

Jahan-e-Syed

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and
Rahat Abrar



Jahan-e-Syed

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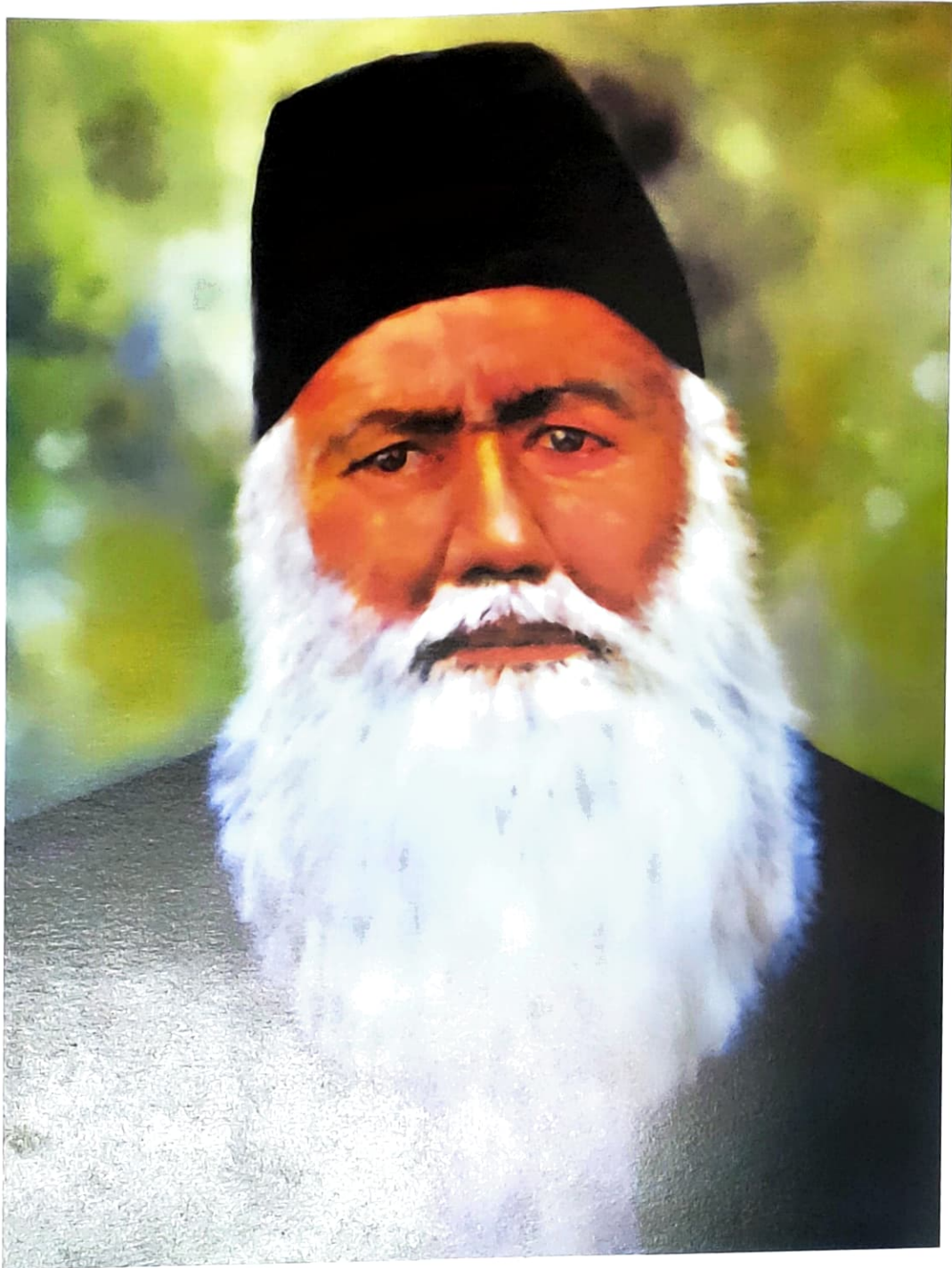
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Foreword



A bicentenary year is the time for reflection, introspection and stock taking. In the two hundredth year of Sir Syed's birth it is a good question to ask how relevant are Sir Syed's ideas today? Sir Syed emphasized rational thinking in all walks of life. In the field of education his rational thinking translated into an embrace of modern education and a scientific point of view. This simple belief in modern education was a path-breaking decision in his time when the orthodox thinking was against modern education. In many ways it proved to have far-reaching consequences, touching the lives of millions of people. Aligarh Muslim University is obviously born out of this simple belief in modern education.

Sir Syed did not live to see his MAO College becoming Aligarh Muslim University in 1920. He could not have seen what the University would be like in 2017. But he did have some vision of the future. Great visionaries always do. While presenting his address on 8 January, 1877, at the foundation stone laying ceremony of MAO College, he famously said:

"From the seed which we sow today there may spring up a mighty tree, whose branches, like those of the banyan of the soil, shall in their turn strike firm roots into the earth, and themselves send forth new and vigorous saplings; that this college may expand into a university, whose sons shall go forth throughout the length and breadth of the land to preach the gospel of free inquiry, of large-hearted tolerance, and of pure morality."

Each word in his address has proved to be prophetic. That mighty tree is Aligarh Muslim University with its many departments and centres.

The students and teachers of Aligarh Muslim University are trying to fulfill Sir Syed's dream. The University has on offer hundreds of courses in various departments of studies. It has consistently figured as one of the top-ranked institutions in the country. It has a vast network of alumni spread over the globe who take very good care of those branches and saplings that Sir Syed spoke about. The banyan tree keeps expanding. Its new branches keep growing from strength to strength.

But Sir Syed also spoke about free inquiry, large-hearted tolerance and pure morality.

The spirit of free inquiry is needed today more than ever before. In an age where social media more often than not clouds our judgement, where fake news becomes the order of the day and where knowledge needs to be freed from the trappings of power, Sir Syed's emphasis on free inquiry acquires a new relevance.

His talk about large-hearted tolerance was no mere empty slogan. His life typified this spirit of tolerance. Today when religious discord and misunderstandings can threaten the fabric of society, Sir Syed's spirit of tolerance is needed more than ever.

His call of pure morality is an absolute value. No wonder the greatest known advocate of morality, Father of the Nation Mohandas Karam Chand Gandhi, repeatedly remembered Sir Syed in his speeches about Hindu-Muslim unity. Sir Syed knew, as would Gandhiji a few decades later, that morality in one's domestic and professional life will make the world a better place.

In other words Sir Syed was talking about students becoming good citizens. A good citizen in the twenty- first century must have this spirit of free inquiry, large-hearted tolerance and the virtue of morality. We at Aligarh Muslim University are committed to not only providing quality education to our students, something that was Sir Syed's mission, but also making them good citizens, something that Sir Syed considered an integral part of their education.

I am happy that this coffee table book has put a new spotlight on the life and mission of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan through some popular and some rare photographs and relevant extracts from his work. May his words and actions inspire the Aligarh Muslim University community further!

Professor Tariq Mansoor

Vice Chancellor
Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh

Introduction

The grand gates of Bab-e-Syed lead into the heart of Aligarh Muslim University campus which holds the dream of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan. As one moves along the main road flanked by old and historic buildings, and tall and dense trees on either side, there is a sense of a hallowed past. Each building has a little history, a riveting narrative, the marks of toils and sacrifices. Is there something about the grandeur and history of the old buildings that modern architecture cannot match or modern architecture is too functionalist, too utilitarian?

Each brick of these buildings points to Sir Syed's vision of the future for the education and uplift of a community which was in the throes of an intellectual and economic crisis. As the busy road buzzes with traffic, time stands still somewhere pointing to the moment when Sir Syed, a scholar, a government official, an aristocrat, unmindful of any false pride and bruised ego, asked for donations and help to build an institution which would serve endless generations of the nation. The strength and stability of the concrete structures and the greenery of the campus are symbolic of Sir Syed's indefatigable spirit and optimism which did not accept defeat even in the face of the greatest obstacles.

There is some correspondence between Sir Syed's personality and the structures that were erected under his supervision. His powerful self finds expression in those strong structures. Or they are an extension of his self! Sir Syed's face, full, expressive, expansive, has its mark on all representative buildings of Mumtaz Ali Anglo-Oriental College. His impressive gait lends its charm to his architectural vision. If Sir Syed cannot be separated from his books, the old structures of Aligarh Muslim University can also not be seen without pausing to think about the man that Sir Syed was.

Up ahead on the left is the sanctified niche for the pursuit of knowledge namely Maulana Azad library, arguably one of the most well-stocked libraries in Asia. A huge portrait of Sir Syed with his long white beard and far seeing eyes seems to extract a pledge from the viewer to follow knowledge like a sinking star.

There with all the computers, books, journals, magazines, separate wings for separate areas of study one cannot but help go back to the moment when the first shelf must have come into existence with just a few books and a load of hopes and dreams. Appropriately it was Sir Syed's personal collection of books which first worked as a library in Lytton Library, which was later shifted to Maulana Azad Library.

In 2017, the bicentenary year of Sir Syed's birth, Aligarh Muslim University has grown in all possible directions: infrastructure, enrolments of students, faculty strength and a vast alumni network. Countless number of men and women, big and small, celebrated and unsung, dead and living, have been part of this journey of progress.

Sir Syed had one dream. The dream has benefited millions.

These millions, of the past and the present, cannot thank the founder of Aligarh Muslim University enough.

In the pages that follow a modest attempt is made to pay a tribute to Sir Syed Ahmad Khan through some new and old pictures. Some rare photographs of the people and the buildings tell the narrative of the University more evocatively than probably any words can. Or they probably give greater scope to the reader to use his imagination, to travel back in time, to see up close the making of history. Still a photography, to recall a distinction made by Roland Barthes, invokes an illogical relationship between 'here' and 'then'. In a photograph a place, thing or person is present but in a past moment. An old photograph arrests a moment but it also brings together the perspective of the photographer, the person photographed and the viewer. In the present an old photograph can yield information in a new perspective.

Does a photograph present incontrovertible evidence of reality? Maybe not in the age of photoshop, but the relationship between photography and reality was a very revealing one in the early years of photography in mid-nineteenth century. Philosopher and writer John Berger hints at the relationship between positivism, photography and sociology in his book *Another Way of Telling* (Vintage, 1982). In many pictures used in this book that relationship is very real. Thus a slightly later day picture of the Aligarh Muslim University's riding team with the then Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru shows not only immaculately turned out boys but also smartly dressed girls. Does not this picture give a lie to horse riding being called a man's sport? Or does not this picture bust the stereotypical image of Aligarh Muslim University in popular imagination? The link between positivism, photography and sociology cannot be dismissed offhand.

Any picture from the past requires some knowledge of the past for a proper understanding and appreciation. A lot of things in many late nineteenth century photographs used in this book--dresses, objects, mannerisms--can be understood properly only when placed in their proper context. A simple photograph of Sir Syed's dining table reveals a man who embraced not only the material aspect of modernity but also the idea and the philosophy of being modern. Sir Syed famously advocated sharing of food with Europeans against the orthodox opinion in his time and he was a generous host at his dinner table. Sir Syed used white cloth on the table with china crockery, forks and spoons (Enayat Ullah quoted in K.A. Nizami's *Sir Syed Album*). An early picture of a dining hall in Muhammadan Anglo-Oriental College shows all students sitting stiffly in their chairs, probably waiting for their meal to be served. The picture reflects Sir Syed's vision of group solidarity at the dining table.

Victorian men and women took great pride in their heavy and formal dressing. The casual and comfortable wear that is the order of the day in our times was not quite the thing in the third quarter of the nineteenth century. Most pictures of the founders of MAO College show a formal dressing. Students were required to dress up formally with a cap on their head. Dressed in Sherwani, a formal dress at any rate, probably our answer to Victorian sense of duty reflected in heavy dressing, the look of students in the pictures is anything but casual. With their eyes firmly fixed on the camera both the children and their elders look a bit too solemn in the photographs from today's standards. No one in the pictures has even a faint smile on his face. It is not that people did not laugh heartily then. But a photography session was an event in their life, a formal occasion demanding formal manners and a formal expression. In fact, Sir Syed was known for his good nature, his ready smile, his laughter and his practical jokes. The photographs sometimes tell a story with some gaps. The reader must fill up those gaps.

The text used in the book also tries to fill up that gap. Scant though it is, in the manner of books that tell their story through pictures, it supplies that missing context to understand the photographs in a more complete manner. The liberal sprinkling of Sir Syed's words in the book, taken from his books, essays, letters and speeches, are intended to complement the photographs. Two narratives, of pictures and

words, are different only in their mode of narration and not in their substance. Both may appear disjointed at times but in the final analysis they try to capture the essence of the man and his work. The ordering of the two narratives does not strictly follow a chronology of events in Sir Syed's and MAO College's life but that hardly distracts the focus away from the man and his mission.

Even then a photograph, specially an old photograph retains a welcome element of ambiguity because of the distance between the moment of arrest in the picture and the moment of its contemplation in the present. It is because of this gap that photography maintains the pretence of an art form. It is not only the mimetic function of photography but also its potential to evoke reflection, sometimes nostalgia, in the viewer that brings it closer to an art form.

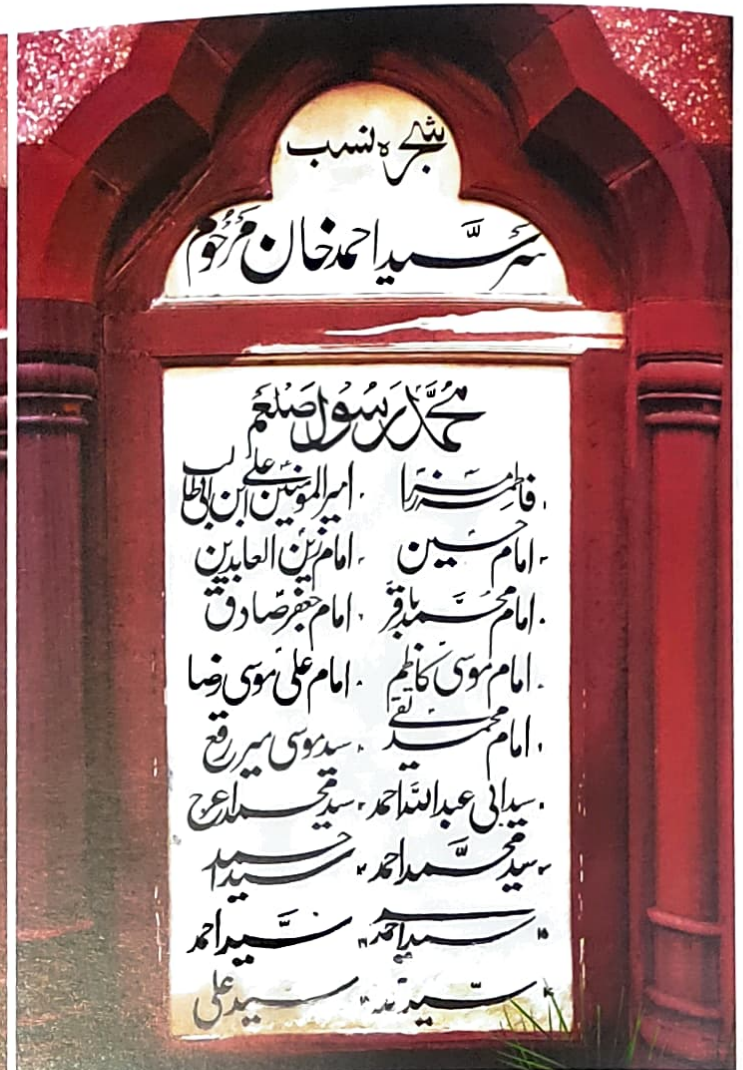
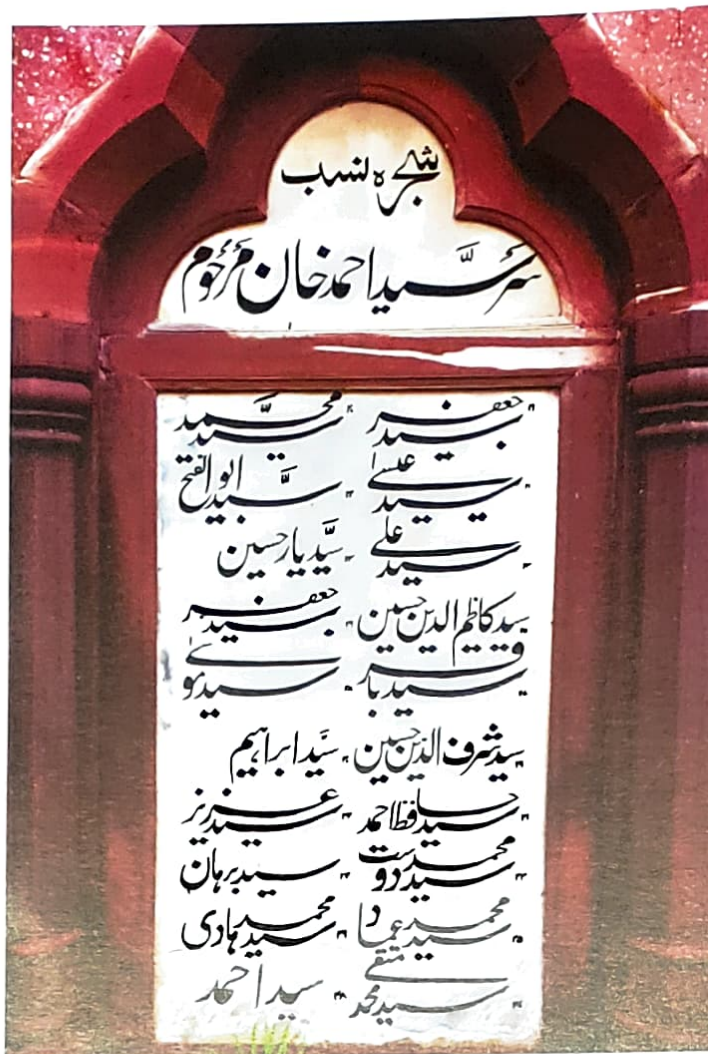
Sir Syed's personality and ideas have been the subject of a plethora of studies. Scholarly works on Sir Syed and MAO College have explored at length, among other subjects, the Aligarh movement, the influence of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan on the question of reform and education of Muslims, and the religious beliefs of Sir Syed. Other studies, not always well known, are of informative nature which document interesting information about the people who helped Sir Syed in his mission, about the buildings of MAO College, and about the role that Aligarh has played in the history of the nation.

This book can be placed somewhere in the middle of these two categories. It weaves its narrative through pictures and brief extracts from the writings of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan. It seeks to hear the echo of Sir Syed's words in the present times.

It is more than a coffee table book in that it responds to both the mimetic and contemplative aspect of photographs. It is intended to arrest some rare moments in the history of MAO College and its founder but also to stir the reader's imagination so that he or she can recreate those moments from his or her vantage point. Each photograph is intended to tell an interesting story and each short extract from Sir Syed's work is intended to whet the intellectual appetite of the reader.

Mohammad Asim Siddiqui

Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh



Sir Syed's Birth and Family

Syed Ahmad Khan (1817-1898), now almost universally known as Sir Syed, came from an illustrious Delhi family which arrived in India during the reign of Mughal emperor Akbar and was part of Mughal administration until the period of Akbar Shah II. Sir Syed's father Sayyid Mohammad Muttaqi Khan enjoyed the patronage of the royal court. Sir Syed's mother Azizun Nisa was the daughter of Khwaja Fariduddin, a very distinguished scholar of geometry, astronomy, philosophy and mysticism who also worked as Akbar Shah II's minister. Sir Syed was born on 17 October 1817 at his maternal grandfather's house which was known as Khwaja Fariduddin Haveli. His mother, known for her charitable works and her opposition to any form of superstition, brought him up in this house.

Sir Syed's Family Tree

Muhammad (SAW)

Fatima Zahra (R.A.)	Amirul Mu'manin Ali Ibne Abi Talib
Imam Husain (AS)	Imam Zainul 'Abidin (AS)
Imam Muhammad Baqir (AS)	Imam Ja'far Sadiq (AS)
Imam Musa Kazim (AS)	Imam Ali Musa Riza (AS)
Imam Muhammad Taqi (AS)	Syed Musa Mubarqa'
Syed Abi Abdullah Ahmad	Syed Muhammad A'raj
Syed Muhammad Ahmad	Syed Ahmad
Syed Musa	Syed Ahmad
Syed Muhammad	Syed Ali

Syed Jafar	Syed Muhammad
Syed Isa	Syed Abul Fateh
Syed Ali	Syed Yar Husain
Syed Kazimuddin Husain	Syed Jafar
Syed Baqir	Syed Musa
Syed Sharfuddin Husain	Syed Ibrahim
Syed Hafiz Ahmad	Syed Aziz
Syed Muhammad Dost	Syed Burhan
Syed Muhammad Imad	Syed Muhammad Hadi
Syed Muhammad Muttaqi	Syed Ahmad



Sir Syed's Haveli in Daryaganj, Delhi. Sir Syed was born here on 17 October 1817.
The Delhi Government has named the road near the Haveli Sir Syed Ahmad Road.



An inside view of Sir Syed's Haveli (2017)
Unfortunately, except for a very small portion, his grand Haveli
has been converted to flats and shops





PICTURE COURTESY: RANA SAFVI

Shops and flats in what was Sir Syed's Haveli



Sir Syed Ahmad Khna
1817-1898



Syed Hamid (1849-1894)



Syed Hamid in childhood



Syed Mahmud (1850-1903)



Syed Mahmud in childhood

Sir Syed's Family

Sir Syed was 19 when he married Parsa Begum, also known as Mubarak Begum. After twenty five years of their marriage, Parsa Begum died. Sir Syed did not remarry despite his friends' insistence.

Sir Syed and Parsa Begum had two sons, Syed Hamid and Syed Mahmud, and a daughter, Amina.

Sir Syed's elder son Syed Hamid was born on 16 February 1849. Sir Syed took him to England in 1869 during his visit.

Syed Hamid joined the government service as a sub-Registrar and later worked as Superintendent of Police. He died in 1894.

Sir Syed's second son Syed Mahmud was born on 24 May 1850. A brilliant student since his childhood, he won a scholarship to study in England, stood first at the annual examination of the Christ College, Cambridge University and got a Barrister's diploma from Lincoln's Inn.

He was the first Muslim in North India who passed Barrister's examination from Britain.

Mahmud distinguished himself in his career, writing books and devoting himself to the cause of Muslim education. He started practicing law in Allahabad and also took up a teaching assignment in 1875 at Muir College, Allahabad. Before finally resigning from his job to concentrate on the development of MAO College, he had been elevated to the position of a Judge in North Western Province High Court, Allahabad.

Syed Mahmud died on 8 May 1903.

Sir Syed's daughter Amina was born in 1860. She died at the young age of 10.



Sir Syed Speaks

"A man should be upright, truthful and righteous even in dealing with the enemy. This alone is the way to get an upper hand over the enemy, otherwise it is nothing but disgracing one's own self before an adversary."

