

Men, Matters and Memories

By
M.A. Lokman-Advocate
Editor-In-chief



Supervision, Edition,
Compilation and Introduction by:
Professor Ahmed Ali Al Hamdani



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Foreword

Knowledge is the only path to salvation, abundant education is the strongest basis for the equality of nations, their appreciation for each other

Muhammad Ali Luqman

I thought of writing an introduction to my father's book which is the only one of his writings published in English so far.

The book, 'Men, Matters and Memories' is a collection of memories that father used to publish each week in his English newspaper, 'The Aden Chronicle'; they date from 1960, 1961, 1962. Other articles in the series sadly have either been lost or are in too poor a condition, ancient, and fragile to be retyped ready for publication. My father used the spelling of his name as Lokman in all his English writings.

It was almost 40 years after my father's passing when, the project of collecting, archiving, and publishing his papers, books, photographs, speeches, and radio recordings, was initiated by my brother Maher Muhammed Ali Luqman. He had managed to rescue a large amount of the material already but through publicity and reward he collected other works that had been lost.

This initial stage took a lot of time, money, and effort but once completed Maher approached Dr Ahmed Ali Alhamadani and invited him to take on the next stage of researching the material and preparing it for printing and publication. This was also a time consuming, costly, and dedicated effort which has meant that father's works are now available to anyone who wishes to access his legacy.

The books detail father's experiences of life in Aden and elsewhere during that major period in Yemen's modern history. They provide an unrivalled and definitive source of the history of that time. The project took many years of work, but it is only partially complete as much of his earlier work is still missing, waiting to be discovered, if it has not been destroyed already.

The British left Aden in 1967 after 139 years of occupation and for most of that period it was administered from British India; in the late 1930s control transferred to London. Father's writings encompass the period from his birth in 1898 until his death in 1966. He did not live to see the end of British rule and the transfer of power to the new regime under the leadership of many individuals who he would have known personally.

The change of rule resulted in a period of political hostility towards the Colonial past and its legacy. The new Government refused to allow any work from that era, academic or otherwise, to be published. It was not until many years later that different ideas prevailed and enabled the launch and publication of the first book which included most of father's works. The launch of that book in 2006 was the start of many to follow, under the auspices of the University of Aden and Dr Al Hamadani, who conducted the research.

Dr Alhamadani is to be commended for his sterling achievement because, until the books were published, very few records about father were available and, as the people who knew him grew old, and memories faded, there was the risk and danger that an important part of the history of that dramatic period would be lost including aspects of a special and ardent man, who debated and promoted his ideas, actions, and struggles through the various means available to him. His activities ranged from the simplest, such as pressurising the British authorities to granting the residents of Aden their legitimate rights, to political engagement with the British and local leaders in the necessary debate concerning the creation of an independent nation based on his strategic ideas and visions for the future.

The idea of writing his memoirs and publishing them in his newspapers Fatat-Al-Jazira and The Aden Chronicle started in 1960, when my brother Farouq Muhammed Ali Luqman, rest his soul, returned from the United States after completing his Master's in Journalism at Columbia University. Farouq took over as Chief Editor of both newspapers and suggested to my father that he should concentrate on writing his memories, as that was normal practice for anyone who had history to tell.

It was at about this time that I came into the picture. My childhood memories of father and Aden, in the fifties and sixties, until his untimely death during pilgrimage to Makah in 1966, are precious to me. We were very close, and his influence on me remains strong to this day; that period prior to his death was filled with joy, learning and surprises. Father's vision was that women should be educated and full participants in the wider world, something that I am proud to have fulfilled. Since the publication of his books, works and writings it has been an opportunity for all of us to rediscover not just the loving and caring father but a man of wisdom and long-term vision who sought to develop his people and homeland in all areas of knowledge and progress.

In his memoirs father writes about his own development through life and he describes how he was influenced from an early age, by his own father, my grandfather Ali Ibrahim Luqman. He was a teacher and a great public speaker. He studied Islamic 'fiqh', and mastered horse riding and shooting. He was a literary critic read poetry, a genius of his time. He spoke many languages and was fluent in English; he worked with the British Government during their rule of Aden and was honoured with the title Khan Bahadoor which was one of the highest honours of the time given by the British.

Father was taught by his own father between 1905 and 1911, when he convinced his father to open a book shop and import books. This was the start of his real education and from this early age he developed a love of books. His extensive reading and learning helped him in later life when he left for India to study Law which was what people could afford in those days as the British scholarships were not yet established. It formed his writing style and began his development on a path that would make him a polyglot, a multilingualist, and philosopher. In his memories father mentions his first Golden Ink Waterman pen which signified the start of his life as a writer.

Father's legacy to his nine sons and four daughters included enlightenment and awareness of the need to progress as well as the importance of education. He was a great man who began an odyssey to change the fortunes of his people. The changes he dreamed about became his lifelong project. He strove to instil the same passion in his own sons, family and friends and the citizens of Aden, through his newspapers. Today, M A Luqman, is regarded as a legend and a positive role model for subsequent generations and the people he loved and who loved him.

The rediscovery of father's works and writings was the start of a long journey of discovery of a man who started early in his life to strive for the sake of his homeland and his greatest concern. The various accounts of his life and times revealed an unknown and forgotten history that has proved fascinating to modern readers. These memories portray a remarkable and extraordinary life of a man who dreamt of a future of a self-sufficient, well fed, healthy, educated, modern Aden.

Our gratitude to my brother Maher Muhammad Ali Luqman, the youngest of all the brothers, who funded this project and the publication of father's books in order to honour his memory, is unbounded. The response of the worldwide Yemeni diaspora to the result has been overwhelming and has enabled extensive further academic studies from all over the world.

Huda Muhammad Ali Luqman

Preface

The Memories of Lokman on Trial

Prepared by: Professor Dr. Ahmed Ali Al-Hamdani

Translated by: Dr. Shirin Yassin Yar Mohamed

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"Men, Matters and Memories" the diaries or memories of Mohamed Ali Lokman, the advocate, were written in English by him and published in the English newspaper (Aden Chronicle) in the form of episodes at the beginning of every week. This paper was read and was well-known in the whole of Yemen and the neighboring as well as distant countries.

The advocate, Mohamed Ali Lokman, started writing and publishing these memories on the 10th of November, 1960 and finished them, it seems, in 1963, as the last episode is dated 27th December, 1962, since we are unable to locate till this moment the 1963 copies of this newspaper.

It seems also that some issue numbers of the mentioned years are lost or perhaps the advocate did not write in these weeks.

It should be mentioned that Lokman, the advocate, was concerned with writing and publishing his memories on different issues and wished very much to broadcast them to people of all ages. And to prove this point it should be said that Lokman resumed the publishing of these memories in Arabic in the Arabic newspaper "Fatat-Al-Jazira" under the title' (Memories – People I knew and events I experienced) during the period extending from 1963 till 1965, that is soon after the last episode was published in English.

Lokman started publishing these memories in Arabic on the 28th of November 1963 and finished them in 1965. However, the copies from 1964 and 1965 issues are still missing till this

date. This is because the Fatat-Al-Jazira publishing house was looted and attacked after the Independence and all the contents were lost including all the archives as well as the special archives of Lokman, and we did not find except six episodes in Arabic, published in 1963 in the Fatat-Al-Jazira newspaper. We also found some episodes from 1966 under the title 'Memories' but they are very few, about four episodes.

And so, the number of episodes in Arabic that were lost were really big, whereas the number of episodes in English are fewer and this fact led us to translate these memories from English into Arabic so that all will benefit, and the effort should not be lost altogether and in so doing to lose a very valuable masterpiece of all times and we are still trying to locate the missing episodes.

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In fact, the first person to draw my attention to these memories and these episodes and their importance is Professor Maher Lokman who showed great concern in the works of his father without any exception and it was he who sent these episodes from Jeddah to Aden as they were published in the advocate, Lokman's paper "Aden Chronicle" typed on the word-processor.

It required of me the reading of these episodes in English, revision of the texts typed on the computer depending on the copies made from the original source. The photocopies were not in good form and needed a reader, expert in English and able to understand the text in the right context.

And because I am not an expert in English, since Russian has taken all my effort, I asked Mr. Mohamed Gafar Mohamed Naser to translate the English text into Arabic and at the same time to check the English text on the computer, depending on the copies made from the original. He completed the task before the agreed date. The translated text also needed revision and we asked our friend and poet Mr. Shawqi Shafiq, who in fact worked very hard to revise the Arabic text, already typed on the computer. And that was not all. I also asked Prof. Dr. Shirin Yassin Yar to read the typed text in English and to revise any typos or other language gaps resulting from the poor copies and she, then Head of Department of English, Faculty of Education, University of Aden, completed the task in good time. And still I had to revise the

Arabic text and to correct the typos. All this has made it possible for us to provide the reader with the episodes in this book in an acceptable form regarding language and content, and perfection is only for the Almighty.

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In this way I present to the reader this book or work which is considered a successful and mature achievement of joint efforts between me and the engineer Maher Lokman, the highly educated person, who did not think of expenses and efforts for the sake of returning the due respect to his father, Mohamed Ali Lokman, the advocate. I found in him a rare loyalty in these days when the conduct of people has changed, and they have become more concerned with money and their personal benefit and pleasure. My friend exerted all his possible efforts in order to re-print and re-publish his father's work for the reader, to facilitate and make it available to every reader with no exception.

On this basis we published the following books together:

- 'Mohamed Ali Lokman, the Fighter, and the Pioneer of Modern Ideology and Literary Renaissance in Yemen – Selected Works,' [2005].
- 'The Discoverer of Fatat-Al-Jazira', (1940-1945),' [2006].
- 'The Poet, Mohamed Ali Lokman, his Poetic and Theatre Works' in two full volumes [2006].
- 'The Symposium of the Struggler Mohamed Ali Lokman, the Pioneer of the Enlightenment Movement in Yemen', [2007].
- 'Mohamed Ali Lokman, the Advocate, 'Fatat-Al-Jazira' Prefaces and Articles (1940 – 1950) - Part One- ', [2007].
- 'Mohamed Ali Lokman, the Advocate, 'Fatat-Al-Jazira' Prefaces and Articles (1951- 1966) - Part Two –', [2008].
- 'Lokman, the Traveler', [2008].

