

THE LIGHT

16 February 1956

NOTICE

This is a special issue of *The Light* in memory of the late Maulana Aftab-ud-Din Ahmad. Anyone desirous of having more copies of this issue may write to the office. There will be no issue of *The Light* on 24 February 1956. – MANAGER

MAULANA AFTAB-UD-DIN AHMAD

By Major Farouq Farmer, Woking (England)

[Major Farouq Farmer accepted Islam at the hand of the late Maulana Aftab-ud-Din Ahmad when the *Maulana* was *Imam* of the Shah Jehan Mosque at Woking. Major Farouq Farmer is in hospital at the moment with a heart attack and an eye problem which needs an operation. In spite of his ill-health, he scribbled the following lines in memory of his late friend, and managed to do this without the hospital staff knowing it, for he is strictly forbidden to read or write.-Ed.]

The late Maulana Aftab-ud-Din Ahmad, *Ex-Imam*, Shah Jehan Mosque, Woking, known affectionately by us English Muslims as Mr. Din, was endeared to us all. Muslims and non-Muslims with whom he came in contact found in him a warm-hearted, sympathetic friend.

During his life in England, he got a thorough grasp of the English way of life. This was an important factor contributing to his success as a Muslim missionary in this country. His energy knew no limits. Often, after a day's lecturing, he would call at my house on his way home and remain there until the early hours of the morning, explaining some particular aspect of Islam. Always tolerant of non-Muslims, yet he could be violent in his denunciation of those who besmirched Islam.

A great and wonderful character has passed from us. Let us praise Allah for all that Mr. Din has meant to us and pray that we be given strength and courage to follow his example.

MAULANA AFTAB-UD-DIN AHMAD WAS A SAINT OF ISLAM

By Dr. S. M. Abdullah, M.Sc., Ph.D.

Imam of the Shah Jehan Mosque, Woking, England.

[The following lines have been written by one of the late *Maulana's* great friends. Dr. S. M. Abdullah, as most of our readers know, has not as yet fully recovered from a recent heart attack. The article is short but reflective of the great friendship that existed between these gentlemen. - Ed.]

To learn, teach and preach is easy. To translate these teachings into action in ones own life is hard. But to influence the lives of others and to succeed in moulding the lives of those who come in contact with ones life is the hardest and the most difficult of all; and indeed this is a mighty achievement.

The late Maulana Aftab-ud-Din Ahmad was a personality who was gifted with this quality of influencing and moulding the lives of others who came in contact with him. He, I think, is the first person in the Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement who, after having dedicated his life for the

cause of Islam, also dedicated his children for the same cause, which is palpable proof of his great conviction of the truthfulness of Islam and its great future. No father would ever wish for his children of which he himself is not fully and absolutely convinced. In this respect, I count the late *Maulana* as one of the saints of Islam and a great spiritual personality. We all deeply mourn his loss but I am sure we would be adding to his happiness if we were to emulate him in his so many good qualities of head and heart. He always felt great pleasure when he succeeded in making a person walk in the footsteps of the Holy Prophet and the *Mujaddid* of this age. So let us try to add to this happiness of his even after his death. May his soul rest in peace. *Amin*.

Brief biography of Maulana Aftab-ud-Din Ahmad

He was born in January 1901 in a village Tola in the district of Burdwan, West Bengal, India. His father, Syed Rahat Ali, was a legal practitioner and was an influential landlord of the area. Maulana Ahmad had his early education in the town of Burdwan. He passed his degree with distinction in English from the Presidency College, Calcutta in 1923. He became mindful of the fallen condition of the Muslims through the Khilafat Movement, to which he rendered voluntary service off and on for four years. He thought of having a first-hand knowledge of Islam through a study of the Arabic language, which took him to the University of Deoband near Dehli in 1923, and he studied there for almost two years. His tutor in the Qur'an was Maulana Shabbir Ahmad Usmani, who, after independence was given the title of *Sheikh-ul-Islam* by the Government of Pakistan.

He was drawn towards the Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement through *The Light*, then a fortnightly magazine under the editorship of Maulana Muhammad Yakub Khan. He proceeded to Lahore for comparative study of religions in 1925. He joined the editorial staff of *The Light* in 1926. He was deputed in July 1927 by the Lahore Ahmadiyya Anjuman to act as missionary of the Calcutta Islamic Missionary Movement at Shillong, Assam, among the most advanced of the hill tribes, the Khasis. Maulana Aftab-ud-Din Ahmad was the first to write several books and booklets on Islam for that tribe.

At the special request of Hazrat Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din, he proceeded to England in 1931 and acted as Assistant *Imam* of the Shah Jehan Mosque, Woking till the end of 1932. On his return to Lahore, he took up editorial responsibilities of *The Islamic Review*. He proceeded to England again in 1934 as *Imam* of the Shah Jehan Mosque, Woking. He returned to Lahore in 1939 and became editor of the monthly *The Islamic Review* and undertook revision of books by Hazrat Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din. He became Secretary of the Woking Muslim Mission and Literary Trust, Lahore in 1948. He was also appointed as editor of the weekly *The Light* of the Ahmadiyya Anjuman Isha'at-i Islam, Lahore in 1950 and remained its editor till his death. He was entrusted with the work of translating *Sahih al-Bukhari* into English by Maulana Muhammad Ali and was able to complete four of its *paras* till his death on 13 January 1956. He lies buried in the Ahmadiyya section of the Miani Sahib Graveyard in Lahore.

He was a fine and impressive writer both in English and in Urdu. He was equally proficient in Bengali, as it was his mother tongue. He translated *The Teachings of Islam* by Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad into Bengali, and this work is considered a standard translation. Among his notable writings are *Islam and Communism* and an English translation of the Arabic work of Hazrat Sheikh Abdul Qadir Jilani, namely *Futuh al-Ghaib*.

Maulana Aftab-ud-Din Ahmad

“O Soul that art at rest,
Return to thy Lord, well-pleased,
and well-pleasing,
So enter among My servants,
And enter My garden !” (89:27-30.)

It should be borne in mind that the highest spiritual state to which a believer can aspire in this world is that he should find contentment of heart in performing obligations enjoined by Allah and is ready to sacrifice all for serving Him alone. This state is termed as the heavenly life. The pure sincerity and righteousness of such a person are rewarded by Almighty Allah both in this life and the life hereafter. The Qur’an has termed it as two Gardens: All others look to a prospective paradise but a righteous person enters paradise in this very life. Maulana Aftab-ud-Din Ahmad to whose revered memory this particular issue is dedicated may justly be regarded a man whose life and death both were embodiment of contentment of a very high degree.

The late Maulana passed his degree from Presidency College, Calcutta in 1923 and studied in Deoband for about two years. He joined the Ahmadiyya Movement in 1925. Since that time this devoted missionary of Islam worked day and night for the defence and propagation of the teachings of Islam both in England and the subcontinent of Indo-Pakistan. To give you an inkling of the love and enthusiasm which he had for this great and noble cause, let me quote here a brief conversation which took place between him and one of his subordinates:

"My dear Maulana Sahib, your health is going down due to continuous hard work. You should at least take rest for a day or two in a week", said the subordinate. The Maulana replied with the usual smile on his face, "My dear Friend, after death I will enjoy complete rest, why should I waste this time which I can easily utilize in serving the cause of Islam." In fact the late Maulana passed his whole life with a deep faith in Allah and an undaunted determination in the noble cause. In one of his letters which is published elsewhere, he wrote to his eldest son Iqbal Ahmad in England :

"We should consider it a privilege to be of a service to the cause of Muhammad, peace and blessings of Allah be on him, even if we are considered fools by our own people . A new world is in the making with the spiritual insight of the Ahmadiyya Movement as its foundationand yet I assure you that this is

the Islam of Prophet Muhammad (SAW) and of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad and it is this that will save the world."

It was these two qualities i.e., undaunted determination in his cause and unflinching faith in God which predominated his whole life and made him a great and successful missionary both in the Muslim and Christian worlds, a sincere friend, a faithful pupil, a selfless worker, a humanitarian, an ardent believer and lover of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, and a great devotee of the Promised Messiah.

Though a man with frail and weak constitution, Maulana Aftab-ud-Din Ahmad would retract any criticism made against the Holy Prophet Muhammad and the Quran with a powerful pen in a clear, simple, argumentative, lucid and fascinating way - a way of a real missionary who would penetrate deep into the hearts of his listeners. He was a man deeply inspired by the Divinely appointed *Mujaddid* of this age for the revival of Islam, Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad and by the missionary zeal and spiritual personality of the late Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din to whom the deceased was very much indebted.

Coming back to the contentment of heart we do not mean self-complacence. Because in these days a wrong notion has been ascribed to religion that it teaches self-complacence, an idea which is wrongly attributed to religion, which has been regarded as main hindrance in the way to progress.. It was the Qur'an which upheld the idea "that man can have nothing but what he strives for." So to say that religion is something which makes man self-complacent and inactive is a misconception to which Islam as a world-religion presents a contrary evidence. For instance while enjoining *Jumu'ah* prayer as obligatory on every Muslim and that all business concerns should be closed at that time, yet it does not ignore practical needs of human beings and said: "But when the prayer is ended, then disperse abroad in the land and seek Allah's grace." Thus Islam brings about a balance in the human pursuits and their resulting benefits.

After all what is religion ? Is it only praying day and night and depending on others for one's livelihood and ignoring rights and responsibilities to one's fellow human beings as is generally the practice of the priestly class these days?. That is why we find an authentic saying of the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, to this effect "There is no priesthood in Islam." Islam is a practical code of human life given to man by the Creator of the Universe. All 'isms' claim to reform human society and provide solution to individual and collective problems, but fail to provide inner peace and cordiality in human relationship. So that it can create an atmosphere in which maximum opportunities are available to achieve one's just aspirations..

Islam presents 'contentment of heart' as a criterion for a perfect code of life. It is only inner peace that can successfully bring about a healthy balance between human pursuit and ultimate welfare of the society. . The criterion presented by Islam is not only logical but practical and is witnessed by hundreds of prophets, *mujaddids*, *aulias* and righteous men, Our age has also witnessed such a man who proclaimed to the world that Islam was and still is the only code of life which not only brings a healthy change in the society but also helps man in attaining perfection . The life of this man showed to the world outside, the power which a contented heart wields. . Thus the Ahmadiyya Movement has produced not one but a band of such people who had attained spiritual height through contentment of heart.

_ **Nasir Ahmad**

HE SHOWED ME THE LIGHT OF ISLAM

By Prof. M. A. Samad, Peshawar.

It was at the annual gathering of the Ahmadis in 1944 that I met Maulana Aftab-ud-Din Ahmad for the first time. Before this, I had made his acquaintance through his letters to me and his learned articles in the *Islamic Review*, and I must say they had both impressed me very much. In fact, it had been a great surprise to find that a person bearing the prefix *Maulana* before his name could be so rational in his treatment of religious issues; for, I must confess, I was then a very ignorant young man, knowing very little of Islam and nothing whatsoever about the Ahmadiyya Movement. As a matter of fact, it had been my objections against religion generally and Islam particularly that had brought me into contact with Maulana Aftab-ud-Din Ahmad. I had received my education in Christian institutions where it was quite common to attack Islam and the Holy Prophet. Though the religion of Jesus, as expounded by my scripture teachers, had no attraction for me, yet the arguments of the Christian missionaries had, all the same, undermined my faith in Islam. Whatever attachment I still had for religion was shaken off by my study of Thinker's Library books.

It was such a man that Maulana Aftab-ud-Din Ahmad invited to Lahore in December 1944 for "mutual exchange of views on religion and other matters." My meeting with the Maulana is memorable for me. I can say without hesitation that I have never been impressed by anyone as I was by Maulana Aftab-ud-Din Ahmad. I was charmed by his simple, unassuming ways and sincere good will. His genuine interest in religion and selfless devotion to the cause he held dear – the highest possible cause of service to God and His creatures – won my spontaneous respect and admiration. He not only preached Islam, but lived Islam. God was to him not just an abstract idea of a philosopher's speculation, but a living and ever-present reality. I soon felt that if there was a God then this man could speak about Him with a sort of authority from Him. If religion differs from philosophy in being a voice of certainty, then I realised after only a few hours in Maulana Aftab-ud-Din Ahmad's company that he had the key of religion. Having a certainty of personal experience together with a powerful intellect to understand and interpret his experience, he alone could remove the doubts of others. Withal his explanation of religious verities and precepts was rational enough to satisfy the most critical mind. He believed that Islam encourages free thinking, and he was himself an original thinker. In spite of his intense devotion to religion, Maulana Aftab-ud-Ahmad was not a fanatic. He had broadmindedness and tolerance which can come only to him who is himself sure of truth. He could say, in the words of Browning:

Not for such hopes and fears
Annulling youth's brief years,
Do I remonstrate: folly wide the mark!
Rather I prize the doubt
Low kinds exist without,
Finished and finite clods, untroubled by a spark.

What absolutely amazed me was the vast range and depth of Maulana Aftab-ud-Din Ahmad's knowledge. He was as deeply read in the old religious classics as he was conversant with the latest developments and trends of scientific and philosophical thought. He had studied the Holy Qur'an under the able guidance of the late Maulana Shabbir Ahmad Usmani, and then of the late Maulana Muhammad Ali and had drunk deep of the fountain of religious knowledge made to flow by Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, the *Mujaddid* of this century. But Maulana Aftab-ud-Din Ahmad could also talk like a modern professor on the theories of Dr. Freud and Darwin. In this respect, he was unique among the great Muslim scholars of the Indo-Pakistan sub-continent. An idea of his vast knowledge can be had from the fact that he was an authority on Sufism on the one hand and Communism on the other. The essay on Sufism, contained in his introduction to his translation of *Futuh al-Ghaib*, is the best introduction to the subject I have come across. Sufism was to him a science, which was ever open to test. I cannot do better than to give a brief quotation from the *Maulana's* essay to help the reader appreciate his views on this difficult subject:

"The word *mysticism*, which is generally used to indicate this aspect of Islam, is a little misleading. The English word has an elusive atmosphere about it, whereas *tasawwuf* is a regular science with its set laws and a full scheme in details. It is based on palpable experiences which can be reproduced, like in any other science, under set circumstances. Every pilgrim has to pass through the same stages in his spiritual journey and these stages are readily recognisable by their detailed descriptions given unanimously by all masters. The landmarks and pitfalls are described in equally exhaustive particulars. Just as in any other course of study, there are methods in it to test the progress of the disciple and his merit. As in any other branch of knowledge, there are geniuses in this branch of study who create a stir in the world, but even the humblest learner can at least aspire to develop a living sense of the presence of God in the midst of our struggle for material existence. He also develops a taste for this culture and an interest in those who follow this path and thereby acquires an increasing control over his passions and desires for things worldly. It can be readily understood that this paves the way for real social peace, the crying need of the times. As for the more gifted pilgrims, but for them God would be a mere hypothesis. It is their experiences that have made God a palpable fact of experience and have made thinking humanity believe in the continuity of life after death. It is they who radiate a faith in life ever-lasting, which in its turn takes away the sting from death and enables us, average men, to view life with a sense of ease. They attain a perfect certainty about the existence of God by a speaking contact with Him and thereby act as the vicegerents of the Holy Prophet (SAW).. It is to these people that the Holy Prophet refers in his often quoted saying: 'The learned among my followers are like the prophets of Israel,' or, in another saying: 'The learned are the successors of the Prophets'" (Introduction to the English translation of *Futuh al-Ghaib* by M. Aftab-ud-Din Ahmad).