(*Tahzibul Akhlaq*, Vol. III, p.194)



Syed Mahmud and Anand Bhawan

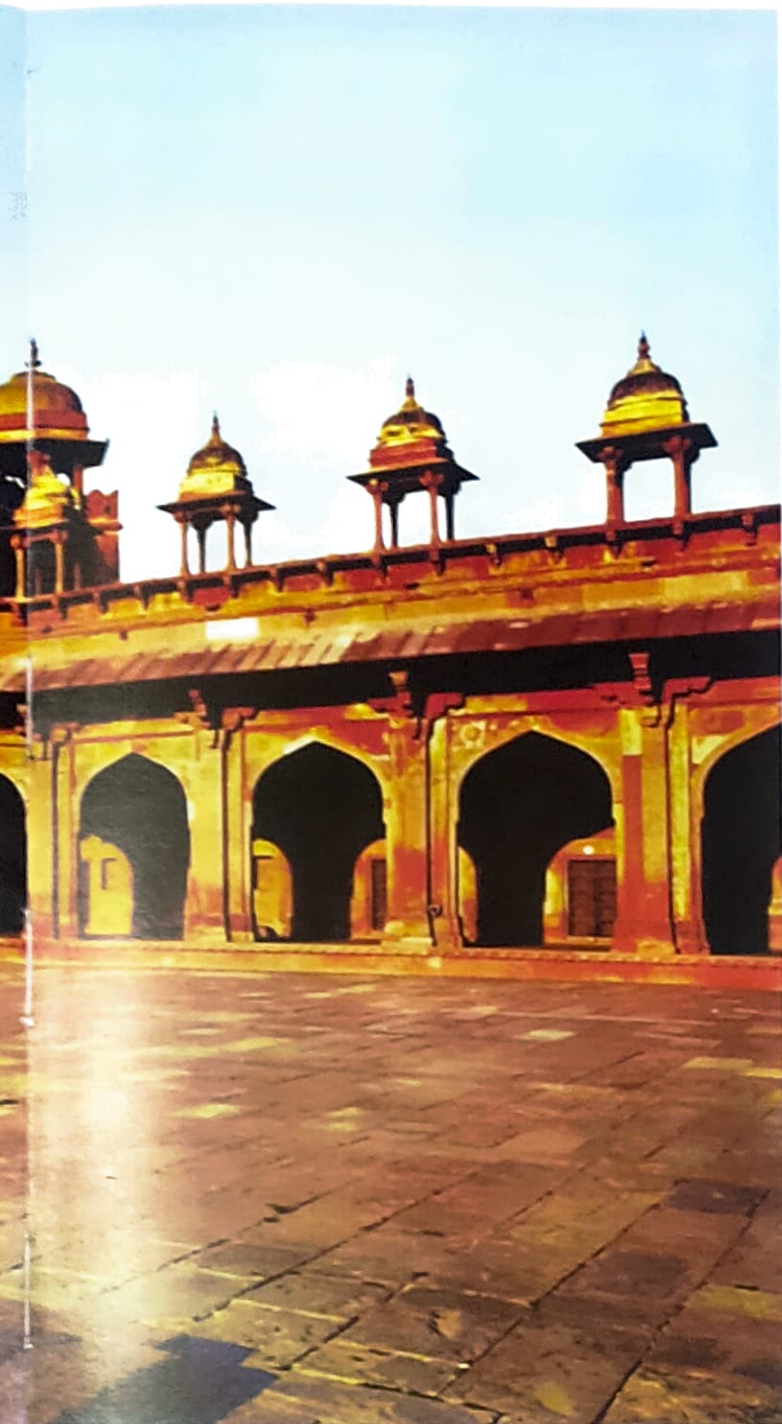


Allahabad's famous Anand Bhawan, the ancestral home of Nehrus, was once the property of Syed Mahmud. Indira Gandhi writes "The house (Anand Bhawan) belonged originally to Mr Justice Mahmud who sold it to Raja Permanand of Moradabad, Judge of Shahjahanpur, from whom it was bought by my grandfather, Pandit Motilal Nehru, in 1900" (David Lelyveld, "The Mystery Mansion" in *Little Magazine*, vol. IV: issue 4).



SIR SYED IN GOVERNMENT SERVICE

It was an important decision in Sir Syed's life when in 1839 he joined as Nayab Munshi in the Office of the Commissioner at Agra. During his posting at Agra, he wrote *Jam-e-Jam*, which was a brief but important historical account of all rulers of Delhi. Beginning in 1842, he spent four years in Fatehpur Sikri, during which period he wrote three books. He moved to Delhi and remained there from 1846 to 1854, except for two short term assignments in Rohtak. Promoted as Sadar Amin, he came to Bijnor in 1855. Before his voluntary retirement in 1876 from his busy and tiring government job, he had his postings in Moradabad, Ghazipur, Aligarh and Banaras.



Sir Syed was posted in Fatehpur Sikri (1842 - 1846). He was given a residence in Fatehpur Sikri which had earlier been the 'khwabgah' (sleeping chamber) of Emperor Akbar.

Victoria School
at Ghazipur established
by Sir Syed in 1863



On 12 May 1862, Sir Syed was transferred to Ghazipur. In 1863, he established the Scientific Society in Ghazipur and prepared a scheme for the translation of English works into Urdu. He also started a school in Ghazipur.



Sir Syed Speaks

"God does not communicate his command in black and white; it can, however, be seen writ large on the walls of time."

(Speech at Amritsar, 29 January 1884)





In August 1867, Sir Syed was appointed the Judge of Small Causes Court in Banaras



Sir Syed Speaks

“Idleness is a word whose meaning is not rightly comprehended by people. They think that abstaining from manual work, and laziness in routine duties is all that idleness implies. They do not realize that real idleness is the idleness of heart and mind.”

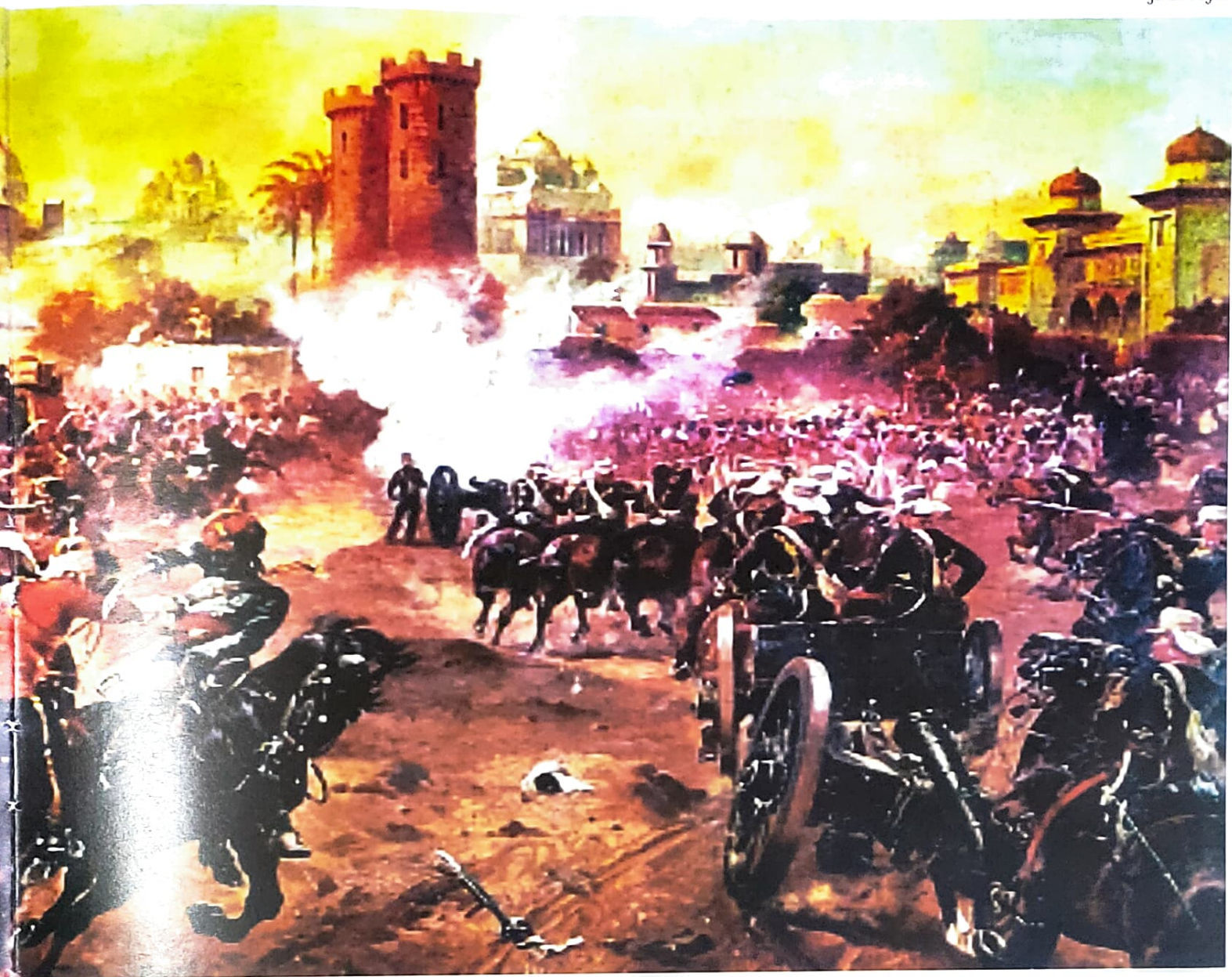
(from *Tahzibul Akhlaq*, Vol. III, 11 March 1872)



REVOLT OF 1857



Sir Syed experienced firsthand the bloodshed, shootings and hangings which happened during the Revolt of 1857. His uncles and cousins were shot dead by the British soldiers during the Revolt. His mother became a mental wreck due to the violence and bloodshed that she witnessed all around her. The entire might of the British government was directed against Indians, especially against the Muslims of Delhi and surrounding



areas. Two of Sir Syed's works were the result of his experience of the Revolt. *Tarikh-i-Sarkashi-i-Bijnaur* (The History of the Bijnaur Uprising) is a fairly objective account of the events in Bijnor between May 1857 and April 1858. *Asbab-i-Baghawat-i-Hind* (The Causes of the Indian Revolt), one of the most cited works in modern Indian history, is a very clear-headed analysis of the causes of the Revolt of 1857.



Capture of the last Mughal Emperor Bahadur Shah Zafar (1857)

رسالہ اسباب بغاوت ہند

مصنفہ

فناکٹر سید احمد خان بہادر مرحوم و مخفونہ کے بیٹی۔ ایس۔ آئی۔ ایل این جی

جسکو

سید مرحوم نے ۱۸۵۷ء کے اسباب بغاوت ہند کے

متعلق لکھا تھا اور جسے ایک مرتبہ ۱۸۵۸ء میں طبع ہوا تھا

بار دوم

حسب فرمائش منیجر صاحب ڈیوٹی ٹبک ڈپو مدرستہ العلوم علی گڑھ

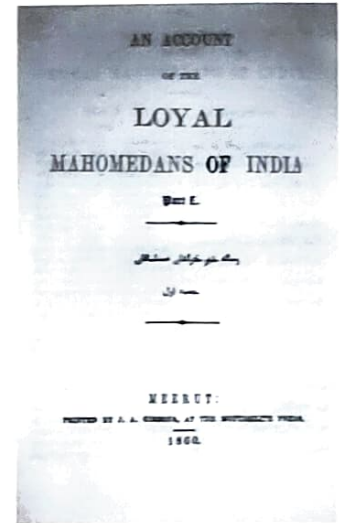
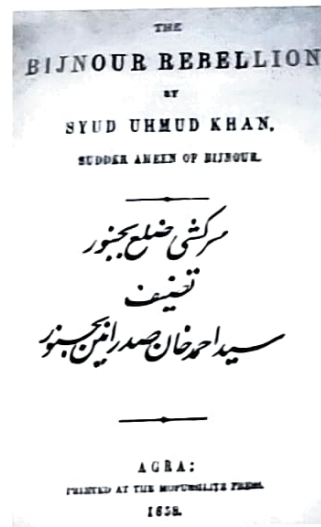
مطبع معین اسلام اگرہ میں طبع ہوا

۱۹۰۳ء

Sir Syed Speaks

“After the Revolt I was grieved neither on account of the plunder of my house nor on account of the loss of property that I had suffered. What saddened my heart was the misery and destruction of people. When Mr. Shakespeare offered to me the *taluka* of Jahanabad, which originally belonged to a distinguished Sayyid family, and yielded an annual rental of more than a lac rupees, as a reward for my services, my heart was deeply hurt. I said to myself: How can I accept this jagir and become a *talukdar* while all the people are in distress. I refused to accept it... For some days I was under the spell of grief and suspense. Believe me that this grief and concern brought senility to me and turned my hair grey... But at that time I thought that it would be extremely unmanly and cowardly on my part to find refuge in some corner and leave the people helpless and in distress. No! I should share their distress and strive hard to avert the calamity by lifting up their hearts. I gave up the idea of migrating and chose to work for my people.”

(Lecture: Muslim Educational Conference,
23 December 1886)



Sir Syed Speaks

"I think if we open the hearts of men and look into their condition, we will find only little difference between the hearts of wise men and ignorant men. Many thoughtless and absurd ideas always enter their hearts; and their hearts experience limitless evil whisperings. But the difference between the wise and the ignorant is that the wise man selects from those ideas and whisperings. He knows which ideas he should use in his conversation and which he should discard. An ignorant man does not do so and utters whatever idea comes to his heart without giving it a serious thought. A wise man, however while talking to his friends, is just like an ignorant man. Whatever comes to his heart, he says to his friend without any reservations as if his ideas come to him aloud."

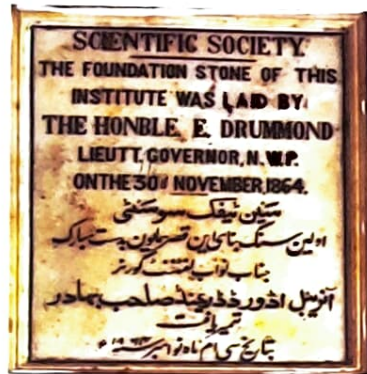
(from "Capacity to Distinguish Between Good and Evil", *Tahzibul Akhlaq*, in *Selected Essays*, p. 127)

"Among all the diseases of the heart, the most fatal is the liking for flattery"
 ("Flattery", *Tahzibul Akhlaq*, in *Selected Essays*, p. 167)



Sir Syed's Rationalist Approach

First established by Sir Syed in Ghazipur, *The Scientific Society* was shifted to Aligarh in 1864. A building close to the present Ajmal Khan Tibbiya College was constructed to house this society. Probably the first modern institution in Islam, the society took up the task of translating into Urdu important works in sciences, agriculture and social sciences. Sir Syed wrote that "One of the chief objects aimed at by the society is the introduction of improved methods of agriculture into India by which the condition of the people may be improved." Sir Syed got John Stuart Mill's *Rudiments of Political Economy* translated into Urdu by Pundit Dhurm Narain. With a good number of Hindus associated with his project, the society was also a platform to bring Hindus and Muslims together to discuss important common issues.



Sir Syed Speaks

"It was quite easy for our forefathers to sit down in mosques and hospices and raise hair-splitting discussions over problems rational as well as hypothetical; and advance arguments to which they did never concede. But a new situation has arisen now and it is absolutely different from the philosophical research of the past. The problems are now proved and shown to us through scientific experimentation. They cannot be mooted on the basis of fantastic or flimsy arguments, as before".

(Lecture at Lahore, 1 February 1884)





Promoter of Harmony between Religions

Sir Syed's commentary on the Bible and his account of the life of the prophet, are two very important works in comparative religion which promote understanding and harmony between religions. Unlike many religious scholars of his time, he did not believe that the text of the Bible had been corrupted. *Tabyin-ul-Kalam* makes the point that prophets save mankind and every country has been blessed with the prophets. Sir Syed's *Life of Mohammed*, written in response to Sir William Muir's very problematic orientalist text *Life of Mahomet*, is a reasoned argument to establish the facts about the Prophet but is remarkably free from any feeling of bitterness. In this book also he expresses his respect for people of all religions.

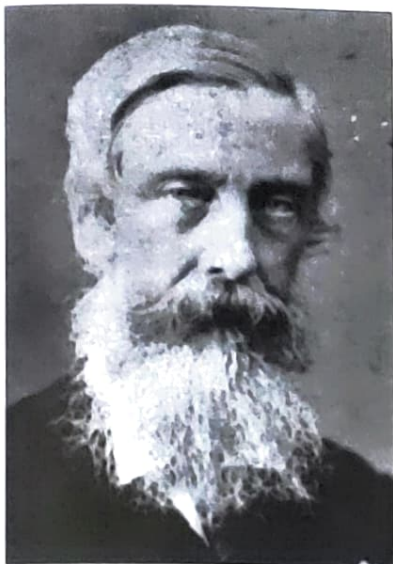
Sir Syed Speaks

"O Hindus and Muslims! Do you belong to a country other than India? Don't you live on this soil and are you not buried under it or cremated on its ghats? If you live and die on this land, then, bear in mind, that 'Hindu' and 'Muslim' is but a religious word; all the Hindus, Muslims and Christians who live in this country are one nation."

(Speech at Gurdaspur, 27 January 1884)

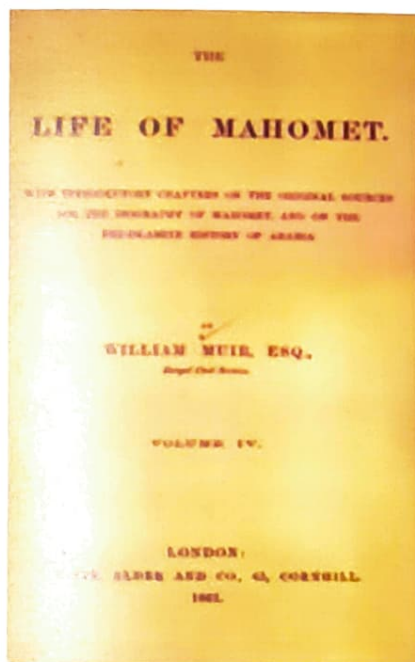
"By the word 'nation' I do mean both Hindus as well as Muslims. It is this context that I refer here to the word 'nation'. For me it is immaterial as to what their religious belief is; because we cannot observe it. But what we do take into account is the fact that all of us, no matter whether Hindus or Muslims, are sons of one and the same soil. Our benefits and advantages stem from one and the same source. On this account I always use the same word for both the communities living in India, that is to say, the word 'Hindus' or the inhabitants of India. When I was a member of the Legislative council, the welfare of this very nation was my main anxiety."

(Speech at Lahore, 3 February 1884)



Sir Syed was greatly offended by Sir William Muir's account of the Prophet in his book *Life of Mahomet*. In a letter to Mehdi Ali, written from England, he wrote "My mind is a bit agitated these days. I am looking at Mr. William's book about the Prophet and it has disturbed me. My heart is burnt to cinders to see his prejudices and unfairness. I have made a firm resolve, and it was there since long, that I should write a biography of the Prophet. I don't care even if all my money is spent, and I am reduced to beggary. On the day of judgement when asked to present myself I will be introduced as one who died in beggary in the name of his ancestor Mohammad."

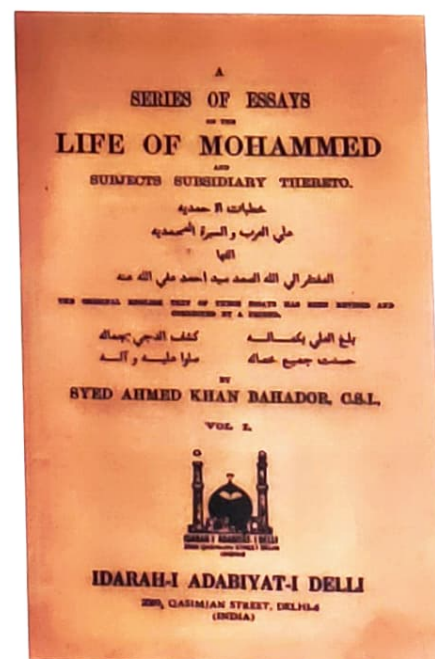
He countered all arguments of Muir in his book *Life of Mohammed*. Despite his serious disagreement with Muir, his relationship with Muir remained very cordial.



Sir Syed Speaks

"Our Prophet neither underrated nor overvalued divorce. He constantly pointed out to his followers how opposed it was to the best interests of society; he always expatiated upon the evils which flowed from it, and ever exhorted his disciples to treat women with respect and kindness."

(From *Life of Mohammed*, Chapter 12, "Whether Islam has been Beneficial or Injurious to Human Society in General")



THE ALICURH INSTITUTE
GAZETTE
اخبار
سین ٹیفک سو سٹی علیکڈہ

جلد ۱ ۶ اپریل سنہ ۱۸۹۶ء روز جمعہ نمبر ۲

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THE MOHAMMEDAN
SOCIAL REFORMER
تہذیب الاخلاق

[نمبر ۱] یکم شوال سنہ ۱۳۱۱ ہجری سنہ ۱۳۲۳ قمری

NEW SERIES EDITED BY M. ENAYET ULLAH, B.A.

تہذیب

آسانا کشتہ نامی ایک عمارت را
پاس کشتہ نامی ایک عمارت را
تہذیب کشتہ نامی ایک عمارت را

پیش کیا ہے حیرت خیز حقیقت ہے۔ لیست کہتے
ہے کہ یہ تہذیب خرابی کوڑ - وسا ہے جس
بجہ تھا - سر کھنڈہ دل میں وہ جوش
نہایت ہے - ہم جانتے تھے - لوگ پہلے تھے ہم
چاہتے تھے - وہ - کشتہ گرا - نہ وہ - نہ وہ - وہ -
لوگ چاہے - وہ - لیست کہتے ہیں -
آئیے ہمیں مگر دل سے - لیست کہتے ہیں -
لیست کہتے ہیں - وہ - لیست کہتے ہیں -
لیست کہتے ہیں - وہ - لیست کہتے ہیں -
لیست کہتے ہیں - وہ - لیست کہتے ہیں -
لیست کہتے ہیں - وہ - لیست کہتے ہیں -

Sir Syed Speaks

"Freedom of expression is the right of everyone. Suppose many persons are unanimous in their opinion regarding a certain matter except one who differs from them then all those persons do not have a greater right to contradict the opinion of that single person as he has the equal right to contradict them if he can do so."

("Freedom of Expression", *Tahzibul Akhlaq*, in *Selected Essays*, p. 107)

Sir Syed as a Journalist

Sir Syed is a pioneer in the field of bilingual and purposive journalism in India. *The Aligarh Institute Gazette* and *Tahzibul Akhlaq*, which made their start in 1866 and 1870 respectively, were, in fact, multilingual publications as they often published material in Persian and Arabic also, apart from Urdu and English. Writing for Sir Syed always had a social purpose. He would use his pen to dispel the darkness that gripped his people and to clear misunderstandings between Muslims and Hindus and between Muslims and Christians. The writing of this sort was attempted through the pages of the *Aligarh Institute Gazette*, a twice weekly journal. The journal, largely devoted to subjects of topical importance, always took a very impartial stand on any difference of opinion between Hindus and Muslims. It rather impressed upon them a policy of peace and reconciliation. It speaks volumes about Sir Syed's organizational skills and pragmatic approach and his seriousness in respecting deadlines that for about thirty two years not only each and every issue of *The Gazette* was published but it also came out on its stipulated date.

Tahzibul Akhlaq (Mohammedan Social Reformer) was the other important journal that Sir Syed started to specifically reform the Muslim religious thinking. He painfully realized that the simple religion of Islam, to quote his words, "has been made so rigid and stiff that nothing can be said in favour of Muslims without a religious debate". Sir Syed would rather approach any problem with his characteristic scientific point of view for he believed that there cannot be any conflict between religion and nature. In an essay entitled "Nature" he remarked that "no one could recognize Allah by any means other than Nature". The issue of the status of Muslim women was also as problematic in Sir Syed's time as it is in ours. In an essay titled "Rights of Women" he refused to consider women inferior to men.



Sir Syed Speaks

"It is the duty of the government that it should protect the rights of the people over whom it rules, whether the rights pertain to property, profession or occupation, freedom of speech and expression, or freedom of life."

(*Tahzibul Akhlaq* Vol. VI)

"To permit liberty of the press is the part of a wise government: To preserve it is the part of a free people."

(Motto of *Aligarh Institute Gazette*)





From Sir Syed's own collection

Sir Syed's Passion for History and Archeology

Sir Syed was a very keen student of history and a proud Indian who valued India's rich cultural heritage and its unique composite culture. His writings on history are numerous and wide ranging. *Jam-e-Jam* (1839) is an account of the ruling dynasties of Delhi from Timur to Bahadur Shah Zafar. He very objectively analysed the causes of the Revolt of 1857 in *Ashab-i-Baghavat-e-Hind* (Causes of Indian Revolt). He revised and edited Abul Fazal's *Ain-e-Akbari* (1856), Ziya ud Din Barani's *Tareekh-e-Firoz Shahi* (1862) and Jahangir's *Tuzuk-e-Jahangiri* (1863). He also wrote *Loyal Mohammadans of India* (1860) and *The History of the District of Bijnaur* (1858).

Sir Syed's *Asar us Sanadid*, a classic of archaeology, shows his eye for details and his truthfulness in recording the physical description of the monuments of Delhi. All aspects of a building which include the description of doors, arches, stairs, the period of its construction, history of repairs and renovation, the people who undertook the construction and repair and myriad such details do not escape his attention in his monumental study. The work was translated into French by Garcia De Tassy and it got Sir Syed an honorary fellowship of the Asiatic Society, London.

Sir Syed was also very fond of collecting and preserving archaeological objects like sculptures, carved stones, doorjambes and concrete panels at a time when there were not many proper museums.