In this way we could revive the heritage of Lokman which was lying under the debris, and it could have been lost altogether because of some deliberate conspiracy from the sly coming from here and there and what pleases the heart is the fact that all these efforts have not gone

in vain since the works of Lokman found their way to the readers from different levels of thinking. It has become impossible today, and in a short period of time, for any researcher to overlook Lokman when studying the enlightenment movement in Yemen and his pursuit towards pioneering and his creativeness in different aspects and what is most important is that we were able to conduct a symposium in Aden University in 2006 and it was successful in all respect.

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The engineer Maher Lokman spent his money and his efforts, and I dedicated my mind and my effort in pain and pleasure as I checked this sentence or that, or corrected this expression and that, and in my pursuit to find the heritage of the man believing that I will reach the heights that he reached and the rank that he reached because this advocate possesses the power and legality for carrying me to where he reached a century ago.

It should be mentioned here that Maher Lokman actually sent me most of his father's works which he was searching for in Yemen and Saudi Arabia and in the Emirates and London and in America and Canada, not foreseeing the hardships, despite of his various works and involvement. He did not stop at that but also published the works of his brother, the poet, the pioneer, and the dramatist and journalist, the respected Ali Mohamed Lokman. I certainly would like to thank him before anything else and thank the team of work that assisted me in typing, revising, in Xeroxing from different sources, and in editing, and refining the text for the context.

This great civilized and enlightening project does not stop at the publishing of these books for we desire to publish other lost works, some of which have been found and some are still missing.

In this respect we, I and Maher Lokman, will publish the third volume of 'Advocate Lokman's Prefaces and Articles'. We have found many of the missing issues of Fatat-Al-Jazira. Those who made copies of the available issues in the National Library or in the Centre for Research and Yemeni Studies in the university forgot to make copies of other issues which are many and form a special volume and we also thrive to find other missing works and we will publish them, Allah willing. And I think this Al-Hamadani/Al-Lokmani project has re-established once again

the name of Lokman, the advocate, as well as the Lokmans in general as when Mohamed Ali Lokman was alive after they were in oblivion for no fault of theirs.

It should also be mentioned that my acquaintance with Maher Lokman, the successful businessman, has formed a great start for the publishing of the works of Lokman. I still remember the days I had spent in constant worries and in search for a publisher for my book in which I collected the compositions of Lokman. I had finished the book and placed it on the table awaiting some government or private body to finance its publishing. I could not do so and one day, Mr. Maher Lokman contacted me; I was not acquainted with him and we agreed to meet in my office. He came accompanying the senior sister and educationist, Khadija Lokman who assisted me in finding some issues of Fatat-Al-Jazira and other numerous things about her father Lokman, the advocate. This was the first meeting and the project started, the project of abundance and goodwill and Mr. Maher Lokman financed the project which has become the sign of both knowledge and friendship, and it is a project that has proved to be a great achievement in many respects.

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And so, this is a new book and another by the advocate, Mohamed Ali Lokman, published in his newspaper, 'Aden Chronicle' under the title 'Men, Matters and Memories', and it is an autobiographical survey of the history of the author in its minute details from childhood till the writing of these episodes. The episodes in this book end in the fifties, in the early fifties to be exact. The missing part of these episodes published in English complete this history till the early sixties, I think. The four episodes published in Arabic in the 1966 volume in the Fatata-Al-Jazira newspaper deal with the events of the second half of the forties, and it seems that the editors of the newspaper re-published them for some reason and that too after the passing away of Lokman, the advocate.

And thus, this autobiographical book narrates the author's life history and documents the events in the various years and decades. In it Lokman, the advocate, follows a chronological and historical narration to a possible and probable degree in stating the details and describing the events and he does not deviate unnecessarily. He combines his personal history with the

history of the time and of the region as well as of the world around, that is the history of Aden where the events of this biography took place, and the history of Yemen. And so Lokman's history or biography cannot be separated from the history of Aden as well as the history of Lokman and Aden cannot be separated from the history of the region. Aden is described in terms of its relationship with its neighbors, the near and far ones, thus bringing in front of our eyes the history of the modern and contemporary Aden with all its hues and colors.

In these episodes, the autobiographical book, Mohamed Ali Lokman, the advocate, deals with the local, regional and international issues, relating them to his personal life and the life of his city – Aden - which he adored. These memories have become a form of an autobiography in which the author describes his life at home, in the street, at school, and at work, exposing many details of his personal and private, and family and social life. Lokman projects his various activities – social and educational, scientific and practical, political and ideological, cultural, religious and economical, stressing his role in all these activities and his presence and his influence on these events, in his attempt to reveal to us all that we need to know, about him and the history of the region, and the conditions of the world around us, the near and the distant ones, during the period of time that he deliberately records as he is describing a history that is hidden and folded away from our eyes, and perhaps not available in other references.

In this way we are in front of a wide panorama, that is both Yemeni and Arabic as well as international, providing the author with the ability to express his commitment to the cause and to provide a full picture and thus the author's travels which he describes truly and sincerely gain importance. In this autobiography, the book, the author describes his travels to Somalia, and Ethiopia and to India as well as he describes his internal journeys to different parts of Yemen - either in the protectorates or the kingdom - describing all that with the insight of a learned man and artist at the same time - the learned who wants to know about things and open their locks or the artist who loves all that he photographs. The author narrates all this in a chronological manner side by side with his biography and within his life cycle. Lokman had classified some of the travels in some books: *A Tour in Somalia Land*, *In the Land of Daher*, however his travels were bigger than that; he traveled to Europe, America, Africa and the Arab World.

What is important in all this is that Lokman writes about these things in details, as if writing from a personal diary he had written over the years for it is not possible that these details

come from memory and the question that we wish to pose here is "Where are his diaries?" It seems that they were lost after independence.

If we say that Lokman wrote these episodes at the age of 64, then we are in front of a very special memory, lively and factual, able to record this matter or that. It seems that he was recording live the events that were passing in front of his eyes at the time of writing these episodes. Or perhaps Lokman placed in front of him his private notes or his personal diary during the writing of these episodes.

What is important is that the author possessed rare courage as he wrote the historical facts, both the local and the international ones. He also reveals frankness and boldness as he registers the different events and narrates the history of the destinies of men and he measures this and that with a scale that is both national and moral. And Lokman was bold enough to demand for the social, educational and economical improvement as well as the beautifying of the lives of people in these episodes.

Lokman wrote about himself and the events that happened as well as about the men he was dealing with, old and young, important as well as ordinary citizens, balancing their destiny and understanding their plight, without any tendency or favoritism and that makes what he registered so valuable.

It has to be pointed out here that some of the things that Lokman has written in these episodes – the book – have appeared in one form or another in some of the books mentioned earlier. The reader has to go back to "*What did the Westerners present?*", "*The story of the Laheji constitution*", "*Aden asks for self-rule*", and "*The story of the Yemeni revolution*" in order to find the details of what Lokman has briefly mentioned in this episode or that. His Preface in the *Fatat-Al-Jazira* has pointed out to this but the matter in these episodes moves in a different direction. It all comes in the form of an autobiography, where the author's character is the main hero's character, many others participating with him but he remains the focus and the centre. The other participants and the events form a background for the main character, the hero – Lokman. But Lokman does not overshadow the other characters or conceal them; he gives each character his proper role in all that he narrates; besides time and place become affective factors in the narrative.

The internal and regional events prevail in Yemen naturally, but the author does not separate them from the national or international events and thus the demands made by the Yemen elites and the Arabs come out clear. In fact, the events alone do not occupy the author's mind but men as well, those he knew stand out clear. In these episodes the dreams and hopes of the elites can be visualized in their pursuit to achieve a better society where abundance prevails, and satisfaction as well as social justice is found. The author refuses to achieve all that through violence or hatred or disputes, since he was a proponent of gradual peace which could be achieved only through important and radical reforms in the life of the citizens and their various matters, but he disliked stagnancy and groupings.

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In all his works Lokman displays a rare sense for history and historical conflicts but this sense is more prominent in these episodes – the memories - that he registered from his memory or diary or personal notes. In these episodes Lokman emerges as a first-rate historian and a superb man of insight in the whole of Yemen. He was the pillar behind most of the happenings and the base of many incidents taking place here and there. In some of these he took an active and effective part, playing a central and important role, while in others he was a secondary participant, and yet in some he was only a close or distant observer. It is essential that the reader understands that Mohamed Ali Lokman, the advocate, was an effective character as well as a basic one in most of the events, whether small or big, which affected in some way the lives of the people and their affairs. He related in different ways the events to the important people – those who made impressions - in all the period registered in the episodes, a fact that that has been confirmed by history and supported by geographical facts.

What is important here in all this is that Mohamed Ali Lokman was a great pioneer and a founder pillar in the Yemeni national movement; he was linked with the liberal movement from the start till the 1948 revolution, which Lokman has described in these episodes and his other works as the first Yemeni revolution or the first revolution in Yemen. He was also the first to demand public reforms and changes in Aden Protectorate. Mohamed Ali Lokman was with the revolutionaries in Sana'a; he participated in the preparation of the first constitution; he broadcasted the call for revolution from Sana'a radio and he was also close to the leaders of the liberal movement, well-versed in all that was happening and was going to happen before

and after the revolution. He was also closely linked with the leaders of 26th September Revolution, the commander Abdullah As-Sallal, (may Allah have mercy on him) as the first and foremost. He was the biggest defender of the September Revolution in Aden, welcoming it from the first day of its happening and supporting it in his newspapers, Fatat-Al-Jazira and Aden Chronicle, as well as in the parties and other places. The reader has to refer to his book, "*The Story of the Yemeni Revolution*," to know about all this and other numerous things to understand the role of this national figure.

In this manner these episodes reveal many things to the reader who can easily understand them; the episodes also reveal the range of Lokman in understanding his fellowmen and the events that he experienced and his wide understanding for the people of his time and the information of the current moment which he lived in all its different dimensions.