Maulana Aftab-ud-Din Ahmad was of the view that if the West could be made to appreciate the message of Islam and the Holy Prophet Muhammad's religious experience it was only through Sufism.

Then let us take the *Maulana's* knowledge of Communism. Several books have been published on the competitive study of Islam and Communism, but Maulana Aftab-ud-Din Ahmad's booklet, *Islam and Western Socialism*, is the most thought-provoking study on the subject. He realised the attraction that Communism has for the educated young men as he made a thorough study of the philosophy and practice of this godless and anti-religious Movement of Russia to be able to save the young men of Islam from becoming its victims. In his discourses and writings, he would often quote from *The Capital* of Karl Marx, the *Communist Manifesto*, and the writings of Engels, Lenin and other leading Communist authorities.

Only a short stay in England was sufficient to enable a man of Maulana Aftab-ud-Din Ahmad's penetrating vision and sound judgement to form a just view of the strength and weakness of the Western civilisation. His lecture delivered at the Sheffield University, published later under the title *Peace Programme of Muhammad*, is both proof of the *Maulana's* learning and intelligent understanding of the problem of the modern world and also a model of how Islam should be presented to the West. The people of the West and the Western educated men and women could readily appreciate Maulana Aftab-ud-Din Ahmad's approach to religion and presentation of Islam. He had a special technique to deal with the doubts and difficulties of the educated young men. In this respect again, he was unique among the missionaries of Islam. Over ten years ago he had surprised me by removing the obstacles against which I had stumbled in my efforts to appreciate Islam. He had found answers to the intellectual difficulties which seemed insuperable to me. Whenever I had any doubts, I would always write to him and prompt would come his reply which would invariably put me on the right path. Now that I regard my faith in Islam as my most valuable possession, I feel much obliged and indebted to Maulana Aftab-ud-Din Ahmad. His death is indeed an irreparable loss to Muslims. To me, it was the passing away of my best friend, philosopher and guide.

THE LAST MESSAGE TO THE COMMUNITY
The Desired Goal of the Ahmadiyya Movement is to Achieve Contentment
of the Heart

By Maulana Aftab-ud-Din Ahmad



"We should consider it a privilege to be of service to the cause of Muhammad, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, even if we are considered fools by our own people. I should remind you that the existing world with all its outward brilliance is on the way to collapse. A new world is in the making with the spiritual insight of the Ahmadiyya Movement as its foundation. Let us cut ourselves adrift from this present rotting world and align ourselves with that rather obscure new world that is silently taking shape. We must disdain the current world to be able to belong to the world of tomorrow. I think it is necessary to tell you that Islam as understood by me and a few others like ourselves will appear rather hard to maintain in the world before us; yet I assure you that this is the Islam of Muhammad and Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad and it is this that will save the world." [An English rendering of an excerpt from an Urdu article written by the late Maulana Aftab-ud-Din Ahmad on the death of the late Maulana Aziz Bakhsh Sahib, the elder brother of the late Maulana Muhammad Ali.- Ed.]

There exist so many arguments and evidences for the truth of Islam. From the time of the Promised Messiah up to the present day, the Ahmadiyya Movement has logically proved the truth of Islam by advancing numerous arguments. But our proof will remain incomplete and superficial if we failed to present to the world a contented heart along with strong arguments. Arguments can satisfy minds but it is only contentment that can quench the thirst of an ailing heart.

Not to mention the nations of the *Gog* and *Magog*; they are very intelligent. Their hell has so much been inflamed that they are wandering aimlessly here and there to extinguish it, without having the proper means to do so. Even our own people are feeling the pangs of the thirst created by the materialism which they borrowed from the West. Our intellectual discussions cannot satisfy them until we create in ourselves such a spiritual power which can give them peace of mind. Once a very intelligent Ahmadi asked a very great missionary of the Movement: "Have you achieved the contentment of heart?" Here, I am not concerned with the answer which was given to the question. The only thing which I want to emphasise here is

that we should be conscious of this very important fact, that the desired goal of our Movement is to achieve contentment of heart. And this is, indeed, the state which we have to give to the world and which the world expects from us. If it is true, then we should pay special attention to it, which the silent but practical life of late Maulana Aziz Bakhsh demonstrates to us. In order to lead us on this very path, Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, the Promised Messiah of this age, came.

FROM DAWN TO DUSK
Sudden death of Maulana Aftab-ud-Din Ahmad
by Nasir Ahmad

My dear father breathed his last at 9 a.m. on Friday 13 January 1956. He was feeling choking pains in his chest for the last two or three weeks which were actually due to the weakness of the heart. But during the last three or four days the pain became more severe and troublesome. On the night of 12th he talked to me about the introduction of the English translation of *Sahih al-Bukhari* and there was absolutely no sign of any serious and sudden happening. I usually leave home at 7 a.m. as I have to reach the college at 7:30 a.m. Before leaving home, the typist came and I went to my father's room to open the door for him to work. At that time, my father asked me from under his quilt: "Who is there?" I replied: "Nasir." As I am told by my dear mother, he gave dictation to the typist and then he went to latrine and afterwards took a bath with hot water.

But when he came back to his bed and was putting on the collar, he felt that his heart was sinking and he lay down on the bed. When my mother came with orange juice, which he used to take in the morning, she found my father's eyes turning up and down and he was breathing as if he was snoring. At once, she asked: "What is the matter, dear?" and tears flowed from his eyes. She called for a doctor but before the doctor arrived, my father was far away from us, in the next world. As usual, I had left home for college and just when I was attempting the last part of the last question in the examination hall, a friend of mine came and informed me that my father was seriously ill. I left the college and on the way I was thinking that God will surely give Father more time to live as he had to complete the translation of *Sahih al-Bukhari*. But lo! when I reached home, Father was no more in this world. I entered the room and removed the quilt. The calmness and satisfaction on his face were more than enough to give a grief-stricken son a reposing patience. And this was the only thing which kept me perfectly patient throughout the day. The *janaza* prayer was offered at 4 p.m. and then his body was taken to the Miani Sahib Cemetery where he was to be buried. There we all waited for Zafar, my younger brother, who was in Multan. He reached the cemetery at 8:30 p.m. and gave a departing kiss to his loving and affectionate father. Then we slowly and steadily laid my father's body down in his eternal bed.

MY DEAR FATHER – WHOM I SHALL NEVER SEE AGAIN

By Iqbal Ahmad (London)

"Our object is to bring about a renovation. Communism is also a revolutionary movement but our revolution is of a different kind. Communism wants a revolution through bloodshed and chaos. We do not believe in that. We do not want to establish the Qur'an by gaining power like Maulana Maudoodi. We want a revolution by way of humanity, meekness, tolerance and prayers. We do not demand political powers. We are a humble people and want Islam to be established in that manner."

Those who have known him from close quarters know these words came out of his heart and he lived such a life till his death.

I have many a times taken part in funeral processions from Ahmadiyya Buildings to Miani Sahib graveyard. Never did I know that I will be deprived of the opportunity of carrying the body of my late father to its last resting place. I never had the experience of the loss of one so dear as a father sitting thousands of miles away from home. I try to visualise those small little lanes of Ahmadiyya Buildings where I spent about fifteen years with my dear father. I try to think that I will no longer find him there. I have read the account of how he died, was carried to the graveyard, and quietly laid down to rest. There is still something within me, which says: "He is still there." I also believe he still is there. Perhaps his body may no longer exist, but his inspiring words and deeds of great conviction shall for ever live in the memories of those who have known him, and as long as the name of the Ahmadiyya Movement lives.

I understand that his biography is appearing elsewhere. I, therefore, do not want to repeat what has already been written. It is difficult to describe a man who had died. Still a few earnest words may perhaps help the readers to realise that we have lost a man who, with his words and actions, inspired many. He was my father, true. He had another role as well: that of a religious guide and teacher. His latter role dominated the first one.

In moments of tribulations, when one is bound to be despaired, I have observed my father praying and seeking divine guidance. Some years ago, my sister, who was a young child at that time, became very ill. One day, while I was trying to amuse her in her sickbed, she lost consciousness and became still. We all thought she had died. My younger brother and I rushed out to find a doctor. We came back with a doctor. He found she hadn't died and started giving her medical aid. After a while, she came to her senses, but all the while when we were worried and anxious, our father was praying silently to God. We thought medical aid had cured our sister, but he thought differently. He had a firm conviction in prayer, and he lived up to it.

He was a great admirer of Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din. When my father used to describe certain qualities of Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din, I could see he had translated many of them into his own life. He once related that a great defamer of Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din had come to the late Khwaja Sahib and explained how he had got into financial troubles. The Khwaja Sahib paid him a few hundred rupees. When some one questioned the late Khwaja Sahib about why he had helped someone who was not his well-wisher, he replied: "He was in need."

I can narrate similar incidents from my father's life. During the Anti-Ahmadiyya agitation, he used to give free homoeopathic medicine to those who were thirsty for his blood. A certain member of his staff happened to be dishonest. My father knew that, but instead of

reprimanding him, he prayed for him. It is strange, but true that that person did change his habits.

For years I have acted as his scribe. His thoughts always worked faster than his pen. Naturally, he had to seek someone's help. I did this for about 12 long years. I am not sorry for it. On the contrary, I believe those were the years when I learnt most and was able to read deep into the mind of my father. While words of conviction and arguments for the defence of Islam would flow out of his tongue, I would suddenly question him about what he had dictated. He wouldn't get annoyed. If he felt his argument was not strong enough, he would readily withdraw. If not, he would come out with his short, well-worded and convincing reply. And we would continue with our work. Those were the moments I enjoyed most with him. Those were the moments when I learnt about the true values of life. Those were the moments when I became convinced that he was no hypocrite, but a true, sincere and devout Muslim. Those were the moments when I felt his great mind projected into the open. Those were the moments when I realised his feeble body had tremendous strength to defend and present Islam. Those were the moments when his heart, mind and speech would work together. Those were the moments when I felt the heights to which a human mind can rise. Alas! Those moments will never come back to me.

He was once described by a member of the Christian Church as a "tall, slim, imposing figure. Very enthusiastic, but not fire-brand, whom every Christian man, woman and child should love despite the difference of his beliefs." That is an exact description of my late father. Everyone who met him felt that here is a man who believes and practices the great Qur'anic teaching, "Mankind is one family." He never distinguished between rich and poor, high or low, strong or weak. He had blood ties with Bengal and had great affection for those people but still he often used to say: "I wish I could die in England." He was cautious about the weaknesses of the British nation. He worked for seven or eight years in England, striking hard at the false doctrines of Christianity, but never once did he offend anyone; on the contrary, he won quite a good few to his faith, and many admirers.

He had the opportunity of welcoming to the Shah Jehan Mosque, at Woking, King Saud, King Farouq, and Haile Salassie, King of Ethiopia. Never once did I hear him mentioning these incidents, for he was careful not to indulge in self-praise. He tried to remain humble and meek throughout his life. On the occasion of the last annual gathering of the Ahmadiyya Anjuman Ishaat-i Islam, Lahore, he gave his last public speech. In that he said:

"Our object is to bring about a renovation. Communism is also a revolutionary movement but our revolution is of a different kind. Communism wants a revolution through bloodshed and chaos. We do not believe in that. We do not want to establish the Qur'an by gaining power like Maulana Maudoodi. We want a revolution by way of humanity, meekness, tolerance and prayers. We do not demand political power. We are a humble people and want Islam to be established in that manner."

Those who knew him from close quarters know these words came out of his heart and he lived such a life till his death.

As everyone knows, life is a hard struggle. I was always anxious to relieve my family of the difficulties it experienced. He would observe such tendencies in my mind and would remark to his friends:

"I would rather see him (myself) in rags but writing for the cause of Islam."

Last year I left the services of the Working Muslim Mission and joined the Institute of Chartered Accountants in London. While an average father would have been happy on such an occasion, my father had a different thing to say. Below, I give an extract from the letter I received from my father dated 18 August 1955:

"We are glad you have succeeded in finding a way to the career you so earnestly desired. But never forget to pray and to do something for the cause of the Movement, even for a part of the day, and do not grudge any sacrifice for its advancement, whatever the appreciations or otherwise, even of our own people. Our values should be spiritual, not material. We should consider it a privilege to be of service to the cause of Muhammad (SAW) even if we are considered fools by our own people. I should remind you that the existing world with all its outward brilliance is on the way to collapse. A new world is in the making, with the spiritual insight of the Ahmadiyya Movement as its foundation. Let us cut ourselves adrift from this present rotting world and align ourselves with that rather obscure new world that is silently taking shape. We must disdain the current world to be able to belong to the world of tomorrow. I think it is necessary to tell you that Islam as understood by me and a few others like ourselves will appear hard to maintain in the world before us; and yet I assure you that this is the Islam of Muhammad (SAW) and Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad and it is this that will save the world. ...All I mean is that you should not make a compromise in living a life which I have taught you to do. I don't think I need to tell you anything more."

The spirit of the letter is self-evident. How many fathers would write such a letter to their sons today? I am not sorry because I have lost a father; I am sad because I have lost such a father, who was different from others. So I seek consolation in the fact that my father was one of those great luminaries who light and guide the path of human progress. May God enable us to become his worthy sons.

THE LATE MAULANA AFTAB-UD-DIN AHMAD

by M. I. Zafar, Rawalpindi.

It is an admitted fact that only the religion of Islam has laid down the correct and reasonable measure of man's righteousness and worldly activities in every sphere of his transitory life. A good Muslim is, therefore, a thoroughly good and noble man. A Muslim, who is always thinking of his own selfish ends and devising methods of self-aggrandisement cannot be called a good Muslim; nay, even a good man. It is a candid truth that it is difficult to be a good man but it is still more difficult to be a good Muslim. Everywhere, regardless of the religion one professes, a good man is defined to be one who thinks about the betterment and advancement of his fellow-beings simultaneously with his own and his family's welfare and betterment.

Islam lays great stress upon the needs of the spirit or mind. It is why immense emphasis is laid upon the development of intellectual faculties. The mind can only be invigorated by acquiring knowledge. Thus, for a good Muslim it is imperative to strive for the attainment of knowledge coupled with the maintenance of physical strength. Man is a rational as well as a moral being. The knowledge of Islamic principles, their application and acting upon them in

an earnest and honest manner can enable a person to achieve the cherished goal of success in this life and salvation in the life to come.