From Sir Syed's own collection

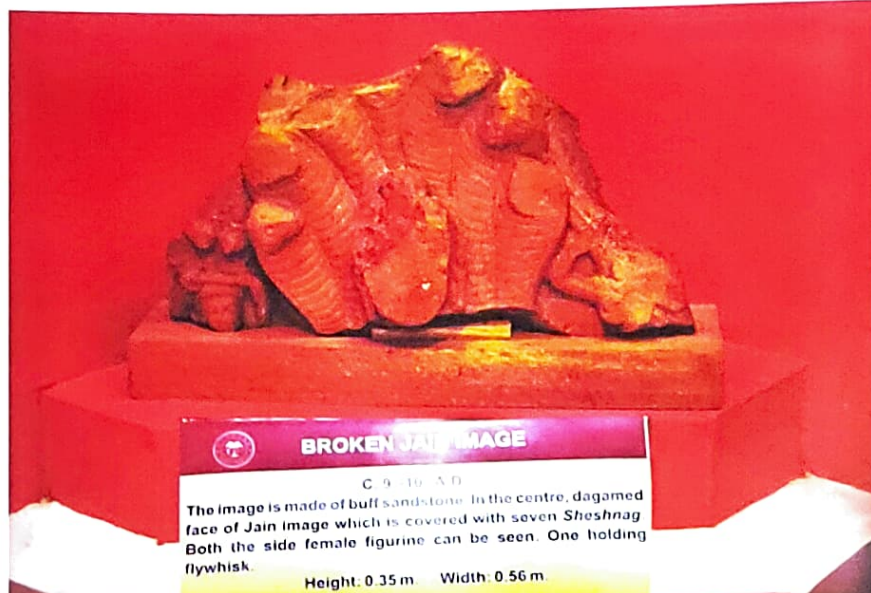
ASHOKA WAS ONE OF INDIA'S GREATEST EMPEROR, MODERN INDIA ADOPTED HIS LION CAPITAL AT SAMATHI AS ITS NATIONAL EMBLEM. THE COLUMN ON WHICH IT STOOD MARKED THE PLACE WHERE THE BUDDHA PREACHED HIS DHAMMA.



ASHOKA
272 B.C. - 232 B.C.



From Sir Syed's own collection



BROKEN JAIN IMAGE

C. 9-10 A.D.

The image is made of buff sandstone. In the centre, damaged face of Jain image which is covered with seven *Sheshnag*. Both the side female figurine can be seen. One holding flywhisk.

Height: 0.35 m. Width: 0.56 m.

From Sir Syed's own collection



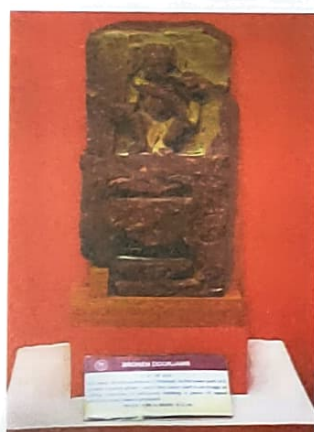
OTHER PART OF DOORSILL DEPICTING LION

C. 9-10 A.D.

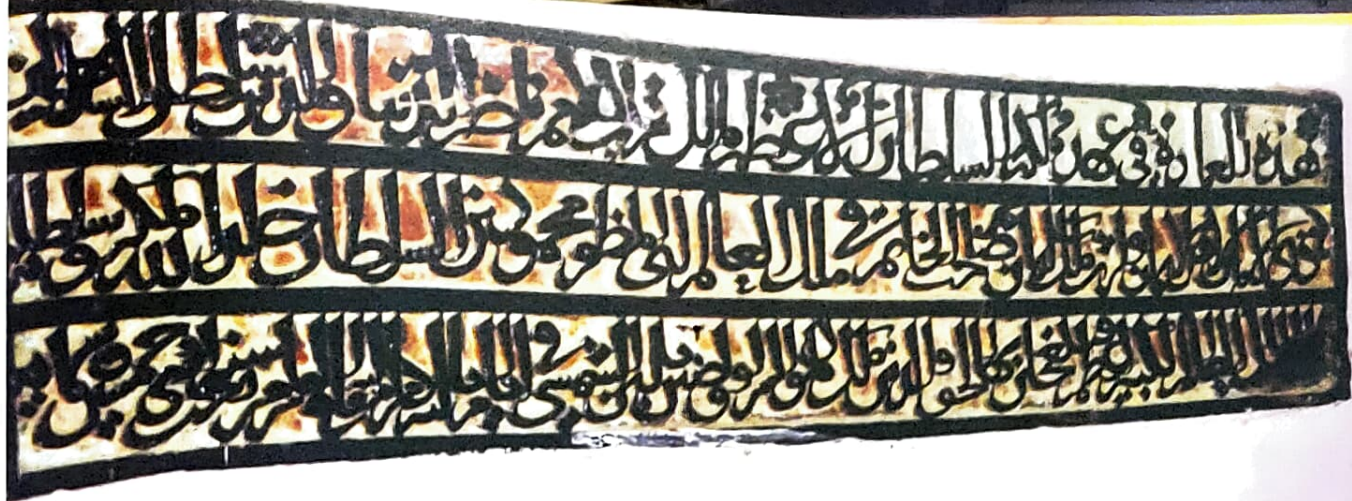
It is made of *Kankar*. A lion with beautiful mane and a carved tail. It also depicts a woman playing on flute. An other deity standing with flywhisk. Badly corroded.

Height: 0.31 m. Width: 0.68 m.

From Sir Syed's own collection



Sir Syed's Love for Arts (courtesy Musa Dakri Museum)



Translation from the Original

This building (was erected) during the reign of the great Sultan, the master of the necks of nations, Nasirud-dunya-waddin, the Sultan of Sultans, the protector of the Faithful, the heir of the kingdom of Solomon, the Lord of the Seal in Empire of the World, Abu-i-Muzaffar Mahmud bin as Sultan haqq-waddin, the Malik of the maliks of the East and China, Balban-ush-Shamsi, during the days of his government, (may his high qualities endure!), on the 10th of Rajab 652 A.H. (26 August, 1254 A.D.)

Sir Syed brought the inscription of the Minaret from the Bala'i Qila to the MAO College. It is now preserved in the erstwhile Nizam Museum, now Sir Syed Hall Reading Room of Aligarh Muslim University.



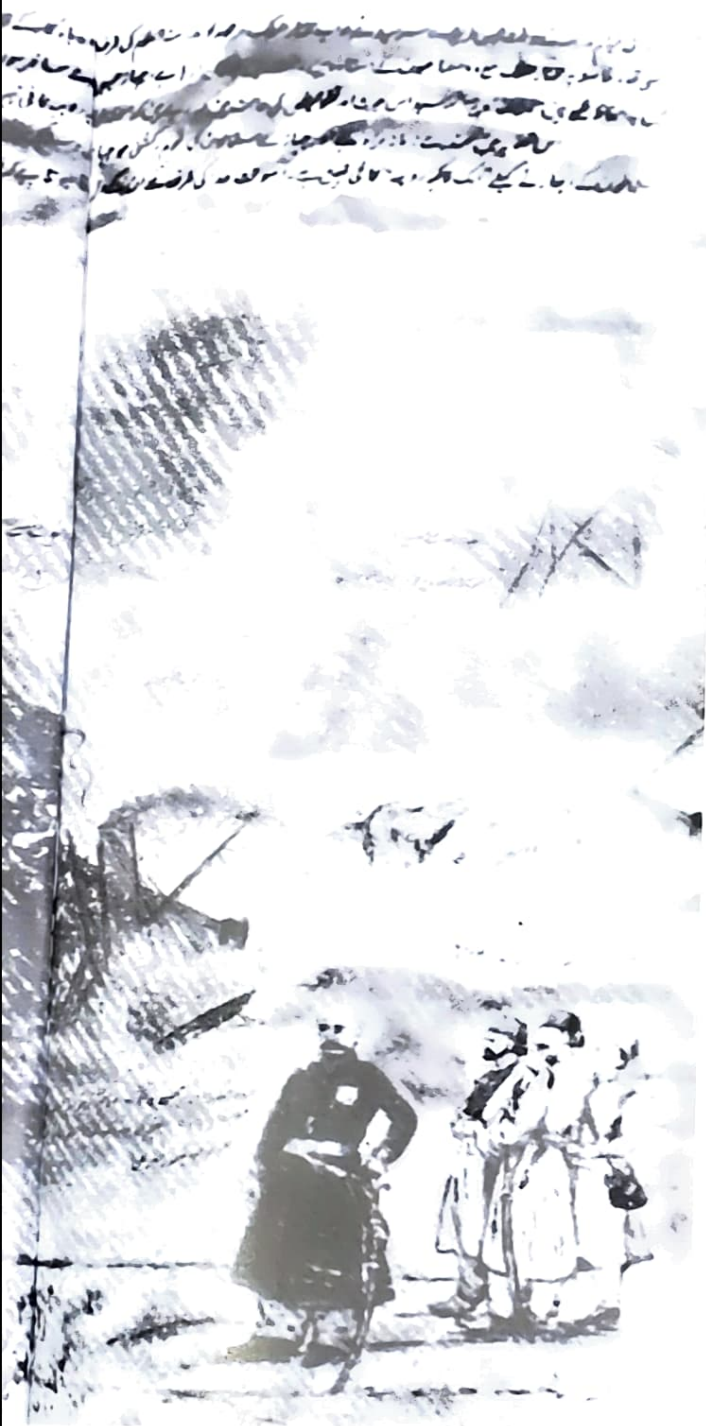
Sir Syed Speaks

"India is the home of both of us (Hindus and Muslims). We both breathe the air of India and take the water of the holy Ganges and the Jamuna... We are living and dying together. By living so long in India, the blood of both has changed. The colour of both has become similar. The faces of both, having changed, have become similar. The Muslims have acquired hundreds of customs from the Hindus and the Hindus have also learned hundreds of things from the Mussulmans. We mixed with each other so much that we produced a new language-Urdu, which was neither our language nor theirs. Thus if we ignore that aspect of ours which we owe to God, both of us, on the basis of being common inhabitants of India, actually constitute one nation; and the progress of this country and that of both of us is possible through mutual cooperation, sympathy and love. We shall only destroy ourselves by mutual disunity and animosity and ill-will to each other. It is pitiable to see those who do not understand this point and create feelings of disunity among these two nations and fail to see that they themselves will be the victims of such a situation and inflict injury to themselves. My friends, I have repeatedly said and say it again that India is like a bride which has got two beautiful and lustrous eyes—Hindus and Mussulmans. If they quarrel against each other that beautiful bride will become ugly and if one destroys the other, she will lose one eye."

(Lecture at Patna, 27 January 1883)







Art had a social purpose for Sir Syed. The adage "a picture is worth a thousand words", was never more true than when Sir Syed sent this painting to Nawab Mukhtarul Mulk Syed Turab Ali Khan of Hyderabad. The concept of the painting had been given by Sir Syed to the painter.

The picture shows Muslims in a state of decline. Their boats are sinking and this pains Sir Syed immensely. An angel points towards the Nawab who appears thoughtful but confident, his soldiers standing behind him in attendance. The angel appears to say that the Nawab can be a saviour of Muslims in their state of decline.

The Nawab was so moved by this painting that he fixed a substantial monthly grant for MAO College.



Moinuddin Art Gallery, Aligarh
Muslim University: A step towards fulfilling
Sir Syed's dream





Sir Syed's Relationship with Poets and Writers of His Time

True to the spirit of his times, Sir Syed was greatly interested in poetry. He was friends with most contemporary Urdu and Hindi poets and writers. He also had very strong views about Urdu poetry and often exhorted Urdu poets to shun the use of artificial language. He greatly influenced important literary figures like Altaf Husain Hali, Deputy Nazir Ahmad and Muhammad Husain Azad, among others.

Sir Syed had a very interesting relationship with the greatest Urdu poet of the time, Mirza Asadullah Khan Ghalib. He requested Ghalib to write a foreword to his *A'in-e Akbari*.

Ghalib obliged Sir Syed but not in a manner Sir Syed would have liked. Sir Syed did not include Ghalib's foreword in his book. Ghalib was able to see the decline of Mughal power and the rise of British power. He advised Sir Syed not to think about the past but to care about the present and the future. It can be conjectured that Sir Syed's devotion to the cause of education, his favourable attitude to British power and his concern for the Muslim community were partly the result of Ghalib's advice.



Ghalib's Taqriz (Foreword/ Review Poem) on Syed Ahmad Khan Arif Jang's edition of A'in-e Akbari (not accepted by Syed Ahmad Khan for publication) (1855-56)

Good news my friends, this ancient book's door
Is now open, because of the Syed's grace and fortune,
The eye began to see, the arm found strength
That which was wrapped in ancient clothes,
now put on a new dress.

And this idea of his, to establish its text and edit the *A'in*
Puts to shame his exalted capability and potential,

He put his heart to a task and pleased himself
But did something like freeing a servant who was already free.

One who isn't capable of admiring his quality
Would no doubt praise him for this task,

For such a task, of which this book is the basis
Only an hypocrite can offer praise.

I, who am the enemy of pretence
And have a sense of my own truthfulness,

If I don't give him praise for this task
It's proper that I find occasion to praise.

I have nothing to say to the perverse
None know what I know of arts and letters,

In the whole world, this merchandise has no buyer.
What profit could my Master hope from it?

It should be said, it's an excellent inventory
So what's there to see that's worth seeing?

And if you talk with me of Laws and Rules
Open your eyes, and in this ancient halting-place

Look at the Sahibs of England.

Look at the style and practice of these,

See what Laws and Rules they have made for all to see
What none ever saw, they have produced.

Science and skills grew at the hands of these skilled ones
Their efforts overtook the efforts of the forebears.

This is the people that owns the right to Laws and Rules
None knows to rule a land better than they,

Justice and Wisdom they've made as one
They have given hundreds of laws to India.

The fire that one brought out of stone
How well these skilled ones bring out from straw!

What spell have they struck on water
That a vapour drives the boat in water!

Sometimes the vapour takes the boat down the sea
Sometimes the vapour brings down the sky to the plains.

Vapour makes the sky-wheel go round and round
Vapour is now like bullocks, or horses.

Vapour makes the ship speed
Making wind and wave redundant.

Their instruments make music without the bow
They make words fly high like birds:

Oh don't you see that these wise people
Get news from thousands of miles in a couple of breaths?

They inject fire into air
And the air glows like embers,

Go to London, for in that shining garden
The city is bright in the night, without candles.

Look at the businesses of the knowledgeable ones:
In every discipline, a hundred innovators!

Before the Laws and Rules that the times now have
All others have become things of yesteryears,

Wise and sensitive and prudent one, does your book
Have such good and elegant Laws?

When one sees such a treasure house of gems
Why should one glean corn from that other harvest?

Well, if you speak of its style, it's good
No, it's much better than all else that you seek

But every good always has a better too
If there's a head, there's also a crown for it.

Don't regard that Generous Source as niggardly
It's a Date-Palm which drops sweet light, like dates.

Worshipping the Dead is not an auspicious thing
And wouldn't you too think that it's
no more than just words?

The Rule of silence pleases my heart, Ghalib
You spoke well doubtless, not speaking is well too.

Here in this world your creed is to worship all the
Prophet's children,

Go past praising, your Law asks you to pray:

For Syed Ahmad Khan-e Arif Jang
Who is made up entirely of wisdom and splendour

Let there be from God all that he might wish for
Let an auspicious star lead all his affairs.

Translated from Persian by Shamsur Rahman Faruqi
(from his Sir Syed Memorial Lecture, 2006)



Sitting L to R: Nawab Viqarul Mulk, Mohsiul Mulk, Deputy Nazir Ahmad, Altaf Husain Hali
Standing L to R: Allama Shibli Nomani and T.W. Arnold

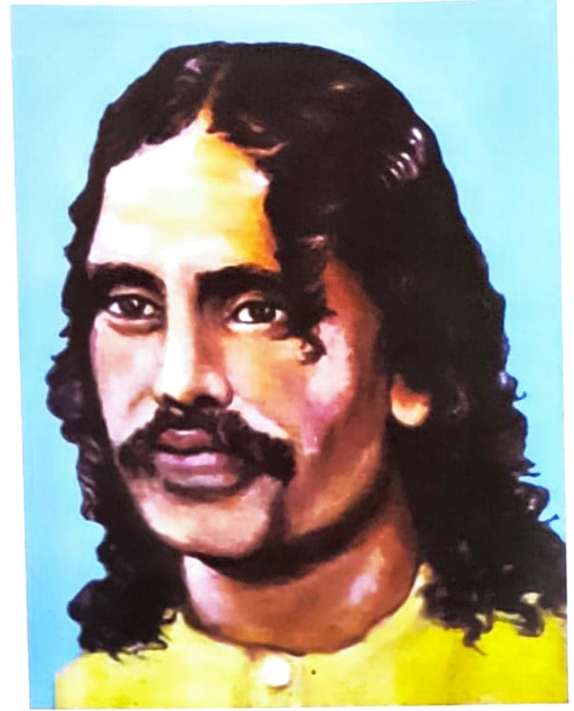
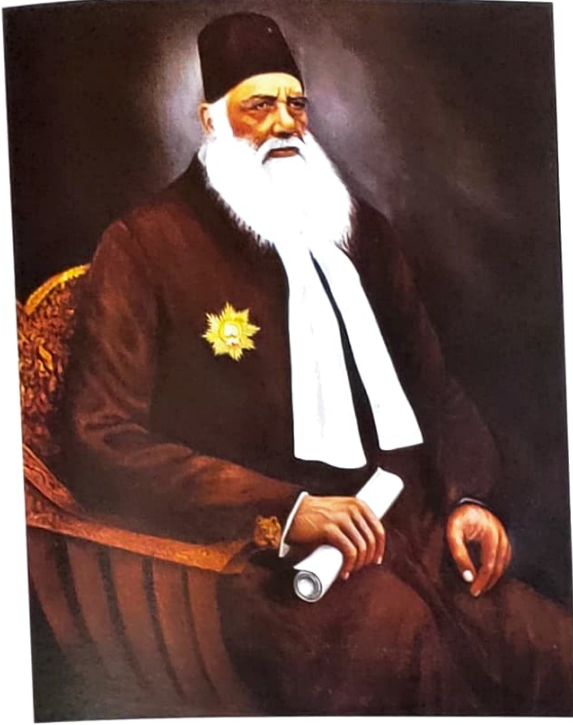


Sir Syed Speaks

"The bad and defective practice of expressing far-fetched and abstract themes, and the codes for using simile and metaphor are now well established. These things do cause in our minds some kind of wonder or marvel; but they do not at all affect the heart, or our nature, or the human emotion which they are concerned with."

(Translation S.R. Faruqi, *Tahzibul Akhlaq*, 11 March 1872)





Sir Syed made Bhartendu Harishchandra a member of the Scientific Society. Bhartendu Harishchandra also wrote for *Aligarh Institute Gazette*. He was in regular touch with Sir Syed Ahmad Khan and even during the Hindi-Urdu controversy their relationship remained cordial. In a letter dated 20 July 1874, written (in Urdu) from Banaras, Bhartendu Harishchandra writes:

Our opinions about Madarsatul Uloom have changed from a study of *Aligarh Institute Gazette*. We have started considering it in a good light. This has been possible because of your visit (Sir Syed's) to Gorakhpur and its surrounding areas. Madarsatul Uloom has specially included the teaching of Sanskrit which has greatly impressed Hindus. We are grateful to you and we are ready to render any help for the development of Sanskrit that you will require of us.



Sir Syed Speaks

"There could be nothing worse or more defective than the art and practice of poetry as in vogue in our time. Themes there are none except of love and romance, and even those do not convey the better human emotions. Rather, the theme [of love] points to those evil emotions which are opposed to true culture and morals."

(Translation S.R. Faruqi, *Tahzibul Akhlaq*, 11 March 1872)

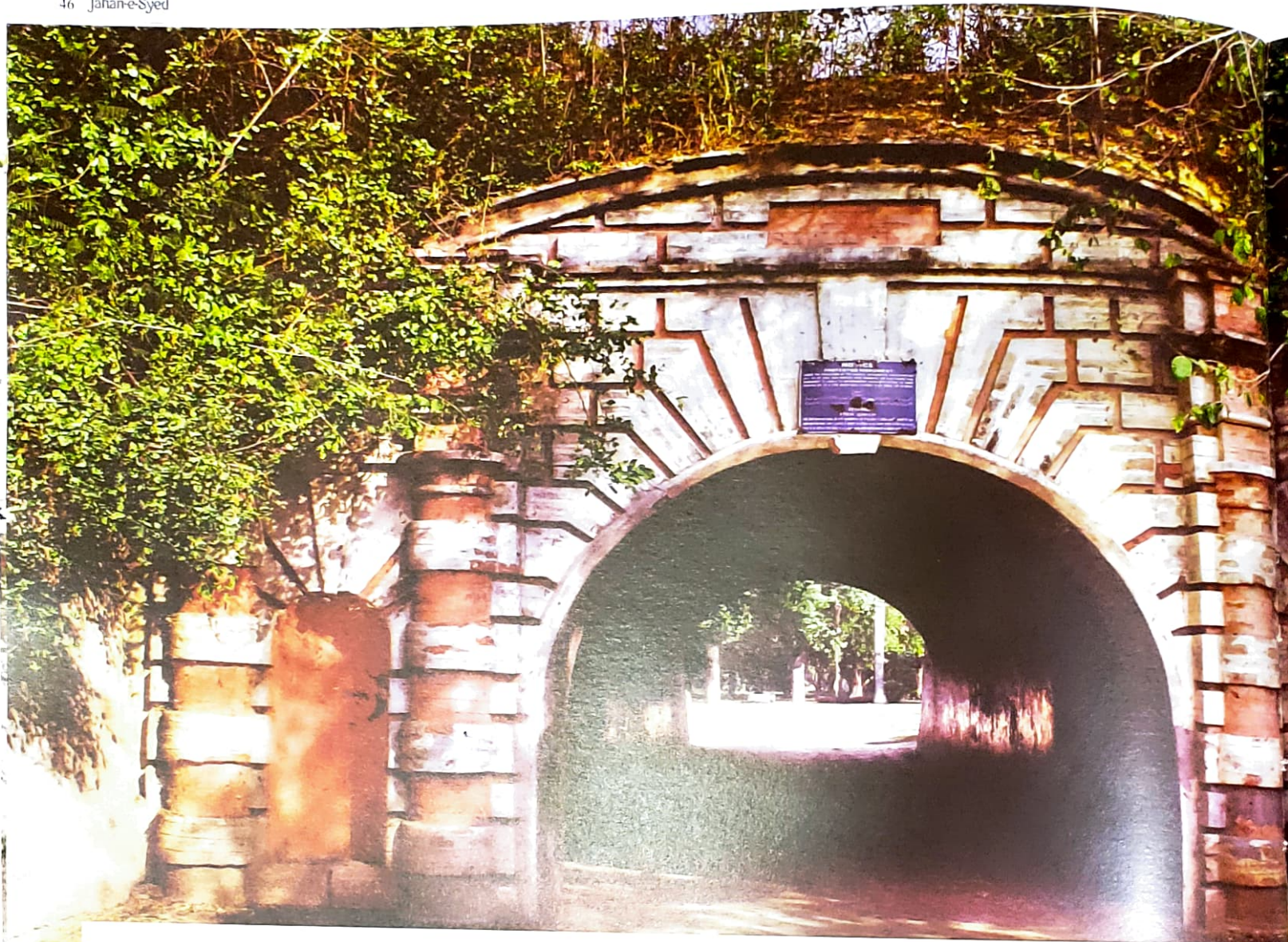




Aligarh's French Connection: Perron House

The present building of Sulaiman Hall was the residence of French General Perron. He was granted the village of Bhamola (close to the present university campus) as a gift by Daulat Rao Sindhia and Shah Alam jointly on 2 August 1802. He constructed his residence in the middle of his military establishment, named it Garden House, which was popularly known as Sahib Bagh. The present Sahib Bagh, an important locality close to Aligarh Muslim University campus, owes its name to General Perron's naming of his house.