The episodes also reveal many facts about his personal and public life and showcase the secrets of some national issues for which Lokman lived and contributed to their fulfillment in the whole of Yemen and these were important issues in which Lokman took the lion's share as a participant. Lokman embraced the liberal men in Aden and opened for them Abi Altayib Camp as well as the Fatat-Al-Jazira newspaper and publishing house; he also warranted them financially and morally with the colonist authorities in Aden, assisting them in forming their party and issuing their newspaper, *The Voice of Yemen*, as well as training them to work in the newspaper in his paper and publishing house.

In all this we see the national concern in the mind and thinking of Lokman who tried to initiate radical reforms in the protectorates. He joined the concerned authorities in these protectorates in order to improve the lives of people in all spheres. Throughout this book we see Lokman as a pioneer figure, a unifying figure and a first-rate man of enlightenment.

I should add to all this that the episodes reveal Lokman's creativity in his newspaper, in his books, in his opening editorials and his articles. Here we can appreciate the beginnings and the endings in their appropriate forms.

It is important to point out here that the episodes end the misunderstanding circulating around the novel, '*Kamala Devi*' which he was involved in translating because some colleagues have written that Lokman had translated this work whereas we see that Lokman had actually written this narrative after composing it, since Lokman does not mention the translated

source, if this work was translated. This is because the man has made us believe in accuracy and honesty in all his works. Lokman wrote in episode (83) of the book under the title, 'Kamala Devi – An Adventure towards the Novel',

': "Kamala Devi is the name I gavein India."

On this basis we can say that these episodes confirm that the narrative, "*Kamala Devi*" or "*The Threshold of Pain*," is the creation of the genius Lokman in its composition and writing and not translation and copying. Lokman says in these episodes- Memories – that he composed his narrative, '*Saeed*' in 1940 although it is now well-known that this novel was written in 1939. The late researcher Abdullah Yaqub Khan wrote in Fatat-Al-Jazira newspaper, issue number (1), 2nd year, on the 5th January 1941, that Mr. Ibrahim Rasam printed the first story "*Saeed*" in this printing press (that is the Arabic Press) in 1939. It seems that his memory could not help Lokman, the advocate, since the novel came out without the date of publication.

In fact, we think that the novel '*Saeed*' was published in the late thirties, because the thirties were the right time for publishing various important works written by Adenese writers and we can mention some of books published in just that period to establish facts and register what happened. A number of books, in fact, appeared during the first half of the thirties: Lokman's book, "*What had the Westerners offered?*" in 1932, "*Aden and the Arab land*," a book about the geography of Aden and the surrounding regions, including a summary of the world geography; it was composed by the Adenese Geographical Committee and published by the Information Centre in Aden. The book was printed in the Nile Press in Egypt in 1932. The third work was the book, "*The dictionary of Adenese proverbs*," written by Abdullah Yaqub Khan, published in Cairo in 1933, and the fourth book was "*The share of Aden in the modern ideological movement*," composed by Ahmed Mohamed Saeed Al-Assnag, published in 1934 in Cairo by Alshora Printing Press.

On this basis the novel, '*Saeed*' must have been published in the thirties, terminating the great works done by the writers in Aden, at the head of them being, the advocate, Mohamed Ali Lokman.

I would add that the writer does not mention the book, "*What had the Westerners offered?*", rather he gives it another title, proving that the advocate, Lokman, benefited from his lively memory, besides using his various notes, for he talks about this book under the title, '*The*

source of the European advancement', at times and "*The European advancement'*, at others, in episodes (54) and (55).

In fact, these episodes open up many closed chapters in the life of Lokman and explain many of his activities and behavior, besides satisfying the reader's desire to know many things about Lokman's personal and public life, and his various activities inside and outside Yemen.

And we can speculate the amount of effort Lokman exerted in all these activities in the different directions, possessing that unfathomable ability to work in different aspects and different venues. We are surprised today to think when Lokman executed all this and how did he find time for it.

In fact, we see that Lokman was an expert in organizing his time and using his time in useful work at its best, for every minute became important and fruitful and was not spent in vain or hurting others.

The other important thing that is revealed in all his works and in these episodes is that Lokman dealt with the near and the distant ones in love and affection, never using foul language or expressions, a fact that proves that he was a gentleman with high morals dealing with others in the way that pleased Allah.

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It is worthy to note that Lokman, the advocate, in these episodes registers the beginnings and the first steps of many matters dealing with the lives of the Adenese society at that time and these are issues that have now become a past and history, that prevailed in the memories of those who are no more, and nothing remains except some vague pictures, difficult to read for no one ever thought of documenting them.

For example, Lokman documents the first steps in the field of education in Aden, and records for us the pictures of education for boys and girls on equal basis; all this is found only with Lokman and nobody else.

In fact, Lokman presents all these things and other things assuring his participation in the fulfillment of this step or that or this beginning or that, and these are things that we knew of

or believed in. This autobiography reveals the amount of participation on the part of Lokman, whether small or big, that took place in those days when Lokman was writing.

Aden finds a major place in these episodes since this city was the birth place of the author as well as the city of his childhood, his youth and his old age; he wished to die and be buried there. However, things took a different turn and Lokman had to leave Aden carrying with him the burden of the social and political enlightenment as well as the problems of education and culture. The author also spent an essential part of his life in trade for it was the pillar of the author and the city at some time; he also had close friendship with Lahej from where he married and its people with whom he established strong relationship. The mother of Salah and Khadija Lokman was from this region. We also see that the various events in the life of the author reveals that, he, Lokman, in fact, wrote the Laheji constitution or at least took a major part in its composition. If Lokman was the father of constitution as one of the 1948 revolutionaries called him, then his many and varied, good and positive, attitudes encompassed the whole of Yemen in a very distinctive way.

In this way these episodes gain a historical, as well as a social value for they tell the reader of the style of Lokman in English in the first third of the sixties; it also presents Lokman's ideas in those years with which he reached towards the demand for complete independence and the expelling of the colonists from the country. The episodes also reveal the culture of Lokman and his understanding of the different phenomena and the solutions of the different cracks here and there. Besides the author surveys in these episodes sixty years or more of the history of Aden and of his own life and of the region at large, and this is an important point for it compensates for the lost history for a lot of things have been neglected, or lost or burnt at one period of time; no one has come closer than Lokman from this period registered by Lokman unless it was for criticism. This is because the various achievements were made in the days of the colonisation and most people dare not look back after independence in fear of losing their lives for it was forbidden to think so in all circumstances and conditions.

These episodes as well as the other works of Lokman reveal one side or another of the citizens of Aden, the Yemeni Arabs, who did not live well as many believed, for they lived in poverty and at the mercy of the British, the Indians, the Persians, the Jews and others. Things have not changed much even today for the faces have changed and had taken different forms.

These episodes are a special register and a special type of history putting together facts and documents through a specific person, and he is Mohamed Ali Lokman, the advocate, who worked for half a century or more without any boredom or carelessness.

In this way these episodes – the autobiography – integrate the personal matters with the general issues, and the family affairs with different social conditions. Lokman is the affectionate father, the kind husband and the man who educated his sons and daughters and brought them up to be good people serving the country and the people.

It seems Lokman had special love for his first wife whom he remembered affectionately till his last days. And so we presume that the publishing of these episodes will help the reader to become more acquainted with Lokman and to understand the value of his life and his struggle in their various forms and shapes. If these episodes depict the personal and family life of Lokman in their general and broad context, they also explain the sides of his struggle in details; something that necessitates us to know him well and to know all about his struggle and his pursuit.

In these episodes we see the personality of Mohamed Ali Lokman clearly with no misunderstanding or blur. It is a personality of a struggler and a brave person; he emerges as a bold man shouldering the national causes and the people's problems in rare boldness and bravery. He describes his friendship and enmity in full earnestness and honesty and outlines his big and small sufferings in details. We can also see that Lokman possessed a sense of adventure and great love for risks, not caring about threats or fears, as long as the matter was in the public interest. And we see what Lokman really loved to work for and what he preferred to avoid.

We see in these episodes that the friends of Lokman were from everywhere, and he dealt with people from different countries, religions, races and languages. It was in the nature of the man who searched for the right whatever its source and type. Lokman was a Muslim and a believer who looked at the people and the world around him through his perspective as a Muslim, never overlooking things; it was possible for him to hurt his culture, or mind, or both, his private and public truth.

These episodes thus show the pursuit for enlightenment that Lokman carried with him over half a century or more on a wide canvas; the episodes also show that Lokman was a civilized social figure who tried to establish and found a society of establishment based on freedom of expression and thinking without fear and he did so before his newspaper, Fata-Al-Jazira and its publishing house.

The beginning was perhaps in the establishment of 'The Arabic Literary Club' in 1924 or before that and he pursued this after Fata-Al-Jazira, in the early forties. Lokman always respected the law and respected the people on this basis. He thus dreamt of forming a state of law and establishments in theory and practice and so he became a partner in many of the organizations, or bodies, which were built to initiate a civil society during the years of his struggle and fight.

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In this way Lokman's enlightenment was comprehensive, encompassing all the different levels from the bottom to the top and vice versa, including the various sides of life – education, culture, journalism, trade, politics, economics and whatever else that mattered to the people.

As we read these episodes, we must remember that Lokman, the advocate, was the first to write an autobiography in the Yemeni literature, presenting to the reader his personal and public memories.

It seems that writing the autobiography in the form of episodes helped the writer to survey the different issues in more freedom, each episode dealing with one particular topic at a time and finishing it up, though the episodes are related in the general form, Lokman, himself seems to unite them and link them up for he is the narrator or the story-teller who tells the reader what happened and was happening and what was likely to happen.

This free form of writing, that is the episode system, has enabled the author to talk of his memories in more than a hundred episodes in two languages, English and Arabic, as he informs us about everything we need to know and conceals anything he thinks is personal and this is true. We can take the example of his relationship with Qat; he chewed Qat at some period of time inside Yemen and outside but he then he turned an enemy to this vice that has harmed the country and its people. He faced antagonism for this for he was a supporter of 'Yemen

without Qat" movement and a proponent of Yemen without any poison of any type, and this was published in his preface and in these episodes.

