

Whether his writings will be regarded as classics in the language, can only be decided by time, but they possess one sure and unmistakable sign of having that fortune. You will notice in almost all languages that the proverbs, the household words of every language, are taken from its standard writers, and the writer who presents more detachable lines excels others generally in popularity. You will find this true in the case of Hafiz and Sadi in Persia, and in that of Shakespeare in England. Judged by this standard Hali again claims a place among the best, even inclusive of the ancients, for almost every verse of his new *Diwan* seems to be fitted for a quotation, in a speech, talk or lecture. It is so easily detachable. It is so useful and full of practical lessons. His other charm of being true to nature I would illustrate by two quotations: one is a definition of *love*, one of the simplest, the truest, and the most natural that I have come across:—

عشق سنتے تے جسے ہم وہ یہی ہے شاید
خود بخورد دل میں ہے اک شخص سماپا جاتا

The other is a description of his feelings over his brother's death. (This was recited at the lecture but is too long to be quoted here.)

With these passages before you I leave you to decide whether Hali deserves to be classed among the highest of poets which India can boast of, and while admitting that on the whole he can not come up to some of the ancient names, he can quite hold his own in comparison with living authors and without exaggeration has the right to sing:

گو کہ حالی اگلے استادوں کے آگے ہیج ہے
کاش ہوتے منک میں ایسے ہی اب دو چار ہیج

AZAD AND HIS WORKS.

The name of the writer whose works are the subject of this evening's discourse hardly needs an introduction from me. Every young man in the Punjab, student or ex-student, has been familiar with it from the early part of his life, and that period of one's educational career in the Punjab with which the best memorable associations are connected is to a greater or a smaller extent associated with Maulvi Azad or his works. Outside the Punjab he is comparatively less known, or, if known, not sufficiently appreciated, for reasons which I will notice later on. But on the Punjab he has claims not only as an eminent writer who has exercised considerable influence on Urdu literature, but as one of the energetic band of pioneers of education in this Province, a co-worker with scholars like Dr. Leitner and Colonel Holroyd, and one of those chosen few who, though belonging to the old school of thought and brought up under the influence of ancient traditions, were acute enough to see the advantages of modern education, and did all they could to facilitate its spread. On Lahore especially he has still more particular claim, as this place has been the home of his adoption, the scene of his useful labours, and the centre of literary activity in the congenial atmosphere of which his best works were produced. It is fitting, therefore, that the Muhammadan Young Men's Association, Lahore, should pay him the tribute of including his name among the illustrious literary men of modern India on whose life and work it was

* (A lecture at a meeting of the Muhammadan Young Men's Association, Lahore, on the 23rd October, 1893 reprinted from the *Punjab Observer* of the 31st idem.)

proposed some time ago to have a series of lectures. The first of the series was a paper on the "writings of Hali," which also was entrusted to me. I am glad to notice that the theme now allotted to me admits of variety as compared with the former, and I will not have to say the same things over again inasmuch as the careers of the two authors differ materially from one another. I said in my last paper that Hali was essentially a poet and could lay but little claim to being an exceptionally excellent prose-writer. Maulvi Azad, on the other hand, is pre-eminently a prose-writer and cannot be ranked among the "masters of the realm of rhyme" in spite of the fact that he has some very creditable performances in poetry.

I find from the notices circulated that Mr. Secretary has, without consulting me, been allowing you to go under the impression that I propose considering Azad as a poet and a prose-writer. I should undeceive you at the start and declare that I intend to do nothing of that kind. He has not only imposed upon me the discussion of Azad's claims as a poet, as an extra burden which I neither meant nor mean to bear, notwithstanding his kind offices, but has fallen into the further mistake of regarding the word poet as necessarily a more important something than the word prose-writer and has made the one as naturally take precedence of the other as ladies now-a-days precede gentlemen laughter. It must not, however, be forgotten that every writer has his own strong points in which he is unequalled, and the moment he attempts to aspire beyond his *forte* he no longer remains a success. Thus it is no discredit to any author if we say of him that he is deficient in a particular line and excels in another. Alfred Lord Tennyson's attempts in prose are of no account, nor would his great contemporary, Thomas Carlyle, had been