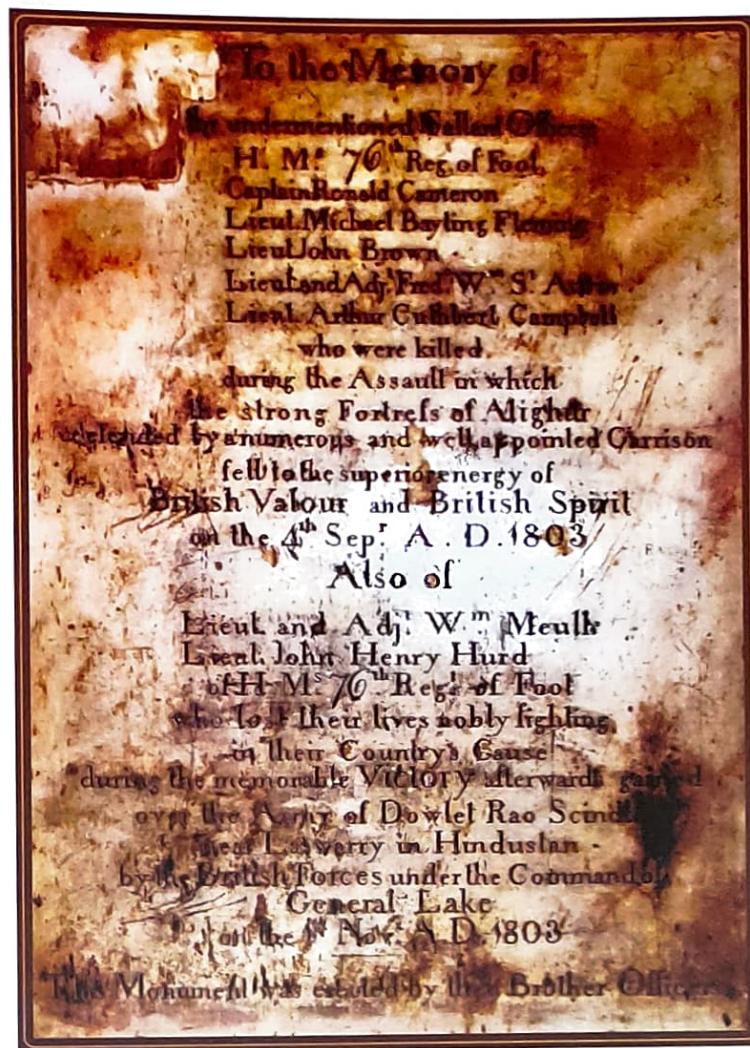




"The 'Aligarh Fort' is originally a Mughal fortress which once also hosted the treasury for some time. It was named "Aligarh", the fort (garh) of Ali after the later Mughal prime minister Najaf Ali Khan. Later it was taken up by the Jats and then by the Marathas, the Scindias. Under the Scindias, it was held by the French troops under the command of General Perron, a forefather of the former French President, Mitterrand.

With its walls being constructed with thick layers of mud, it could withstand the medieval canon fire, thus considered impregnable. Although ultimately razed to the ground, some remains still survive.

This Fortress, which ultimately gave its name to the entire Aligarh city is now a property of the Aligarh Muslim University" (Syed Ali Nadeem Rezavi)
Presently the University is maintaining a botanical garden in the Aligarh Fort.



The inscription bearing the names of soldiers who lost their lives in the battle for the Fortress in 1803 between the Marathas and the British Army. The British forces captured the Aligarh fort in 1803.



21 Mecklenburgh Square, London



Sir Syed's England Visit

The brutal oppression of Muslims after the events of 1857 convinced Sir Syed that the future of the community lay in Western education and the patronage of the government. His seventeen months stay in England in 1869-70 gave him a chance to mix freely with the English and learn valuable lessons from their tremendous progress. During his stay in England he visited Cambridge, attended the Queen's Levee, became a member of the prestigious and very exclusive Athenaeum Club of London, attended the last public reading given by great English novelist Charles Dickens and visited Thomas Carlyle whose account of the Prophet he quotes approvingly in his *Life of Mohammed*. He mixed freely with the elites and the common people of England. He visited Cambridge and observed very closely the functioning of British system of education. Duke of Argyll conferred upon Sir Syed the prestigious title of C.S.I (Sir) on 6 August 1869 in London.

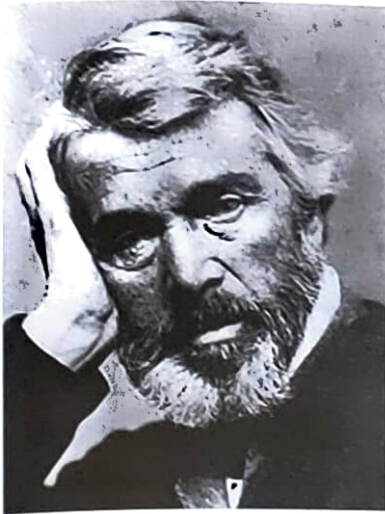


Sir Syed Speaks

“Enemy is a better counselor than a friend because a friend does not say anything other than what is good and the enemy does not seek for any other thing than what is evil.”

“Hypocrisy,” *Tahzibul Akhlaq*, in *Selected Essays*, p. 164)

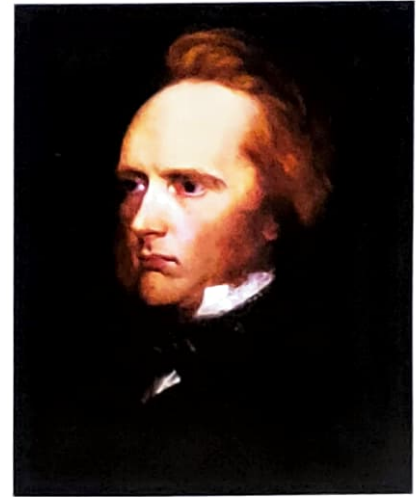




Thomas Carlyle



Charles Dickens



Duke of Argyll



Athenaeum Club, London in mid-nineteenth century

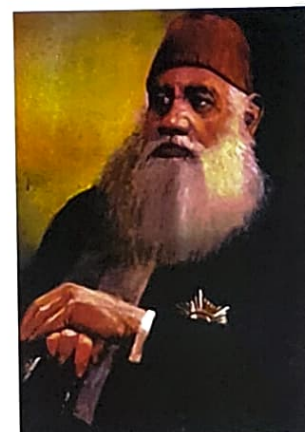


UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE



OXBRIDGE MODEL OF MAO COLLEGE

The foundation stone of Muhammadan Anglo-Oriental College was laid by Lord Lytton, the Viceroy and Governor General of India, on 8 January 1877. In just few years' time a number of very important buildings, known for their impressive architectural beauty, often deriving inspiration from Oxford and Cambridge universities, were constructed with generous contributions from patrons which included *Rajas*, *Nawabs*, landlords and ordinary folks.

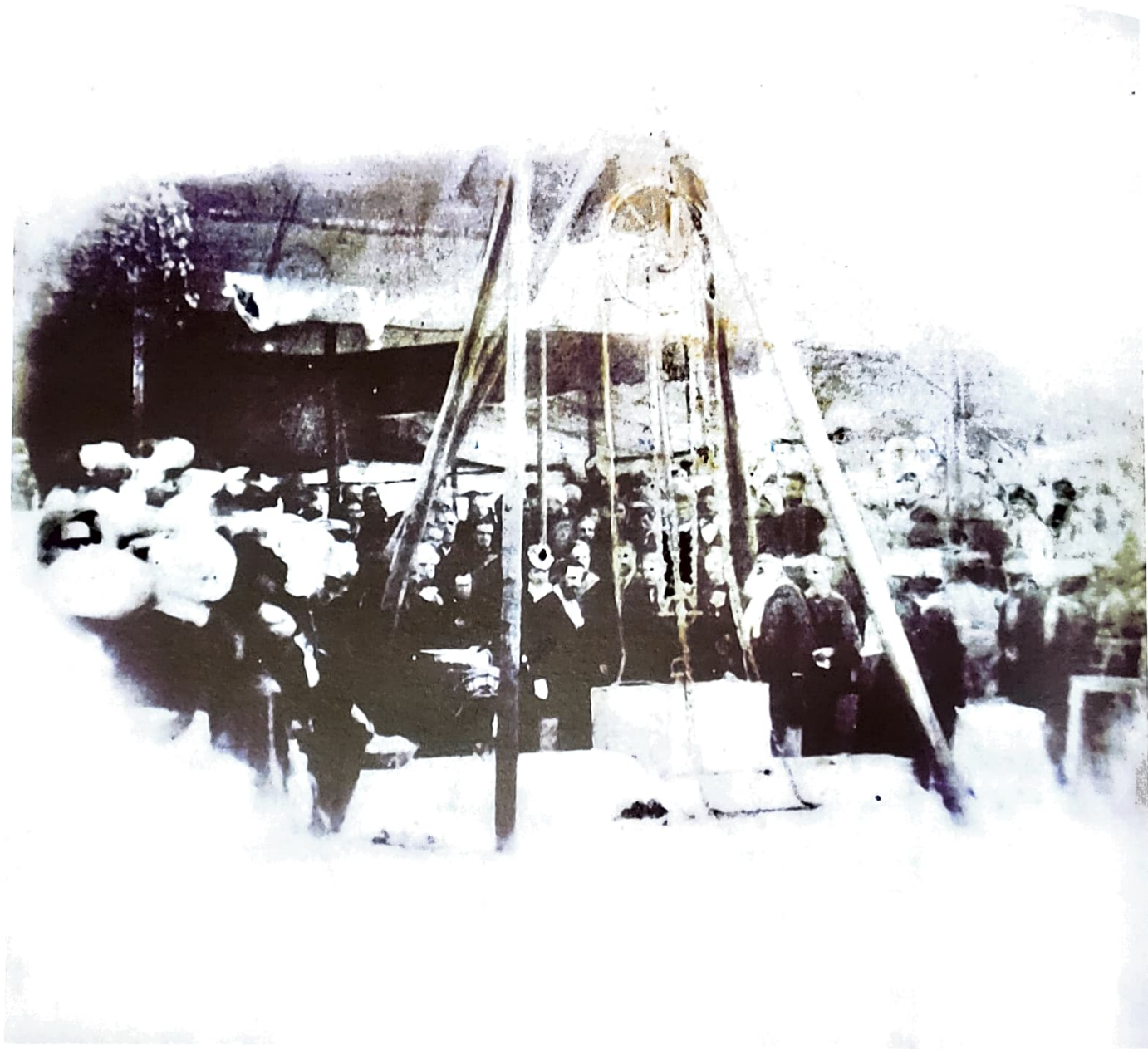


Sir Syed Speaks

"Life is like an inanimate object having no movement, hope makes it active. It is hope that makes man develop the habit of seriousness humility, and sweet temperament. In short, hope is the life of the soul of man. It keeps soul always happy and eases all the pains; enthuses man to work hard and keeps man ready to undertake extremely hard and difficult jobs."

("Hope", *Tahzibul Akhlaq*, in *Selected Essays*, p. 144)





Foundation Stone laying ceremony of MAO College.
Sir Syed and Lord Lytton can be seen clearly in the picture.



Sir Syed Speaks

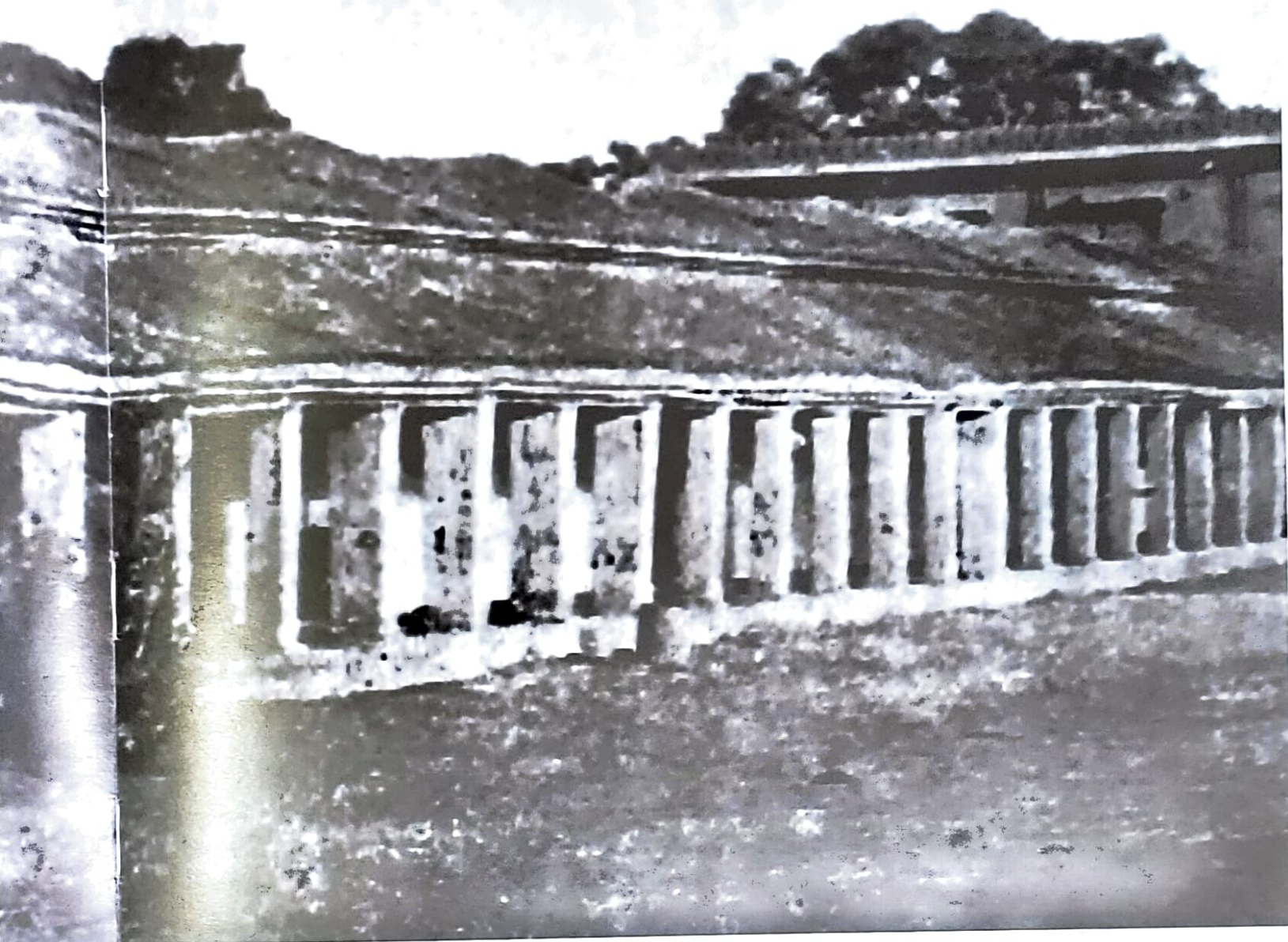
"... from the seed which we sow today there may spring up a mighty tree, whose branches, like those of the banyan of the soil, shall in their turn strike firm roots into the earth, and themselves send forth new and vigorous saplings; that this college may expand into a university, whose sons shall go forth throughout the length and breadth of the land to preach the gospel of free inquiry, of large-hearted toleration, and of pure morality."

(Address presented to Lord Lyton on 8 January 1877)





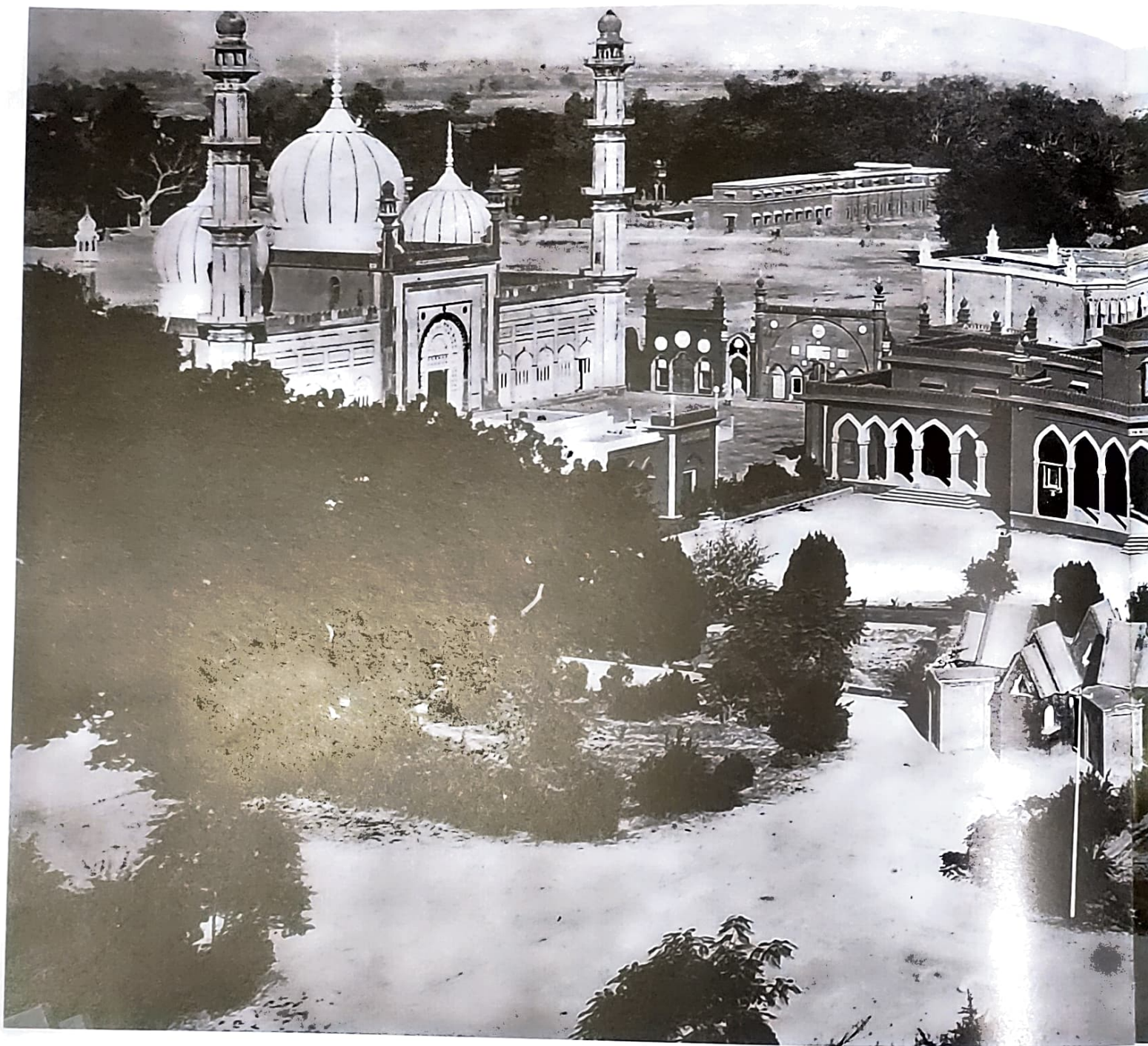
Kachchi Barrack, originally a military parade ground, was the first hostel of the college.
It was the first place of residence for the first generation MAO College students.
It had thatched roofs which leaked during the rainy season.







The last view of Kachchi Barrack. Later concrete structures came up on this site.





An early 20th Century view of MAO College





Strachey Hall: With generous contributions from donors, the Strachey Hall, completed in 1894, has a total area of 7000 sq feet with a verandah and two galleries. When MAO College became Aligarh Muslim University in 1920, the University's inauguration ceremony was also held in the Strachey Hall. It has always been the hub of intellectual, cultural and social activities of the College and the University. The heritage building has been renovated as recently as 2017.



Sir Syed Speaks

Addressing the foundation stone ceremony of the College Sir Syed said, "There have before been schools and colleges founded and endowed by private individuals. There have been others built by sovereigns and supported by the revenues of the State. But this is the first time that in the history of the Muhammadans of India, that a college owes its establishment not to the charity or love of learning of an individual, nor to the splendid patronage of a monarch, but to the combined wishes of a whole community... It is based upon principles of toleration and progress such as find no parallel in the annals of the East... the seed which we sow today there may spring up a mighty tree whose branches, like those of the banyan of the soil shall in their turn send forth new and vigorous saplings."

(8 January 1877)







Central Mosque: Sir Syed started construction of the Mosque in 1879 when stones from Mirzapur were transported to Aligarh. Sir Syed also bought ten old marble slabs on which were written verses of the Holy Quran when they were brought to the Aligarh market for sale. The foundation stone of the mosque was laid by Justice Mahmud. The inscription which adorns the main entrance of the Mosque was carved by Yaqoot Raqam, a famous Persian calligraphist in the period of Mughal emperor Shahjahan, who also had carved inscriptions on Taj Mahal. The structure of the Mosque was completed in 1912 and it was formally declared open on 1 February, 1915. The Mosque was designed by the Architecture Department of Thompson Engineering College, Roorkee on the pattern of Jama Masjid, Delhi. The mosque also has a gate which was repaired and named as 'Bab-e-Rahmat' in 1916.



Sir Syed Speaks

The remark that - "The sword is the inevitable penalty for the denial of Islam", is one of the gravest charges falsely imputed to this faith by the Professors of other religions, and arises from the utter ignorance of those who make the accusation. Islam inculcates and demands a hearty and sincere belief in all that it teaches; and that genuine faith which proceeds from a person's heart cannot be obtained by force or violence. Judicious readers will not fail to observe that the above quoted remark is entirely contrary to the fundamental principles of the Moslem faith, wherein it is inculcated in the clearest language possible : "Let there be no forcing in religion; the right way has been made clearly distinguishable from the wrong one" (chap. X. 98). And also; "If the Lord had pleased, all who are on the earth would have believed together; and wilt thou force men to be believers? No man can believe but by the permission of God, and He will pour out His indignation on those who will not understand. (Chap. (ii) 257)."

(From *Life of Mohammed*, Chapter 12, "Whether Islam has been Beneficial or Injurious to Human Society in General").





Beck Manzil, named after Theodore Beck (1859-1899), the principal of MAO College from 1884 to 1899, was the result of the efforts of old boys of the college living in Meerut who collected funds for the construction of this building. A graduate of Trinity College, Cambridge, Beck was also the president of Cambridge Union during his student days. He was greatly devoted to Sir Syed and his vision of the university. Altaf Husain Hali has written "If one has not seen the picture of affection and discipline let him come and see Beck and his students conversing with one another. If he has not seen love between Hindus and Muslims, let him come here and see Hindus and Muslims as one soul in two bodies" (in S.K. Bhatnagar, *History of the M.A.O. College Aligarh*).

Theodore Beck died very young but till almost the last day of his life he was trying to raise money for Sir Syed Memorial Fund.



Sir Syed Speaks

Ignorance is the mother of poverty. When a nation becomes devoid of arts and learning, it invites poverty. And when poverty comes it brings in its wake thousands of crimes."

(Speech at Patna, 26 May 1873)

It may be briefly stated that the causes which have kept the Mohammedans aloof from English education may be traced to four sources—to their political traditions, social customs, religious beliefs and poverty. An insight into the political causes can be obtained by studying the history of the last two centuries.

(Evidence of Sir Syed before the First Education Commission of 1882)





Lytton Library was named by Sir Syed on 8 January 1877 after Robert Bulwer Lytton, the viceroy and governor general of India from 1876 to 1880. Lytton was a writer and a poet though his work is little read today. The building was completed in 1908. The library was shifted to the present Maulana Azad Library on 6 November 1960.



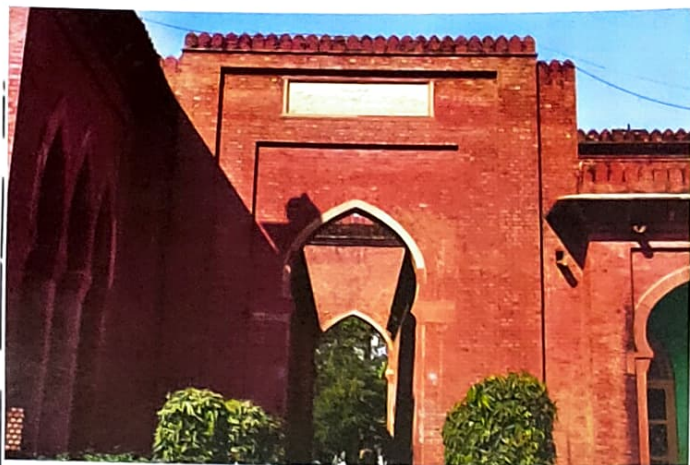
Sir Syed Speaks

“Dear Students! You, your entire community, your teachers and parents and myself, all are too happy to see that you have assembled here from far off towns, nay, even from different countries, to acquire knowledge. You study various branches of knowledge and enjoy noble ideas, illuminating academic discourses and pithy moral sayings (of different authors). Your teachers cherish paternal affection and tender feelings for you. They always wish you well and desire your betterment. They teach you from excellent books composed by erudite scholars and eminent authors. But to-day I should like to teach you a lesson from a book which has neither been composed and written on paper by any author, nor has it been printed and published at any press. Nature alone has composed it and with all her consummate and generous hands. Its words have no doubt a form and an enchantment but it is a bit difficult to see and pursue these words. Its meanings are too perspicuous but rather difficult to be got at. You need not open to read it. It always lies open before your eyes.

Don't search that book on your shelves or tables or in the College Library. It is with you all the time. What is that book? It is, indeed, nothing but the corporate life of you and your classmates in this college. Thus you have to learn how to study this book and get at its substance.”

(*Maqalat*, quoted in K.A. Nizami, *Sir Syed Album*, p. 11)





Henry Lawrence Gate: Where the main part of Aligarh Muslim University is located today was once a military parade ground. Henry Lawrence, the then District Collector, approved the transfer of 74 acres of land in 1874 for the proposed Mohammadan-Anglo Oriental College in response to a letter by Sir Syed Ahmad Khan on behalf of the Fund Committee for the college. The possession of land was facilitated with the intervention of Lieutenant Governor Sir John Strachey after some objections were raised by the officiating District Collector A Montogue. Sir John Strachey visited Aligarh and in a meeting with Sir Syed it was decided that the committee would submit a plan of the building to the government before starting work on the site.