Every sensible person knows that there are various duties which one has to perform in this world: duties to the Creator (God, the Most High), to one's country, to family members, relatives, neighbours and so on, which are entrusted to man. A noble man not only performs his duties to Allah, the Almighty, but also his duties to human beings. It is the way in which one renders service to humanity, which ennobles a man. Islam lays immense stress upon the acquirement and imparting of knowledge. The more a Muslim strives for gaining knowledge, affording guidance to others, the nobler he becomes in the eyes of Allah, the Most Wise, and in those of his fellow-beings. It is, therefore, deemed the supreme duty and sublime attribute of a good and noble Muslim to cultivate the principles of Islam and to guide his brothers-in-faith particularly, and the people of other religions in general, so that they may not tread the path of unrighteousness and immorality.

When we read the short sketch of the life of the late Maulana Aftab-ud-Din Ahmad, editor of *The Light*, given on the front page of the said English weekly dated 24 January 1956, it becomes abundantly clear that most of his life was spent in the service of Islam and thereby the Muslims of the world. He spent his youthful years in the acquirement of knowledge – secular as well as religious. His thirst for knowledge of Islam took him to the great Muslim scholar and renowned preacher, the late Maulana Shabbir Ahmad Usmani.. Here the late Maulana Aftab-ud-Din Ahmad acquired considerable knowledge of the true religion of Islam and quenched his thirst for knowledge. It is evident that the late *Maulana* was a born writer and had been created for the specific task of propagation of Islam.

His real task in life started in 1926 on his occupying a position on the editorial staff of *The Light* Lahore. Besides this, he went on acquiring knowledge about Islam. Allah, the All-wise, knew that this enthusiastic young scholar would prove himself a true missionary of Islam, as he had been endowed with all the requisite attributes and capabilities of a noble Muslim. After a couple of years he was deputed to act as a missionary and he started his mission among the most advanced of all the hill tribes of Assam. In connection with his missionary work, he wrote several books on Islam in the Khasi language, which was indeed a tremendous task, but his zeal and enthusiasm enabled him to accomplish this great task. In 1931, he proceeded to England to carry on his missionary work. Here, the immaculate honour of acting as the Assistant *Imam* of the Shah Jehan Mosque was conferred upon him, in which capacity he worked for two years. He acted again as *Imam* of the said Mosque in England for five years.

His noble task in life was that of fighting the evil forces and the ungodly movements started in 1939. He started writing books on Islam against the atheists, particularly on Communism. These notable writings of his spread his renown far and wide. Being a true Muslim, he was selflessly, zealously and sedulously devoted to the task of propagation of Islamic principles and striking hard blows on the enemies of Islam. He not only imparted Islamic inculcations, but also counteracted the forces of ungodliness. He frustrated the odious schemes of Communism and unfolded the great adaptive power of Islamic principles with frank and simple explanations.

His editorial notes, which appeared in *The Light*, Lahore are thought-provoking and invite the Muslim's attention to the great need of propagating Islamic principles and acting upon them themselves. In fact, he hated things which are contrary to reason. He was in favour of a

progressive Islam, free from the bigotry and prejudices brought in by the half-educated *mullahs*. His writings are effective, forceful and free from conceit and deception. He was gifted with straight-thinking and had the capability of an exhaustive working and wide vision of Islam. The task of translating the Arabic work of Shaikh Abdul Qadir Gilani, *Futuh al-Ghaib*, *Sahih al-Bukhari* (Traditions) and of other books is of no ordinary magnitude and deserves our profound admiration. In short, the late Maulana Aftab-ud-Din Ahmad was endowed with true missionary spirit and he worked for Islam with enthusiastic perseverance and limitless fervour. Every educated Muslim should try to follow his example and should devote himself sedulously, whole-heartedly and zealously to propagate the truly divine religion of Islam and to act according to the Islamic principles so that the misguided humanity be saved from the disastrous end. It is the duty of every true believer to work selflessly for the cause of Islam because our salvation and the safety of the people of the world lies in following the luminous path of Islam.

In the end, I pray to Allah, the Most Kind, that the soul of late *Maulana* may rest in peace. *Ameen!*

DOES MAULANA AFTAB-UD-DIN AHMAD PASS AWAY?

By Ata-ur-Rahman, Dacca.

The news that Maulana Aftab-ud-Din Ahmad is no more is terrible indeed. The world is in the grip of giant atheistic sway and the physical presence of the great *Maulana* was so much needed. But we must submit to Almighty Allah and pray.

A living example of the existence of God, the great *Maulana* lived, thought and worked for one great purpose – to restore man's faith in God and His Prophet. His words, his voice, his arguments had a charm that is not available elsewhere. He may be rightly called the “God-gifted voice of Islam,” May Allah forgive me if I am guilty of hyperbole. To me, he was like this. He was my teacher, friend and leader, but even for a moment he would not let me feel that he was superior. He was so humble that he would not order me, though I was pleased to have his orders. Being entitled to command me, he would never command; rather, he was always pleased to carry out what I wished him to do. Praise be to Allah for such a man.

His writings on a complex subject like Communism are full of logic and truth. Keen readers cannot leave him unread. His tracts and essay regarding the marriages of the Holy Prophet (SAW) alone can be considered as significant service to Islam. These impartial and sincere remarks are free from exaggeration, and the Muslim world is indebted to him for this timely intellectual and spiritual guidance.. His translation works also bear impress of his sincerity and spiritual zest.. *Does God Hear Prayers?*, *Futuh-ul-Ghaib*, and *Sahih al-Bukhari* will be valuable assets to the Islamic literature.

The great *Maulana* captivated me by his love and gentleness. So it is very difficult for me to compose myself at his sudden and untimely death. The thought that I shall not see his smiling face anymore gives me intense pain which I cannot express in words. I shall continue to feel his absence till my death.

If Allah helps me I would like to take up his unfinished work. And that would be a great honour for me to do something for a cause which was very dear to him.

WORLD CONGRESS OF FAITHS
OXFORD CONGRESS
Muslim Service Conducted by the Maulana Aftab-ud-Din Ahmad
Imam, The Shah Jehan Mosque, Woking, England.

In the name of God, the Beneficent, the Merciful.
All praise is due to God, the Lord of the worlds.
The Beneficent, the Merciful.
Master of the day of Requital.
Thee do we serve, and Thee do we beseech for help.
Guide us on the right path.
The path of those upon whom Thou hast bestowed favours.
Not of those upon whom wrath is brought down, .
Nor those who go astray. – *Ameen. - (The Opening Chapter).*

Ultimate Source of all strength and beauty

Casting aside all our misleading sense of achievements, and rising above the feeling of the apparent vastness and grandeur of the Creation, we stand with awe and humility before God, the One Invisible Author and Sustainer of all, to realise how, in Him, lie all strength and beauty, and how these abound in the Universe only by His sufferance. As we perceive in Him the Originator and Sustainer of all life, all power, all comfort and all happiness, we perceive also how His power and control encompass the whole of possible existence. We feel how this immense diversity of the creation is held together throughout by His one beneficent purpose, and how, coming nearer to ourselves, the destinies of all the units of human society are guided from step to step with love and care by His overwhelmingly beneficent will. We further realise that, but for the unceasing manifestation of His mercifulness, nothing can exist and thrive, and that, as He suffers everything and every system to exist and grow, He also consummates it at the end of a fixed period to make it fulfil some higher object of existence. We remember that He is the Author of all laws, and the highest of His laws is beneficence and mercy.

As we realise all this, we feel that the only part we can play in the scheme of the creation is to follow His will with all our faculties of body, mind and soul, and that therein alone lies our highest achievement - the fulfilment of the supreme object of our existence. We have not created ourselves, nor do we know our destiny; our destiny is known only to Him, Who has created us. The knowledge of that destiny can come to us only by degrees, and only if we apply to Him with due humility of spirit.

All goodness lies in submission to the Divine Will

It is in thus appealing to the Author of our destiny for knowledge of it that our spiritual life lies. The spirit of self-sufficiency in us is disastrous to our spiritual existence. The scheme of creation is irresistible. The Qur'an says: "Everything submits to Him willingly or unwillingly." It is the willing submission to the Author's scheme that constitutes spiritual life. The nearer this willingness of ours approaches to perfection, the healthier we are spiritually, and the more cheerful, joyous and comprehending in our inner nature. This effort towards willing submission could not, however, proceed from our assertive ego, which makes it appear as if the strength that the mind needs to overcome its own imperfections. including the strength, willingly submit to the course of destiny, lies in the mind itself. Let us recognise instead that our mind is itself a creation of God, and, as such depends upon Him even for the

ultimate strength of submission. It is this total, unreserved reliance on God at every step of our spiritual journey that will enable us to understand His will for us, and understanding it, submit to it cheerfully. This is the straight and plain path to our destiny.

There are two other paths – one, the path of arrogantly questioning the wisdom of the Divine scheme and refusing at every step to follow destiny, and the other, the path of self-sufficiency that urges the mind, instead of discovering the destiny appointed for it as a part of the whole, to give the individual self and the rest of Creation a destiny from itself. This, indeed, amounts to a denial of any scheme of Creation. Both these paths, being wrong, are fraught with pain and suffering to our existence – both immediate and ultimate. May we be given light enough to eschew both these paths and understand not only that the Creation has a purpose, but also that the purpose is to give the grandest fulfilment to the object of our existence.

As the name itself signifies, *Islam* is the path of submission. The capacity for walking along this path, no doubt, lies dormant in every person, but the inclination to adopt one of the other two paths is very strong in man as he emerges into moral life. The higher nature of submission is found submerged in the lower nature of disobedience. According to the Qur'an, the self of man does not emerge into this world in a perfected or refined form. Like a noble metal, the soul of man is pushed forth from the physical to the moral world in a crude form mixed up with all sorts of dross. To use the words of the Book:

"And the soul and its perfection, so He intimated to it by inspiration its deviating. From truth and its guarding (against evil), He will indeed be successful who purifies it, and he will indeed fail who corrupts it" (91 : 7-10).

The process of self-purification

Our spiritual life, therefore, consists of a sustained effort to purify the original but latent spirit of submission in the soul from the dross of the spirit of rebellion. This is not a path strewn with roses. Like all real achievements, it is beset with difficulties. Like all real comforts, it has to be earned through discomfort. All the different aspects of life have to be harmonised; each and every faculty of ours has to be disciplined for the purpose of that harmonisation. It is indeed "an uphill road," as the Qur'an would put it, but it is the only road. Difficult though the path is, the inexhaustible helpfulness of Divine beneficence, not only promises, but assures us, of the achievement of our goal. His help comes first in the shape of revealed ordinances for the general guidance of our individual and social lives on all their different plans. These are accompanied by the examples of the persons who receive this revelation for the rest of the people, and who are specially purified by the Holy Spirit of God to serve the purpose. These persons are called *nabi* in Arabic, imperfectly translated into English by the word *prophet*, and they have appeared in all ages and among all nations. We should pay indiscriminate and unreserved homage to all of them, as this will open our mind to the universality of Divine Light in human society – a stepping-stone towards cosmic consciousness.

These two principles of universal Divine guidance through dispensations and appointed personalities are the lines along which our spiritual struggle should be carried on. The course of the struggle is long one, and consists of innumerable stages, which can broadly be reduced to three. The first is the one to which the spirit of submission is practically non-existent, and the self manifests only the overwhelming passion of insubordination and sin.

Three stages on the road to spiritual journey

The self at this stage is in its original crude form, and has not yet received the supporting light of God. In Islamic terminology, it is called *nafs al-ammara* or the *commanding self*. The animal self of man holds sway over his whole consciousness and completely overshadows his spiritual vision. It creates for him a false heaven of bestiality. The ignorant self wallows in and gloats over it. The terms *morality* and *moral standards* are meaningless to it, and it does not follow such standards excepting in so far as it is compelled to do so by convention or by the physical power of others. Then, by a prolonged effort through patient prayers and disciplinary measures, one reaches the second stage of the spiritual journey. Here, the spirit of obedience and submission does make itself felt, but is still too weak to have the mastery over the other spirit of insubordination. To borrow a biblical phrase, "the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak." It is called in Islam *nafs-ul-lawwamah* or the *chiding self*. Remorse, repentance, and what is called the pangs of conscience are the characteristics of this stage, during which the difficulty of the spiritual struggle is felt especially. Doubts and despair beset the path, and the pilgrim is, spiritually speaking, almost bled to death in the course of this struggle. Indeed, at times he cries out in despair "*mataa nasrullaah?*" (Where is the help of God?).

But just at these critical moments the voice of God rings in the soul, saying:

"Behold! The help of God is very near."

Thus, supported subtly, yet tangibly, by the hand of God, and gradually overcoming the different weaknesses of the flesh, the self of man progresses till it reaches the third and final stage of its evolution, termed in Islam *nafs-ul-mutmainnah* or the *self in repose*. At this stage, there is complete harmony between the Divine purpose and the desire of the self. The soul is completely free from the rule of the restless and insubordinate flesh. Peace has descended on the soul. The self has entered into complete submission. May God lead our souls along the straight path to this submission and peace!

"O God! We ask of Thee steadfastness in our pursuits. We ask of Thee the intent for good action, and power to thank Thee for Thy benevolence, and the power to render Thee devoted service. We ask of Thee the tongue that speaketh truth, and the heart that entertaineth no misgivings and the gift of fellow-feeling" (Prophet Muhammad, adapted).

"Our Lord! Call us not to account if we have forgotten or erred in anything. Our Lord! Lay not on us a burden heavier than we have strength to bear. Wipe out the faults that we have committed, and cover us from any in future, and have mercy on us."

Allahumma antas-Salaamu wa minkas Salaamu; tabaarakta yaa Zal-jalaali wal-ikraam (O God. Thou art the Author of peace, and from Thee comes peace. Blessed art Thou, O Lord of Glory and Honour).

SUDDEN DEATH OF AN INVETERATE SCHOLAR

By Babu Sheikh Ghulam Qadir, Lahore.

With broken heart I am giving vent to my aggrieved feelings which lay in my heart over the sudden death of Maulana Aftab-ud-Din Ahmad. The deceased possessed many a sterling quality. He was a man of light and learning, through and through a religions veteran, a rational scholar but at the same time a real mystic in its literal sense. In addition to his usual daily prayers, he offered *Tahajjud* prayer in the early hours just before dawn. Before conducting his day-to-day office work, he used to impart the sublime teachings of the Holy Qur'an (*Dars-i Qur'an*) to his subordinates daily for about half an hour. He was really a blessing for his family members and the staff working under him. He was a sympathetic and faithful friend, a fair-spoken man, and a sweet-tempered gentleman. These natural gifts won for him the respect, honour and affection of everybody who came in close contact with him. He was a wise and penetrating thinker and a writer specially gifted with an impressive style. Apart from discharging his duties diligently as Secretary of the Woking Muslim Mission, he was very ably and successfully running the weekly *Light*. He rendered about four parts of *Sahih al-Bukhari* (the first part is already in the press) into English. He also translated into English the Arabic discourses of Sheikh Abdul Qadir Gilani – *Futuh-ul-Ghaib*. He was busy in translating *Ghalba-i Quran* (Triumph of the Qur'an) into the English language, written in Urdu by Hazrat Maulana Sadr-ud-Din..