of much importance as a poet even if he had wished to be, but the Sage of Chelsea was too wise to venture upon such a task. So I think that the proper sphere of Maulvi Azad is prose, and it is there that he shines with a lustre entirely his own. It must be admitted at the same time that Maulvi Azad is not a prose writer because he could not be a poet. He has been made what he is by the times in which his lot has been cast. I believe he would have distinguished himself equally as a poet had he been born a century earlier. Brought up in Delhi at a time when the last representatives of Urdu poetry were still flourishing, when the public taste encouraged poetical contests, when Zauq and Ghalib fought for literary supremacy, with opportunities of associating with the best poets of the day and with a wild imagination which his looks even in his saner days betrayed, showing a temperament by nature poetical, Azad could not but have been a poet. He saw, however, that Urdu poetry, fettered with conventional shackles as it was, had reached its climax if the conventional limits were to be observed. He knew enough of the conservatism of his countrymen to foresee that any attempts to write independently of the conventions imposed, which was the only way in which some productions conforming to the modern needs could be given, would be discouraged and result in failure. Moreover, being gifted with a thorough appreciation of what were regarded excellences in ancient Urdu verse, and having all the feelings of an artist on the point, his own nature perhaps could not bear to do away with the fantastic crust which had with time gathered round the kernel of Urdu poetry. He found also that while hundreds of collections of poetical works in Urdu could easily be obtained, it was difficult to get even a single book of some literary merit in good Urdu prose in the easy language

spoken and understood by the people. A few stories, translations of the Qoran and the Hadis, or of medical books there were, but they too were written in style either too pedantic and high-sounding to be easily understood by ordinary men or too antiquated to be of any practical use. He, therefore, struck out for himself a new path and began to see what excellence Urdu prose was capable of. He found the ground receptive; the seeds which he and his eminent contemporaries having the same opinions as himself sowed seem to have flourished, and have yielded, and promise to yield in future, an ample harvest. The struggle with his own temperament required for striking out this new line must have been very great, the sacrifice of his own formed tastes remarkable, and the resolution to direct his faculties into an altogether new channel very strong. I would call such a sacrifice of personal inclinations for what one deems of use to his country and countrymen, a literary martyrdom—which phrase could fitly apply to Maulvi Azad, who sacrificed his health also to literary pursuits, and remained during his last days only a wreck of his former self. To this latter sacrifice, however, a detailed reference further on will be necessary; and we have in the meantime to discuss some of his writings.

I am sorry it is our misfortune in this country not to be possessed of materials to furnish accounts of the early life and culture of our distinguished men unless they themselves communicate facts to us, and this lack leaves sketches of this sort without their proper preludes incomplete. In our biographical sketches we are introduced to the man when he has entered on his life work, we are face to face with an accomplished fact, with a phenomenon of evolution without having the means of watching the extremely interesting process which

ended in the evolution, the steps which rendered the accomplishment of the fact possible and the influence which made the man. In the present case, for instance, I may, with some effort, succeed in bringing before you the portrait of a man of mature age, with a rather thick beard, medium or even short stature, in the simplest of dress with a *pugrie* betraying birth in a place where people do not burden themselves with it and wear only small light caps, chewing his betel-leaf while taking a long walk along one of your Lahore roads. I may even go further and make you imagine yourself listening to his talk, humorous and witty but at the same time polite, exciting laughter but at nobody's expense, or to his learned discourse in a serious mood of which he was as capable as the former. I may step further still and introduce you to the writer's sanctum and show him absorbed in his studies, poring over his books amid old and new manuscripts scattered around, and the end of his pen touching his lips. But how can I possibly bring before you the boy who became transformed into the man above described, the young looks which to observant eyes must have held forth promises of future genius, the frolics which called down wit and humour now so amusing, and the love for study which ripened into sound knowledge? If imagination can in any way make up for this lack you will not catch me sparing it. I have some belief in this method of supplying from imagination in special cases. One of the greatest modern naturalists, Count Cuvier, has achieved wonderful success in this respect. Give him the fossil of an animal belonging to an altogether defunct species and he will supply you with a detailed account of its physiology. His accounts have been verified in some cases by reference to old historical or legendary descriptions of animals of