Khalifa Syed Mohammad Hasan Gate was named after Khalifa Mohammad Hasan, the Prime Minister of Maharaja of Patiala. The MAO College was closed on 17 January 1895 to mourn his death.

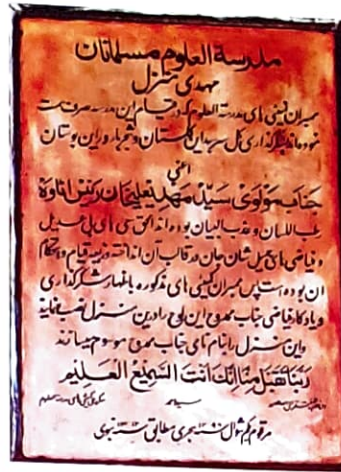


Sir Syed Speaks

"I could not even bear to contemplate the miserable state of my people. For sometime I wrestled with my grief and, believe me, it made an old man of me. My hair turned white. When I went to Muradabad, the ruin which had befallen the nobles of that town made my sorrow all the greater. But I realized that it would be cowardly of me, almost inhuman, to run away to safety while my community was lying in ruins. No, it was my duty to share its misfortunes and do all in my power to dispel them. I gave up the idea of running away and chose to devote myself to my people."

(Speech of Sir Syed before the All India Muslim Educational Conference on 28 December 1889).





Mehdi Manzil, a lecture room to the east of the Strachey Hall, was completed in 1882. It gets its name from Mohsin-ul-Mulk, probably the closest associate of Sir Syed, who took over as the Secretary of the College after Sir Syed's death. During his tenure as secretary he raised substantial funds to develop MAO College.



Asman Manzil was named after Nawab Mohammad Mazharuddin Khan Bahadur Sir Asman Jah, the prime minister of Hyderabad, who visited Aligarh on 24 July 1888 and donated Rs 10000 towards the construction of the principal lecture room of the college. He laid the foundation stone of **Asman Manzil** and Sir James Latouch, the Lt. Governor, performed the opening ceremony of the building on 28 July 1904.



Sir Syed Speaks

“Only those people know about my busy life and pre-occupations who have had a chance to observe them. Time is short and engagements are limitless. I do not have power either to stop the sun from setting and extend the period of the night. If I pay attention to one thing, several other important things are left unattended.”

(Speech at Jalandhar, 4 February 1884)





Mushtaq Manzil was named by Sir Syed to express his gratitude to Nawab Viqarul-ul-Mulk Maulvi Mushtaq Husain for his financial assistance to MAO College during its difficult period in 1891-92. In proposing that a "permanent memorial should be set up in his name", Sir Syed particularly mentioned Viqarul-ul-Mulk's efforts for the collection of funds for the main mosque of the college, Strachey Hall, and Asman Manzil. Sir Syed used to say that if Mehdi Manzil was constructed next to Lytton Library to suggest Mohsin-ul-Mulk's interest in knowledge, Viqarul-ul-Mulk's religious spirit found expression in Mushtaq Manzil being situated next to the main mosque of the college.



Sir Syed Speaks

Bigotry prevents man from acquiring virtues of a thousand kinds. It happens quite often that a man considers a work to be very important and useful but his bigotry does not allow him to take up that work so he is deliberately trapped in evil and turns away from goodness."

("Bigotry", Tahzibul Akhlaq, in Selected Essays, p. 157)





Boundary Walls: In order to remember their contribution to MAO. College, Sir Syed had the names of the founders and benefactors inscribed on the walls of various buildings. In 1877 the managing committee of the college decided to raise a boundary of stone railings for the college compound with the following dimensions: East 2400 feet, West 1950 feet, North 2100 feet, South 1250 feet. Sir Syed made the announcement that the names of donors who contributed Rs. 20 would be engraved on the railings. Sixty six persons, which included his friends Kashi Nath Biswas of Banaras and Rai Bakht Singh of Mewar, immediately made their contributions.



Sir Syed Speaks

“There is no doubt that Madrasatul Uloom is a means of national progress. By the word 'nation' here I do not mean Muslims alone but Hindus and Muslims both. Undoubtedly the institution was founded with a view to ameliorating the sad and pitiable condition of the Muslims which had deprived them of the drive and initiative for learning European sciences and literature. Both Hindus and Muslims live here in India, but in foreign countries we are all known as Indian natives. This is why the insult of a Hindu is an insult of the Muslim and the humiliation of a Muslim is a matter of shame for the Hindus. In the circumstances, we can never be held in respect unless both the brothers are bred and brought up together, get the same education together, and are provided with the same means of progress for their future career. With this sole objective in view, I established this institution called Madrasatul Uloom. But for the co-operation and timely help of the people, I could scarcely have accomplished this task. I am greatly indebted to those who have helped me in this connection. In this respect, I am not grateful to Muslims as much as to Hindus who have extended helping hands by making liberal donations to their Muslim brothers. A number of Hindu names are inscribed on the walls and niches of the institution so as to preserve their memories for how generously they had donated for their depressed Muslim brothers in their dire need.”

(Speech at Amritsar, 26 January 1884)





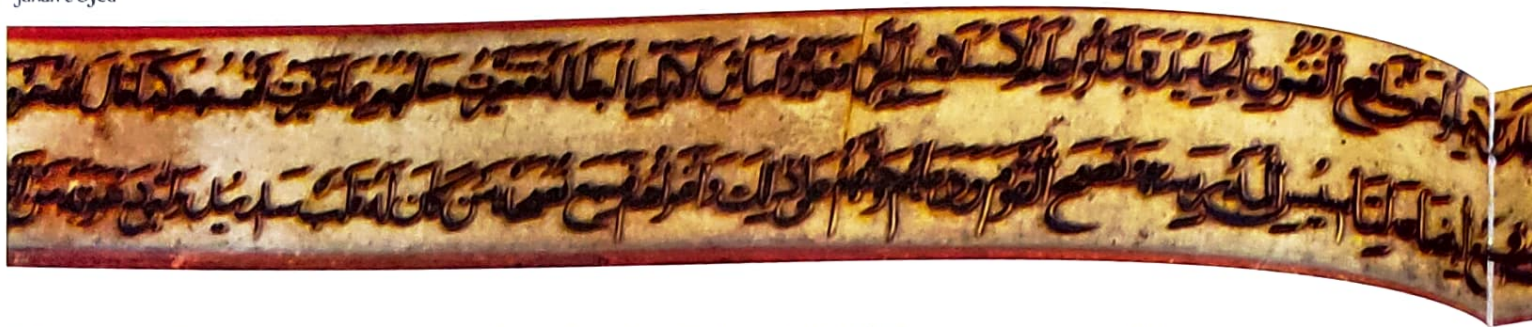
Victoria Gate was the main gate of the college. Its foundation stone was laid in 1884. This gate was initially planned by Haji Ismail to be named after Sir Syed. Sir Syed agreed to the proposal only when the names of Maulvi Samiullah Khan and Haji Ismail were included in the inscription. At Sir Syed's insistence the inscription included the message "The Muslim community has founded this college for the good of its people". Finally some Arabic verses were inscribed on the front of the door and on the back the names of Sir Syed and his two friends Maulvi Samiullah and Haji Ismail were inscribed in Persian. The gate was named Victoria Gate on 25 July 1914. Victoria Gate has a clock at its top which was gifted to the college by Theodore Beck's father Joseph Beck.



Sir Syed Speaks

"The main reason behind the establishment of this institution, as I am sure all of you know was the wretched dependence of the Muslims, which had been debasing their position day after day. Their religious fanaticism did not let them avail the educational facilities provided by the government schools and colleges. It was, therefore, deemed necessary to make some special arrangement for their education. Suppose, for example, there are two brothers, one of whom is quite hale and hearty but the other is diseased. His health is on the decline. Thus it is the duty of all the brothers to take care of their ailing brother in his trouble. This was the very idea that goaded me to establish the Muhammedan Anglo-Oriental College. But I am pleased to say that both the brothers get the same education appertaining to those who call themselves Hindus without any reservations. There is no distinction whatsoever between Hindus and Muslims. Only one who strives can lay claim to get award. Here in this College both Hindus as well as Muslims are entitled to get the stipends and both of them are treated at par as boarders. I regard both Hindus and Muslims as my two eyes."

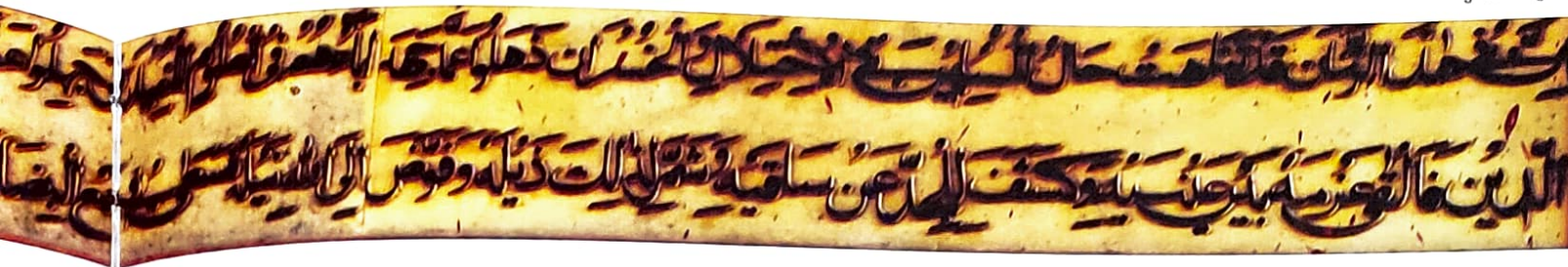
(Speech at Lahore, 3 February 1884)



History of MAO (Muhammadian Anglo-Oriental) College engraved in Arabic on Victoria Gate by the founders

(Translation of the Arabic inscription carved on two huge beige-colored sandstone panels on both sides of Victoria Gate. It can be seen from the inner south quadrangle of Sir Syed Hall)





In these times Muslims are living in a state of decline and deterioration, which has led to a state of disastrous loss. They lag behind other nations in the acquisition of knowledge and modern sciences, an endeavor in which their forefathers took great pride. They have denied themselves the benefits of education and have traded Islam's emphasis on knowledge with ignorance. Thus, they have substituted the achievements and contributions of their forefathers in the fields of Islamic knowledge with useless pursuits. This error has caused a significant decline in their circumstances.

Allah has proclaimed in the Quran: *"Allah does not change the condition of a people unless they themselves change it"*.

When their state of ignorance reached the lowest level, the heart of a noble soul, from amongst the progeny of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh), became extremely saddened, and concerned. Syed Ahmad Khan, KCSI, who inherited the title of *Jawadud Dawlah*, and a noble character from his ancestors, pondered upon the causes of this decline and the existing condition of Muslims. The ramifications of the prevailing conditions became clear to him and he was both, dismayed and alarmed, by the situation.

He worked sincerely to improve the situation. Allah inspired him to formulate a vision of an educational institution for Muslims that would impart knowledge of modern sciences. He was determined to achieve this goal and dedicated his life and personal fortune to the task.

He started by raising funds for the College. He invited people to support him, galvanized them, and inspired them to join the cause. Many generous and well-intentioned people responded positively to his call. Among them were Nawab Qaisarul Hind, and Queen Victoria of Britain. They appreciated and supported his mission for which he thanked them greatly.

Many Muslims and non-Muslims identified with this mission. He persevered in spite of meager resources and lack of funds. He constantly struggled to involve more people in his efforts to start the College. Amongst his kinsmen and co-workers the most supportive and dear helper was fazil Maulvi Sami Ullah Khan Bahadur, CMG.

Their intention was to open the College at the earliest. They had full faith and confidence in Allah, and ultimately they achieved the success they had dreamed of. The inauguration was done in the presence of prominent Muslims in the year 1292 AH / 1875 CE. May Allah have mercy upon them and accept their efforts.

They remained focused on the core objective and were able to construct a magnificent college building with classrooms and residential quarters where teachers could teach and students could acquire knowledge in a dignified manner. This pleased their hearts greatly. Muslims noticed their efforts and started joining the school in large numbers to acquire knowledge of religion and other sciences.

At this time, Allah inspired the honorable Rais Haji Muhammad Ismail Khan to construct a new building to honor Syed Ahmed Khan for his contribution to the nation and community. His intention was to construct a landmark building to commemorate the efforts of the individual who, following in the footsteps of his pious forefathers, and emulating the noble Messenger, had dedicated his life to the betterment of his people. This would be the first edifice constructed in Hindustan as a tribute to the man who gifted the nation with the College. People appreciated and participated in this venture, and raised funds with determination to achieve the goal. The new building to honor Syed Ahmad Khan, KCSI, was thus completed. May Allah protect him and give him longer life.

The construction of the new building began on 17 October 1883 (in the month of Dhul Hijja of 1300 AH).

MAO College - Early years Zahur Ward



Hostel life at MAO College
Zahur Husain Ward was an important hostel in MAO College.



Presently the old hostel building houses the Department of Islamic Studies and Arabic.





MAO College, Aligarh - English Boarding House

Top row (Fourth from left)

Ahmad Said Khan (Nawab of Chhatari
Later Governor of UP and Prime Minister of Hyderabad, Deccan)

Boy standing behind the lady

Sir Sikander Heyat (Later Governor of Punjab)

Second sitting row (Fifth from left)

Sir Nazimuddin (Later Governor of
East Bengal and Prime Minister of Pakistan)



Sir Syed Speaks

"Perhaps there might be some of our friends who would be wondering at the subject of the development of education for the Indians and might be thinking whether there is any drawback in the education of the Indians that the measures for improving it are being discussed. The Indians had earned the national glory and excellence in education, arts and decent manners before all the nations of the world (but I will say after the Egyptians). The theological science of the Hindus was better than the theological science of all the nations. Their knowledge of 'Belles Lettres' was superior to the knowledge of the whole world. The epic poetry of *Mahabharata* and *Ramayana* surpassed all the war poems of the world."

(from "Countrymen and Progress in Education", *Aligarh Institute Gazette*, in *Selected Essays*, pp. 68-69))





A group photograph of the students of the MAO College with its founder Sir Syed Ahmad Khan,
Principal Theodore Beck and teaching staff in December 1894



Sir Syed Speaks

"The basis of all (progress) is that you should bring all treasures of knowledge under your control."

(Speech at Banaras, 20 December 1867)





Theodore Beck and Student Leaders, 1898-1899
Seated on chairs. Beck is third from left, Sajjad Haidar is second from right and between them is Llewlyn Tipping



Sir Syed Speaks

"Only those works are worthy of respect, which are considered to be so by the heart also. So, to become a human being, it is necessary for man that all his works are based on honesty and the witness of the heart."

(From "Reverence" *Tahzibul Akhlaq*, in *Selected Essays*, p. 151)



MAO College had on its staff a number of European Professors, which included, among others, Walter Raleigh, T.W. Arnold and Llewlyn Tipping.



Theodore Morrison (1863-1936) with his wife



Sir Walter Raleigh (1861-1922)



Sir Syed Speaks

"Aristotle was not our religious leader that we should consider his axioms, his philosophy and his theology infallible. Avicenna did not receive any revelation that we should accept only his medicine and not of others. There is no Divine injunction to stick to the worldly sciences which we have been studying for long and which had no parallel in their time. Then why should we not open our eyes and look at the new sciences and new things which are the evidence of the miraculous power of God and which manifest themselves to man day by day? What we have said are not empty rhetoric, we have at present living examples of all this in the world."

(From "Excellence", *Tahzibul Akhlaq* in *Selected Essays*, p. 148)





European faculty at MAO College (with wives) 1898

Sitting L to R: Mrs. Tipping, Mrs. Beck, Mrs. Arnold, Mrs. Morrison and Prof. Tipping

Standing: Maulvi Nadir Ali, Sahabzada Aftab Ahmad Khan, Prof. T.W. Arnold, Prof. Chakrawarti, Prof. Theodore Morrison
Prof. Theodore Beck, Mr. Niyaz Mohammad Khan (Pleader, Saharanpur) and Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah (Founder Women's College, AMU)



Sir Syed Speaks

"I do not say that the portion of Europe that reached India is faultless and it expresses its opinion with full freedom and it is not blocked by any kind of obstacles be they ancestral, traditional or national. But I do say that among all the nations it possesses most of the best qualities".

(from "Countrymen and Progress in Education", *Aligarh Institute Gazette*, in *Selected Essays*, p. 75)





Ind Row L to R: 1. Deputy Nazir Ahmad 2. Mohsinul Mulk, 3. T.W. Arnold, 6. Sahibzada Aftab Ahmad Khan, 7. Zainul Abideen



Sir Syed Speaks

"I have never hesitated to eat and drink with English people, so long as wine and pork have not been included in the meal. My English friends often visit my house, and I theirs. We share the same table ... What we are not ashamed to do before God, we should not fear to do before our fellow men."

(from *Hayat-i-Javed* tr. by K.H. Qadiri and David J. Matthews.)





Dining Hall of MAO College students

Salar Manzil



Salar Manzil has served as Dining hall since the period of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan





Culture of poetry at MAO College (1902)

A photograph taken after a *Mushaira* at MAO College

Mirza Shuja, Ahsan, Abdul Ali Asi, Amirullah Taslim
Meer Mehdi Majrooh, Nawab Shujauddin Khan, Agha Shair
Maftoom Dehalvi, Fani Badauni, Hasrat Mohani,
Akhgar, Mohd Hamid



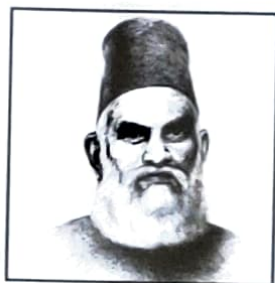
Sir Syed Speaks

"A great shortcoming in the literary arts of our language was that its poetry was incomplete. The poets had devoted their lofty resolution to romantic ghazals and *vasokht* poems, and panygerics, and short *qit'a* poem of the pangs of separation and story-telling masnavis. I don't say that those themes shouldn't have been touched. No, they too are excellent themes and are very useful in the search for newer themes and for giving expression to the ingenuity of the poetic temperament. But the deficiency was that our language had nothing else. Themes of the other kind, which indeed are the true themes, and are related with nature, weren't there.... That day of 1874 when the musha'ira of natural poetry was established in Lahore will always be remembered in the history of the literary arts of Urdu language."

(translation by S.R. Farooqui, from *Tahzibul Akhlaq*, 7 February 1875)



Sir Syed's relationship with his Associates and his illustrious contemporaries



Nawab Mohsinul Mulk
(1837-1907)



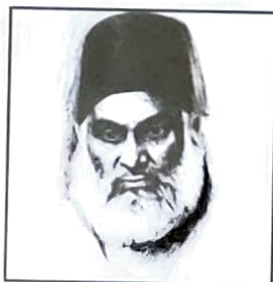
Maulvi Samiullah Khan
(1834-1908)



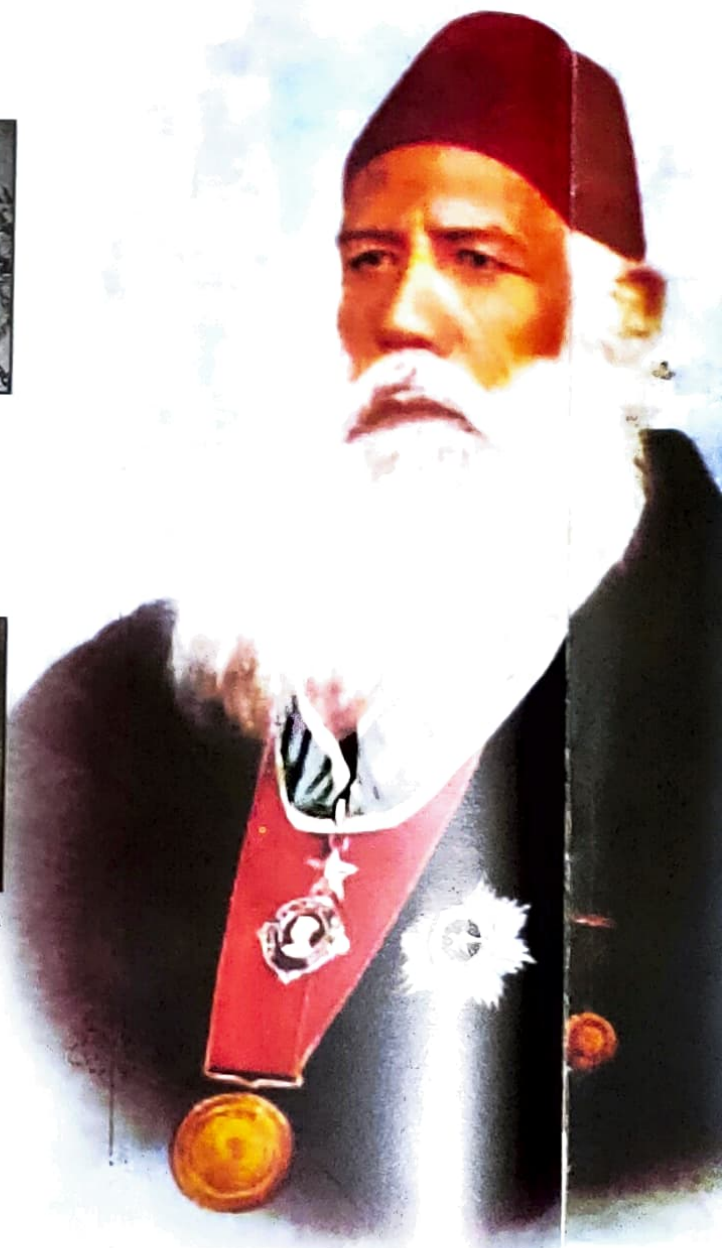
Maulvi Zaka Ullah
(1832-1910)

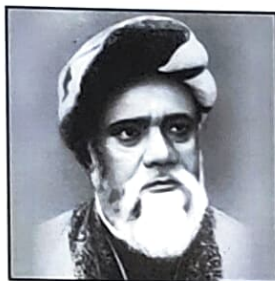


Maulvi Syed Zainul Abideen
(1832-1905)



Viqarul Mulk
(1841-1917)

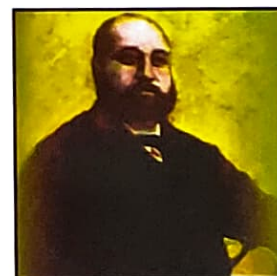




Deputy Nazir Ahmad
(1830-1912)



Khwaja Altaf Husain Hali
(1837-1914)



Maulvi Chiragh Ali
(1844-1895)



Raja Jai Kishan Das
(1832-1905)



Allama Shibli Nomani
(1857-1914)



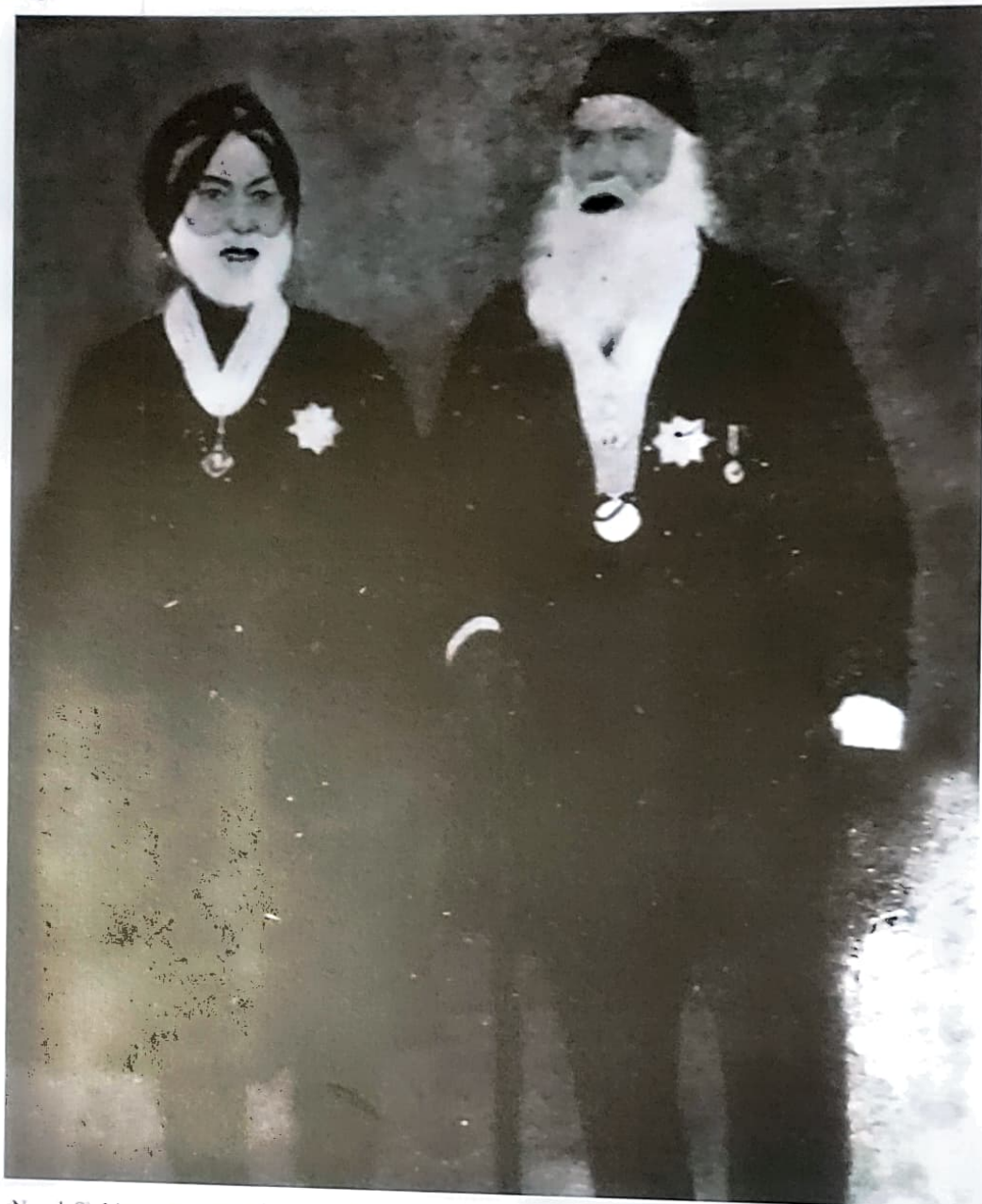
Sir Syed with family and friends

Standing L to R: 1. Syed Hamid (son) 2. Attendant, 3. Syed Mahmud, 4. Zainul Abideen, 6. Mirza Iqbal
 Sitting L to R: Maulvi Imdad Ali (Deputy Collector) 2. Raja Jai Krishan Das (Deputy Collector) 3. Sir Syed
 4. Rahmat Khan (Deputy Collector Bijnori) 5. Rai Baldev Bakshi (Deputy Collector Moradabad)



Sir Syed in the Punjab

Standing: Haji Syed Mohd. Ismail Khan of Datawali, Maulvi Syed Iqbal Ali,
Bakshi Ikramullah Khan, Syed Muhammad Ali



Nawab Sir Mumtaz ud Daula Muhammad Faiz Ali Khan of Pahasu (Distt. Bulandshahr) with Sir Syed Ahmad Khan





Faiz Gate owes its name to Mumtaz-ud-Daula Nawab Sir Mumtaz Faiz Ali Khan Bahadur K.C.S.I. of Pahasu, a close associate of Sir Syed. The second-most oldest structure in MAO College (the first being Zahur Gate) Faiz gate, constructed in 1876, mentions the honour bestowed upon both Sir Syed and Faiz Ali Khan Bahadur. While Faiz Ali Khan's medal is visible on the left pillar, Sir Syed's medal adorns the right pillar.