Muslim and non-Muslim societies in England and elsewhere in the Western Continents held the *Maulana* in great esteem.

The news of his sudden death rocked every member of the *Jama'at* like a bolt from the blue. The *Jama'at* rightly took this tragic event as an irreparable loss to the organisation that has created an unbridgeable gulf.

The deceased left a widow, three sons and two daughters. His eldest son, Mr. Iqbal Ahmad, is studying Chartered Accountancy in London, and is also helping Dr. S. M. Abdullah, the *Imam* of the Shah Jehan Mosque, Woking, England in the discharge of his duties because the latter is weak due to a recent heart attack. The second son, Mr. Nasir Ahmad, is to appear in the LL.B. examination this year, and has also taken up the duties of the Secretary of the Woking Muslim Mission in place of his deceased father. The third son, Mr. Zafar Ahmad, is studying in the second year of the M.B.B.S. at Nishtar Medical College, Multan. His eldest daughter is in the middle and is studying at the Islamia Girls High School, Lahore.

In short, all the three sons of the deceased are like their father, and are determined to serve the cause of Islam side by side with their particular vocations.

I wish them God-speed. -*Ameen*.

HE IS NOT DEAD

by **Habib H. Vazir, Karachi**

I first met Maulana Aftab-ud-Din Ahmad in September 1953, but I knew him from his writings since 1934, over nineteen years. I have had the pleasure of exchanging letters with him: letters answering my questions, enlightening me on points of doubts, and explaining problems. But in 1953 my wife and I first met him and I was surprised to find a very unassuming man. He was then busy translating the *Sahih al-Bukhari*. The last time I saw him was in November 1955 during my last visit to Lahore. The interview was very brief as I had to leave and I promised to call on him during my next visit to Lahore in January. I was late by eighteen days. He had gone to his Maker.

He was one of the truly great; not from amongst those great men who just swim on the surface for men to see, great men who leave a trail of newspaper publicity; he was not that; he was not that: he was one who dived deep into the ocean for pearls; he was that great that his name was written in the rolls of God.

His writings were sincere and simple but had force. His appeal to reason was striking. His criticism did not stoop to vituperations; in fact, some of his editorials, whilst criticising, found some apparent good in the opponents. And in his love for Islam, he neither spared the non-Muslims for their false propaganda against Islam nor the Muslims for being a bad advertisement of Islam.

His defence of Prophet Muhammad was never apologetic. The Prophet to him needed no apology for his deeds or words in relation to place and time. To him, the Prophet's words and deeds applied as much to all places and times.

As I stood over his grave offering *Fatihah*, where he is resting with the valiant soldiers of Islam: Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din and Maulana Muhammad Ali, I realised with tears that he, with Khwaja Sahib and Maulana Muhammad Ali, have gone from us but they are not dead. Good men devoted to the cause of God and humanity do not die. They live in the spirit and in their worthy cause and work.

May their successors prove as noble and worthy as them.

SOME MEMOIRS ON MAULANA AFTAB-UD-DIN AHMAD

By **Mr. Mominul Haque, Noakhali (East Pakistan)**

Oh Lord, now I am ready
When Thy time shall come,
For I have made my evening lamp ready for Thee;
O, When Thou shall lit it with Thy Fire? - Tagore

It was the month of September 1955 when I first came into contact with him, which continued till the end of his life. Indeed, it is a very short course, but for the remembrance of a lofty man like the late Maulana Aftab-ud-Din Ahmad, and the influence that he imprints on the mind of one who comes into contact with him, it is more than sufficient. He has

practically carved a deep-rooted influence on my mind and mood of thought, which will be a constant source of inspiration and hope in times of difficulty or distress.

"Never be disappointed nor be discouraged by the agony of life," was his constant advice to the young men. "You are not to count the numbers of failures but to act ceaselessly." He could advise this as his life itself was a clear testimony of ceaseless action, sometimes battered with failures, sometimes garlanded with success.

I had the opportunity of talking to him several times, and discussing for hours together. I will cherish those moments throughout my life as a precious specimen of my memory. Man is always alone in the deep corner of his heart. There is no companion in that realm, save and except some past memories, which shine like a diamond on the seashore.

I can recollect one gloomy evening: we were returning from the Lahore Fort, and while we were passing by the rooms erected on the two sides of the Roshnai Gate, he suddenly told me: "Stop here."

Standing by the side of the footpath, I asked him in a bewildering voice: "Why? What has happened?"

The late *Maulana* asked me: "Can you tell me who lived in these buildings?"

My answer was in the negative.

"Look. These were the buildings where once the Cabinet members, secretaries and dignitaries of the Moghul time used to dwell. This was the centre of Muslim scholars and men of high intellect who would teach students from various countries of the world. These rooms were once the dwelling place of seekers of knowledge but are now in the care of the night birds."

"And the buildings in the surroundings now?"

He stopped and mused for a couple of minutes. "It has become the den of all types of sordidity and meanness, exudated from the upper society, where immorality prevails, wilderness reigns."

Again he paused, but smiled in the next moment and told me in an amazing voice: "If you like to have a measuring rod to estimate the abyss of the downfall of the Muslims, then look to these rooms and the surrounding buildings and for a moment go through the past history."

He ended it with a similar smile. But it was crystal clear to me that behind the smiling face there lay a burning soul, pierced with grief and sorrow but determined like a rock to uphold his fellow brother to the pinnacle of glory and achievement for which, from 1923 onward till his last breathing, he worked with an undaunted spirit, being unmindful of personal pleasure and comfort.

"This world has become bestial, fraught with corruption and immorality, injustice and heinousness. Is it civilisation? Tell me, how long will this untold sufferings of millions of souls prevail in the world? Answer me, how long this will continue?"

A tormented soul, full of sympathy and love for mankind, placed this awful question before me, not more than thirty-six hours before his sudden demise on 13 January 1956.

I know, in spite of all the scientific and material advancement of modern civilisation, we are still heading towards another disastrous global war. Hatred among individuals, an unceasing appetite to snatch and hold from all among the nations, have made the present age poisonous and disintegrated into hostile camps. While I think of a solution for this world tension, it is not altogether optimism; rather a gloomy pessimism shivers me with horror like Antarctic cold. I know not how long the sufferings of mankind will continue.

"Strengthen your faith and it is faith and faith alone that can save you from this down-current of the present world," he told me one night in his usual confident voice.

To reinforce his argument, he echoed the words of Thomas Carlyle: "Belief is great, life-giving." I still remember those lines which he read from the book, *Heroes and Hero-worship*:

"To the Arab Nation, it was as a birth from darkness into light. Arabia first become alive by means of it (there is no God but Allah). A poor shepherd people roaming unnoticed in its desert since the creation of the world; a Hero-Prophet was sent down to them with a word they could believe: See, the unnoticed becomes world-notable, the small has grown world-great. Within one century afterwards Arabia is at Granada on this hand, at Delhi on that. ... Glancing in valour and splendour and the light of genius, Arabia shines through long ages over a great section of the world. *Belief is great, life-giving*. The history of a nation becomes fruitful, soul-elevating, great, as soon as it believes."

Even now, I feel, those rhythmic voice of the reciter are still ringing in my ears. Alas! Nobody knows how sad it is to recollect those past memories.

"If Muslims were to live as a man, they can do it only by being Muslims, otherwise let them denounce their faith. The sooner they do it, the better for them," he said, during one of our discourses.

"If the rest of the mankind, without adhering to their spiritual faith with the state business, can live and prosper gradually, why not Muslims? Your conclusion as regards the future of the Muslim nation is based on fallacy," I tried to refute him thus.

He said: "When I say Muslim I do mean an ardent follower of Islam. And Islam is not bracketed into some watertight compartments. It is a composite whole, which gives a clear-cut philosophy on which the entire structure of human life is based. If you discard one, you disavow another."

We know death is an inevitable end of one's life. But still, we are afraid of it lest we will be thrown into the darkness of oblivion. But the man around whom the present portion of my memoirs is taking shape is one of those few who disdained the frowns of death, not only by his outstanding personality which he exerted upon his contemporaries but by the difficult part he played in shaping the course of the history of his community, which is passing through a period of transition. Today, if he is forgotten, I will not be surprised, but I am sure a day will definitely come when the future historian, in order to record his nation's advancement from darkness to light, will reach by the side of a grave wherein laid an old man of only 55 who kept himself fully aloof from all sorts of shallow vanity and cheap personal exhibition, in order to serve the cause of Islam by the last drop in his vein.

I heard him reciting many a time a Bengali poem of Tagore, for whom his estimation was so great:

Oh Lord, now I am ready
When Thy time shall come,
For I have made my evening lamp ready for Thee,
O, when Thou shall lit it with the Fire?

To me, like others, his death was a sudden calamity, but for him, death was an expected guest for whom, as if he waited with an unhesitating mind and a prepared soul. And that is the characteristic of an unforgettable man.

CONDOLENCE MESSAGES AND LETTERS

Passing away of Maulana Aftab-ud-Din Ahmad

On Sunday 22 January 1956, a meeting was held at 3 p.m. at the East Pakistan Islam Mission, 28 Old Mughaltuli, Dacca, to condole the death of Maulana Aftab-ud-Din Ahmad and to discuss the noble work of his dedicated life. Dr. S. Z. Ahmed was in the chair. Maulvis Ataur Rahman, Sirajul Haq, Syed Amjad Husain, Abdus Samad Jamali and Kazi Yusuf Hossain dealt with the life and works of the late *Maulana* and discussed ways and means to commemorate his name and make it eternally useful to the youths of Pakistan.

The following resolutions were then passed:

1. This meeting records its deepest sense of sorrow and loss at the sudden and untimely demise of Maulana Aftab-ud-Din Ahmad, *ex-Imam* of the Woking Mosque, England, Editor of *The Light*, Lahore, Secretary of the Woking Muslim Mission and Literary Trust, Lahore and one of the pillars of the Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement. It extends its heartfelt sympathy and consolation to the members of the late *Maulana's* family and prays to Allah for His choicest blessings on the soul of the deceased.
2. Resolved that steps be taken to form a committee with two members from the East Pakistan Islam Mission, two from among the members of the late *Maulana's* family, and four from among his friends and admirers in East and West Pakistan for compiling the important writings of the great *Maulana*.
3. Resolved that a literary society, called the "Aftab-ud-Din Literary Society," be established in Dacca to commemorate the name of the late lamented *Maulana*.
4. Resolved that copies of the proceedings of this meeting be sent to Mr. Nasir Ahmad and to the Secretary of the Lahore Ahmadiyya Anjuman and to the Press.

Abdul Samad Jamali
Missionary-in-charge, Dacca.

Embassy of Pakistan
5. Giessereiweg
Berne
Switzerland

Janab Secretary Sahib,

21 January 1956

Your kind letter of the 14th instant brought the very sad and shocking news of the sudden demise of Maulana Aftab-ud-Din Ahmad (*Inna lillahi wa inna ilaihi raji'oon*). His death will not be a loss to only his family and friends but also, I am sure, to the Mission and to the cause of Islam. We were just like brothers since our college days and he always held esteem and regard from all of us. We were proud of him and will remember him so long we live, but we are to be satisfied with whatever Allah bestows on us. May He grant him peace in Heaven.

I will be thankful if you will kindly convey to Bhabi Sahiba my best sense of sorrow for Aftab Bhai's death. Please also let me know how the family will now be maintained because, so far as I know, none of the children is settled in life to look after the dependents.

With best regards to you and others of the Mission.

Your sincerely,
(Dr.) A. M. Malik

(At that time, he was Central Minister for Labour and Parliamentary Affairs. For sometime he was Acting president of Pakistan. He was also Governor of East Pakistan during the last phase of the unfortunate fall of Dacca. – Ed.)

CONDOLENCE MEETING IN DACCA **BAR LIBRARY**

A meeting of the citizens of Dacca was held in the local Bar Library Hall at 3:30 p.m. on 20 January 1956 to condole the death of Maulana Aftab-ud-Din Ahmad, Editor of *The Light*, Lahore, and ex-*Imam* of the Shah Jehan Mosque, Woking, England. Mr. Nazir-ud-Din Ahmad, Advocate, Federal Court, presided and the following gentlemen spoke on the different aspects of the great *Maulana's* life dedicated to the holy cause of the propagation of Islam in the world in general and the Christian lands in particular: Mr. Abul Hashim, Maulvi Abdus Samad Jamali, Syed Abdul Bazel, Dr. Muhsin, Maulvi Aatur Rahman and Mr. Abdul Ghani Khan.

Special mention was made by the President as well as the Speakers of the late *Maulana's* great erudition, piety, humility, integrity of character and life of dedication. His lifelong service to his faith and contribution towards giving a shape to the new thought in Islam were spoken of as highly inspiring and of immense value.

Maulana Aftab-ud-Din Ahmad was born in Tola, Burdwan in January 1901. He passed his Matriculation Examination at the Calcutta University in the First Division and passed B.A.

with distinction from the Presidency College, Calcutta. He then went to Deoband and then to the Centre of the Ahmadiyya Movement at Lahore for further Arabic and theological studies.

He was the first Missionary to the Shillong Islamic Mission, which he founded in 1927. In 1931, he went to England as Deputy *Imam* of the Woking Mosque and was appointed, after two years, as its chief *Imam*, a post he held till 1939. The *Maulana* edited the world-renowned monthly *The Islamic Review*, England, for several years and was its Associate editor until the time of his death. He was Secretary of the Woking Muslim Mission and Trust, Lahore and also editor of the weekly *Light* of Ahmadiyya Anjuman Isha'at-i Islam, Lahore.. He wrote several books on Islam in Khasi and English.

Proposals were made at the meeting to publish a compilation of the late *Maulana's* important writings and also to establish an Islamic centre in East Pakistan to commemorate his name. Resolutions were passed recording the deep sense of sorrow at his sudden and untimely death by heart-failure at Lahore on 13 January 1956, and sympathising with the members of the bereaved family. The meeting terminated with fervent prayers for Allah's blessings on the soul of the deceased.

Prior to the meeting, Maulvi Abdus Samad Jamali, Missionary, East Pakistan Islam Mission, had referred, in his *Jumu'ah* sermon, to the great *Maulana's* passing away as an irreparable loss to the Ahmadiyya Movement as also to the Muslim world in general and, after the *Jumu'ah* prayers, a *janaza* service had been held under the *imamat* of the Missionary.

-The Daily Azad, Dacca

**East Pakistan Association
34/35 The Mall
Lahore**

"This extraordinary meeting of the East Pakistan Association expresses deep sorrow at the sudden demise of Maulana Aftab-ud-Din Ahmad, Ex-*Imam* of Shah Jehan Mosque, Woking England, Editor of *The Light*, and a member of this Association.

This Association further conveys its heartfelt sympathy to Mrs. Aftab-ud-Din Ahmad and her children on their bereavement.

The copy of the above resolution was forwarded to the widow of the late Maulana Aftab-ud-Din Ahmed which was passed on Sunday 25 January 1956.