former ages with which they tally sometimes to the letter. Well, with a Cuvier's observation one could easily tell what any one was like at particular period of his life. Having no pretension to any science of that sort we have to content ourselves with giving tone and colour to the hints dropped by Azad himself now and then regarding himself and rendering our picture approach completion as much as possible. We find from occasional references that the author's father was a gentleman of some learning and refined tastes, and was an admirer and friend of Sheikh Muhammad Ibrahim Zauq. The father seems to have taken considerable care in the early training of his son, as it is stated that the son was not allowed to go to *mushairas*, that is, the poetical contests, till he had reached a certain period of age, as going there could at best be an amusement. When a little advanced, the son began to accompany his father on visits to literary friends and to meetings of the kind alluded to. This partaking in such meetings and contact with the best writers of verse of his day, was an effectual finish to the grounding he had obtained in knowledge through paternal care. While still young he began to enjoy the influence of Zauq's company, who looked upon him as a promising and useful pupil always at hand, while he began to open his mind and store in it all he could of verses, ancient and modern, which he heard from his master, of traditions regarding old authors which were till then the legitimate inheritance of literary men and were communicated from teacher to pupil orally, and which proved of so great a use to Azad in his after-life. Naturally of an inquisitive disposition he seems to have been constantly pestering his renowned master with enquiries of all sorts, and receiving replies favourable and unfavourable according to the mood in which the

master happened to be at the time. He did not stop here. He scraped acquaintance with the old friends, companions and play-fellows of Zauq and his contemporaries, and kept listening attentively to the accounts of their friend which they related. His acquisitiveness did not even spare the old cook of his master, who, being an old servant of the family and as a Delhi man naturally interested in poetical contests, though illiterate, was fully acquainted with Zauq's attempts at versification as a boy, and remembered some verses which even Zauq had forgotten himself, or tried to forget, as he did not regard them as in conformity with his more advanced and developed notions of poetry. To Azad, however, every verse of his master possessed a special value, as he knew it would be useful as showing a contrast between his early and later stages. With the object of extracting something out of the old cook, Azad used to flatter him and to hover about him and to be at him in his leisure moments, and often succeeded in his object by importunity. One of his victories he triumphantly relates in his new edition of Zauq. I think you will like to see the trophy. A trophy it is, as in the whole of Zauq's collection we do not find a single verse in the vein in which the one described as extracted from the cook is written. It runs:

پیدشانی انور پہ ہے جہو مر کا پڑا چاند
لا بوسہ چڑھے چاند کا وعدہ تھا چڑھا چاند

Having secured this verse, Azad did not rely on the sole authority of the old cook, but went to the author himself and reciting it before him asked if it was his. Zauq smiled and half unwilling admitted it to be his, perhaps out of delicacy, as the Indian notions of delicacy look upon the demand made in the verse as outstepping modesty. Making due allowance for the boyishness of the author

when he gave utterance to the line, it still deserves to be called a beautiful one. Returning to Azad, we see that even as a boy he lost no opportunity of supplementing his knowledge by facts, however small and with whatever difficulty obtained. Thus the early youth of Azad was spent till that unique historical occurrence, the breaking out of the Indian Mutiny, brought about an utter revolution in Delhi life; old houses were extinguished, families gone, the wealthy transformed into the needy, and on the other hand nobodies came to be regarded as somebodies. The old beloved Delhi, the sweet home of literature and art, the resort of the learned and the pious, the centre of the Mugal civilisation, no longer remained an abode for its old inhabitants. Some were turned out by circumstances over which they had no control, others left of their own accord as being unable to bear the sight of their beloved town in ruins and preferred voluntary exile to a house destitute of its attractions, and others again went forth in search of work and employment. Heart-rending as are the details of this unparalleled calamity, still it had its uses. That some men whose energies would perhaps have got rusty in the conventional Delhi routine life of the times were put in circumstances where their hidden talents found ample exercise, is the least of those advantages. Had there been no Mutiny perhaps we would not have had the Azad we have.