Sir Syed with his son Syed Mahmud (second from right), his grandson Ross Masood and some friends





Sir Syed in Hyderabad (1891)



Sitting R to L: Maulvi Iqbal Ali (Judge), Zainul Abideen, Qazi Raza Hasan (Patna), Sir Syed, Mohsinul Mulk, Syed Imtiaz Ali
Standing R to L: Chaubedar, Syed Zainuddin, Maulana Shibli Nomani, Mustafa Khan (Khurja) Syed Ahmad Ali, Nawab Nazir Jang, Attendant,
 Sitting on the floor: Son of Nawab Nazir Jang.



Sir Syed Speaks

"What a deception! What an illusion they are in who think that helping others in afflictions is sympathy! Is any work of God without a use? No, though we are unable to understand many of them.

Do we not have a share in that use? Nay, of course we have a share directly or indirectly or with many indirect links. Then how can it be assumed that we are helping others? Rather it is to help ourselves through certain means for our comfort."

(from "Sympathy", *Tahzibul Akhlaq* in *Selected Essays*, p. 139)







MAO College students, teachers and trustees during the Secretaryship of Viqarul Mulk (1907-1914)



Fund Raising for the MAO College

Sir Syed had the dream but no money. He had the vision but no funds. He ran from pillar to post to raise funds for building MAO College. He met nobles and aristocrats, *Rajas* and *Nawabs*, and ordinary men and women on the street to generate resources for the college.

Sir Syed had a team of some dedicated friends and well wishers to help him in this mammoth exercise. The fund committee of the college took up the job of collecting funds with a missionary zeal. Some of the most prominent people of the time participated in this fund raising exercise. In the picture on the left are some of those prominent people.

Agha Khan in Lahore for collection of funds

Sitting L to R:

1. Maulana Shaukat Ali, 3. Prof. A. Aziz (Inspector of Schools), 4. Mian Ahsanul Haq.
5. Maulana Zafar Ali Khan 6. Khwaja Kamaluddin.

Seated:

- Nawab A. Husain Khan Khayal, 2. S. Masihullah Khan, 3. Raja Mahmudabad. 4. Agha Khan,
5. Nawab Fateh Ali Khan Qazilbash, 7. Khwaja Yusuf Ali

Standing:

1. Shaikh Abdul Qadir, 2. Syed Ali Bilgrami, 3. Sahabzada Aftab Ahmad Khan, 4. Sir Mohd. Shafi,
5. Dr. Ziauddin, 8. Sir Mohd. Iqbal.

2nd row:

3. Nawab Sadr Yar Jung, 6. Maulvi Aziz Mirza



Sir Syed Speaks

"Time exercises the greatest influence on man. It goes on changing the ideas, beliefs, and customs of man by its hidden efficacies which are not known. Day remains the same, night remains the same, the sun rises and sets in the same way, the moon waxes and wanes on the same pattern. Stars keep on twinkling as they always did. Then what is new with which the past things intermingle and are considered to be outdated and new things come into existence and get acceptability among men. It shows that the things that constitute time do not change in any way but the ideas and knowledge of man go on improving. New sciences and arts appear and have their influence on man and they are responsible for all this change. And since they all appear and come into existence in some time or other, it is described to be the impact of time. As time influences the worldly ideas, habits, rituals and customs and the state of culture and society, in the same way religion and belief are also influenced by time".

(from "Impact of Time on Religion", *Tahzibul Akhlaq* in *Selected Essays*, p. 43)







Courtesy Muneer Mohammad Khan

Games and Sports

Sports and games have been an integral part of campus life both at MAO College and at Aligarh Muslim University. Sir Syed was greatly interested in sports. He himself participated in sports such as swimming and archery. In his Oxbridge model of the university sports and games, especially outdoor games requiring physical fitness, held a very important place.

From its very inception, the university has consistently produced outstanding sportsmen who have represented the university at national and international level. In the Indian cricket team's tour to England in 1911, three players from Aligarh, Khan Salamuddin, Syed Hasan and Shafqat Hussein, were students of MAO College (Peter Osborne, *Wounded Tiger*, 2014, Simon & Schuster, pp. 51-55)

In the first official test tour of India to England in 1932, there were two players, Wazir Ali and Nazir Ali, who had studied at Aligarh. Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy, India's Twenty 20 domestic championship, is named after Syed Mushtaq Ali, one of the finest ever Indian cricketers, who studied at Aligarh Muslim University. Legendary Indian cricketer Lala Amarnath was also a student of the University.

The university has organized sports and games by forming different clubs, each club headed by a president. Cricket club was established at MAO College as early as 1878, soon after the first ever Cricket Test match was played between Australia and England at Melbourne in March 1877. MAO College's Cricket team performed exceedingly well against the teams of other colleges and universities in and outside Aligarh. Interestingly Rudyard Kipling's famous novel *Kim*, which was published in serial form in 1900-01, has a positive reference to Aligarh's Cricket team. It was Theodore Beck who made special efforts to put Aligarh on the national map in sports, especially in cricket.

Theodore Morrison, a very avid rider, was instrumental in establishing Muslim University Riding Club in 1893. In fact Aligarh is the only university in the country with a century old Riding Club. Football and Athletics Clubs were established in 1894. Hockey club was established in 1902, Tennis in 1904, Badminton and Swimming in 1916. Later, clubs for Basketball, Hiking and Mountaineering, Skating, Gymkhana etc., were also established.

Oxford Cricket Team's tour of Aligarh 1902-1903*

Sitting on the ground (L to R): 1. Khwaja M. Akram, 2. Abdul Mughni, 3. Muzaffar Mohammad Khan, 4. Maulana Shaukat Ali (well known freedom fighter, younger of the Ali brothers), 6. Shafqat.

On the Chairs (L to R): 2. Ahsanul Haque, 3. Sampson Haword, 4. Saeed Mohammad Khan (Captain MAO College), 5. K.J. Key (Captain Oxford University Team), 6. Salamuddin.

Standing (First Row L to R): 11. Maulana Mohammad Ali Jauhar

Standing (Last Row L to R): Players of Oxford Cricket Team.

*Only a few identifiable persons have been mentioned here.





MAO College Football team 1897-1898*

Standing : 1. Makhdoomji, 3. Qutbuddin (Captain) 5. Nazir Abbas.

Sitting: 8. Islam Hamid, 9. Safdar Husain, 10. Mohd. Ahmad, 11. Hamid "Cat".

On the ground: 13. Masud Ahmad.

*Only a few identifiable persons have been mentioned here.

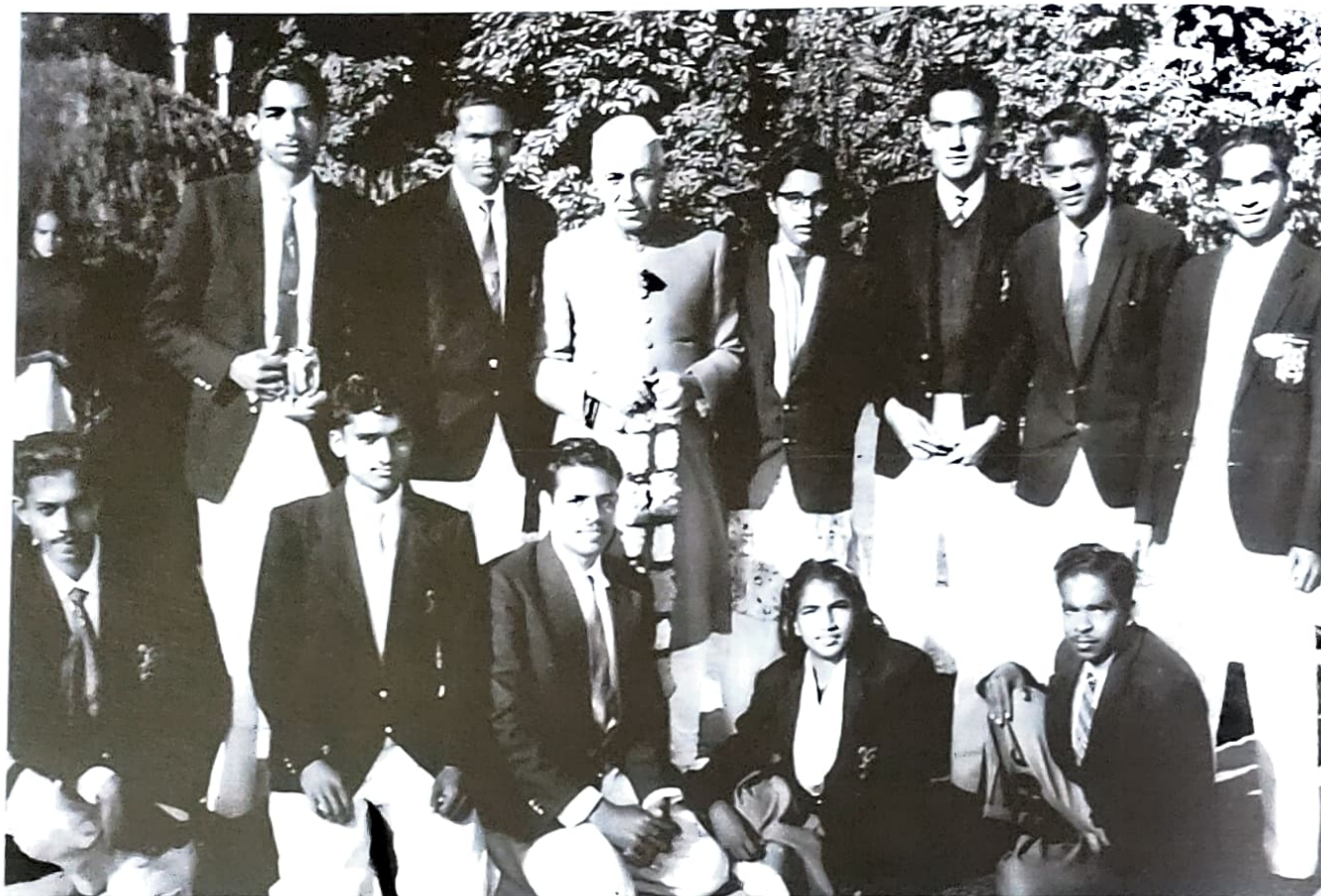


Sir Syed Speaks

"We aim to turn this MAO College into a University similar to that of Oxford or Cambridge... Like the churches of Oxford and Cambridge, there will be a mosque attached to each college... There will be boarding houses, in which students will be provided with a suite complete with a bath, a study and a retiring room. The boarding house will have a common hall and a common dining room. There will be a playground and a swimming pool attached to it."

(*Aligarh Institute Gazette* 5 April 1911 in Ishrat Ali Qureshi, *Aligarh Past and Present*, p. 42)





AMU Riding team with Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru at his residence
Both boys and girls have been very active members of AMU's Riding Club.



Sir Syed Speaks

"A woman herself is the owner and proprietor of her personal property, and has full right to use it in any way. She like a man enjoys the power of making all kinds of agreements; and her own self and her property bear the responsibility of these agreements and documents signed by her".

("Rights of Women" from *Tahzibul Akhlaq*" in *Selected Essays*, p. 27)





Allama Iqbal with AMU Riding team
L to R: Prof. Abdul Majeed Qureshi (sitting second from left), Dr. Sir Mohammad Iqbal (sitting third from left),
 Sir Ross Masood (Vice Chancellor) (sitting fourth from left) and other (Courtesy Shahid Qureshi) in 1934

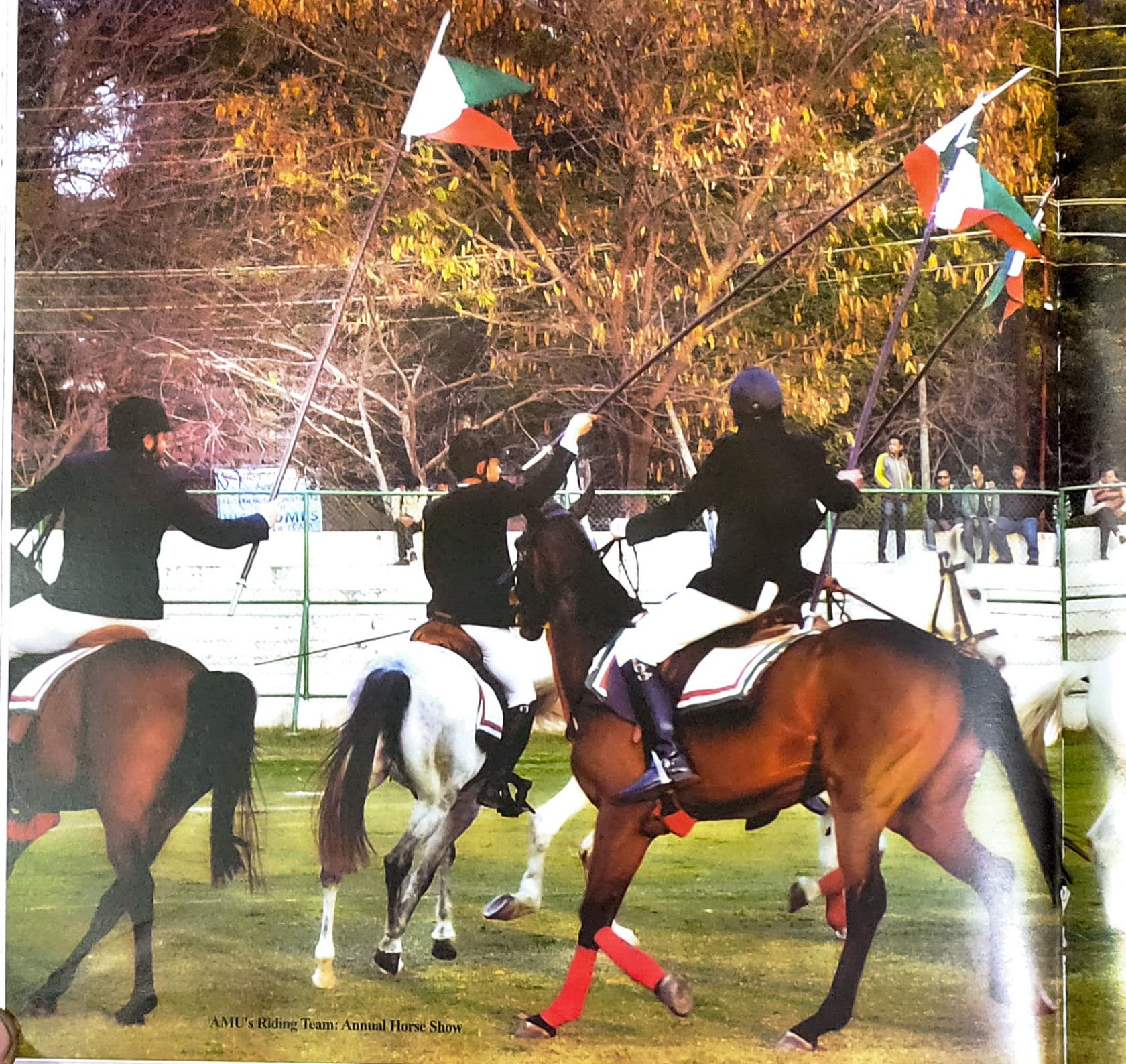


Sir Syed Speaks

"Our forefathers might have had a great stature, but we do not possess those qualities. No doubt, they were the inventors of difficult sciences but we are not even capable of understanding them. So we must lament at our present situation, and not be proud of our forefathers' name and fame".

("Countrymen and Progress in Education" from *Aligarh Institute Gazette*" in *Selected Essays*, p. 73)





AMU's Riding Team: Annual Horse Show



Debate and Discussion at MAO College

The Siddons Club

Siddons Club was formally inaugurated in August 1884, on the pattern of Cambridge University Students Union, in the honour of Henry George Impey Siddons, the first principal of the MAO College. The main purpose of the club was to organize debates and discussions on different issues. Principal MAO college was the ex-officio president of the club. The vice president and secretary of the club were elected from among students of the college.

The first debate of the club was held on 15 November 1884 on the theme: "The spread of female education is to be desired but by home tuition and not through school and college." The topics of other debates which were organized by the Club included "War is a Biological Necessity" (4 February 1905), "Can Muslims ever progress to satisfaction", and "Freedom of the Press in a country like India is not desirable" (Qureshi 57).

The first meeting of the 'Penny Reading' was organized by the Club on 5 September 1885. The club thus became a centre of cultural and literary activities of Aligarh as a whole. The seventh anniversary of the Club was organized on a grand scale on 19 December 1891. All European ladies and the Aligarh gentry were invited to that event. Sir Syed was also present on this occasion. The first vice-president of the Club was Khawaja Sajjad Husain, and the first secretary of the club was Syed Mohammad Ali.



Sitting L to R: L. Tipping, Theodore Beck, M. Abdullah (founder of Women's College)
 Standing L to R: Mohd Ali Khan, Sajjad Hyder, Mohd Sultan, Misbahul Umar



Students' Union

Sitting L to R: M. Abdus Sami (secretary, Union), Zakir Husain (vice-president, Union; he would later become the president of India), J.H. Towle (principal and the president of the club), A.F. Rahman (treasurer), M. Amin (librarian).

Standing L to R: Majiduddin, Nawab Zaman, Fazle Razzaq, Sufi Ahmad Bakhsh, Ahfad Husain, S. Nurullah, Abdul Basit, Nafisul Hasan.



Sir Syed Speaks

"That no government can take the responsibilities of the education of the whole nation, and I firmly believe that it is not possible for the government to meet out fully the educational requirements of its subjects. Even more than this, I strongly hold that the nation wishing for the betterment of the education of its young boys, cannot do so unless it by itself provides for their education".

(Speech at Gurdaspur, 27 January, 1884)







Theodore Morrison, who succeeded Theodore Beck as the principal of MAO College, laid the foundation stone of Siddons Union Debating Hall on 22 February 1905. He remained its ex-officio president for five years.