Lokman also resorts to the style of open episodes, where we find that he completes this episode or that in another episode, a fact that ensures that this style enables the author to remain flexible and not tie himself up to the topic that he wants to relate to us. Thus, the choice of this style is clear for it is a style that is enforced upon the author through which he could easily reveal or conceal what he wanted in a great literary freedom.

Thus, these episodes are important in the works of Lokman over the decades and in the current and modern Yemeni ideology.

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In these episodes Lokman, the advocate, achieves three objectives – informational, educational and historical. If Lokman conveys in this autobiography the experiences and experiments of the past generation in the founding and originating a live and dynamic society which pursued to establish itself in such difficult and cruel conditions, he as well educates the present generation who today reads in these episodes about the values of behavior and insists on creative and talented work, free of jealousy or hatred.

And maybe, in these episodes Lokman who puts together a running stream of information from different directions, was trying to tempt the reader with these facts and to enrich his mind and to soften his heart thus enabling him to gain much knowledge and education. And it does not matter whether Lokman succeeded or failed in doing so. What is important in this respect is that Lokman pursued with his contemporaries to bring about great changes in the life of the people and the society as well as in their thinking. This was a special kind of attempt that exerted efforts and power from year to year and from a decade to another. However, what was achieved was big at that time and it does not matter that the events of the post-independence or pre-independence periods destroyed these efforts and scattered the attempts and stopped the escalation, finishing it completely till the unification when most of the things were restored in their proper places.

And so, we do not see Lokman alone in these memories but we also find with him the leaders of ideology and men of enlightenment who worked with him and believed in him in this national thrive with its various achievements and creation.

Lokman in fact presents to the reader, before anything else, his personal experience which got mingled with the experiences of others and the trials of the people in the country and abroad. And so, these personal experiences and self-trials become public property in all places and at all times.

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And it is important for the reader to understand that these episodes reveal the evident liberal conflict in the ideology of Lokman and his various activities and his multi-colored work. These episodes clearly express this side of Lokman in his life and work which continued for half a century to be approximate. His concern for starting literary and reform clubs, accrediting education for boys and girls, setting up newspapers in different languages and other activities are part of this liberal thinking throughout his life. However, the local conditions at that time made Lokman work at various fronts and in different directions; he combined the modern reform conflicts- the upraising as well the re-establishing ones - with the liberal ideology in a great cohesion. Lokman was moving in all this towards the establishing of a society that was modern and civilized andt can be part of a useful civilization. All this is very evident in the episodes.

In this way these episodes – the autobiography – the memories, indicate in one way or another that the writing of such serious work that writers and thinkers leave behind gain enormous value, some of which we have mentioned in this preface, for most of them have passed away burying with them valuable treasures from their beautiful and rich memories, that carries so much in its different expressions.

In these episodes we find the national and the Arab spirit very much elevated and high since Lokman, the advocate, deals with the Arab issues in the same manner as the local and national issues. In this work we see that deep love that Lokman had for Palestine, Algiers and the Egyptian Revolution among others. He does not stop at that but becomes an active

participant/player of a special kind in the run of events and conditions in these issues from the start till the end. At the personal level these episodes stop the disputes around the practical life of Lokman at this time or that for these episodes convey his working life in details and in a well-explained manner.

In fact, in these episodes, Mohamed Ali Lokman, the advocate, clearly displays his stand from this cause or that since objectivity is a feature of these episodes and it is a distinctive characteristic that gives a special flavor to these episodes. Thus, the plane that that carried, Lokman the advocate, to Aden on the eve of the first revolution in 1948 was not, in fact Italian, as some sources had said, but Ethiopian; it took him to Aden and saved his life from Seif Al-Jallad Ahmed.

And thus, this book – the autobiography in episodes - becomes the main and basic reference for the facts and details around the life of Lokman, the advocate, in its various stages from the beginning till the end.

There can be no two views in what Lokman has written except perhaps in the interpretation of this event or that or the explaining of the reasons that caused this or that incident. We think that in the publishing of the memories of Lokman which he wrote in his newspaper, Fatat-Al-Jazira in Arabic will open further horizons in the study of his autobiography and in understanding other instances and incidents we badly need others to know.

In this way this work becomes a complete reference in the history of the region and its geography, an important reference for politics and sociology, history and geography, economics and trade, culture and ideology, education and teaching, and many other innumerable things.

November 10, 1960

Men, Matters and Memories (1)

It was early in the year 1918. The First World War was raging. I was then appointed acting manager of Messrs., Clayton Ghaleb & Co., Ltd. It was an Anglo-Lebanese Company, with their head office in Manchester. I had successfully booked hundreds of indents for imports of textiles from Lancashire for Indian and Arab merchants in Aden e.g. Parmanund Laljee, Bhagwandas Devjee, Hirachand Sunderjee, Awadth Abdullah Badheb and many others. In six months goods worth £.20.000 /- reached Aden inspite of the activity of German mine laying and submarines in the Mediterranean Sea. I had also shipped thousands of bales of Coffee and Hides sent by the Branches in Abyssinia via Djibouti. S/S Wolsey Hall carrying a huge amount of goods for us was sunk in the Mediterranean.

One evening in those very busy days, an Arab woman came to my office sobbing bitterly. Her son was deported from Aden to Buraika, which was then a smuggler's paradise. I was known as petition writer in earlier years. I did not wish to disappoint this poor mother and wrote to the magistrate asking him to review his order. I said "I feel that the police Authorities have thrown dust into the eyes of the Court in order to secure the order of deportation". The magistrate was furious and sent for me. He asked me if I realized the significance of my remarks. I replied I did. He then said he would punish me for contempt, of Court. "Before you do so" I said, "please send for the deportee" " Why ? " he asked . "Because he is just 11 years old and Aden born", I replied. The magistrate summoned the police officer and called upon him to bring the deportee. A launch was sent to Little Aden. Mr.Eddie Barnes, Harbour Police Inspector, was in those days the uncrowned King of Buraika. The order for deportation was cancelled. The Magistrate was Major Strong. The boy was Abdo Zangoor He had picked up a lock from the Maalla wharf and was arrested and put up for deportation. He was a carpenter and his brother was a famous footballer. His family was a poor Adeni family.

November 17, 1960

Men, Matters and Memories (2)

It was 1917. World war I was reaching its climax of invading England and ruling the World. A Turkish army was stationed at Lahej under the courageous General Saeed Pacha, Fostering Aden, and had even reached the suburbs of Shaikh Othman. The British were suspected of intentionally allowing that army to linger here to weaken the attack on the Suez Canal. The sharif Hussain of Mecca and his sons had revolted against Turkey and were fighting on the side of the Allies.

I had left the Marist Brothers School in 1916 and had become a Petition writer, after passing the 6th Standard, the highest class in Aden then. I had many fine school mates. Some of them are very successful citizens today. Leon Delbourgo, Ahmed Yousoof Khan, Fakhiah Ahmed, Abdullah Hasson Khaliffa, Othman Showala and Pareira. Many are no more. We had all enjoyed the care and education of the Reverend Brothers; Bro. Valerian, Brother James and the wonderful Headmaster, Brother Gregory.

Aden Courts had Military Judges

The Courts in Aden were administered by Military Officers and one Civilian Judge, Syed Rustomali. Appeals were decided by the political Resident. I had already made a name. I made successful appeals on behalf of many Adenis – Attiq Mitwah, who had one year R.I. – was released. Sadeq Sumble who had 5 years R I was acquitted. I also prepared Export permit forms for the Arab merchants, who made voluminous exports of Grey Sheetings, White Shirtings, Food Stuffs. Tobacco and Potash to Jeizan, the Queen of the Red Sea under Syed Mohamed Idrisi. Aden merchants amassed huge fortunes. My father was in the Aden Protectorates. The quantities permitted to be exported from Aden by Major Wood, First Assistant Resident, were increased by forgery and very often ten times the quantities permitted were dispatched from Aden by sailing craft. Everybody had money.

Turkish Army Well Fed

The fact that the Turkish army in Lahej had everything it needed alarmed the Aden Government and after investigation, a criminal complaint was made. A police inspector was imported from Bombay and Ahmed Hajeh Ali, Husain Ali Ramah and Ibrahim Ali Jaffer were brought to book. The Police Inspector was repulsively strict. Some of the witnesses were assaulted and beaten.

I was called to give a statement, but I had had it corrected seven times before I agreed to sign it. In the court I was asked if the three accused were friends. Elaya Hashi was the Court interpreter. Major Strong was the Magistrate. The latter referred to my statement to the Police in which it was written that I had said they were fast friends, why the discrepancy? I referred the magistrate to the corrections in my statement to the Police and said the Inspector had refused to make more of those corrections. Besides, such statements were not of much importance in those days. The Court appeared to be satisfied and many witnesses later were encouraged to tell the Court that they were forced to tell tales.

The accused were discharged.

November 24, 1960

Men, Matters and Memories (3)

It was 1912. I was a young school boy and had already passed the Third Standard of the Secondary School and spoke English fluently. My father was the asst. Interpreter of Residency Office, the present day Secretariat. Major General Bell was the political Resident. Major H.F. Jacob was the First Assistant Resident. He was later Lt. Colonel and author of the perfumes of Araby and the Kings of Arabia. He was a scholar of Arabic and even wrote Arabic poetry. He had lost his first wife and married Mary Oluf Hoyer, a missionary in Aden, who occupied the same premises now in the occupation of the Danish Mission Book Shop. He mentioned in his book "Perfumes of Araby" that my father was his coach.

There were very few British Officers in Aden apart from Military Officers, at the head of Indian army, garrisoning Aden. The British Empire was then in its palmy days, and absorbed every Englishman who could be spared to serve abroad.

The political Resident made courtesy visits to the Arab Chiefs at Mukalla, Bir Ali, Balahaf, Socotra and other Stations like Perim, and Kuria Muria. My father was an indispensable companion on those tours and during the school vacations, he took me with him.