**Yours faithfully,
Salah-ud-Din Nasir
(Asstt. Secretary)**

Begum Aftab-ud-Din Ahmad.

Ahmadiyya Buildings Lahore. *Jama'at* of Karachi shocked. Sudden demise of Maulana Aftab-ud-Din Ahmad.. May Allah bless his soul.

Secretary

**Tableegh
Lahore**

Kindly convey deepest sympathy to Maulana Aftab-ud-Din's family.

**Masud Beg
Head Master
Govt. High School. Pasrur (Sialkot)**

**Dacca Law Reports
Shanti Nagar
Ramna, Dacca**

Dated 16 January 1956

Janab Manager Sahib,

I am deeply shocked to learn about the sudden passing away of Maulana Aftab-ud-Din Sahib. His death has been premature and his service to the cause of Islam both in the West as well as the East will ever remain a shining example of a dedicated life and will be cherished by all those who have the cause of the religion of Islam at heart. I look upon him as a great man because he was so sincere and so unostentatious and so friendly in his talks with others.

He had undertaken a noble unfinished work namely, the English translation of the *Sahih al-Bukhari* commenced by that great figure, the late Maulana Muhammad Ali, and before he himself could finish the job he has been called away by his Creator. We earnestly hope the work will continue till it is complete.

I humbly join numerous other friends and admirers in conveying my sincere condolence to the bereaved family of the late Maulvi Aftab-ud-Din Ahmad Sahib.

I suggest that a special issue of the *Light* be brought out giving the biographical sketches and services of the great son of Islam and something enduring may be done to perpetuate his memory.

I have the latest issue of the *Light* which contains the second portion of my article, "The Qur'an, *Sunnah*, etc." I had been so very busy with the work as the Editor of the Dacca Law Reports since December last that I had little or no leisure to take up any serious intellectual work. I, however, hope to send the remaining portion a few days later, as I am still too busy and could not free myself from the pressure of work.

With best and sincere wishes,

Yours faithfully,
Obaidul Haq, Advocate.

The Shah Jehan Mosque
Woking
Surrey
England

14 January 1956

Dear Respective Hazrat Amir, Secretary Sahib and Members of the Anjuman,

Assalamu alaikum,

I have received the staggering news of my father's death. It has come as a rude shock at an apparently ill-opportune moment. We human beings perhaps fail to realise the wisdom of God. I feel the best thing to say at this moment is: "Praise be to Allah, and may the soul of the deceased rest in peace."

Human society is strongly bound with affection, love and sentiments. The loss of one so dear as a father is sure to cause an upheaval in the emotional state of one's life. In the course of human history, with the aid of fabulous wealth, people have built monuments to mark the memory of their dear ones. I have no wealth. My father, as you know, did not leave any. The only wealth he has bequeathed is a life dedicated to the cause of Islam. The usual manner to express one's grief at such an occasion is to mourn and weep. I have not done that. I feel a more appropriate way of doing it is to take up the work which was so dear to him and which he left so suddenly. There are difficulties in my way, which I hope to overcome.

Hoping to be remembered in your prayers.

Yours very sincerely,

Iqbal Ahmad

Mogra
Burdwan

17 January 1956

Beloved Nasir,
Assalaam Alayekum!

Though you are not in close touch and acquaintance with me, yet you always exist in my remembrance.

I am an unfortunate younger brother of your lucky father. My name is Sabir. With a view to personally meet you all I intended to start for Lahore sometime in February next. But my luck has failed to enjoy this kind of happiness.

The unexpected disappearance of the only star of our family has immersed the entire family into a deep sorrow of ocean. I am now at my wit's end like a deer struck with an arrow by a fowler. Now, though I am bereft of any language to sympathise you and your family, yet I feel it my bounden duty to console you and the bereaved family considering myself elderly to you.

Son! Man is mortal in this world. All human beings and others creatures on this earth must face death. The difference is of time only .Undoubtedly my elder brother has left the world. But he has left behind him noble achievements and also you are his three jewels. Hope you are the worthy sons of your worthy father. I pray to Almighty Allah that the place your revered father, Maulana Aftab-ud-Din Sahib, has left vacant, may be filled in by you.

I am anxious to know the time and other details about the departure of the great soul of my elder brother. I will be much happy if you keep contact with me through correspond..

Yours faithfully,
Sabir Chacha

**61 Dinanath Sen Road
Dacca**

14 January 1956

**Syed Ahsan Ali B.L.
Assistant Secretary,
Legislative Department
Dacca.**

My dear Nasir,

Received the extremely sad news last evening. That was a bolt from the blue as we were not prepared for that. Of course, a man shall have to leave this world one day.

Your father was not only a pillar to the family but was a man of international fame. On his death we have lost a great figure. Now our family is a stranded one as none among the children is an earning member upon whom others may depend. Let God's will be done.

We were five brothers; now I am left alone. One day I shall also have to leave this world and I am ever-prepared for this. But being a man, I expect to see you, the children of the family, well-established in life before I leave this world. Dear child, today I am totally lost.. I am conscious of the fact that words would fail to console you. It is only time that will heal the wound you have received in the sudden death of your dear father..

Love to you, Zafar, Mubarak, Bushra and taslim to Bhabi Sahiba..

**Your unfortunate uncle,
Ahsan Ali.**

**21. Gopibagh, 3rd Lane
P.O. Wari
Dacca**

30.1.56

My dear Nasir,

Received your letter and the precious enclosure. We received the sad news of your reputed father's sudden death the day following the occurrence. We had a condolence meeting here at The Dacca Bar on Friday the 20th of January 1956. I have already written to Iqbal. Your father was more than a brother to me. In his death I have lost a sincere friend, a philosopher and a guide. Our only consolation is that we believe that separation by death is merely a phenomenon. Spiritually, we are near as we were when he was alive. Death is inevitable for all but it is pleasing to know that he passed away like a Sufi and a *wali*. May his soul enjoy eternal peace and progress. I hope you all will bear the loss with patience and forbearance and will try to live up to the tradition he has left behind. He thought that of all his children you would be his spiritual successor. May his wishes materialise. Convey my wife's sympathies to your bereaved mother. I am leaving Dacca tomorrow for Burdwan. I will have occasion to write to you when I come back after a fortnight. I shall preserve Maulana Sahib's last letter to me as a precious treasure. I thank you very much for sending the letter to me with best wishes.

**Yours affectionately,
Abul Hashim.**

**Bahadurabad
28 Jan 1956**

The Manager
Weekly *Light*, Lahore

Dear Sir,

Assalamu alaikum.

I was terribly shocked to hear the sad news of the demise of M. Aftab-ud-Din Ahmad Sahib through the *Light* of 24th January, 1956 which reached me today on 28th January.. *Inna lillahi wa Innaa ilaihi Raji'oon.*

I was deeply regretted and lost my balance of mind for sometime because it is through the guidance of this learned missionary and Maulana Muhammad Ali and Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din that I came to know the beautiful teachings of Islam and riggled out of scepticism. By the demise of Maulana Aftab-ud-Din Ahmad, the Muslim intellectual missionary, world has lost one of its most zealous exponents and is thus an irreparable loss to the Muslim community.

I pray to Almighty Allah to give power to our community to produce 100 such missionaries for the one lost to fill up this irreparable gap. I also pray to Allah that let Him give peace to the departed soul and a peaceful place in His heavenly abode. I also pray to Allah to give

power and courage to the bereaved family and our community to bear the sad loss caused by the demise of the learned Maulana. Aftab-ud-Din Ahmad Sahib.

Please convey this message to the bereaved family..

Your brother-in-Islam,

Abdul Razak

Yenangyaung

Burma

24.1.56

My dear brother,

I have just received a letter from the General Secretary giving me the sad news of Hazrat Maulana Aftab-ud-Din Ahmad's sudden death. O! what a loss to our Anjuman. I have no words to express my sorrow. He was not an ordinary person; he was a prominent member of our *Jama'at*. How his place will be filled I do not know. May Allah give his soul the best place in paradise and give you and other relations patience to bear this bereavement.

Yours-in-Islam,

N. A. Khan

Wilson House

Medford-55

USA

Jan. 30 1956

My very dear Nasir,

Assalamo Alaikum.

Your very painful and sad letter reached me yesterday. Although I had come to know about this tragic news through another source, but I was waiting for the confirmation and praying that that may be wrong. Meanwhile, your detailed letter about the sad demise of my beloved and respected uncle and guide came to my hand. I can't express my grief in words. It has really shaken me through and through. The expression of sentiments may be taken as emotional but I can't say of what substance that man would be who, after having come into contact with my beloved consoler uncle – Maulana Aftab-ud-Din Ahmad – would not feel his separation in later days. He was the noble soul to whom I always turned in my spiritual turmoils and worldly confusions. He was the person whom I always found as a lighthouse in the pitch darkness of my sceptic readings. He was the fort in whom I used to take refuge in the retreat of my rational conflicts. How can't I feel his sad demise? I could not imagine his death, as it has overtaken my mind so suddenly.. I never expected it so early. Undoubtedly I have been shocked. Firstly, due to my own personal relationship, and secondly, due to the shock which our loving Islamic cause has suffered by his departure. I can imagine the depth of your grief, and the intensity of shock which your young and tender heart has received at this early age, but, my dear brother, that was the will of God to Whom we all submit. Throughout his life he was infusing God-consciousness in us, the sceptic earthly beings, and

the time has arrived when we should not let his cause and efforts go in vain and we should not bow down before our transitory and earthly passions. He lives in our hearts. You have a double advantage that he is manifested through you both physically and spiritually and it would be his greatest happiness if we live a life by his standards and values. He is, honestly speaking, one of our ideal character-builders who groomed others so much that virtually they imbibed the ideals preached and practised by him.. Hard it is for you at present to bear the intensity of the shock but you are an Ahmadi who are here in this world to live and discharge all the duties according to the Commandments of God Almighty. Your beloved father died serving His cause, and let us take over that cause, and pay homage to our beloved departed soul. It is the memory of that noble, sacrificing, meek, humble, learned, and consoling soul who lived among us, who preached the word of God to the suffering humanity, who sacrificed his youthful ambitions in the service of Islam, and who departed while serving that great cause. Is this not a great heritage to live by? Is this not an ever-living personality the death's furious hand cannot take away from us? A day is destined for all living beings, and the glory is for the Eternal, Living God Who brings us forth from nothingness.

It would be my earnest desire and pleasure to hear from you about your future projects. A huge burden of responsibility has fallen on your young shoulders, and I pray to God Almighty that He may assist you to successfully fulfil these responsibilities.

With prayers and kindest regards.

Yours affectionately.

G. Rabbani.

Former Ambassador to Oman

BEWARE! O'SAILORS

Written on the untimely death of Maulana Aftab-ud-Din Ahmad

**by Syed Amjad Hussain
Dacca (East Pakistan)**

In this turbulent ocean deep,
Beware o'sailors new.
Your lives are as if on the lotus leaf,
Ephemeral little dew.

With a despaired heart and timorous pen,
Friends, how I tell.
You will not hear anymore the sound,
Of the thundering warning-bell.

The bell is silent, eternally silent,
The house hath lost its light.
The hidden rocks surround your ship,
By sides left and right.

The cruel hurricane lashing the waves,

Everywhere the sound of the boom.
Alas! For aye, we are forcibly pushed,
Into the envelop of gloom.

Oh, unfathomable sea, speechless why,
Tell me if you know.
Will dark vanish, will birds sing,
Will the sun here glow?

One is lost, as if all is lost,
Lost the Lightman dear.
The path is lost, the goal afar,
The death is coming near.

Let us say, Glory be to Him, Who gave us
One resplendent light.
Let us say, Glory be to Him Who sent here
One dark grim night.

ISLAM MEANS PEACE WITHIN AND PEACE WITHOUT **An essay written in memory of Hazrat Maulana Aftab-ud-Din Ahmad**

by Ali Akhtar Azimabadi

(A man devoted to studies and meditation, who lived in a corner of the office of the Working Muslim Mission and Literary Trust, Aziz Manzil, Brandreth Road, Lahore and died in that secluded corner clustered with books. – Ed.)

"And console thy soul with those who call on their Lord morning and evening, pursuing their course towards His objects and purposes (of life). And do not cast loose thine eyes from them, with a craving for the embellishments of the fallen life". (The Qur'an, *The Cave*, section 4).

The holy dove who was the harbinger of peace to his fellowmen is eternally gone to peace (*Salaam*, the name of God in the Qur'an). The man who turned many homes on this earth into abodes of peace is at last gone to the infinite Abode of Peace (*Darus Salam*, the name of Heaven in the Qur'an). The man, who was at peace with his God was lovingly called off by Peace Himself, for eternal communion in peace and love. Will you, my friend, send your peace and love to this peace-less and love-less world by your spiritual galvanisation? We need your prayers even from that Beyond..

Hazrat Maulana Aftab-ud-Din Ahmad was born in the district of Burdwan (West Bengal, India) of a noble and *Syed* family. He also used to tell me that he had blood relations at Barb (in Patna, a district of India).

He joined the Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam and moulded his entire life according to the ways of Islam, so much so that his entire life became the ensign of the Ten Conditions of the

Bai'at (Initiation) of the Promised Messiah, Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad. The *Bai'at* lays down that the initiated should give preference to the Islamic ways of life over the material and biological ones. He propagated Islam in England for seven years, both by his tongue and pen, and more, by his example of the Islamic way of life. He propagated not the static and dead Islam of the *mullahs*, but a living and moving Islam in everyday life. The Islamic way of life had charged in him magnetism and charm, and charmed he every man by his Islamic behaviour.

He was benevolent and loving to all whom he met. All day long he was sacrificing his brain and his body in benevolence and love to mankind and society. Whatsoever a man asked him, got from him, even a poor pittance which he could gladly afford. In eight years of intimacy I did not see a single man getting a reply from him in the negative. "No," he did not know. He was all affirmative. In the office, in the streets, in the meetings and in behaving with men and society, his benevolent and loving character was illustrative of the Islamic way of life. He followed the objects and purposes of human life, as set forth by God in the Qur'an. He believed and lived up them - the two sets of rights and services – rights and services to God, and rights and services to humanity..

In Islam, both of them are co-essential and complementary. Wobbling about in either of the two sets of rights and services is un-Islamic and an un-Qur'anic way of life. The Qur'an makes men more cognisant of the attributes of God through society and social dealings. There can be no concept of a man who is outside society.. God created the Qur'anic Adam (man) after His attributes and made him *khalifa* (vicegerent and ruler). Without society and good dealings with it, there can be no full awareness of the attributes of God. The Atheists deny God because they are unsocial beings. They do not know goodness, therefore, they do not give goodness to others. Through goodness man knows the Absolute Goodness (God). Men's unsocial acts are blinds and screens between them and their God. The Atheists and the Materialists cannot reply to the question: Why should we do good to others, or what is goodness at all? A Muslim replies: My God is Goodness and He enjoins me to do good to my fellowmen. Goodness is of eternal value. The denial of God and His Revelation is the denial of eternal Goodness – the denial of Truth and Reality. And *vice versa*, the denial of goodness is denial of God and His attributes and of His Benevolence Nourishing, Mercy and Love (*Rabb, Rahman, Rahim, Wadud*).