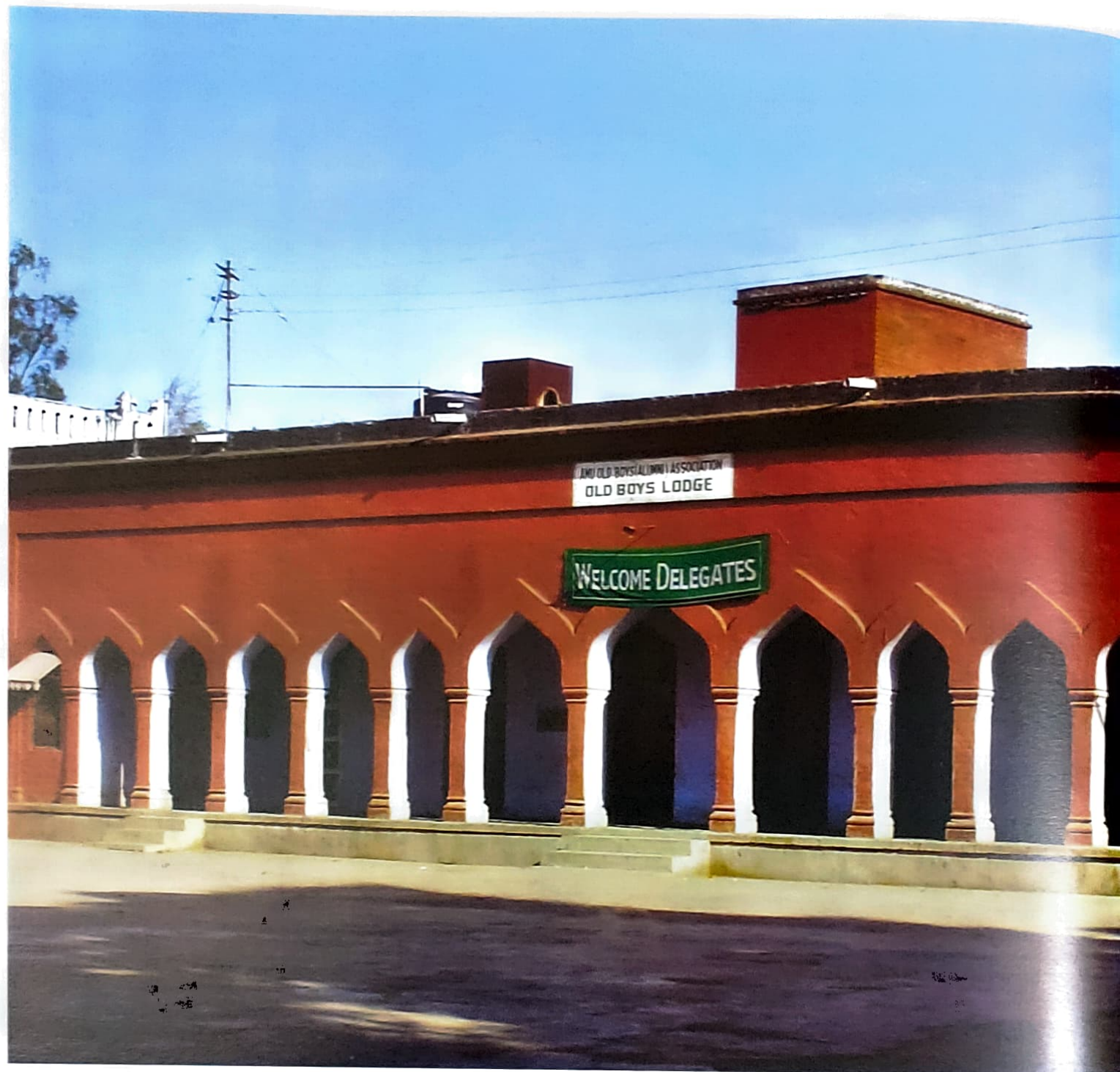


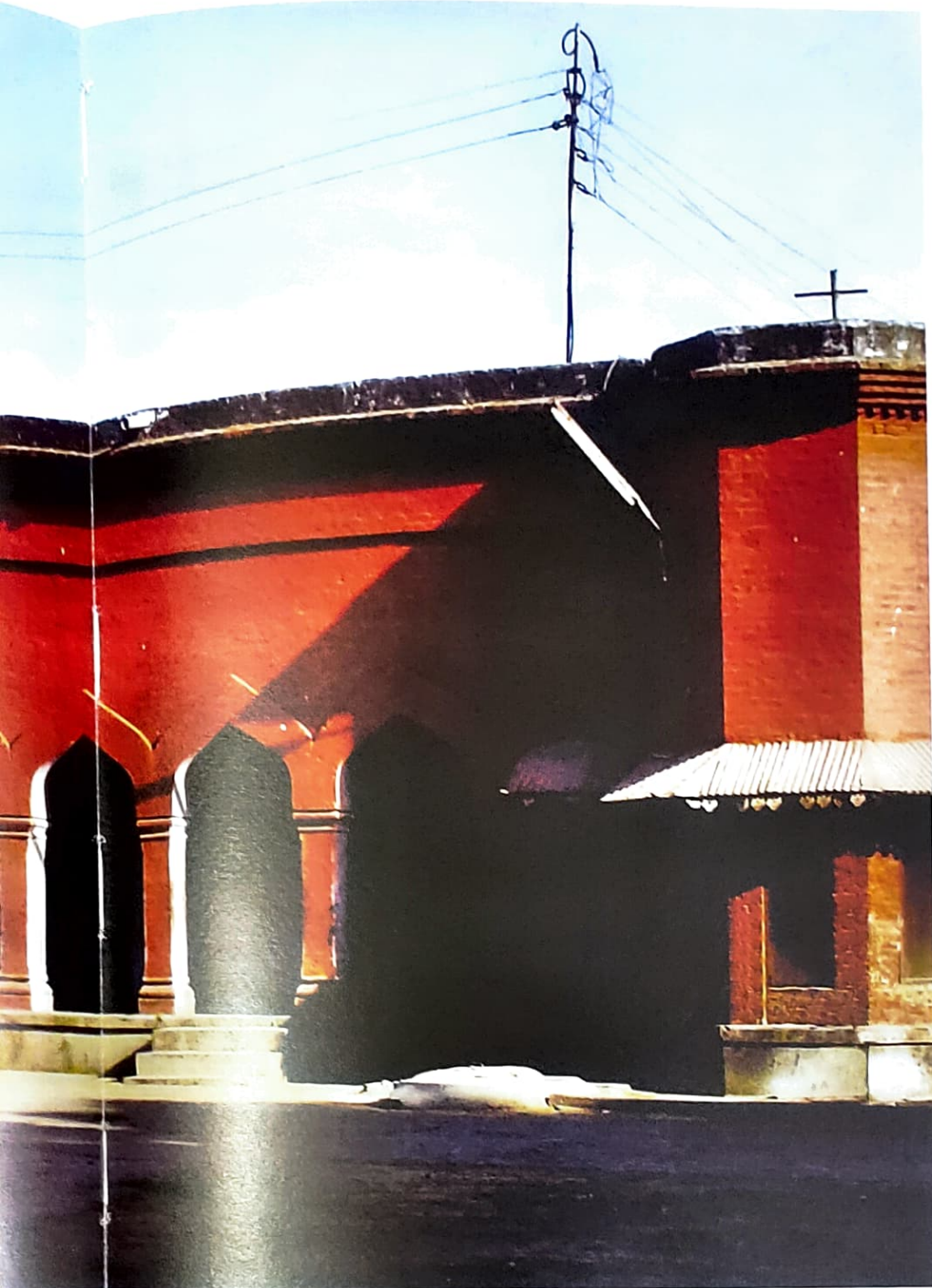
Sir Syed Speaks

"Whosoever wishes to be confident of his opinion in any degree or wishes that people in general too accept it, the only way for him would be to forward his opinion for general discussion and for the objections that may be raised by people of all kinds. If people were not allowed to discuss and criticise the philosophy and astronomy of Newton and his theory of gravity, the world would not so fervently believe in the validity and reality of it as it is doing today. There was no mode of opposition that was not meted out to this wise philosopher; and there was no religious curse and reproach that was not hurled upon that honest philosopher. But, consider, what was the result? The result is that today the whole world, including the knowledgeable and the ignorant, the philosophers and the religious bigots, accept his theory and take it as truth. Its truth has found greater acceptance in the hearts than even the religious beliefs.

(from "Freedom of Expression, *Tahzibul Akhlaq*" in *Selected Essays*, p. 113)







The Brotherhood which later became Old Boys Association

“The Ikhwan” or the brotherhood was set up on 1 July 1892. Its membership was open to the present and old boys and teachers. Members were required to contribute at least 1% of their income to raise a fund which would help the poor students of the College. Sir Syed, in order to qualify for its membership, requested the Principal on 8 June 1892, to sanction his admission to class 9. He sent a year's fee and sought exemption from attendance. He wrote, “I am not such a fool that I will subscribe to the funds without the benefits of its full membership” and contributed 1% of the pension.

The first meeting of the Ikhwan was held in July 1892, under the chairmanship of Syed Zahur Husain, advocate of Allahabad High Court.

The aims of the Brotherhood were to create (1) a centre for national activity (2) a unity of thoughts and action and (3) a lasting bond of brotherhood among the Muslim youth who were separated by the necessities of their different careers. Later, this body was named 'Old Boys Association.' Old Boys Association of Aligarh Muslim University has contributed in a big way to making this a great institution.

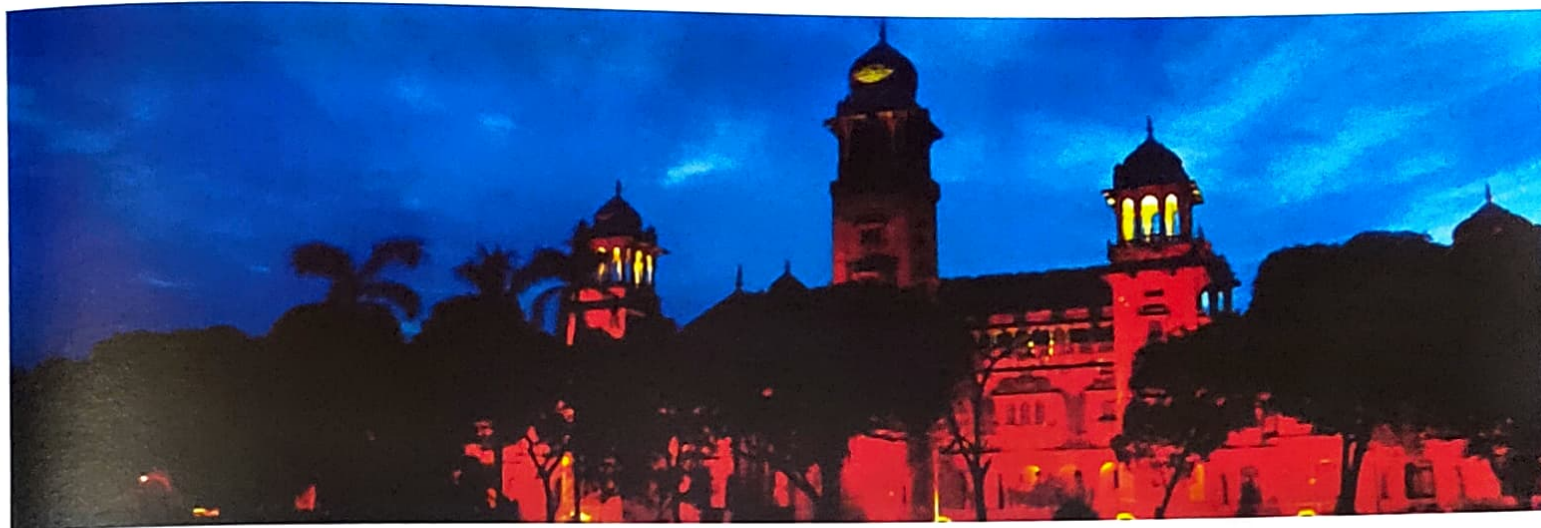
University of Calcutta

MAO College was affiliated to University of Calcutta till 1886. Sir Syed was nominated a Fellow of University of Calcutta in 1876. His *Asar-us-Sanadid* was prescribed at the undergraduate level in University of Calcutta in 1872. MAO College was also made an examination centre of University of Calcutta in 1882.



University of Allahabad

MAO College was affiliated to Allahabad University from 1887 to 1920. Sir Syed was nominated a Fellow of Allahabad University in 1887. Sir John Edge the first Vice Chancellor of Allahabad University, attended the anniversary of Siddons Club on 1 January 1888.





Still from Shyam Benegal's *Bharat Ek Khoj*



Mohan Maharishi as Sir Syed (second from right) and Irrfan Khan as Samiullah (second from left)

Sir Syed in Art, Literature and Popular Culture

Sir Syed's life and works have inspired poets, writers, painters, sculptors, film directors and theatre personalities. Many documentaries have been made on his life. Celebrated film director Shyam Benegal paid him a tribute in an important episode of his famous television serial *Bharat Ek Khoj* (1988) which was based on Nehru's *Discovery of India*. An interesting documentary on his life was made by Syed Saeed Ahmad in which the role of Sir Syed was essayed by Iqbal Ahmad. A long play titled *Sir Syed* (2017), written by F.S. Sheerani and directed by Ankit Malik, sums up the life and contribution of Sir Syed. Sculptor and painter Tahir M. Syed executed a heroic size bust of Sir Syed in Roman style. On one occasion Sir Syed himself appeared on the stage in the Aligarh Exhibition to raise funds for the MAO College.

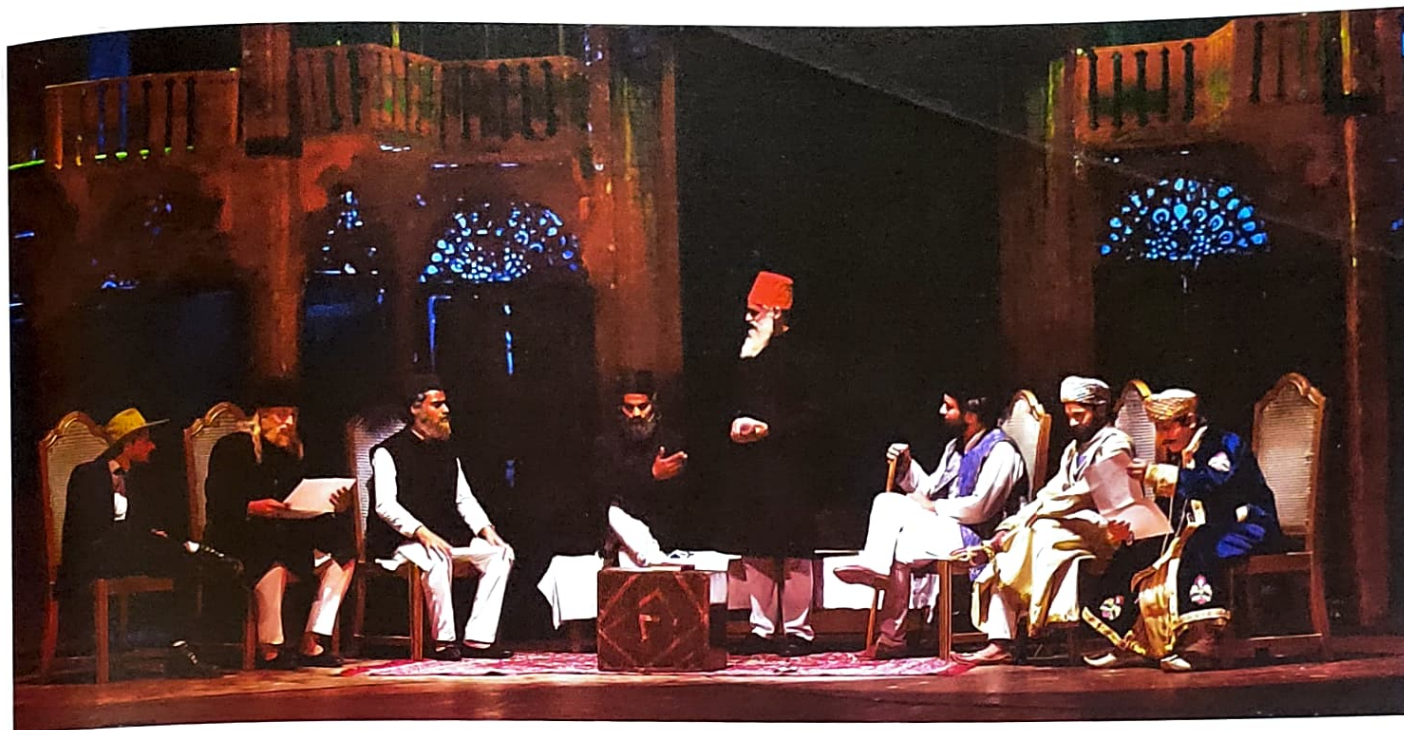
There have been a score of biographies of Sir Syed and writings on his life and different aspects of his works can literally fill up many shelves in a library.



Still from Syed Saeed Ahmad's documentary
Iqbal Ahmad as Sir Syed in Syed Saeed Ahmad's documentary



Roman style bust of Sir Syed by Tahir M. Syed



From *Sir Syed*, a play directed by Ankit Malik and written by F.S. Sherani

Sir Syed Speaks

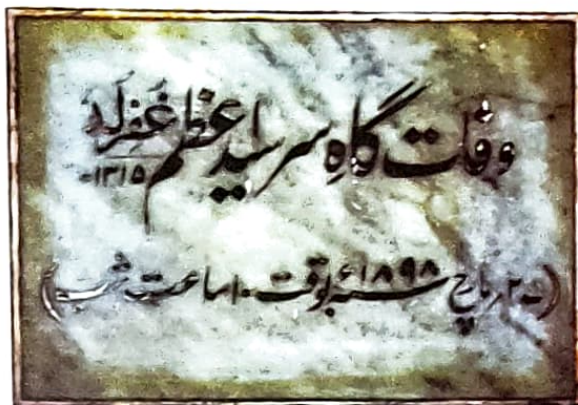
If anyone is surprised to see me on the stage, then he has no regard for his people. He is nothing more than a hypocrite. I am truly sorry for the people of this community who hold disgraceful things to be the cause of their honour and glory but consider anything done in good faith for the benefit of their fellow men to be a cause for shame. I am sorry for the people of this community who mislead others by covering up their faces with a veil of sanctity woven with black threads of deceit and arrogance, but never think how they might wipe out the ugliness and evils of their own hearts. I am sorry for him who sits in safety on the shore laughing while his people are floundering in the ocean of disgrace and adversity, who openly does such shameful and dishonourable deeds that immodesty itself blushes to witness them, but who thinks that anything done for the good of his people is ignominious and hatefull.

You nobles, you wealthy men, you who take pride in your riches and honour: Do you imagine that our children can profit from what you have, while your community is in such a poor state. This is what your father believed, and their children have found themselves in such a miserable plight that we have to come up on to the stage to help them... I have done everything in my power to raise money for the education our children must have. I have left no way untried. But my efforts have been to no avail. I have begged but gained little. I have tried to recruit volunteers, but the few who came forward have not been able to accomplish much. It is for this reason that I am standing on this stage, trying to do what I can for the education of our children.

(*Hayat-i-Javed* tr. by K.H. Qadiri and David J. Matthews, pp. 151-52)

Sir Syed's Death

Sir Syed died in Aligarh on 27 March 1898 after a brief illness. A sea of people, Indians and Europeans, Muslims, Hindus and Christians, college students and teachers, and ordinary workers of the town, joined his funeral procession. His funeral prayers, led by Maulana Abdullah Ansari, were offered in the cricket field of MAO College. He was buried near the MAO college mosque the next day.



***The Pioneer, Allahabad,
29 March 1898, carried
the following editorial on
Sir Syed's Death***

We deeply regret to have to announce the death at Aligarh at 10'O clock on Sunday night of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan. Sir Syed had long since passed the allotted span - he was born in 1817 - but the public were unprepared by any previous intimation of illness. The venerable gentleman, it seems, was in his usual health until some three days ago when he fell ill with blood poisoning On Friday the symptoms began to grow serious, the surgeon Captain Pisani who was in constant attendance throughout, called in Dr. Morierty of Bareilly for consultation, ... a relapse followed on Sunday. All the efforts of the doctors proved in vain, and death supervened at 10'O clock. The death of Sir Syed will be recognised by Anglo - Indians and Mohammadans alike as nothing less than a public calamity.

His name, it need hardly be said, is most conspicuously associated with the great institution at Aligarh which has done... for the educational advancement of Mohammadans since it was founded twenty years ago but Sir Syed Ahmad Khan was an enthusiastic educationalist only because he was a farseeing statesman. With his death there dies the most salutary and fruitful as well as the most powerful political force that have moved the Mohammadan world of India during the last quarter of a century. But the appreciation that is due to a career extending over forty years, and so full of remarkable, honourable and useful activities, must be left for another time.

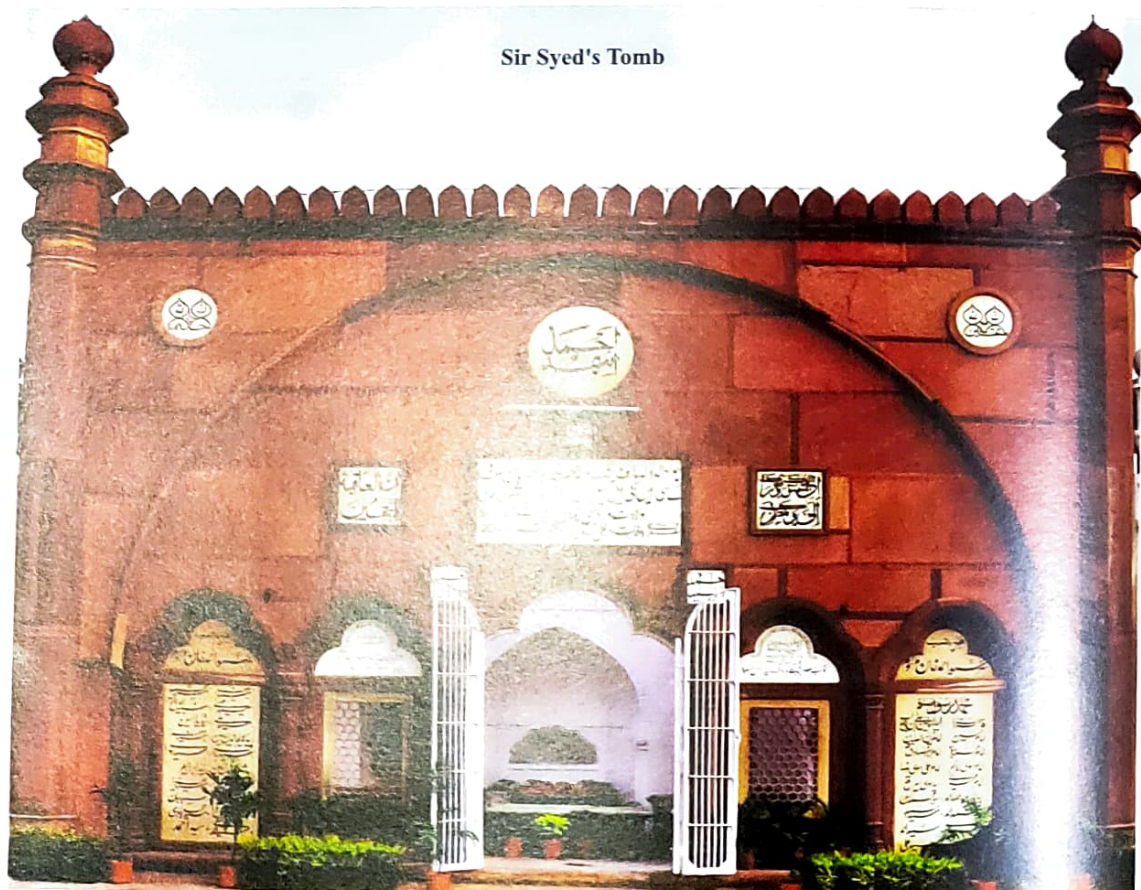


British daily *The Times* wrote the following editorial on his death

By the death recently reported from Allahabad of Sir Saiyid Ahmad Khan India loses one who has been described as its most prominent Mahomedan since the death of the great Sir Salar Jung. For nearly 50 years, and especially since the Mutiny, Saiyid Ahmad has stood as an interpreter between the Mahomedans of India and their rulers, as well as between them and the British people. He was ever ready to defend his co-religionists from literary attacks upon them, and our own columns, as well as the pages of some of the leading English magazines, have borne witness to his learning and his dialectical skill when defending his own people. On the other hand, no man has done a tithe of what he has done in arousing Indian Mahomedans to a sense of their own deficiencies, especially in the great matter of education. Indeed, when his unwearied, and lifelong efforts in this direction are considered, as well as the extraordinary success which has attended them, he may well be described as the apostle of education to the Mahomedans of India. His institute at Aligarh, with its own printing press and journal, his Anglo-Oriental College at the same place, on the model of a college of Oxford or Cambridge, for the education of Mahomedans of the upper classes, are splendid monuments to his breadth of mind, his wisdom, and his energy.....

For many years past Sir Saiyid Ahmad's home at Aligarh has been the goal of the pilgrimages of many of the greatest personages in India, and his reception by his fellow Mahomedans when he has gone to the Punjab or to Hyderabad has been semi-regal. His last years were wholly devoted to the prosperity of his college and institute, and most of his journeys have been made on their behalf. Anglo-Indians who know him best are as enthusiastic in his praise as the Indian Mahomedans.....

Sir Syed's Tomb



Allama Iqbal paid a glowing tribute to Sir Syed in his inimitable style

سید کی لوحِ ثربت

Syed Ki Loh-e-Turbat

اے گزشتہ زمانہ میں جس پر
اے گزشتہ زمانہ میں جس پر

Ae Ke Tera Murgh-e-Jaan Taar-e-Nafas Mein Hai Aseer, Ae Ke Teri Rooh Rooh Ka Taar Qafas Mein Hai Aseer

میں جس کے غریبوں کی آبادی ہو
میں جس کے غریبوں کی آبادی ہو

Iss Chaman Ke Naghma Parraon Ki Azadi To Dekh, Sheher Jo Ujra Huwa Tha, Use Ki Abadi To Dekh

گلدستہ کی بے جس کی بے جس کی
گلدستہ کی بے جس کی بے جس کی

Fikr Rehti Thi Mujhe Jis Ki Woh Mehfil Hai Yehi, Sabr-e-Haqiqat Ki Khalti Ka Hasil Hai Yehi

گنبدِ ثربت سے درگاہِ تہمت کی

چشمِ باطن سے دامنِ کفر کی

Sang-e-Turbat Hai Mera Gerwida-e-Taqrer Dekh, Chashm-e-Batin Se Zara Use Ki Loh-e-Tehrer Dekh

دعا گزشتہ زمانہ میں جس پر
دعا گزشتہ زمانہ میں جس پر

Mudda Tera Agar Dunya Mein Hai Taleem-e-Den, Turk-e-Dunya Qaum Ko Apni Na Sikhana Kahin

دعا گزشتہ زمانہ میں جس پر
دعا گزشتہ زمانہ میں جس پر

Wa Na Karma Firqa Bandi Ke Liye Apni Zuban, Chup Ke Hai Balhwa Huwa Hungama-e-Mehshar Yujan

دعا گزشتہ زمانہ میں جس پر
دعا گزشتہ زمانہ میں جس پر

Wasl Ke Asbab Paida Hain Teri Tahrir Se, Dekh! Koi Dil Na Dukh Jaye Teri Taqrer Se

مصلحتوں پرانی ہستیاں کو بھیڑ

دعا گزشتہ زمانہ میں جس پر

Mehfil-e-Nau Mein Purani Dastanon Ko Na Chhaur, Rang Par Jo Ab Na Aye Un Ki Ahsan Ko Na Chhaur

دعا گزشتہ زمانہ میں جس پر
دعا گزشتہ زمانہ میں جس پر

Tu Agar Koi Mudabbhar Hai To Sun Meri Sada, Hai Dalaam-e-Asbab-e-Siasat Ka Aya

دعا گزشتہ زمانہ میں جس پر
دعا گزشتہ زمانہ میں جس پر

Arz-e-Matlah Se Jihjak Jana Nahin Zaiha Tuihe, Naik Hai Niyat Agar Teri To Kyar Parwa Tuihe

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دعا گزشتہ زمانہ میں جس پر
دعا گزشتہ زمانہ میں جس پر

Banda-e-Momin Ka Dil Deem-o-Riya Se Paak Hai, Quwat-e-Farman-Rawa Ke Samne Bebaak Hai

دعا گزشتہ زمانہ میں جس پر
دعا گزشتہ زمانہ میں جس پر

Ho Agar Haddon Mein Tere Khana-e-Maujiz Raqam, Sheesha-e-Dil Ho Agar Tera Misal-e-Jaam-o-Jam

دعا گزشتہ زمانہ میں جس پر
دعا گزشتہ زمانہ میں جس پر

Paak Rakh Apni Zuban, Talmeez-e-Rehmani Hai Tu, Ho Na Jaye Dekhna Teri Sada Be-Abrul

دعا گزشتہ زمانہ میں جس پر
دعا گزشتہ زمانہ میں جس پر

دعا گزشتہ زمانہ میں جس پر
دعا گزشتہ زمانہ میں جس پر

Sone Walun Ko Jaga De Shair Ke Ejaz Se, Khirman-e-Batil Jala De Shoola-e-Awaz Se

Syed's Tombstone

Oh! Syed thou art still living
But the bird of thy soul is caged

Look at the freedom of the singers in this garden
Look at the population of this ruined city

This is the assembly that I have sought
This is the harvest from patience and stability

My tombstone desires to converse
With the inner eye read the writing on this tombstone

If your purpose is to teach religion
Do not teach your people renunciation

Lend not your voice to communalism
Because it is here that doomsday hides

May your writings bring unity
May no heart be broken by your words

Never touch on old stories in the new assembly
Let alone those stories that are lost

If you are judicious, Then listen to me
Courage is the mainstay of a leader of men

It does not become you to escape responsibility
If your intentions are good, have no fear

The heart of the true believer
Is free of despair and dishonesty
He stands bold before the power of the ruler

If you have a pen that can produce miracles
And if the goblet of your heart
Is like that of Jamshed

You should keep your language pure
Because you are delivering the message of God
May your words never be disrespected

Awaken the sleeping with your verse
Burn up the habitation of deceit
With the fire of your voice.