Put To The Test

At Mukalla, Mrs. Jacob asked me to accompany her to the Palace, to interpret for her. She met the ladies including the wife of Syed Husain bin Hamed El Mihdhar, later Khan Bahadur, and one of those very astute and rare statesmen, ever known in Southern Arabia. I discharged my duty very well and Syed Husain took me to Sultan Sir Ghaleb bin Awadth to tell him how much English I knew at that tender age. The Sultan spoke Arabic and Urdu. He said in Arabic, "We must examine you". A Bedouin then appeared before him and claimed the price of a cow destroyed by one of the rebellious slaves of the Sultan, who was a jolly humorous person, kind and generous. He asked Syed Husain what he thought and the latter nodded his assent. But the Sultan said that was unfair and looking at me he asked me what I had to say in such a matter. Eyes were focused on me and somebody said, "This is a hard test". I said "It may please your Highness to know that an Arab poet long ago had said "It would be a shame for the Lion to allow a desert beast to devour his cubs". The Sultan was pleased but remarked "This will cost us forty rupees."

Sayed Husain the Prime Minister of the Quaiti Sultan then took me by the hand to his house and conferred on me a silver band bedecked with semi precious stones, which I treasured for many years. We departed from Makalla with many presents of wonderful honey, hamoumi tobacco and Mukalla baskets we carried with us on the HMS Dalhousie which was stationed here. For many Arab notables from that port to Aden including Shaikh Saleh Barahim and Syed Abdul Rehman Aljifri, who has later emigrated to Cairo.

December 1, 1960

Men, Matters and Memories (4)

THIS WEEK, I intend to take my readers as far back as the year 1905. This was an important date in the history of Aden . The Suez Canal was then open to maritime traffic; the Japanese had routed the invincible Russian army and the Colonial powers found rich and fertile soil, in their exploitation of China.

The Messageries Maritimes had established regular ocean service between Marseilles and Shanghai . Many seamen were recruited from Aden. Some of them had become Syrangs and were rich. Ibrahim Ghubashi and Ali Shamakh built streets of houses on their return from abroad. Djibouti was in French occupation and Massawa in Italian occupation, insipite of their defeat at Adowa in 1896 by the Abyssinians. Many from Aden shifted to Djabouti : Abdulla Mohamed Ali Ghulamali and Yousoof Hussain Lokman. They flourished. Many Yemenis from Mocha moved to that growing port. Some carpenters and masons were recruited from Aden for Massawa.

TURKISH COLONIALISM

The Turks were the rulers of Yemen. Imam Yahya made Shahara fortress his abode. The Turks had introduced a city state organization in the Yemen; they appointed Mayors and conferred on them the titles of Pachas, after consultation with the citizens. Like all Colonial powers they centralized their efforts, raised and made happy a number of families, and left the majority of the people in poverty. Their system of taxation was, however, reasonable in comparison with the subsequent Zakat system. Among the Pachas created in Yemen were Syed Ahmed Pacha, Ahmed Nomon Pacha, Abdul Qader Nomon and Ahmed Nasser Pacha. The latter was one of the Turkish delegates on the Anglo Turkish Boundary Commission. Major H.F. Jacob was the British representative.

In that year my mother sent me to see the Syed Hashem Bahr fair at Shaikh Othman. This Saint was a pious porter in the firm of Syed Taha Safee in Crater. Shaikh Othman had then a small population of about 5000. Most of them used to work in the Khor Maksar Salt Works, then owned by the Italians. My father, who became the Inspector of Income tax in later years told me that the Italian Salt works paid the biggest amount in income tax. I remember I was told the sum was one million rupees per annum. This was one of the richest companies in Aden. The Aden Coal Co., Ltd. was another.

We took a gharry drawn by a camel to Shaikh Othman as a result of rinder pest among horses. There were no taxis in 1905. We passed through the tunnels and the Isthmus. I was then told that my grandfather Ibrahim and his son-in-law Suleiman had taken a sub contract to open tunnel and that they had lost a big amount of money.

ON CAMELBACK TO CRATER

On the way to Shaikh Othman we bivouacked near a water cistern and a large tree at KhorMaksar on the old road facing the Khormaksar Club. A water aqueduct was running from Shaikh Othman to the Isthmus, just behind the historical Turkish Trench, where at present a Five Million water tank has been constructed by the Public Works Department.

During the afternoon on the fair-day I was watching the horse race in the open space facing the dome of the saint (today the whole area is developed and there are hundreds of big buildings, and a small area of it is left near the slaughter house). Suddenly I saw my father riding a camel, after nine months of absence, in Dhala. I called out. He brought the camel on its knees and carried me behind him and off to Crater. He said he was going to see his sick mother. In less than an hour we arrived but unfortunately found her dead in her house in Section F street No 4 . She was a Yemeni lady of noble birth and had many relatives in Aden and in Yemen.

December 8, 1960

Men, Matters and Memories (5)

IN THE YEAR 1908, the population of Aden was in the region of 35000. There were no attractive buildings, finest house was that of Luke Thomas & Co. Ltd. Steamer point, then. The Arab merchants conducted a prosperous business. Syed Taha Safee was one of the big dealers in skins, hides, coffee and gums imported from Yemen and Abyssinia. Shaikh Bakkar Basharehil imported Hamoumi Tobacco “Abu Sabaa Brand” from Shehr and Mukalla. Shaikh Saleh Balaxa dumped all his wealth in an attempt to inaugurate Salt Works in Abyan and constructed water tanks in Shuqrah. Shaikh Ahmed Omer Bilfagih, Shaikh Bayousoof, Shaikh Bubakr Muslem, Shaikh Shoaib and other Hadhramis made exports to the Red Sea, Africa and Benadir (Somalia). Shaikh Ali El Amoodi and Shaikh Mohamed Ba Ali Al Amoodi had established connections with Sudan and Eritrea. In the Sudan Sawakin was an important port.

Adenis also took part in that prosperous trade. Ali Hajeb Ali was one of the big brokers in the central market which was then in the building now occupied by Paul Ries in Dana Bazaar. The Kirby and firewood market was in the Saila, now occupied by the British Bank of the Middle East. Bank of India and the Building of Emir Fadhl bin Ali. Mahboub and Rehan Farahat, another Adeni firm imported good from the Yemen. The big buyers were Maurice Ries and P. Bardey. My uncle Hussain Ibrahim Lokman was the broker of the latter firm. Mr. Besse was a clerk in this firm before he started his own business. Other smaller merchant were Dayel Ahmed Sultan who was an agent for the traders coming to Aden on dhows from Khokha, Ghuleifiqa and Taef north of Mokha in the Red sea. Ali Houmi represented traders coming over here from SUR in the Persian Gulf with dry fruits and wurs (a yellow dye) The Yemenis were not yet important merchants here but Koshasha was a Sanaani broker, in Bohra Bazaar, and many buyers from Sanaa used to lodge with him. The Hassanalis had big business with Basra and Eritrea.

Generally, Aden was an emporium of trade in those days of great thrift, as it always was in the ancient times when camel caravans from here reached Palmyra and Ophir. Bulhar in Somaliland was a big business centre, more important than Berberah. Haj Ebrahim Noor and Haj Ahmed, Somali nationals had offices there. They were also well established in Aden. They had almost a monopoly of the horse gharry transport business.

Some of the oldest Indian shop keepers and firms are Gowasjee Dinshaw, Pallonjee Dinshaw, Bhieajes, Siraj Tarachand, Bhagwandas, Paramanund Laljee, Nathoo Mooljee and the Bohras : Sarela, Sharafali, Adamali, Hakimjee Nuruddin Mohamed Ali & G.M. Mohamedali, who had huge interests in Addis Ababa, Harrar and Dire Dawa.

Many Adenis moved away to the new ports of Djabouti, Massawa and Mombasa. Yousof Hussain Lokman, Abdulla Ali Ghulam Ali and Mohamedali went to Djabouti. Abdo Shamakh and the Mubaraks migrated to Mombasa as skin-selectors. The Arabs in East Africa have remained traders in skins to this date, because they had no competition in this business from the energetic and resourceful Indian traders.

At the age of ten, my father who was the Inspector of Income Tax sent me to study Mohameddan Law with Syed Abdullah bin Hamed Safee, a jurist and an authority on the sayings of the Prophet of Islam. I memorized many chapters of the Quran and the Hadith (Tradition). I also studied the law of Inheritance, by Al Boqari , with Shaikh Abdullah Al Hadrhrami who used to have a circle for all law students; and my teacher in Arabic Grammer was Shaikh Omar Zabidi, a blind Faqih and Grammarian. My father taught me Arabic Literature and in 1910 I was given a prize in school for proficiency in Arabic and another in Geography. Our headmaster of the Government Primary School (the buildings was the one now occupied by the main Trading Co., in Crater,) was Faqih Saeed Ali El Fugaibi, who was very good at Arithmetic and Syed Hamood El Hazimi a calligraphist, was his assistant. He later became Qadhi of Aden and then Qadhi of Beberah .

One of our teachers was Faqih Ahmed Hindi, who wrote a history of Aden, in Arabic, the first one written by a local man.

Those were the good old days.

December 15, 1960

Men, Matters and Memories (6)

BETWEEN 1907 and 1911, I was a student of the Government Primary School, at Crater. It was the only one here but there were two others in Tawahi and Shaikh Othman. There was one secondary, rather, intermediate school, in Crater and another at Tawahi . Syed Hamood bin Hasson was the inspector of Education and Headmaster of the Crater School.

I had to work for gain, to help the family . I became a scribe writing letters for purdahnashin ladies, to their husbands, in East Africa(Mombasa) to which they had repaired after British acquisition of the country by lease from the Sultan of Zanzibar. There were immigrants from Aden in Djibouti, Massawa, and even in Saigon in the Far East. I used to work, late afternoons and on holidays.