Allah created the Qur'anic Adam (man) in society and commanded him in the Qur'an not to be unsocial (a concept also connoting denial of God). You may call him Adam (the first man), *homo sapien*, or *homo nidoe*, but do not call him the scion (or from the stock of) anthropoids or animals. God evolved Adam (or man) from His Idea (*Tasawwur*). Men and Adam have the Idea, but the anthropoids and animals have it not.

I have the Idea of energy, eternity and infinity, but the anthropoids and animals have it not. I have the mathematical Idea of $1+1=2$, but the anthropoids and animals have it not. I have the Idea of 1, 2, 3, etc., but they have it not. Allah created Adam or man by His Idea. God said to His Idea: Let him be, and Adam came into being with the Idea. *Kun fa yakun* (*The Family of Amran*, Section 6).

Allah, in the Qur'an, has the attribute of *Musawwir*, that is, the Originator of the Idea (*tasawwur*): "He is Allah, the Creator, the Maker, the Originator of the Idea" (*The Banishment*, section 3, v. 24).

The modern sciences believe that mass (matter) changes into energy and energy changes into mass (matter). You cannot demonstrate in your laboratory how non-dimensional energy changes into mass and space, both having dimensions. This question is an Idealistic and Metaphysical one. The modern sciences are drifting more and more towards Idealism and Positivism. I say that energy is the identity or the product of the Idea. Both of them have no dimensions in space and are infinite. They are not the products of the finite universe, having dimensions and space. God made Adam by His Idea: "And when thy Lord said to the angels: I am going to place (My) vicegerent and ruler on the earth, they said: Will Thou place in it such a one as make mischief in it and shed blood? And we celebrate Thy praise and extol Thy Holiness. He (Allah) said: Surely I know what you know not. And He taught Adam all the denotations and connotations (*Al-asmaa*), then he presented them (i.e.man) to the angels. He said: Tell Me the denotations and connotations. And We said: O Adam, dwell Thou and Thy wife in peace (*Ar.us-kun*) in the garden, and eat from it a plenteous food wherever you wish; and do not go near the tree (*la taqraba hazi-hish shajarata*), lest you become of the unjust" (The Qur'an, *The Cow*, section 4).

Allah evolved idealistic Adam (or man) from the Idea, and did not evolve him from the anthropoids or animals by the process of biological Evolution. According to the Qur'an, Allah made Adam and Eve in-Family, in-Society, in-Economics, in-Politics, in-Law, in-Jurisprudence, and in-State. The anthropoids and animals do not have these values. Therefore, these values in men are not evolved and cannot be evolved from the anthropoids (gorilla, chimpanzee, etc) or any other animal. The biologists could not establish any link between the skull and brain of man and the anthropoids or an animal. Moreover, the above verses command husband and wife to dwell in peace. Peace is emotion and it does not exist in animals.

In the above verse, *us-kun* is from *sakana*, of which Lane gives the following meanings: "State of rest, quiet, calm, unruffled."

Lane also gives the meaning of *us-kun* (and quotes Arabic authorities in his support): "He made him or gave him to inhabit the house or abode; he lodged him therein."

House-building and dwelling in family, is also the idealistic quality of man. It is just the opposite of anthropoids who live un-peacefully scattered in the trees. Instead of living with a family they wander.. They have no permanent house to dwell in peace, like men. The anthropoids do not make family, society, Economics, Law and State, which Adam is commanded to make. The Qur'an commands Adam (or men) not to lead the *unsocial* life of the "Tree" like the anthropoids, and not to break all these Values and the Idea, which distinguish men from anthropoids and animals. Man has no relationship with anthropoids and animals. The Qur'an refuted Darwinism and Mendelism about 1400 years ago. If he becomes unsocial like the anthropoids or animals, he is condemned as unjust under the law.

According to the Bible, the "tree" is the tree of knowledge, and according to the Qur'an, the "tree" is the tree of evil – unsocial life and demonstration of animal passions.. According to the Qur'an, God gave Adam immense knowledge and the Idea. According to the Qur'anic terminology, every male is Adam (7:11). He is commanded to live according to the values enjoined by the Creator.. Those who fail to do so are called the unjust..

From Plato down to the present times, no philosophy, no science and no jurisprudence could define justice. It can only be known by God's Revelation. Only the Power Who made human life by Idea can define justice and enjoin ways how to implement it in the daily life of a man.

The Qur'an categorically denies that Adam has any relationship with the monkeys or other animals. They do not know *asmaa* (denotations and connotations), which God taught Adam. How did *asma* evolved biologically in man?

According to the Bible, "the tree was the tree of knowledge," which was forbidden to Adam by God. But according to the Qur'an, God Himself taught Adam knowledge (*asma*). According to the Bible, for tasting knowledge, Adam and his progeny committed and inherited eternal sin, and were eternally condemned by God to eternal hell. But the Qur'an teaches men to pray to God for giving knowledge. There is no eternal sin and eternal hell in Islam. Every man is immaculate and progressive. Islamic Heaven is the eternal progression of man in peace.

THE LATE MAULANA AFTAB-UD-DIN AHMAD

A Personal Appreciation

By Daraj-ud-Din Ahmad

I was in my sickbed when, perusing the daily newspaper, I was apprised of the passing away of the late Maulana Aftab-ud-Din Ahmad whom I met first in Shillong in the year 1922 or 1923 when he was a young man and little known to the outside world. He was then a lean and thin young man, but a talk with him for a short while impressed me with his dynamic personality and I foresaw in him great potentialities..

He was at that time in charge of the Islamic Mission whose primary object was to bring to the hill-tribes of Assam, the Khasis, the light of Islam, as these people were being converted to Christianity by the joint efforts of the different Christian Missions that had opened schools and hospitals and whose missionaries were mixing freely with members of this simple hill-tribe and drawing them to their fold by various inducements with their unlimited resources. It was, indeed, a Herculean feat to stem the tide with the scanty resources of the Islamic Mission but, quite undaunted, the late *Maulana* lent his whole heart and soul into the work and was able to enlist the sympathies of a handful of Muslims then serving in the Secretariat at Shillong and mainly with their help published a few pamphlets displaying the beauties of Islam which succeeded in bringing within the fold of Islam a few English-knowing Khasis whose enthusiasm for the propagation of our religion among members of their own community was simply astonishing.

The Islamic Mission had to fight many battles with their powerful opponents who were determined to crush the movement, but the zeal and fervour of the late *Maulana* was equal to the task and the Mission survived all the ordeals and progressed so long as he was at the helm of its affairs.

After he left Shillong, the influence of the Mission began to decline and the number of converts also declined. His work as the *Imam* of the Shah Jehan Mosque, Woking is well known to all the readers of *The Light* and when on his return to India he joined as the Editor of this paper, it gave a new life to the paper and many a reader awaited eagerly for the next issue as it was bound to contain some very inspiring subjects from his facile pen. His

translation of the *Sahih al-Bukhari* in every issue of the paper was read with zest by its many subscribers.

A noble soul has departed in these trying times of the Muslims of this country. The loss is irreparable as we had expected many more things from him, but the will of the Lord is Supreme and we must bow down to it in total submission. We pray to Allah to bestow His choicest blessings on the dear departed soul. *Ameen*.

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Islam,
Assalam-o-Alaikim.

We have received numerous letters from our dear friends, relatives and kind subscribers, expressing their sincere sympathy with us on the sudden death of our dear father on 13 January 1956. It is practically impossible for us to reply to each and every one. We, therefore, convey our sincere thanks to them through this paper, and request them to pray for the departed soul.

Yours in Islam,

Iqbal Ahmad, Nasir Ahmad and Zafar Ahmad.

EID-UL-FITR SERMON (1356 A.H.)

At the Shah Jehan Mosque, Woking, England

By the late Maulana Aftab-ud-Din Ahmad

“The month of Ramadan is that in which the Qur’an was revealed, a guidance to men and clear proofs of the guidance and the distinction; therefore whoever of you is present in the month, he shall fast therein, and whoever is sick or upon a journey (he shall fast) a (like) number of other days. God desires ease for you, and He does not desire for you difficulty, and that you should complete the number and that you should exalt the greatness of God for having guided you and that you may give thanks” (2 : 185).

Brothers and Sisters, praise be to God that so many of us have been able to participate in this festival of *Eid-ul-Fitr*, or the breaking of the fast.

Strictly speaking, this festival began with the month of Ramadan – the month of Fasting. Unlike other religious communities of the world, we Muslims do not officially celebrate either the birth or the death or any successful achievement of the Founder of Islam, lest the glory of the Unity of the Godhead be in any way obscured thereby. Instead, we celebrate, for one thing, the anniversary of the first Revelation of the Qur’an. It was a spiritual experience of the Prophet – an experience undergone in absolute loneliness, while he was in ascetic contemplation in the Cave of Hira, near Mecca. Nevertheless, it was an experience undergone by him as the representative man for this last part of human history. Although the complete Revelation of the Qur’an coming, as it did, piecemeal, with its various ordinances, explanations and directions – physical, moral, social, economic, political. administrative and spiritual – took the whole of the remaining 22 years of the Prophet's life, yet its beginning was witnessed in one of the last days of the month of Ramadan – in the year 610 of the Christian era, that is, at the fortieth year of the Prophet's life. Hence the sanctity of this

month, of which we celebrate the end today. Again, our way of celebrating this festival is also unique in the history of celebrations. We celebrate the whole month by fasting from dawn to sunset, from day to day. Indeed, if there has been any religious festival celebrated in a purely spiritual way, it is the Muslim festival of the Ramadan, or the first Revelation of the Qur'an; and this is quite appropriate to the occasion. Revelation has always been associated with the ascetic practice of fasting. The Holy Prophet Moses fasted for forty days preparatory to his Revelation and so did the Holy Prophet Jesus. The Holy Prophet Muhammad was also fasting when this Revelation came to him.

This association of Revelation with fasting is not difficult to understand. The physical life of this existence necessitates a periodical tuning-up of the body if the soul is to soar to the highest point of which it is capable. The clamours of the physical senses, if not brought under proper control, will create a disturbance in the soul's communion with God, in the same way as the uncontrolled atmospherics do in our wireless transmissions. According to the Qur'an, there is a perpetual query addressed to the soul from the Divine Court: "Am I not your Lord?" and the soul's perpetual response to it is: "Aye, my Lord." In other words, the soul always recognises the Lord. Why, then, is this world full of sin and disobedience? Certainly, it is the influence of the flesh, which, by its confusing calls, prevents the soul from listening to the perpetual call of its Creator. It is to this phenomenon that the Prophet Jesus refers when he says: "The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak." Indeed, the flesh is too egoistic and one-sided in its demand, and in the interests of the soul, it must be checked and controlled from time to time.

The institution of Fasting in Islam affords opportunity for such checking and controlling. As is known to you all, fasting is not merely abstaining from food and drink and smoking, but also abstaining from all kinds of sensual gratification. A full month's restraint of this sort in the year is certainly calculated to help enormously the spiritual faculties in the individual and in the nation. The mind, under this discipline, is surely more able to see and understand things Divine than it could otherwise be. Hence it is that the Qur'an is copiously recited during this month. All the Muslim houses, not to mention the mosques, from one end of the world to the other, resound with recitations of the Qur'an. Indeed, no better time can be imagined for taking to heart the lessons given by a Divine Book than during this month of Ramadan.

There is a special prayer designed for devoutly listening to the Qur'anic exhortations and expositions, and it is called *Tarawih*. It is a late evening prayer. *Huffaz*, or those who commit the whole of the Qur'an in its original Arabic to memory, and they are counted by thousands if not by millions, throughout the Muslim world, give a complete recitation of the Qur'an during these prayers. The Muslim world creates spiritually in its own humble way, so to speak, the atmosphere which formed the background of the Qur'anic Revelation and all revealed ordinances for that matter. Just as the whale that from time to time comes up to the top of the water for breath, so the Muslim world for one month in the year rises above the level of physical sensations and breathes in the free air of Divine Revelation.

The glorification of the Lord – the *Takbir*, as it is called by the Qur'an – which we are doing at this moment, is only the vocal expression of the internal realisation which we have experienced during this sacred month. Indeed, when the soul is free from the interruptions of the flesh, the glory of the Divine Presence bursts in upon it like the sun beams from a cloudless sky.

This short morning prayer of ours and this glorification of the Lord are undoubtedly a fitting sequel to the month-long spiritual festival which we have been celebrating.

Connected with fasting is also charity. As you all know, our Holy Prophet Muhammad, who used to be very charitable in his everyday life, was unusually charitable during this month. As in every otherwise provision in Islam, to save this charity from falling out of practice, the minimum has been fixed; which has to be paid on behalf of every soul in the house before the head of the house joins in the congregational prayers. As I have announced so often, this minimum would be something like half-a crown in English money.

It does not need any deep contemplation to understand the relationship between fasting and charity. Whereas fasting controls the greediness of the physical senses and subdues them in all their manifestations, charity makes a positive move to crush the very germs of greediness. You can easily understand how selfishness in man, in order to be perfectly subdued, needs positive acts of self-abnegation. Obviously, acts of charity act as a tonic to the mind after its cure from lust by the discipline of the Ramadan Fasting.

Herein is revealed to us another aspect of fasting which bears upon the most pressing problem of our times. We are faced today by a serious strife between the rich and the poor, between the "haves" and the "have-nots" – a strife unparalleled in history for its brutality and callousness. It has deprived the whole of Europe of social peace. The Spanish scenes are liable to be re-enacted in any part of Europe today. It is undoubtedly a very menacing prospect. Yet, if we look closely, we shall find that the poor do not hate and detest the rich solely because of their own poverty or because of the opulence of the other party. They resent not the rich man's wealth, but his brutal arrogance and callous indifference towards their sufferings. If the poor discover any inclination on the part of the rich to be charitable and anxious for the mitigation of their sufferings, they will not only not feel jealous of the rich, but even love them and follow them in all international and national affairs, even with great sacrifices, as they have been doing throughout the ages.

Unfortunately in the present-day West, this desirable solicitude of the rich for the poor which is the only solution of this long drawn-out class war, is totally absent. It should not be understood that the rich people of Europe are made of a clay different from that of the corresponding classes in other communities of the world, or that they are not anxious to have this problem solved by getting rid of a certain unwholesome mentality. To be just and fair to them, it must be admitted that they are a very well-meaning people as their occasional manifestations of charity show. A community that can produce a Noble, a Rothschild, or a Nuffield cannot be regarded as inherently callous to human sufferings. In fact, it is the lack of proper discipline of the mind that stands in the way of the Western rich developing on a satisfactory scale their charitable feelings towards the poor. The ordinary English proverb is "Hell is paved with good intentions." It is a wrong understanding of the human mind to think that it does not need any practical guidance in developing its noble sentiments. It is equally wrong to think that external laws are all that is needed to make our social relationships sweet and harmonious.