The Abode of Sir Syed



Victorian Style Sofa Set

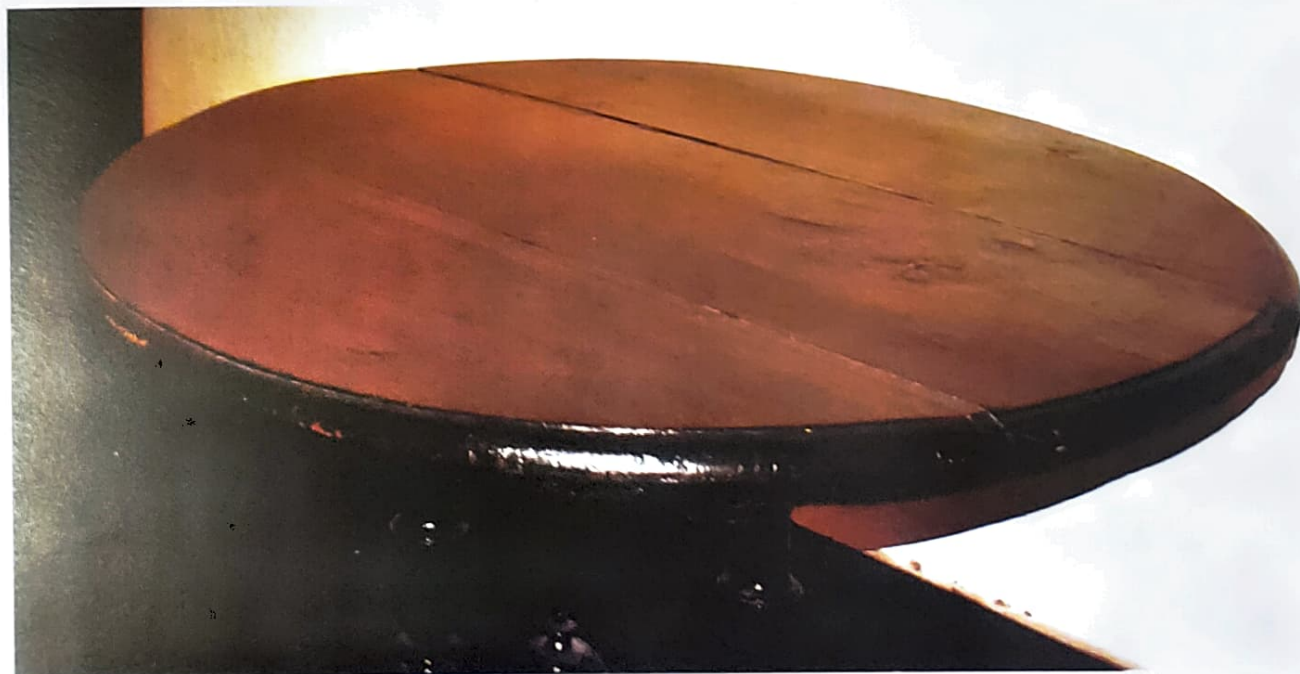


Sir Syed's Walking Stick

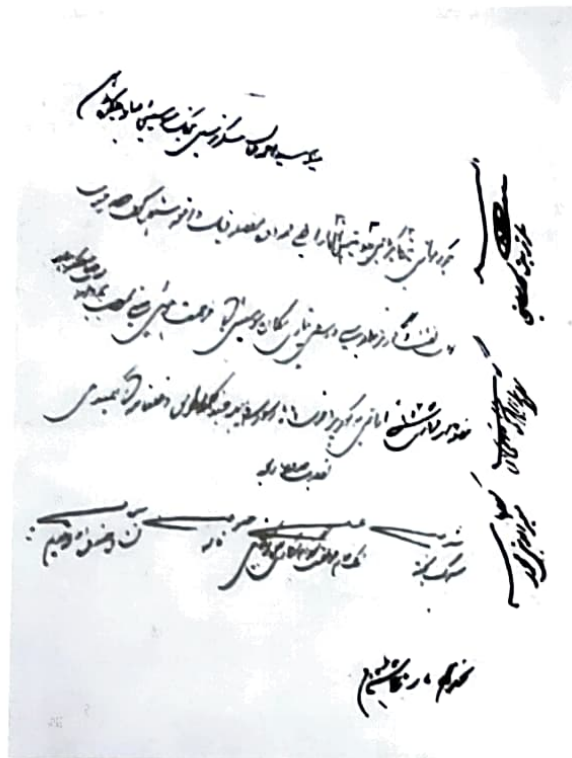
Sir Syed's house, originally a military mess, was maintained in a European style. He entertained important dignitaries—Europeans and Indians, in his living room. He used knife, fork and spoons at his dining table. In fact, Sir Syed often faced jeers and taunts not only for his support to Western education but also for his adoption of some English manners and customs. There is a funny anecdote that when Sir Syed was awarded the title of C.S.I (Companion Star of India) some people thought that he had become an 'Isai' (a Christian). Urdu poet Akbar Allahabadi, a known critic of Sir Syed in his time, wrote a few couplets to this effect.



Sir Syed's Study Table and Chair



Sir Syed's Dining Table



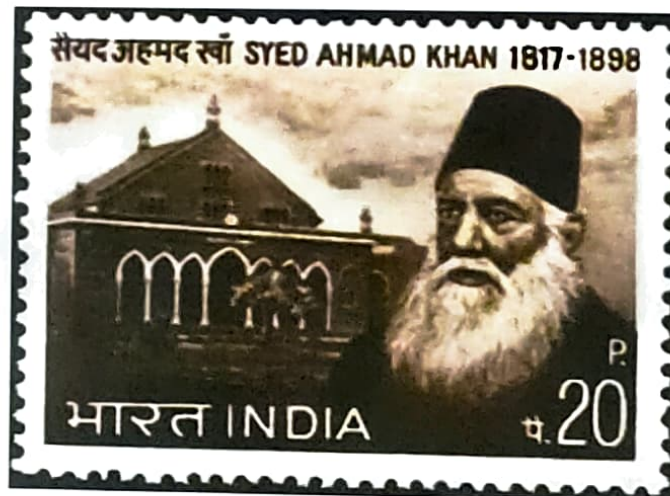
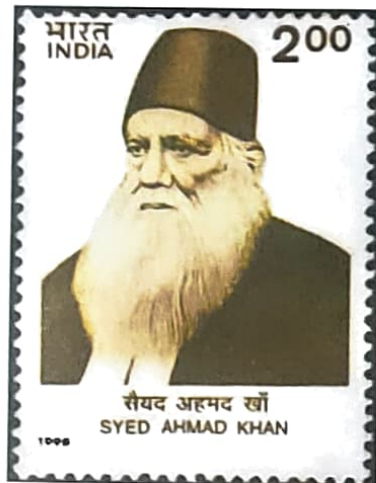
Sir Syed's hand writing

Handwritten signature of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan in Urdu script.



MAO College Monogram

Handwritten signature of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan in Urdu script.



The Government of India has issued many stamps in Sir Syed's honour.



This house served as Sir Syed's residence from 1876 to 1898.
Presently this building houses Sir Syed Academy.



VIEWS ON SIR SYED



Lala Lajpat Rai

"From childhood, I was taught to respect the opinions and the teachings of the white bearded Syed of Aligarh. Your Social Reformer (Tehzibul Akhlaq) was constantly read to me by my fond father, who looked upon you as no less than a prophet of the nineteenth century. Your writings in the Aligarh Institute Gazette, and your speeches in Council and other public meetings, were constantly studied by me and preserved as a sacred trust by my revered by parent. It was thus that I came to know that you once approved the contents of John Stuart Mill's book on 'Liberty' ... and Jeremy Bentham's on 'Utility'."

(Open letter to Sir Syed Ahmad Khan by Lala Lajpat Rai)

Pandit Jawharlal Nehru

"Sir Syed's decision to concentrate on western education for Muslims was undoubtedly a right one. Without that they could not have played any effective part in the building up of Indian Nationalism of the new type and they would have been doomed to play second fiddle to the Hindus with their better education and for stronger economic position. The Muslims were not historically or ideologically ready then for the bourgeois national movement as they had developed no bourgeoisie, as the Hindus had done. Sir Syed's activities, therefore, although seemingly very moderate were in the right revolutionary direction."

(From *An Autobiography*)



Maulana Abdul Kalam Azad

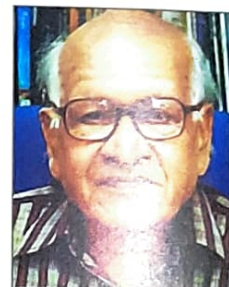
"The inscription which has been carved on the walls of your Strachey Hall may fade with passage of time, but the inscription which Aligarh has written on the modern period of Indian history can never fade. Future historians will discover in Aligarh one of the main sources which has contributed to the evolution of modern India'.

(From Convocation Address delivered in 1949)

Bipan Chandra

"Sayyid Ahmad Khan was a great believer in religious toleration. He believed that all religions had a certain underlying unity which could be called practical morality. Believing that a person's religion was his or her private affair, he roundly condemned any sign of religious bigotry in personal relations. He was also opposed to communal friction".

(From *History of Modern India*, "Sayyid Ahmad Khan and the Aligarh School")



Dr. Rajendra Prasad

"It was the far sightedness and patriotic fervor of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan which led to the establishment of a School on the 1 June 1875 and which was raised to the status of a College subsequently and was given the status of University in the year 1920. During this period it became a very great center of education and it acquired a name for itself in India and abroad. It has taken an important part in shaping the history of the Indian Muslims."

(From Convocation Address by Dr. Rajendra Prasad on 8 December 1951)

Dr. Zakir Husain

"I am not aware of any other seat of higher learning in the country which presents in its students and teachers such a representative cross-section of the various elements of our national life as does Aligarh. Your traditions of corporate life are a further asset. The combined work of students and teachers at this center can achieve something in the way of establishing a seat of learning and good life of which our country could well be proud"

(From Convocation Address dated 27 February 1957)

Pandit Govind Ballabh Pant

'The founder of MAO College ... was one of the most eminent Indians ever born ... Sir Syed was gifted with a powerful mind... He stood for tolerance, reason, scientific outlook and freedom of thought against bigotry, fanaticism and narrow sectarianism'

(From Convocation Address 27 February 1951)



Abid Hussain

Sir Syed was aware that Indian Muslims could not stay aloof from the changes that modernization was imposing upon all social groups in India. The establishment of the Muslim Anglo-Oriental College, the great precursor of Aligarh Muslim University, is an eloquent testimony of this. If there was one thing that Sir Syed advocated throughout his life it was social change. He recognized that in order not to meekly surrender to the modern world, a community has to prepare for the future by coming to terms with modernity from a position of strength.

(From Sir Syed Memorial Lecture, 1994)



Rajmohan Gandhi

"With the launching of MAO Sayyid Ahmed was seen as a national figure and a leader of the Indian Muslims. Lytton named him to the Imperial Legislative Council, as, in his turn, did Ripon, Lytton's successor as Viceroy. In the Council Sayyid Ahmed initiated a bill favouring powers for compulsory vaccination against smallpox and give vigorous backing to a measure to end racial discrimination in Indian courts. The proud Hindustani opposed his friend Graham when the latter criticized a proposal by Allan Octavian Hume, another of the Raj's custodians, for a native volunteer corps in India. 'In not allowing the natives to become volunteers, said Sayyid Ahmed in a letter to Graham, 'the Government means to say that they do not trust the natives of India.' He then proceeded to remind Graham of the saying, 'if you want us to trust you, you should also trust us.'"

(From *Understanding the Muslim Mind*, Chapter 2, "Sayyid Ahmed Khan")



W W Hunter at the first session of the Education Commission in the North Western Provinces at Aligarh:

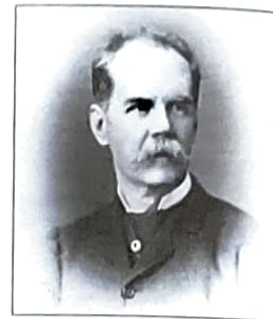
"You gentleman, who have built this college, will bequeath a far nobler monument to posterity. You will have behind you a magnificent memorial, not of the discord, but of the reconciliation of races; a monument of beneficent energy, not of destructive force.... Gentleman, this college at Aligarh not only provides an education for the Muhammadans of the North-West provinces, but it stands forth as an example to All India, of a Muhammadan institution which effectively combines the secular with the religious aspects of education."



Sir Auckland Colvin, Lt. Governor of North West province

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

(Addressing a function at MAO College in 1892)



Barbara D. Metcalf

'Sir Syed was the father of Muslim intellectual Renaissance'. His dedication to serve the Muslim community led him to be the "Founder of the First Modernist Institution in Islam "

(From *Islam in South Asia*)



Tara Chand

A striking illustration from the nineteenth century is the resemblance between the basic ideas of Ram Mohan Roy in the first half and of Syed Ahmad Khan in the second half of the century. Both held up the supremacy of reason in religious, moral and social affairs... Both believed in the oneness of God, the reality of nature and the equality of man. They repudiated the ascetic view of life and the idea that the world was evil or illusory. Both desired the removal of social evils and irrational customs which had sapped the strength of society and defiled the purity of its morals. For both western education—the study of modern sciences, was the sovereign remedy for the ills of Indian society; for both the western system of responsible government was the ideal form of government which Indians ought to try to attain...They recognised the importance of communal harmony and the mixed character of India's culture.

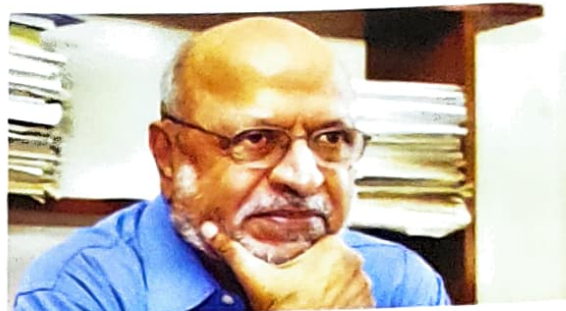
(From *History of the Freedom Movement in India*, Vol. III pp. 227-228)



Shyam Benegal

Sir Syed single-handedly introduced modern education in the Muslim community, and was one of the greatest votaries of Hindu-Muslims unity. One only has to read his essay on 'Contact between the Hindus and the Muslims.' He was a secularist well before the term became common currency a century later.

(From Sir Syed Memorial Lecture, "Secularism and Indian Popular Cinema", 2005)



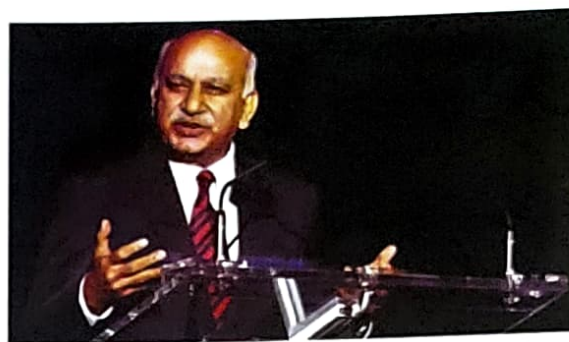
M.J. Akbar

He was far ahead of his age in demanding education for girls....

One cannot glibly blame Sir Syed for misreading the complexities of democracy, for nowhere had democracy evolved to its present liberal maturity. Democracy was largely the preserve of the richer class of men (France did not give women the vote till 1945). America, whose constitution is an ode to liberty and equality, did not extend to most blacks what it believed to be the inalienable rights of white people until the reforms of President Lyndon Johnson in 1965...

Votes were not equal in British-Indian democracy, when it arrived on stilts.

(From Sir Syed Memorial Lecture,
"Muslims and Modernity: Relevance of Sir Syed in 2010")



Ramchandra Guha

... the first two great liberal reformers of India were Raja Ram Mohan Roy and Sir Syed Ahmad Khan and Ram Mohan Roy came before because he was older. His work started around 1810 onwards and Sir Syed Ahmad Khan became intellectually and socially active a little later, it was around the 1840s and they were really quite remarkable because they were the first Indian thinkers appropriately, one Hindu, one Muslim to talk about the challenge of modernity to India's encounter with modern civilization... You know, there were some people who said "Look backwards, we were great, we were once great and so we have to go back to the past". But Ram Mohan Roy and Sir Syed Ahmad Khan looked forward, they saw that we have been challenged, we have been conquered, we have been subjugated, we have been humiliated because there were some deficiencies in our society. That although, we had great traditions in our past, we had not been able to adapt to the challenges posed by the fast moving modern world, the challenges of the industrial revolution, the democratic revolution and the technological revolution and Ram Mohan Roy and Sir Syed inaugurated the tradition of Indian liberalism.

(From Sir Syed Memorial Lecture, "Liberalism in the Age of Extremes", 2014)



Fellowships, Awards and Honours for Sir Syed

1. Title of Jawad-ud-Daula Arif Jung conferred on Sir Syed by the last Mughal Emperor, Bahadur Shah Zafar in 1842.
2. Nominated member of Special Commission for hearing appeals about confiscated property in 1857.
3. Honorary Fellow of the Royal Asiatic society, London on 4 July 1864 for his original research work on Archaeological history of Delhi.
4. Member of East India Association, London on 1 January 1867.
5. Awarded C.S.I. (Companion Star of India) on 6 August 1869.
6. Honorary membership of very exclusive Athenaeum Club of London in 1870.
6. Appointed as fellow of University of Calcutta by Viceroy and Governor General of India in 1876.
7. Member of Governor General of India's Council by Lord Lytton on 31 December 1878.
8. Member of First Education Commission headed by W. W. Hunter in 1882.
9. Member of the North West Provincial Legislative Council in 1887.
10. Fellow of Allahabad University in 1887.
11. Member of Civil Service Commission in 1887.
12. Awarded K.C.S.I. (Knight Commander Star of India) in May 1888.
13. Doctorate of Law (honoris causa) of Edinburgh University conferred on Sir Syed in 1889.



Chronology of Important Events in Sir Syed's Life

	1817	Birth at Delhi
17 October	1828	Death of Khwaja Fariduddin, maternal grandfather
	1837	<i>Sayyid-ul-Akhhbar</i> started by Sayyid Muhammad Khan
	1838	Death of his father, Sayyid Muhammad Muttaqi
	1839	Appointed Naib Munshi at Agra
February	1841	Appointed Munsif at Mainpuri
24 December	1842	Transferred from Mainpuri to Fatehpur Sikri
10 January	1842	Received the title of <i>Jawad-ud-Daula</i> Arif Jung from the Mughal Court
	1842	Completed <i>Jila al-Qulub ba Zikr al Mahbub</i>
	1844	Completed <i>Tuhfa-i-Hasan</i> and <i>Tashil fi Jar-al Saqil</i>
	1845	Death of Sayyid Muhammad Khan's brother
	1847	First edition of <i>Asar-us-Sanadid</i> appeared
	1849	Completed <i>Kalamat-ul-Haqq</i>
	1850	Completed <i>Rah-i-Sunnat dar radi-i-bid'at</i>
	1852	Completed <i>Namiqa fi Byan mas'ala Tasawwur al-Shaikh</i> and <i>Silsilat-ul-Muluk</i>
	1854	Second edition of <i>Asar-us-Sanadid</i>
13 January	1855	Appointed permanent <i>Sadr Amin</i> at Bijnor
	1855	Edited <i>A'in-i-Akhbari</i>
	1857	Death of his mother at Meerut
	1858	Appointed <i>Sadr us Sadur</i> , Moradabad
April	1858	Published <i>Tarikh Sarkashi-i-Zilla Bijnor</i>
	1859	Published <i>Causes of the Indian Revolt</i>
	1859	Established a Madrasah at Moradabad
	1860	Published <i>Loyal Muhammadans of India</i>
	1860	Famine in N.W. Provinces and relief work by Sayyid Ahmad Khan
	1861	Franch translation of <i>Asar us-Sanadid</i> by Garcin de Tassy
	1861	Death of his wife
12 May	1862	Transferred to Ghazipur
	1862	Edited <i>Tarikh i-Firoz Shahi</i>
	1863	Published a pamphlet on Education
	1864	Laid the Foundation of <i>Madrasah</i> at Ghazipur
	1864	Transferred to Aligarh.
30 December	1865	Sent a memorandum to the Government about the intention of the Scientific Society to published books on agriculture
	1866	Started <i>Aligarh Institute Gazette</i>
1 August	1867	Sent a memorandum to the Viceroy for establishment of a vernacular University
15 August	1867	Transferred to Banaras
25 September	1867	Started Homeopathic dispensary and Hospital in Banaras
1 April	1869	Left Banaras for England
4 September	1870	Left London for India
24 December	1870	Started <i>Tahzib-ul- Akhlaq</i>
26 December	1870	Established the Committee for the Better Diffusion and Advancement of Learning among Muhammadans of India
February	1873	Scheme for establishing a College presented
	1876	Retired from service
	1876	Starts writing Commentary on the Qur'an
	1882	Appears before the Education Commission
	1883	Founded Muhammadan Civil Service Found Association
	1883	Established Muhammadan Association, Aligarh
	1886	Established Muhammadan Educational Conference
August	1888	Established Patriotic Association at Aligarh
	1889	Circulates the Trustee Bill
27 March	1898	Death at Aligarh

Acknowledgement

In presenting the material in this book, both words and pictures, we depended on many different kinds of sources. As always Altaf Husain Hali's *Hayat-e-Javed*, remains the most important source of information for anyone who undertakes work on Sir Syed and Muhammadan Anglo-Oriental College. We also benefitted greatly from S.K. Bhatnagar's *The History of M.A.O. College* (Asia Publishing House/Sir Syed Hall: 1869) and Ishrat Ali Qureshi's *Aligarh: Past and Present*, (Aligarh Muslim University: 1992), both books containing a mine of useful information about MAO College. Also found very useful were K.A. Nizami's *Sir Syed Album* (Idarah-i Adabiyat-i Delli: 1983), a remarkable effort to tell the story of Sir Syed and his associates through photographs and David Lelyveld's *Aligarh's First Generation*, (Oxford University Press: 1996) which cannot be surpassed in rigour and analysis. Some of the photographs used in this book have appeared before in Lelyveld, Bhatnagar and Nizami.

Many extracts from Sir Syed's speeches and writings, in English translation, have been taken from *Selected Essays of Sir Syed*, translated by Muhammad Hameedullah, (Sir Syed Academy: 2004) and Ishrat Ali Qureshi's *The Beacon Light: Extracts from the Writings and Speeches of Sir Syed*, (Aligarh Muslim University: 1985).

The book could not have been possible without the help and the patronage that we have received from Professor Tariq Mansoor, vice-chancellor of Aligarh Muslim University. He took great interest in the idea of this book and its execution and was always forthcoming with his generous help and useful tips. Our very special thanks are due to Shafey Kidwai for rendering all possible help— moral, intellectual, infrastructural—at different stages of this book.

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Mohammad Asim Siddiqui

Rahat Abrar