Leaving aside a comparatively uneventful life before coming to Lahore, during which he occupied positions of small importance such as a teacher in military schools, etc; which gave no exercise to his abilities and provided no field for the display of his talents, let us come to Maulvi Azad's work in Lahore. He was probably among the batch of teachers and educationalists who came in the train of Colonel Holroyd when he left the military for the

Education Department. The rest of his story as far as his service career is concerned does not take long to tell. Many of those present here this evening have watched his rise to a Professorship in the Local Government College, and many of the ex-students of that institution are personally acquainted with him and have the pleasantest recollections of his friendly treatment. But his life here gave him a scope to display his talents. First of all he was appointed by the Education Department to compile or make text-books for the Punjab public schools in Urdu and Persian. The 1st and 2nd books of Persian still current in schools are the result of his efforts and are really valuable for beginners. The 2nd book in Urdu, now almost extinct, and some other selections were his compilations, while the *Qisas-i-Hind*, or the "Annals of India," has long remained and still continues to be one of the best text-books in Urdu. This brought him distinction. It was followed by more valuable productions. The most useful of his works, the *Ab-i-Hayat*, a sort of history of Urdu literature, was written during his Professorship here. To Persian literature also he made several contributions, the most useful of which was his book on Persian Grammar, which, being written immediately after his travels through Persia, was quite up to date, and treated also of certain departures from old rules of grammar. One of his excellences was his knowledge of modern Persian. He could wield a tongue in Persian, which with a screen between could hardly be distinguished from that of a native of Persia. His study of the Persian lore, ancient and modern was extensive, and it was this knowledge that made his travels through Persia interesting and successful. His thirst of knowledge did not leave him in his travels, and he is said to have brought back with him some very rare and valuable books from Persia, some of which would have seen

the light had his health allowed him to work.* This mention of travels puts me in mind of another phase of the man's character. He was as enduring, inured to hardship, and indifferent to bodily ease as a traveller can well be, and the curious thing about him is that he is said to have sometimes travelled in the garb of a *faqir*. Nobody will doubt that one can best enjoy travelling in this habit, uncurbed by formalities which cling to a man of acknowledged position and draw for him a line between legitimate and forbidden ground. A *faqir* is hampered by no such obstacles, and he can be as lithe in his movements as the birds of the air and as free of care as the lilies of the field, and can devote himself entirely to observation and experience of the strange lands he visits and the new sights that meet his eye. On return from his travels Azad entered again upon a career of usefulness and gave to the world his revised collection of Zauk with notes. While engaged on this work he gave out that he would establish a library open to the public. He did so and ungrudgingly placed his valuable store of books at the disposal of the public, and established also a reading-room in which people could read newspapers from all parts of India. His name, which, though well-known already, had increased in respect by the distinction conferred upon him on the occasion of the Jubilee of Her Most Gracious Majesty the Queen-Empress of India, by granting to him the richly deserved title of Shams-ul-Ulema, attracted to him numerous visitors, whom he found time so to please as to send them home with the best of impressions about himself. But it pleased God to put an end to his usefulness at this stage of his life. Overwork and continuous strain on his brain

*One of the results of his research during his travels has been published in Lahore. The *Sukhandan-i-Paras*, as the book is styled, is a valuable treatise on philology proving the identity of the origin of the *Peratan* and the Sanskrit language.

undermined his intellect and it got impaired. For sometime he remained seriously insane; then he to some extent improved and it was hoped that he might be able to do something more for our literature, but this wish was not destined to be fulfilled and he did not recover. He wrote, however, a book called *Sapak Namak*, which shows, what a literary man could do even in a state of mental derangement. ✓