What Communism has tried to do in the economic field of our social life has been done far more thoroughly, and without the concomitant cruelties, reactions and fuss by the Muslim Law of Inheritance. The effectiveness, however, of Muslim regulations for distribution of wealth arises from the fact that they come on the top of a series of drills on our socio-moral plane of life. The system of congregational prayers, which compels the rich several times a

day to rub shoulders with the poor, on a footing of complete equality, which is further supplemented by the system of *Zakah* or poor rate, which compels the rich to religiously recognise the rights of the poor to a portion of the earnings of the rich, is enough to kill any sense of arrogance and exclusiveness in the minds of the rich. If there is any need for a training in the cultivation of an active feeling of sympathy and charity for the hungry and the starving, this is furnished by the Fasting of Ramadan. Indeed, no amount of sermonising can bring home the actual pinch of hunger to one who has never experienced any scarcity and want.

This ordinance of voluntary abstention from food and drink and other sensual enjoyments on the part of the rich is therefore a training in socialistic feeling which is not only most effective but also unparalleled in the history of economic legislation. Very rightly does the Qur'an call itself "a guidance to men, and clear proofs of the guidance and the distinction." Glory be to the Lord Who revealed it for us. Further, the world is badly in need of peace, and paradoxically enough, it is preparing headlong for a destructive war. All the nations are engaged every moment in making huge preparations for a great war. We all know why it is so. It is the unbounded greed in man. Collectively and individually, those who have comparatively little want more, and those who have more want still more, without any regard to the limitations of propriety. We should not forget that the national mind is the reflection of the individual mind. It is a perniciously wrong idea that suggests that a bad and selfish individual becomes a saint when he or she deliberates on any collective action. It is rather the reverse. The individual loses his standard of thought and feeling when he is in a crowd. To control the collective greed, we must control it in the individual. To find altruistic feeling in a class or in a nation, we must find it in the individual. The ordinance of Ramadan Fasting is aimed at securing the subjection of the lust in the individual mind, and at upholding and developing the altruistic feeling in man, and, in so far as it promises these, it holds before humanity the hope of that peace which seems so dead today.

Enemies have said that Islam is a deadweight on the soul of the Islamic world, and that it keeps it from all advancement and life-giving movements. I wish these enemies had the wisdom to read and understand the facts of history. Nations that once have throbbed with life and creative energy, when they fall, as they must eventually do, never recover their position. No one can trace today, far less find prosperous, the Assyrians, the Babylonians, the Phoenicians, the old-time Greeks or the great Romans; but one does find today the Arabs, who at one time created, in the words of Lothrop Stoddard, a new world – the world of Islam; the Persians, who embellished Islam so marvellously in the course of its transmission as a culture and thought movement; the Egyptians who supported Islam so early in its history, and the Turks and the Afghans who rendered splendid military services to the cause of that faith. They are all living today as nations, and not only living, but they have the ambition, a living hope, to guide the destinies of humanity once more as soon as opportunity affords. Obviously, it is the religion of Islam that creates this exception for Muslims to the general rule of history. But for their unflinching religion these nations must have gone the way that other nations like them have gone before. The living religion of God – Islam – not only has saved the Muslim nations from total collapse, but also seems destined to save the present civilised humanity from its threatened doom.

Brothers and Sisters, as some great poet has rightly observed, it is not where the clamorous waves beat against the shore with terrific noise that we should seek the result of the blows of the sea at the land. At these ostensible points of the sea's excursions against the land we see more or less futile efforts. We see at times some sand washed away; at others, some pebbles

thrown ashore. Nevertheless, at distant corners far removed from the human eye, the sea is steadily, though silently, encroaching on the land, making creeks where none existed before, and making bays out of creeks. Its struggles after all are not in vain. In the world of thought and emotion, the same rule applies to Islam. One notices the rather negligible progress of Islam in the political struggles of Muslim nations, although signs of the reviving power of Islam are patent even in those struggles; but the real triumph of Islam is to be found in the life-and-death struggle between Fascism and Communism; in the "pacifist" movement of Europe pitched against the new "religion" of Germany, based on pure militarism; in the inauguration and failure of the prohibition movement in Christian America; in the attempts of Hindu India to rid itself of the vice of drinking; in the progressive marriage laws of Western countries, and, above all, in the futility of all attempts at peace between Christian nations. The whole situation in the world outside Islam is crying aloud for a spiritual revolution, and this revolution has to be, as is evident, on the lines of Islam, as no other religion can promise anything like a solution and harmonisation of these conflicting problems – social, moral and economic.

It was in the seventies of the last century that a far-sighted Englishman, Mr. Bosworth Smith, made the following prophecy: "Islam itself is a thing of indestructible vitality, and may thrive the more when rid of the magnificent corruptions and the illusory prestige of the Stamboul successors of the Prophet." Little did the gentleman realise that the words of his prophecy would prove far truer in the course of half a century than his wildest imagination could have comprehended. All sober and thinking minds in the West realise today that Islam, with its wise and practical ordinances, is the only hope for humanity, and among these same ordinances, that of Ramadan Fasting, the end of which we have assembled here to celebrate today, is of very great importance in that it has a direct bearing on the present confusion in the world.

O MY DEPARTED TEACHER

By Muhammad Sultan Nizami

I joined the staff of the Working Muslim Mission in the year 1941 as a clerk. At that time, the office used to be on the upper storey of Aziz Manzil. The late Maulana Aftab-ud-Din Ahmad used to sit in the left-side room on Brandreth Road. In those days, the *Islamic Review* was published from Lahore. The late *Maulana* also edited the weekly Working *Gazette* along with the editorship of the *Islamic Review*.

It was only ten or twelve days after I joined the office and was busy in writing addresses on the envelopes when the late *Maulana* entered our room and, addressing Mr. Muhammad Sadiq Qureshi, the then Head Clerk of the Mission, said: "You have put much burden on this gentleman. I have seen him working from ten o'clock in the morning up to four o'clock in the evening. I am afraid due to such overwork he may leave the service."

Those kind, sympathetic and loving words of the late *Maulana* impressed me very much and since then, feelings of respect towards this noble officer of mine grew gradually in my heart and pulled me along on the way, a way which led him to such height of spiritual nobility. From that day I resolved not to leave the company of this noble soul – a soul from whom I had to learn much about this life and the life hereafter

Maulana in the office

The late *Maulana* used to give *dars* (lecture on the Qur'an) to all the workers of the Mission every morning except on Fridays, when he used to read out narrations from the *Sahih al-Bukhari*. And this he continued with great regularity throughout his life till his death on 13 January 1956. He was so keen to continue this practice that he would ask somebody else to do it in his absence.

His way of giving *dars* was so wonderful, full of information, arguments and inspiration that one felt the birth of a new spirit and an earnest urge to follow and practice the teachings of Islam. The method of giving *dars* adopted by the *Maulana* was that he would ask anyone from among us to read a passage from the Qur'an and would even correct our reading. After the recitation he would explain it.

He told us several times that the time we spend in doing the office work did not benefit us much as the time we utilise in reciting the Qur'an and understanding its meaning. The latter moments were the best moments of our life.

Bend towards Sufism

Besides the usual *dars* in the morning, I used to go to him whenever I found time. I found him very sympathetic, helpful and social in those moments of discussion. I discussed with him questions relating to the Qur'an, *Hadith*, *Fiqh*, *Shari'ah* and Sufism and throughout the discussion he would answer my questions very politely but with a master mind and with deep understanding.

The late *Maulana* was a strong upholder of Sufism. He frequently said that the Ahmadiyya community was a strong and ardent upholder of *Tassawwuf* but all the same they were loosening their grips on it at the present moment while indulging themselves in petty discussions and debates. In fact, the very basis of religion is Sufism. And the Promised Messiah, may peace be on him, was living proof of this fundamental basis of religion in this age of gross materialism where forces of godlessness are at their height.

A devotee of the Promised Messiah

The late *Maulana* was a great devotee of the Promised Messiah. He often used to quote from his books in his daily conversation and *dars*. He would often emphasise the truth that in this age of materialism it was the personality and spiritual guidance of the Promised Messiah which has saved us from falling into the depths of degeneration. And it was the unflinching faith in God and the cause of the Holy Prophet Muhammad which inculcated profound faith, courage and zeal in the missionaries of the Ahmadiyya Movement – a characteristic appreciated and envied by all lovers of Islam.

A great admirer of the late Maulana Muhammad Ali

Maulana Aftab-ud-Din was a great admirer of the late Maulana Muhammad Ali. He would say that Maulana Muhammad Ali is the greatest Muslim scholar of this modern age. He also admitted that Maulana Muhammad Ali has not left any question with regard to the basic principles of the Qur'an, *Hadith* and Islamic Law in general which came before him without giving an authentic and thorough answer to it. The literature produced by him will always remain a guiding star for minds wandering among the darkness of doubts and confusion both within and outside the fold of Islam. The late Maulana Aftab-ud-Din Ahmad, though himself

a good writer with a clear and argumentative pen, would often admit the scholarly and masterly pen of Maulana Muhammad Ali by saying "We are just like dust under his feet."

Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din - His master and guide

The late *Maulana* was very much indebted to the late Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din and considered him both as his intellectual and spiritual guide. He repeatedly said about the great *Khwaja* that "God specially made this illustrious person for the propagation of Islam. It was he to whom I came as a pupil and in whose noble and righteous company, whose kind suggestions, sincere advice, whose impressive lectures and scholarly writings infused in my heart and mind a spirit and a light which unveiled to me a world to which I was a perfect stranger before. And it was his great and influential personality which inculcated in me such a courage and conviction that I could dauntlessly preach and defend Islam and the Prophet of Islam in the Western lands with a firm faith in the superiority of Islam – a contribution of the Ahmadiyya Movement to the modern Islamic thought. The great *Khwaja* strived and worked hard exerting all his energies and faculties of mind. He would not stop dictating articles on Islam even when the doctors insisted that he should take a complete rest. In fact, he served the cause of Islam till the final call of death. May Allah give me the power and strength to follow the footprints of the great *Khwaja*."

Maulana Aziz Bakish's wilayat

The late *Maulana* regarded the late Maulana Aziz Bakash as a *qutub* and was a great admirer of his *wilayat*. He envied Maulana Aziz Bakhsh's God-fearingness, purity of thought and action, his piety and regularity in prayers. He often told us "when in the calmness of the night, the voice of Maulana Aziz Bakhsh reciting Qur'an would reach my ears, I used to feel ashamed and my conscience would intimidate me saying, O Aftab-ud-Din, you are comfortably lying on the bed and this old man of seventy is indulging himself in the worship of God with weeping eyes, praying for the good of the suffering people. It was this pious and enviable habit of the late Maulana Aziz Bakhsh which made me punctual in my *Tahajjud* prayers. And it was his submissive and humiliating prayers that created submission and humiliation in my prayers. It is mostly due to submissive and humiliating prayers of such benefactors of mankind that we are saved from so many calamities and troubles in this world, otherwise our words and actions are so deplorable and degenerated that God should not have spared us."

A deep respect for Maulana Sadr-ud-Din

The late *Maulana* had a great regard and respect for Maulana Sadr-ud-Din Sahib, the President/*Amir* of the Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement and Founder of the Berlin Muslim Mission. He also admired him as the right-hand man of the late Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din to whom the deceased himself was very much indebted. Maulana Sadr-ud-Din Sahib has rendered invaluable and selfless services for the cause of Islam and so many English and German ladies and gentlemen embraced Islam at his hand.

The late *Maulana* very much liked Maulana Sadr-ud-Din Sahib's method and style of giving lectures. He would often say: "I have never heard such eloquent speeches and beautiful descriptions of the life of the Holy Prophet Muhammad as those given by Maulana Sadr-ud-Din.

Speaking about the elders of the Jama'at

As usual, the late *Maulana* would admire many persons of the *Jama'at* whose prayers carry an effect and are accepted by the Almighty Allah. He declared: "The people who sacrifice

their life and wealth in the way of Allah are called *walis*. After all, who are *walis*? Do they have any particular signs on them to be called a *wali*? Or are they the people who rub dust, oil their body and toll a rosary, take intoxicants and cry out *La ilaha ill Allah*? This is not *wilayat*. But *wilayat* is that that a man should put religion before all worldly affairs and always remember and worship God. His word and actions should be a living manifestation of the all-pervading spirit of God. His heart should be filled with feelings of love and affection for his fellow human beings. He must be a God-fearing man who keeps himself protected from all sorts of evil thoughts and practices. A struggle to make oneself a real and perfect man is called *wilayat* – a stage in the development of spiritualism. And this is the most characteristic aspect of the Islamic concept of spiritualism which demands that man should develop his inherent faculties not by keeping himself aloof from all sorts of worldly affairs but by coming into the actual field of life where his spirituality is to face a real test – a test, when passed, takes man to such heights of superiority that even the angels start envying him."

Utmost sacrifice and struggle for religion

He often said: "I am a stranger in this land. I have no relatives here. I am here only entirely depending for the success of my mission on the Almighty Allah. I have left my boat on the tumultuous waves of life. God knows better whether it will reach its destination or will sink in the middle of the rough waters. I have dedicated my life to hold high the name of my Great Master and for the propagation of the teachings of the Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him. I pray to Him that He may give me the strength and opportunity so that I may accomplish the work and responsibility which I took as the foremost duty of my life. The words of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, always resound in my ears: I may be killed for the upholding of His name and propagating the teachings of Islam and again may be given life, and again may be killed in His way, and again may be given life and again may be killed in His way and this may continue till the Final Day." May God inculcate this sacrificing spirit in the heart of every Muslim man and woman that his life and death should be for the sake of upholding the name of God. Now then, is it possible that there may be left a single man who would not believe in God?"

A practical example

The late *Maulana* was two or three times offered a very remunerative pay for the editorship of a certain English daily but each time he refused the offer and said: "I have dedicated my life to put religion before all material ambitions and aspirations. How can it be possible that I may leave the work of propagation of Islam for the sake of wealth and honour? I spent my whole life in defending the holy personality of the Prophet Muhammad and for the upholding of the name of God. It is against my very nature to be an editor of a political paper and praise this government and criticise that without having any aim of life before me except money. It is my earnest wish that I may die as a religious writer rather than a political one."

O, what a strong faith in God and love for the cause of Islam. He not only dedicated his life for the cause of Islam but also dedicated the life of his second son, Nasir Ahmad. One day he came to the office and there was a smile on his lips and he said: "Nizami Sahib, I have dedicated the life of Nasir Ahmad for the cause of Islam. You should pray to God that He may accept this my humble offer."

Near him was standing Mr. Ali Akhtar of Azimabad, a great friend of his. He asked him: "Maulana Sahib, have you thought about the future?"

At this, the late *Maulana* smiled and said: "I have done the beginning and am leaving the end with God."

Mr. Akhtar again asked him: "Don't you know that the institution is passing through a critical period? It is struggling for its existence. Please give him a good education so that he may get some good post in the Government Service. If tomorrow the institution fails, what will be the future of this boy?"