Having passed the 6th standard of the primary school in 1911 my father put me in the Marist Brothers School , Steamer Point and purchased a donkey to carry me daily from Crater. I cultivated new friendships – Francis Aga, Joseph Fidele (we used to call him Dafydoundilly), Robert Countinho, Omer Khan, Ahmed Abdul Rizzaack , Abdi Gool Mohamed and Hassan Khan . Many of them are living and doing well.

In that year, Cowasjee Dinshaw imported three autobuses for passenger plying between Crater and Tawahi. They had funnels for smoke, release. Sir Hormusjee, a man of vast experience, was the manager proprietor of the firm. He was knighted after 1923, for his many good social services, including the maintenance of the Gujrati School.

I continued to go to School on my donkey, and soon afterward I was trained to ride a horse . My father had a fine bay steed. On Sunday, we took the horse to the beach to wash him. I then learnt swimming.

Brother Valerian, our teacher in the lower classes, was a very kind priest. He formed a football team and elected me captain of the team. We played against English boys on the ground opposite the graveyard behind the Military Maintenance Unit, Steamer Point. We played regularly and in the winter months we went on picnics up , the Shum Shum Flag Staff. On one occasion I was late but I followed the party and slipped. I was saved by miraculously clinging to a tree, on my way down the hill. After that incident, I climbed to the Flag staff 13 up from Daswin Bazaar, and down in about 40 minute, alone.

One morning, on the 7th of May 1910, while still in the primary school, Crater, the Head master came to the class, in low spirits and told the boys that the school would be closed because news was received that His Majesty King Edward the VII was dead. A year later his son King George V. came to Aden, on a State visit with his wife Queen Marry, on their way to the Delhi Durbar, where he was crowned Empeor of India. Many of the Chiefs of the Aden Protectorate, including Sir Sultan Ahmed Fadhl the ruler of Abdali State and Emir Shayef of Dhala were invited to attend the Durbar . Emir Shayef died in India.

Aden was hilariously decorated, with flags of all colours ; coloured paper was passed around pillars and posts, and banners were unfurled on the roofs and windows of buildings. The Status of Queen Victoria

was erected, where it stands today in the Crescent, Steamer point. All school boys were prepared to sing the National Anthem and Saleh Hasson Turki , a musician, and an old citizen of Aden, translated the anthem into Arabic and taught the boys to sing it. They sang it on a water cistern which was then opposite the Union Club. We stood to welcome His Majesty near St. Anthony's Church.

Some brass medals were distributed among school boys and the Arab Chiefs returned from India with Darbar Medals.

All dignitaries and notables of Aden greeted their majesties as they stood in a vast shamianah near the statue of Queen Victoria . Syed Abdulla Aidarous , however , shook hands with His Majesty , but refused to bow . He argued that he only bowed to God while offering his prayers . People talked about this courage .

December 22, 1960

Men, Matters and Memories (7)

Early in this century, there were very few British executive Officers in Aden, which was administered from Bombay since British occupation in 1839. The High Court of Bombay was our Court of Appeal. Local currency was the Indian rupee, but there was plenty of English gold sovereigns in circulation than can be seen today. This gold was then pouring into the Aden Protectorates, in the form of presents to the Chiefs.

Some of the Arabs were given a few important posts. Haj Abdullah Khalifa was made health Inspector. Saleh Abdullah Khalifa was the overseer of the fodder market, and the Registrar of Population. Abdul Qader Mackawee was the Aden Settlement Secretary, Saleh Mackawee the Sub Registrar and Ali Jaffer Abd Rahim the Head Interpreter, Master Hamood the Inspector of Education and K.B. Rustomali a magistrate.

Parsees and Goans held much higher positions. K.B. Pestonjee was the Treasury Officer and Commissioner of Income Tax. Bomanjee was the Secretary of the Aden Settlement before A.Q. Macawee. Bilpodiwala was the doctor in charge of the King Edward VII Charitable Dispensary. The Residency Office was under the sway and influence of the Goans. De Luna was Superintendent, Ferram was his assistant and Fernandez Confidential Secretary. The Residency Office has always remained a closed apartment to the Adenis .

The Indian Hindu Merchant controlled the market for manufactured cotton goods, Indian tobacco, oil and exchange. Meghjee Chaptee was an important stock – broker, so was Hirachand Sunderjee, and Nathoo Mooljee. In the cotton trade some of the pioneers were Siraj, Tarachand Karamchand, Morarjee Indarjee and others. The Bohras at one time monopolised the Silk trade : Sarela , Sharafali Tyebjee and Daoodbhoy Abdul Rahim. There were 5000 Aden Jews inhabiting Aden. They were silver and gold smiths, money lenders, liquor brewers, shopkeepers dealing in crockery and cutlery and Hotel Keepers. Hotel de L'Europe & Grand Hotel, were managed by a Rumanian Jew. Banju Menahem Messa was one of the richest men in Aden.

The population was small no cars pestering unwary pedestrians on the roads. Space was huge everywhere. One could go about sauntering safely.

Water was drawn from wells in Shaikh Othman and sent drifting through an aqueduct to the Isthmus. It was insufficient and several condensers, one in Crater owned by Khan Saheb Sorabjee, one in Hedjuff, owned by the Aden Water Co. and a third owned by the military authorities on the Port Trust Wharf Steamer Point, below Ras Morbut supplied fresh water to Government servants. M. Bhot was the contractor. He supplied condensed water to other people at two annas per handa of four gallons. He was also an optician. Plenty of rain water was always available in the Tawela tank and was sold at ½ anna per handa. In Crater there was one good well supplying potable water in the Khusaf Valley near the Hindu Temple. It is BIR AZZUTI, the shoe well. A story is told of a Princess having dropped her shoe into this well.

Near Bir Azzuti there was the Government Guest House for the entertainment of the Protectorate Chiefs, That was the building occupied by Captain Haines in 1839, and later made into an office. Ali Abdullah Shaibani was the Guest contractor. He was a very prosperous man and used to move about on horseback.

The Tanks were in 1900, onwards, in a very good condition. They were then 46 years old since their discovery by Major Playfair, First Assistant Resident in 1854. Playfair's history of Aden and Yemen is very interesting. Many tanks on the hillsides have been deplorably neglected into utter oblivion. I used to live, in Section F, and with many friends we used to go uphill to swim in these tanks, in the West of Crater.

My mother and stepmother entrusted to me the purchase of daily rations. Rice, Daood Khan brand, was sold at annas six per bushel of 5 lbs. Good Yemeni Ghee annas 7 per lbs. Mutton 2½ as a lb. A coolie received a minimum wage of Annas five per day. A clerk Rs. 30 per mensem. Maximum salaries were Rs. 120/- for local hands. Many Adenis served as candidates for months without remuneration.

The number of QAT addicts in the early years of this century was small. The habit is becoming universal.

Women of Aden have always observed strict purdah. Their dresses were gaudy and colourful.

They put on long frocks (Kurta), reaching the ankles, and lametta borders, and cordons of gold on the front part of the body. Their head dress was also beautifully made of gold lace covering the whole head . Over and above they wore stoles of different colours heavily embroidered in silver and gold flowers. Briden put on TASS frocks (Nus Rupies fil Khana) also in silver thread . All the high class ladies and even the poorer class indulged in colouring their hands, feet and faces with Black Dye which lasted for days. On festival occasions they painted their hands and feet with Henna. A few Laheji ladies tatooed their foreheads and chins. They looked beautiful . After reaching the age of thirteen I was not allowed to see the harem. Although fascinating, they never were allowed to appear to public gaze and seldom came out during the morning. They however went to see their neighbours and relatives in the afternoon and some after dusk.

December 29, 1960

Men, Matters and Memories (8)

DURING the school summer vacation of 1914 I decided to spend the holidays in Lahej. I made my arrangements to join a party of engineers and surveyors, invited by His Highness Sultan Sir Ahmed Fadhl bin Mohsin El Abdali to carry out an experiment of boring wells in Laheji. On a moonlit night we left Crater by a cab drawn by a strong horse. I accompanied my father and an armed guard. My father had a mauser rifle and the guard a Le gras, with a heavy bandolier. A Somali drove the cab. The road to Shaikh Othman via the tunnels was quiet, dreary and desolate. We changed the horse midway and on reaching Police Chowki No.4 at the junction branching to the Italian Salt works, I saw my father and the Arab guard load their guns and get on the alert. My father told the guard to be careful that the trigger does not go off lest it may hurt me. I was told that Subeihi highway men were very frequently pestering travelers in that area and had plundered some camels from the old village at Shaikh Othman, known as Shaikh Ad-Daweel.

Days Of the Camel Caravan

We halted about midnight at Government Garden, now allocated to the Old Folks, and on a camp bed, in a tent in the garden I had a sound sleep. I was awakened in the early hours of the morning to say my prayers .

Late that afternoon we left Shaikh Othman in a caravan consisting of 21 camels, carrying personal baggage, rations and equipment. We stopped at Dar El-Amir, the first village of the Abdali State. We were told that floods had damaged the trucks and that we must wait for further information.

A camelman, Ahmed Saeed Nooaimi, took me by the hand and introduced me to Haj Ali Aman, the Chief Customs Officer at Dar El Amir who welcomed and invited me to a cup of tea . He was 48 tall, fair, smiling and kind. He was dressed in a long shirt made of China Silk embroidered with silver ribbons around the neck and on the chest. He wore a coloured silk cap in the Hejazi fashion.

Some other guests joined and we sat on a Persian carpet on a parapet outside the Customs House. Silk pillows red , green and yellow were distributed to us. Very soon afterwards a Samovar was brought and tray of golden glass tea tumblers. Our host sat by us and started pouring sugar into the tumblers and tea from a fine coloured porcelain kettle. He subsequently drove a golden spoon into each tumbler smeared with amber grid which gave the tea an intoxicating aroma. That was my first experience of tea mixed with amber grid. I enjoyed it.

Haj Ali Aman, was a gentleman. His daughter was married to the Sultan of Lahej. He kept abreast with the marching world. He discussed current affairs with intelligence and had the latest issues of Al Moayyad, an Egyptian Arabic newspaper published by Syed Ali Yousoof advocating Pan Islamism, an ideology supported by King Abdul Hamid II of Turkey, till 1905, when he was dethroned. He was succeeded by King Mohamed Rashad V, and was the last important Ottoman Caliph.