I pass on now to an examination of his works, one by one, some reference to which has already been made. The first that I will take up is the *Qisas-s-Hind* which contains an account of the most remarkable events of Indian History given in the most telling manner. The language used and the style employed in this book are simply admirable. To my mind it has always borne a resemblance to the *Gulistan* of Saadi, the peculiar feature of which is that though it is taught to children from the earliest period of their education, it continues to charm them in youth and in old age. Similarly, though in Urdu literature the *Qisas-i-Hind* is the book with which one makes his acquaintance while in the Primary School, but one can enjoy half an hour with it even when he is grown up and has read scores of the best books in the language. The balanced sentences containing words which appeal to one as those exactly fitting the position they occupy, which would hardly admit of being displaced without losing their effect, continue their charm for advanced intellects and developed tastes. Quoting passages requires time and as the book is within everybody's reach you can verify the truth of the statement for yourself.

We had, therefore, better come to a work of his which, though of all others the least read, is regarded as his best in point of literary merit by men of taste. It is a novel feature in Urdu

literature, and contains the best illustrations of his characteristic style which will be found impossible to imitate. If there is one peculiarity in Azad's writings it is this, that its imitation is difficult. Our eminent man of letters, Maulvi Nazir Ahmad also has a style of his own, difficult to be copied, but not to the same extent as the former one, and some attempts have even been made, and not quite without success, to copy it. Another famous modern auther, Sharar, has been imitated with considerable success, but I have not come across a successful imitation of Azad. The best book illustrating this characteristic style is the *نیرنگ خیال* which is an instructive allegory dealing with human life. This is no place for entering upon the entertaining character of this variety of writing or the powerful influence it exercises over the human mind in impressing otherwise indigestible truths upon it in the most effective manner. This kind of writing is nearly unknown in Urdu literature. The Greeks from whom the word allegory is taken were the first to introduce this method of writing, and it has since gone through several evolutions through the able hands of Roman writers, and later on through the masterly hands of Addison, Swift and John Bunyan, the author of that best known of allegories, the *Pilgrim's Progress*. There are some very good allegories in the Persian language in the *Masnavi* of Maulana Rum which are possessed of high merit, as well as in the ancient Sanskrit books, translations of which could be had and could have given writers in Urdu some idea of attempting similar productions. So far as I know the honour of having first written an allegory after the true Greek model belongs to Maulvi Azad, in which he shows not only command of the Urdu language but also wonderful acquaintance with the Greek mythological and allegorical lore. I have heard it said, and probably with truth, that the author

owed the plan of this work to Dr. Leitner, who, being himself well-versed in Greek and English, gave Azad the advantage of his knowledge, and it was on materials supplied by him that the superstructure of this "Phenomenon of Imagination," as the name of the book would stand when translated, was raised. Whatever the means employed, the fact stands out in the boldest relief that Azad has accomplished what could be expected only from English knowing scholars of Urdu, in spite of his sad lack of English knowledge, and is thus in a position to put the former, among whom, I am afraid, some of us present here this evening will have to be classed, to shame. One of the most interesting passages in this book is that dealing with the question of the comparison of Zauq and Ghalib. I will not here touch the vexed question of the comparative merits of Zauq and Ghalib, and will not quite endorse the view taken by Azad, but will say this much, that he has said what he had to say in an inimitable way. He was Zauq's pupil, and he must needs admire him even to the extent of denying others their right, but the way in which he has expressed his estimation of Zauq's position in literature does him much credit, as, while extolling Zauq, he has not forgotten Ghalib, though a keen observer could see through the carefully veiled attack on the latter.