As usual, there danced was a smile on his lips and he replied with confidence: "There are thousands to go to the Government Service but there are some who dedicate their lives for the cause of Islam. As regards the condition of the institution, God knows better. I have offered my son to Him; it is up to Him to make his life a success in this cause. So pray for me that God may give me strength in pursuing my ambitions and give this boy an opportunity to serve the cause of Islam in the real sense of the word."

Last prayers over parent's graves

He often remembered his parents and relatives and expressed his wish last year to visit his native place and to see once again Calcutta where he had passed the precious days of his student life. Hazrat Amir received a letter from Dacca inviting him to an Islamic symposium being held there. Maulana Sadr-ud-Din deputed the late Maulana Aftab-ud-Din Ahmad and the latter went there. That was his last visit to his native place and relatives. There he delivered his lecture on 23 October on the second day of the Dacca Islamic Symposium. His speech was motivated by an inner light which was wanting in all other speeches and thus it very much inspired and made a deep impression on his audience. Then he went to his native place and while praying over the graves of his parents he said: "O, my loving parents, it may be the last prayer over your graves, so now I depart from you." Then he returned to Lahore in the first week of December 1955.

One day he told me: "Nizami Sahib, God is always aware of the wishes of his humble servants. It was my earnest desire to visit my native place and to see my relatives. So, all praise be to Allah. He gave me the chance to fulfil this, my cherished wish."

His recent engagements

The *Maulana* was very busy during the latter days with the translation work of *Sahih al-Bukhari* and *Ghalba-i Qur'an*, that is, The Triumph of the Qur'an, a book that was recently written by Maulana Sadr-ud-Din, Head of the Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement. He was also revising his English translation of the Arabic discourses of Hadzrat Sheikh Abdul Qadir Jilani, may peace be upon him. And he was also the Editor of the weekly *Light* and Secretary of the Working Muslim Mission and Literary Trust. Several times I requested him to take some rest as his health was going down day by day because he worked on Sundays and even worked while lying on a bed in the office room when he was not well. But his reply was: "Nizami Sahib, after death I will enjoy a complete rest. Why should I waste this time which I can easily utilise in serving the cause of Islam?"

His prayer to die

On 12 January, while my loving teacher was giving us the daily *dars-i Qur'an* and was explaining the 15th section of *Surah Naml* (Ants), he said: "I pray to Allah that He may take me away from this world now as my eyes do not desire to see the corruption, immorality and malpractices of the present society."

MAULANA AFTAB-UD-DIN AHMAD

The True Embodiment of the Ahmadiyya Spirit

by Dr. Allah Bakhsh, M.B.B.S., D.P.H. (London), Chemical Examiner, Sindh

"He who surrenders himself completely to Allah and is doer of goodness, has truly laid hold on the firmest handle" (31 : 22).

"Is he who was dead, then We raised him to life and made for him a light by which he walks among the people" (6 : 123).

A spark of living faith generates in man the spirit of true service and self-denial, but these are often not found together. Intellectual gifts find a rare combination with spiritual attainments. An ideal humanitarian outlook is exceptionally met with the practical wisdom of merging one's self completely with the God-ordained Movement. Maulana Aftab-ud-Din Ahmad possessed a rare assemblage of the apparently conflicting, but truly complementing virtues and in this respect he shines out unrivalled and unique. May Allah shower His blessings upon his soul!

Maulana Aftab-ud-Din Ahmad's sudden and sad demise by heart failure on 13 January came as a great blow and shock to all those associated with him and especially to members of the Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement. In order to understand the man, his calibre and character, it is essential that a short resume of his life-history be reviewed.

As his father lived in Burdwan, a district of West Bengal, the *Maulana* received his elementary education in Burdwan and then took his degree at Presidency College, Calcutta in the year 1923. The ingrained love of faith in the *Maulana's* heart, however, forced him to get admission in the theological school at Deoband, much against the wishes of his father. At this institution, the *Maulana* could hardly stay for a couple of years. The reason for it is rather interesting. Having had the benefit of English education, the *Maulana* had become a subscriber to the weekly organ of the Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement, *The Light*. The stark conservatism and the narrow fanatic attitude of the Deoband school, however, could hardly accommodate a scholar who viewed the Ahmadiyya Movement sympathetically and even supported its viewpoints. In the discussions that were bound to arise between the *Maulana* and his schoolmates, the former was ultimately obliged to quit the school as a price for regarding the Ahmadiyya interpretation as true. He thereupon turned his attention to the centre of the Movement, the light of whose teachings had already illumined his heart. Staying and studying at the Ahmadiyya Buildings, Lahore, he came in personal contact with the late Hazrat Maulana Muhammad Ali and other luminaries. Ultimately, he joined the Movement and remained as an understudy for about a couple of years.

Founding the Shillong Islamic Mission

About the year 1927, the Ahmadiyya Anjuman received a request for a missionary from Shillong, the capital of Assam. There could be no better choice than Maulana Aftab-ud-Din Ahmad, who belonged to those parts. During the two years of its working, the spade-work having been done, the Mission was successfully making its headway when the authorities for some reason or other decided to discontinue it. The seed of Islamic propagation had, however, been firmly planted there through the selfless and sincere hands of the *Maulana*. With the support and sponsoring of some of the local persons, the Shillong Mission therefore

continued its work as an independent institution and is to this day existing under the direction of Dr. Khadam Rahmani Noori.

The *Maulana*, however, received an offer from the late Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din for working in the Woking Muslim Mission and in 1930 he was sent to England for helping in carrying out the activities of the pioneer mission in the West. For over two years the *Maulana* worked hard, but due to hard work and the rigours of the English climate, his health began to fail, he being of a frail physical frame. He had, therefore, to be recalled home in 1932. The *Maulana* was on board the ship bound for India when the news of the death of Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din was received by him.

Imam of the Woking Mosque

The affairs of the Woking Muslim Mission and The Shah Jehan Mosque at Woking, England having taken a new turn in 1934, the *Maulana's* services were requisitioned again for overseas service. Now the *Maulana* had been given full charge of the Mission and the Mosque and for five years until 1939, he proved his worth as an able missionary and a worthy preacher of Islam in those foreign lands. The new English converts were so deeply impressed by his true sincerity and high moral calibre that after many years of leaving that country they used to inquire: "Yes, but where is Mr. Deen nowadays?" meaning thereby Maulana Aftab-ud-Din Ahmad. There is another instance which shows the great respect he had permanently created in their hearts. Master Asghar Ali, who has very recently returned from Woking, has told me how voluntarily and spontaneously have some of these noble English souls been of great help to Mr. Iqbal Ahmad, Maulana's eldest son, who went to England only last year. The *Maulana* had never again been to the West since 1939 but even after the lapse of such a long time the spark of his love and reverence still lives in the minds of those who had the opportunity to come in contact with him.

Secretary, Woking Muslim Mission and Editor, The Light

Since 1939, the *Maulana* had been associated with many activities in connection with the Woking Muslim Mission and Literary Trust at Lahore and the Ahmadiyya Anjuman Isha'at-i Islam, Lahore. He remained all along the Secretary of the Mission and was for the past seven years Editor of *The Light*. He had been lately busy in revising the Bengali translation of the Holy Qur'an which has been done by M. A. Samad Jamali of Dacca, translating *Sahih al-Bukhari* into English, one part of which is already complete, to see the light of publication. The work taken in hand by him would, it is hoped, be continued to completion by his worthy sons and successors.

Unshakeable faith in God

Real faith in God is not merely a formal expression, as evinced by many of us. It is an inward state of consciousness which is evidenced through one's actions during trials and temptations. The writer has the privilege of being intimately associated with the *Maulana* since 1938. It is, therefore, with the firsthand knowledge of Maulana's inmost thoughts and aspirations that one can state with utmost confidence and truth that the *Maulana* had an implicit faith in God and the Divine will as the following instance would indicate. A few years ago, one day the *Maulana* consulted me about a personal matter. He had an offer of a first-class post in the Central Government, made to him by some Minister. The *Maulana* asked my advice. Knowing his needs and the way *Maulana* used to meet both ends, I advised him to accept the offer. A few days later, I inquired about his decision. The *Maulana* said he had refused to accept the offer. Upon my asking his reasons, he said that to accept the offer would have been against the covenant he had made with God to serve His faith for his lifetime. It is an open

secret that not a few workers in the sphere of faith and preachers of Islam have wavered when worldly positions have been offered to them and have even severed connections on that very account. The *Maulana*, amidst storm and temptations, stood like a rock. While looking at his life, it can truly be said that the following couplet applied to him with all its force: He stood on the burning deck whilst all but him had fled. The covenant he had made with his master, the *Mujaddid* and Messiah of the present century, to hold fast to the cause of faith above worldly temptations, the *Maulana* truly fulfilled up to his last, even though he saw hardly any companion accompanying him. Invincible faith and unshakeable belief he had in the will of the Lord and in subordinating his own desires to His will.

Self-abnegating

Spirit of rivalry amongst workers in any walk of life is a common human weakness. When this failing manifests amongst the workers in the cause of faith, it becomes the main reason for its degeneration. The *Maulana's* heart was entirely free from it. Capable and worthy as he was, for the highest office, but never did he desire it. He was superseded, his rights ignored, but never did he complain to any one. He had devoted his life in the cause of God; he never expected reward from men. Deserving higher recognition and greater worth, yet he never cared to look to worldly benefits. The two great pillars of faith are belief in God and service of humanity as the well-known tradition describes it: "Obedience to Allah's Commandments and mercy for His creatures."

Upholders of religion and preachers of faith fail mostly because they possess neither the one nor the other in reality. Maulana Aftab-ud-Din Ahmad was a true man of faith and a successful preacher because he could be seen high up on these two basic pillars.

Combination of virtues

Persons given to God's worshipping are seen often lacking in the social service spirit. While the *Maulana* had an implicit faith in God and His worship, he was at the same time the foremost in helping fellowmen. Whenever he heard of some friend being in trouble, he took the first opportunity to see him and sympathise with him. In order to ameliorate the poor and contribute to their well-being and health, he had opened a free homoeopathic dispensary. Not only was the *Maulana* a critic and logical argumentator, but anyone who has cared to read his editorials in *The Light* for the past seven years must have known that he was a philosopher and a deep thinker. Despite this, he was not a victim of the weakness of those who value human reasoning and thinking above the dictates of faith and obedience to the Divine will. Anyone acquainted with his way of dealing with a subject must have been impressed by his manner of cogent reasoning and convincing arguments in refuting charges against Islam and the Ahmadiyya Movement.

Yet the *Maulana's* basic position was not rationalism but his appeal ultimately lay to higher human feelings and the better sense of man's soul. He employed arguments and reasoning to satisfy the intellectual sense. This is exactly the method *par excellent* as the most effective conquering way to Islamic faith that the Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement has devised in the modern and changed world of intellectualism.

Mild and charming personality

Not only was the *Maulana's* method of writing rational and faith-inspiring in conformity with the spirit of the Ahmadiyya Movement but those coming into contact with his personality felt the same attraction and charm inculcated in them. Never was he seen to be furious and harsh against deniers and doubters. With calmness and coolness would he converse, and in

case of disagreement would leave the matter under discussion for free opinion and frank expression. Again, there are persons who are broad in their outlook and large in their sympathies but they are prone to be impracticable and idealists only. While on the contrary persons who are zealous and enthusiasts become fanatics and intolerant, narrow-visioned and bigoted. It is a rarity to find a man possessed of good qualities of the opposing types having none of the extremist and evil tendencies. Maulana Aftab-ud-Din Ahmad was blessed with the unique quality of having combined in him broad outlook, sincere zeal for sympathy, implicit faith of becoming an zealous worker of the Ahmadiyya Movement Lahore.

While viewing his life and personality in this perspective, there should be no hesitation in asserting that Maulana Aftab-ud-Din Ahmad was in true sense an embodiment of the Ahmadiyya Movement. He had so closely and intimately merged his personality and identified so completely with the spirit of the Divinely-ordained Movement as to shine out above everybody else..

True love and devotion

Maulana Aftab-ud-Din Ahmad cherished the highest noble sentiments for the Founder and his Godly-ordained Movement. He even found bliss in living in that portion of the house where his beloved Master had breathed his last. He was, in fact, consumed in the fire of love of the man who had arisen through Divine command to regenerate a sunken humanity in this age of scientific barbarism. If Maulana Aftab-ud-Din Ahmad was a living embodiment of the spirit of the Movement, let his death be an eye-opener for us all. Let us one and all emulate his high example and mould our lives as he had done, to bring them in line with the true dictates of the Movement. Such persons who are humble in their ways of self-assertion and self-elevation but are high and great in the sight of the Lord, are not often born and are not met with easily in this world of today. Possessing great virtues and high stature, yet they aspire for nothing, have no ambition to fulfil, but to serve the faith and worship the Lord in all humility, sincerity and selflessness. When such persons leave this earth, everyone who had come in contact with them is left with sore eyes and grief-stricken heart. These righteous people are already at one with the Lord and for them the Qur'anic verse is so aptly applicable: "We are truly for the Lord and to Him is our eventual return."

The writer cannot better express his feelings at the untimely loss of his most intimate friend than quote the Holy Prophet's saying said at some similar occasion of bereavement: "The eye weeps and the heart grieves, but we say nothing save that we are willing to accept the Lord's will."

MOURNING THE DEMISE OF MAULANA AFTAB-UD-DIN AHMAD **by Shams-ud-Din Ahmad, Mymensingh (East Pakistan).**

Maulana Aftab-ud-Din Ahmad is no longer in this physical world. The work or duty for the accomplishment of which he had come in this world is done and, as it is natural, he has been made to exit from the field of this earthly sojourn.

Apart from the fact that the average Ahmadi, unlike the present day conventional Muslim, is more or less inspired with the spirit of Islam as well as the *Sunnah* of the Holy Prophet, Maulana Aftab-ud-Din Ahmad was to me a personality towering with the edifying traits of a character behoving a Muslim in the true sense of the term. As a man of learning and erudition, he occupied a prominent place, so far as my humble understanding goes, among the present-day Ahmadis of the Lahore section are concerned..

A forceful exponent of the Holy Qur'an and *Hadith*, and resourceful thinker over the subjects of theology and culture, Maulana Aftab-ud-Din Ahmad was an embodiment of refutations and protestations against the so-called modernism, extravagance, dogmatism and alien cults of the present day world.

We do not know why his life-course is cut short and his role in the Ahmadiyya Movement has been cut short so early, when the present day world fraught with stark materialistic tendencies needed men like Maulana Aftab-ud-Din Ahmad who with implicit faith and mighty intellect could expound and practise the lofty teachings of Islam..

Indeed, mysterious are the ways of Allah and we have to submit and resign to His Will and say: "*Inna lil-lahi wa inna ilaihi raji'un!*" From Allah we are and to Him is our eventual return.

May Allah grant him forgiveness and peace in his life beyond death. *Ameen!*