Snake Charmer Too Was Stung

Our host entertained us with some stories. One was that a few days earlier a man came seeking his assistance for a near relative who had a snake bite. He said, "I hastened to go and give him first aid. A man in Dar El Amir said he was a snake charmer and came with me. After walking two furlongs we reached the hut and on a mat on the ground we saw a man in his last agonies. We could do nothing and he died. The snake charmer started looking round and discovered the serpent crouching near the hut. He caught it by the neck and held it up triumphantly, with its mouth wide open. He was talking about it when suddenly it stung him and he fell down. I struck it with a heavy cane and my other companions hit it hard. It was killed. We tried to save the snake charmer, but he was dead."

Haj Ali Aman was one of a number of respected Arabs in Lahej. His hobby was the collection of the moment; The Kings of Turkey, Kaiser Wilhelm, the Khedives of Egypt, Enver, Pacha, Talaat Pach Victor Emmanuel of Italy and so on and so forth. He was proud of his collection and asked me about my own hobbies. I said I had a wonderful stamp Album. I also collected cigarette cards and various kinds of sea shells. He was pleased to hear about my hobbies.

Trapped By Mud Caravan Scattered

At 10 Pm. that night our caravan started moving. We took the route via Fayoosh to avoid the heavy floods, but we suddenly found ourselves in a huge marsh, surrounded by thick soil from all sides. My camelman went off to seek a way out but my camel slipped and nearly fell down but I held fast and shouted aloud. The camelman returned in good time to raise the camel and guide it out of the slush.

The caravan fell asunder. But just at dawn we all gathered again. It was a lovely morning, and sunrise was enchanting. A few gazelles ran about on the sands, when some of the camelmen shot one deer. When we got into the valley on our way to Athaalab Village on the East Part of Lahej we found plenty of birds, resembling grouse. and pigeons. We reached Athaalab, in the afternoon. I had slept for an hour or so on the boxes carried by the camel. But I was absolutely fatigued. I could not have a rest. Tents had to be pitched and baggage to be opened and arranged. The sun was scorching . The Shaikh of The Village came and took me to his house, where I slept on the floor. He gave me a comfortable bedding.

Athaalab was one of the big villages with a population of more than 800. There were a number of mud houses, a well supplying potable water and many green fields and Palm Trees.

January 5, 1961

Men, Matters and Memories (9)

ATHAALAB Village in the Abdali State of Lahej stands on a mound, above the bank of the Ubar (Canal) Albadharem, which forms part of Byzag tributary, of Wadi Assagheer, the left arm of the Delta. The other arm is the Wadi Alkabir. Both these Wadis comprise Wadi Tuban, which runs down the river bed of Warazan, a stream running from Northern Yemen. In later years I surveyed by plane, of the Ethiopian Airlines, the province of Ammar with a Yemeni delegation. Both Wadi Tuban, with its mouth at Hiswah opposite Steamer Point, and Wadi Bana, watering the Cotton Fields of Abyan come down from Ammar.

Most villages in the Aden Protectorates, both the Western and the Eastern are usually built on high ground, to avoid natural disasters, floods and enemies. Some of the villages in Hadhramout, the Audhali country, Beihaan and Dhala are situated on precipitous cliffs with narrow roads leading to them, with this end in view.

I MAKE FRIENDS WITH SULTAN

After living for three days in the house of the Shaikh of Athaalab, I found the place infested with mosquitoes as a result of stagnant water in the fields and in the many ditches surrounding the village. I was provided with a mosquito net. I went to see the Artesian well, and there. I borrowed a camel of an Arab guard from Laheji. I mounted the beast and after about a mile, a hyena shot out from a thicket, where upon the camel started galloping and jumping so fast that I could not hold it back. It was just before sunset. Crossing the fields lying between the camp and Hauta (Lahej) I found myself near the Palace of the Sultan, Sir Ahmed Fadhl Muhsen, who was looking through binoculars and discerned my plight. He ordered one of his soldiers to stop the animal and help me to dismount. He then called me to go up to him. He knew me from early childhood in 1903. He had lived in the back house of Cowasjee Dinshaw & Bros., in Tawahi in 1911, and I used to go and lunch at his generous table. He found me several times returning to Crater from the Marist Brothers' School and stopped his Victoria to give me a lift, remarking, hoarding, that I was hording the money and walking on foot instead.

Before his departure for the Delhi Durbar, he called me and gave me five sovereigns with these words "Save the car fare that your father gives you but spend this money on transport. I know you will be a very useful man."

The Sultan asked me about what made the camel run away with me. I said it was a hyena that we met on the way. He said you must thank God that you did not encounter a leopard. Are there any such ferocious animal in this district. I asked. He replied in the affirmative.

Dinner was served, which comprised large discs of leavened bread greased with Ghee, lamb and honey. He was suffering of diabetes but never agreed to give up honey. He said that, honey and ambergris and saffron (crocus) invigorated three main parts the heart and the procreative system. Unfortunately, he died soon afterwards.

GOLD SOVEREIGNS AND JEWELLERY

SULTAN SirAhmed Fadhl was an astute statesman and a shrewd administrator. He made treaties with the Haushabi Sultan of Museimir and with the Qutaibi and Alawi Shaikhs. He kept the Subeihi marauders and highway men under check and was a personal friend of Lt. Colonel H.F. Jacoub, the First Assistant Resident of Aden who dedicated a special chapter in his book “Perfumes of Araby” to his biography under the head line “Abuna”, our father, by which name he was known all over the Western Aden Protectorate. The Sultan was also a friend of the Imam Yahya of Yemen. During his reign he converted the desert lands of Wadi Khair into verdant fields and gardens, which were however, cut off from water by the subsequent potentates, who ruled Lahej. He had three sons and had left them fifty thousand gold sovereigns and an immense quantity of valuable jewels. One diamond ring was sold recently for rupees 20,000/-. His son Prince Ali bin Ahmed inherited a pearl, worth thirty thousand rupees, and treasured a beautiful emerald worth any amount of money.

SAME OLD LAHEJ OF 1912

During that era of the history of the Western Aden Protectorate there were several chiefs known for their wisdom and tact, they were Sultan Sir Ahmed Fadhl, Sultan Ali Manai El Houshabi , Sultan Ahmed bin Husain El Fadhli of Shuqra and Abyan, Shaikh Ali Muhsen Askar of Upper Yaffa, who was very friendly to the Aden Government, Shaikh Muckbell Abdulla the Qutaibi, Amir Nasr of Dhala who became unhappy in later years. All of them, were cooperative and respected one another, in the same way as we see today the ministers of the Federal Government of the WAP.

Lahej has not changed much in appearance since 1912. With the exception of Arroddha Palace, Qasr el Hajar and the extensions to the main bazaar There is hardly anything remarkable. Recently, however, Sultan Fadhl bin Ali has added the hospital outside the town and built the dam to preserve the water in the Wadi. This is certainly a great contribution.

I spent a month in Lahej. I visited the religious law circle, under the Laheji Savant Shaikh Ahmed Annakhlani and attended some of lectures. I also visited Jama Musawa where Emir Ahmed Fadhl C.M.G., had graduated. from He was an unusual historian in this part of the world as well as a poet cum musician. He was practically the only author of importance in the WAP.

I OWN A BOOKSHOP

I returned to Aden and was confined to bed with malaria for three months , during which I read many books, including the stories of Antar, Seif Dhu Yazan, El-Amira Dhat El Himma, in 70 parts (10000 pages.), The Arabian Nights and a few histories.

Ahmed Abdullah Khayyat was a scribe in Section D Street No.1 His office was the meeting place of literary men like Sheikh Mohamed Hajeb, who was a gifted calligraphist. Books from Syria and Cairo were sold in Aden, and news papers came regularly.

Upon my recovery, I went to a bookshop to buy a book in order to continue my studies of the Muhammadan Law. I had seven annas to pay for the book but the owner demanded 10 annas and when I objected he said “Go to your father and ask him to buy you a book shop”. Ibrahim Ghubashi was present. He was angry and said, “Why do you disdain this young man. He is the “molar” of Aden. Here is the money you want”. I refused politely to accept his payment and said that I had better tell my father to buy me a book shop.

I told my father and he decided to open for me a bookshop.

He hired the shop which is today in the occupation of the Supreme Store and in less than three months I had a book shop as big as that of Haj Obadi Hasson. I had my cousin Mohamed Ali Abdul Husain to assist me. I sold books, but I unfortunately, irregularly and read many of the books in the shop instead.

January 12, 1961

Men, Matters and Memories (10)

BETWEEN 1906 and 1912, Crater was the scene of frequent street fights among parties organized in Qatia Streets. and Hussein Sections. Many street heroes sprang up leading the battles, carrying and brandishing their heavy sticks and attacking their opponents in their own dens. That was a struggle for supremacy and existence.

The original settlers of Aden inhabited the Qatie Streets.

The newcomers and thousands of immigrants, from Mocha and the Hadramout occupied the other part of the town, which were separated by the road leading from the tanks to the Front Bay.

Hindus, Jews and all the European firms lived in Sections A, E, and C. The Arabs inhabiting these sections had business relations and dealings with them. They were their suppliers and brokers. In the other part of the town , Sections D, R & F., the Arabs were artisans and workmen. They were stone dressers, carpenters, masons and so forth. Many had established trade connections with Yemen. Somaliland and Hadramout. All the Hadrami commission agents lived in section B. This competition excited jealousies and disputes .

Mr. Benghait, a Spanish Jew was the inspector of police, assisted by jamadar Mohamed Tabbakh, an Adeni Arab. They had a busy time to restore order and security. Hasson Abdul Hadi was the centre of intelligence. He himself took part in the street fighting with his brother Ali Abdul Hadi.