The next work demanding our attention is *Ab-i-Hayat*, which, as I have already said, supplies a distinct want and paves the way for Urdu coming to be a literature of permanent value, as it gives an account of the writers in the language from the earliest down to the latest. There were some books already in the language, the most notable of which was one by Abdul Ghafur Khan, *Nassakh*, but it has superceded all as the best fulfilling modern requirements and a little more reliable. This is a book which has been more largely admired than his other productions, and deserves to be, from the

research and labour he has had to go through for it, and will therefore help most in his name being remembered. Yet it is not without its defects. The authenticity of some of the anecdotes regarding the authors described therein is questioned in some quarters. For instance, I have seen a very remarkable anecdote related by Azad, regarding Mir Insha-Ulla Khan's last days, the graphic but pathetic description of which has brought forth many a sincerely shed tear from some tender hearts, contradicted from a very reliable source. A gentleman in Lucknow who claims relationship with Syed Insha-Ulla says he is prepared to contradict it on the authority of family traditions. I did not want to listen to the gentleman's arguments falsifying Azad's description, as every victory on his side divested me of a portion of a dearly-cherished romance about the great poet, and lessened his importance in my estimation in proportion, as soon as it appeared that Insha was after all not the genius in ruined circumstances that has secured our heartiest sympathy, but one who died in wealth and opulence gained in a generous Oriental court. Similarly, his account of the parentage of Mirza Dabir has been taken exception to by a pupil of the latter, who contradicts the author of the *Ab-i-Hayat* with conclusive proofs by giving genealogical trees and copies of ancient royal documents, in a pamphlet distributed gratis. Ghalib has been done scant justice to on account of his rivalry with Zauq. But with all this the performance is memorable, and we owe much to the author of it.

The last* compilation which he has given to Urdu literature is his revised and annotated edition of Zauq. He has rendered it thrice greater in volume

* One more valuable addition to Azad's books has been made by the publication of the *Darbar-i-Akbari*, an entertaining and detailed record of the unprecedented reign of the great Akbar. It was written while the author was in good health, but he could not revise it.

than the ordinary collections in the market before, and still complains that most of what his master had produced has been lost during the Mutiny. His notes giving circumstantial details of the occasions on which some of Zauq's verses were uttered have doubly enhanced the value of the book and have invested some otherwise ordinary verses with a halo of romance. As an example I may call your attention to two well-known lines out of a quite famous *ghazal*:—

گر خدا دیوتے فنا عت ماہ یکہفتہ کی طرح
دوڑے ساری کو کبھی آدھی نہ انسان چھوڑ کر
ہم بھی سننے ہیں دکن میں ہے بڑی قدر سخن
کون جائے ذوق پر دہلی کی گایان چھوڑ کر

The verses are no more than pretty as they stand, but one cannot help admiring the nobility and heroism of the spirit which gave utterance to them when one learns how great a temptation he had to resist in order to conform to what rightly or wrongly he believed to be his principle. Azad relates that Diwan Chandu Lal was then in power in the Deccan as the Nizam's Diwan and as a man who had great admiration for poetry and loved to gather the best literary men of the day around him. He heard of Zauq and wanted to have him in the Deccan court. He sent a special messenger to Zauq with several thousands of rupees and a line as a *طرح* as for writing his *ghazal*. The messenger came all the way from the Deccan with the money, delivered his master's message to Zauq, and requested him to make preparations for the journey with the money brought. But Zauq declined the princely offer with thanks, and sent a letter containing two *ghazals*, after the specimen prescribed in which he suggestively explained the cause of his inability to go. In providing this revised

collection Azad has rendered signal service to literature. Carping criticism has not, however, left even this performance alone. It is alleged by some that the verses added are not Zauq's, but spurious ones. I cannot say that I have much respect for this theory. I think Azad must deem it a decided compliment to his own ability if people can credit him with the authorship of lines such as those now added in the *Diwan*.

Having chanced to touch on his capacity to write poetry I will take a brief notice of his poetical productions also, if I have not already tired your patience. He may have been gifted by nature with a poetical mind, but, as I have already remarked, he has proved himself a very illustrious example of inclination sacrificed to conviction of what would be useful, and furnishes a precedent well worthy of imitation by many of our rising young men who ought to try to form their tastes according to the needs of the present times. There are only three or four short places of poetry claiming the authorship of Azad that I know of. They are beautiful in their own way, showing raciness, power and felicity of expression embodying very good moral truths or practical precepts. His inspiring piece having a chorus of

آزاد کی یہی ہے صدا ہاں بڑھے چلو

can well be a watch-word for every student and a guide in life. His poems on nature such as the one describing sun-set, may well vie with some of the best similar descriptions by English poets, and his other poetical attempts are also characterised by simplicity, among which his Ode to the Queen on the Jubilee, beginning: with, *اے خوشی آ تیرے آنے سے* deserves special mention as a model of a simple style. Beyond these few things, as far as I am aware, he has no production in this line and these alone do not go far to establish his claim as

a poet. But these writings added to his vastly useful efforts in prose, no doubt entitle Maulvi Azad to a position, and a very eminent one, among the best modern writers in our language, and he deserves the popularity which he enjoys.

Now I proceed to mention, as I promised in the beginning, some of the causes which have deprived him of popularity outside our Province, or at least have denied him the same amount of it which has fallen to his lot in the Punjab. These consist of prejudice in one form or another. He is depreciated by some of our Lucknow literary magnates simply because he was born at Delhi, which is the greatest crime a writer can commit in the Penal Code of Lucknow criticism. There are others who differing from him in one or two points in the accounts of writers given in the *Ab-i-Hayat* will denounce his other works also as worthless. Others again dislike him on the ground that he has represented Zauq to be of the Shia persuasion, whom they believe to have been a Sunni, as he himself belonged to the former faith. There are others still who, in their admiration for Ghalib cannot bear to acknowledge any worth in a man who was capable of doing any injustice to Ghalib, in order to show of his own idol to the best advantage. For this last mentioned class of critics I have one word of advice. Instead of finding fault with Azad for having underrated Ghalib or overestimated Zauq, they should themselves attempt a faithful record of the former's life on the same lines and show his numerous excellences. I have always felt a strong desire to see a pupil or an admirer of Ghalib setting him off at his best. I learn that a life and estimate of his works is promised from the pen of one of his ablest pupils and

I wait for its appearance. * Coming, however, to our subject, we find that different sorts of prejudices have stood in the way of Azad's getting as much fame outside the Punjab, the Province of his life-work, as he deserved, yet he has succeeded eminently in his objects here, and must have the consolation, if his present sad state allows even of this, to see an earnest prayer to which he once gave utterance in the following lines well realised :—

مجھ کو تو ملک سے ہے نہ کچھ مال سے غرض
 رکھتا نہیں زمانے کے جن جنجال سے غرض
 ہے التجا یہی کہ کرم تو اگر کرے
 وہ بات دے زبان میں کہ دل پر اثر کرے

* The biography alluded to has now appeared. It is the *Yadgar-i-Ghalib* by Hali. I learn that a similar work is contemplated by Mir Mahdi Majruh of Delhi who was perhaps even more intimately acquainted with Ghalib, than Maulvi Hali.

MAULVI NAZIR AHMAD AND HIS WORKS.

—:—

Shams-ul-Ulama Maulvi Nazir Ahmad of Delhi is one of the few authors who have the satisfaction of noticing unmistakable signs of the appreciation of their work in their life-time. The life of a literary man in all countries and all ages has been as a rule far from a life of wealth and affluence, and troubles have generally been the lot of literary men, and it was by shining in spite of all disadvantages, that they have proved the superior stuff they were made of and have ended their lives leaving the world dazzled by the lustre of genius, and feeling sorry for its failure to recognize and reward merit, when it was time. With the beginning of the present century, there came a change over Europe in this respect, and authorship began to pay. The present century of the history of England, in common with that of other civilised countries, affords remarkable instances of literary men, who were exceptions to the above rule, and amassed great fortunes by literature. In the East, however, before the contact with European civilisation in some parts of it, the only way of encouragement of literary men, mostly poets, had been through the bounty of kings and rulers. The East did not enjoy printing as early as the West, and therefore, books for a long time remained in Asia, the privilege and the luxury of the rich and the great. By the time learning had reached every nook and corner of Europe and printed books on moderate prices were placed within the reach of the ordinary middle class people, Asiatic countries had all the ancient stores of literature pent up in manuscript volumes in the libraries of the great or the learned, and none but a rich man, actuated by a strong zeal for learning, could obtain permission to get any