Colourful Heroes Of Past Days

The important actors on that stage were Abdullah Taj, Essa Mackawi, Abdullah Mohamed Jabali, Ahmed Hasson Azazi and his brothers, Abdullah Zoolaihi, Hussain Ibrahim Lokman, Salem Saif, Addidi (Tawahi), and Mohammed Ahmed, The heroes, at first, manifested characteristics of courage, daring, physical strength, and gallantry . But, intrigues and corruption tended to vitiate the atmosphere. The opponents began to stab one another and Zulaikhi had acid thrown on his face. He lost one eye permanently. Mohamed Ahmed killed and stabbed seven in Crater, in one night including Haj Ali Mohamed Shamakh a man known for his bravery and aggression. He was very seriously injured. I paid him a visit the next day. He had then just recovered his consciousness. Local singer sang “Mohammed Ahmed has killed seven”, which was remembered for a long time. A maternal near relation told me the next day that he had returned late the night before from Qatia Street and found Mohamed Ahmed on the wall of the Crater Civil Hospital smoking. He bid him well “I was terrified a few minutes later, when I returned home and learnt of the murderous campaign of Mohamed Ahmed”, he said.

The Philospoher Magistrate

Major Condon, the Philosopher magistrate, tackled some of these cases with the wisdom, of a man of knowledge. He analyzed the wave of violence which had lasted long. In some of his judgments, which were excellent pieces of literature, he quoted examples from Kelila and Dimna. He explained HOW FRIENDS ARE PARTED and admonished the parties. I read one of those judgments, which was translated into Arabic by my father. Major Condon was an M.A. Oxon.

My uncle Hussain Lokman was assaulted by one of the heroes of those days, HUSSAIN EL ALAS. I accompanied him to Hospital where his wound was dressed. The situation had deteriorated exceedingly and Indians found it easy to take part in the intrigues. Abdullah Wali Chaper was one of them.

January 19, 1961

Men, Matters and Memories (11)

EARLY in this century, the Arabs of Aden monopolised the whole transit trade of this Colony. Skins, hides, Bamusaika furs, leopards-skins, even lion's hide, rhinoceros horns, ivory, civet and gold bars from Abyssinia. coffee from the same source was shipped to Aden . Many Hadhrami Arabs had gone to Djimma, Sidamo, Laqamti, Harrar, Dire-Daowa and Jigjiga to barter Aden exports for coffee from those areas . The Guildessa Abyssinian Coffee is a wonderful blend of a special aroma. Some other Arabs in Dessie and Bati represented Aden merchants for the purchase of skins. Many shops were opened in Addis Ababa to receive the goods brought in from the hinterland by the Naggadis.

Shaikh Mohammed Omer Bazaarah was one of the pioneers of trade in that country. His agents Salem and Saeed Bazarah captured the attention and sympathy of Menelik 11, Emperor of Ethiopia, at a time when means of transport was still very primitive. The Menelik had a mule to carry him from the Palace to the bazaars. I knew Shaikh Mohamed Omer Bazaarah, sons Ali, Abdul Karim and Abdul Rehman. The old man liked to hear me discuss religious topics in his presence .

The Advent Of Thalers

The price of a score of Bati goatskins was then three thalers.

It was Shaikh M.O. Bazaarah who had introduced the Maria Theresa. Thalers into Ethiopia, which had no currency of its own. An ounce of gold was sold at Seven thalers (about £ 1).

Banin Menahem Messa conducted a huge trade with Addis Abeba. His agent there was Syed Safi, an Arab from Hadhramoat, connected with the Safis of Aden. Banin was the biggest money lender in Aden. I knew him through my father, who was a man of great influence here and was popular, jovial and humorous. On several occasions I translated Arabic documents for the firm of Menahim Messa. Poor folks used to pawn their valuables with this firm, who gave them loans on interest; which however very few could redeem. Bags full of golden ornaments were sold by the Court, by public auction, after the death of Banin.

There were two other important Arab merchants connected with the transit trade with Abyssinia. They were Syed Hasson El Bar and Shaikh Omer Baamer. They carried large scale exports and imports. Aboujedid (American Grey Sheetings), and Manchester Grey Sheetings was the principle item of cotton imports. Messrs, Clayton Ghaleb and Co. Ltd. had by then established themselves in Djabouti ; Mohamed Abdulla Bahashwan was the agent of Shaikh Baamer, for the purchase of Hamoumi Tobacco exported from Makalla to Abyssinia via Djabouti. I used to help Bahashwan in his accounts. Menelik II welcomed the Arab traders into his realm and gave them big parcels of land to develop. He told Shaikh Saeed Bazarah "Look as far as you can; take full that land".

Flourishing Arabs Soon Dwindled

In Yemen, the Arabs had well established connections and at one time, Hajeb Ali and his sons Ahmed Hajeb and Saleh, at present the owner of the Peacock Restaurant were the agents of Yaffae Coffee planters in Aden. Yaffa Coffee is second to none in lovely fragrance and the quality of its bean. Mahmoud and Ibrahim Fikri also dealt in this commodity and I was for some years, in the twenties, a commission agent for the coffee suppliers of Lower Yaffa. & Dhala Sheepskins.

The Arabs of Aden soon lost their grip on this lucrative trade. They were ousted by the bigger brains from Europe, who were able to turn them into middlemen of second rate importance and ordinary brokers ; men of talent, integrity and business acumen like Mohamed Abdullah Saad, Husain Ibrahim Lokman, Ali Ahmed Roogee and Mohamed Ali Saad.

Some Good Reasons

No established business can ever dwindle without good reasons. The Arab merchant was ousted from the market because he had succumbed to a bad habit – ADDICTION TO QAT. He spent long hours on end every day and night, chewing the mild narcotic, squatting on the floor of his shop, sending puffs of smoke from his hukkah, while the energetic European capitalist came to Aden with new ideas. He utilized banking facilities then offered by the only bank in this Colony for 100 years the National Bank of India Ltd., The P & O. Banking Corporation and the firm of C.D. & Bros., did not make much success in Banking.

Other reasons for the failure of the Arabs to compete with the European merchants successfully was their dependence on convention and tradition in matters of business. They failed to march with the marching world. They left their sons to rot in the shops without proper education. They did not study economics and none paid a visit to Europe at a time when thousands of Indians and Japanese were filling in the seats of European and English Universities learning political economy and trade principles and industry. They remained even to this day ignorant of the true principles of supply and demand, marketing tactics and advertisement.

But, Aden is the home of the siesta. The inhabitants love lazying and for those reasons, even the Indian merchants have not fared better. Take an old and well reputed firm like E,. C. Patel. This popular house made a fortune in 1902 during the Anglo Turkish Boundary Commission. They flourished but only to a certain degree. They could have done much better.

Even the European dealers in Aden have contended themselves with easy bread. There is however one exception. It was the great business genius Antonie Besse. I had worked with him for 6 years and represented him in his Somaliland branches. He was a man of super human energy, presence of mind , careful and intelligent business planning and acumen.

I shall later revert to the question of industry which had been deplorably neglected in Aden.

January 26, 1961

Men, Matters and Memories (12)

Section C was and still is the home of the majority of the original Arab settlers of Aden. The Aidroos family is certainly the oldest. Syed Alawi El Aidroos was the man who had brought hostilities to an end between the Arabs of Aden and Captain Haines in 1839. He went to meet him on the Khormaksaer beach. The Bader family of fishermen, was also an ancient Adeni family. Ali Bader lived till recently. He was interviewed by H. F. Jacob, an orientalist. Ali Abdullah El-Adani, Syed Abdulla Obadi , the Moshigee family, Ali Abdullah Shaibani and his brothers, the Safees, the Mackawis, the Munaibaris, Syed El Bar, Sharif Mohomed Hasson Rifaee, the Bagunaids, the Bazaraas, Ali Hageb, the Hassan Alia, Attia Jaber and the Mowafis ; They were thriving inhabitants. The transit trade of Aden was in their hands. They acted as Commission Agents for suppliers in Abyasinia, Yemen. East Africa. Benadir Coast (Somalia), Sudan, Eritrea and the Persian Gulf. Coffee, Skins, Hides, Gum incence, gum, myrrh, habak Hadi , wax, Asofaelida, Dates and other commodities reached Aden from the neighbouring countries.

In small quantities Aden received honey, aloes, ghee, garlic, live stock, cattle and many other commodities from Yemen and the Aden Protectorates . Foodstuffs came from India; Sugar from Java, pineapples dry ginger and cassia from Singapore, cloves from Zanzibar and textiles from Manchester, groceries and spices from India.

Hadhramis In Java

The Hadhramis represented their kinsmen in the East Indies. Money was sent regularly from Batavia, Soerabaja and Singapore by big and wealthy Arabs like Al Kaff, Sakka, Ben Yamani and so forth, Sums to the extent of £600,000/- per annum reached Aden for redirection to Mukalla. Some Arab commission agents were very successful. Syed Mohammed Muhsen Saffee was one and so was Mohamed Awad Moherez and Mahboob and Rehman Farahat.

There were several European firms in Crater doing extensive buying on the local market, for exports : Dilsizian Freres, Soojeta Italiana, Caracanda Freres, Maison Livierato, Abdulla Mudhawar (a Lebanese) Clayton Ghaleb & Co. Ltd., (Anglo-Arab) represented by Louis El Khazen, Herbert Whitworth, Enrico N. Stein, Carr. Parr & Joseph, Maurice Ries, Alois Schwiger & Mr.Besse. Shipping was already flowing since the first steam ship reached Aden in 1882. Luke Thomas was established & had as manager Mr.Murray, a man of convivial character. The P. & O. The Messageries Maritimes, Cowasjee Dinshaw Bros., Pallonji and Bhicaji.

The revolt of the Wadad Mohamed Abdulla Hassan in Somaliland started early during this century. The British Government shipped enormous quantities of foodstuffs & military supplies for the army, engaged in an internecine warfare with the Wadad, to Berberah & Bulbar. Many Adeni adventurers & traders moved to Bulhar, Berberah & Zeilah. They made big profits & were safe because the British guarded the frontiers & the trade routes. Hergeisa was of no importance then.

Quranic Schools

There were in Aden 40 Quranic Schools. The teachers were pious Faquihs. My teacher of the Quran was Faqih Saeed Abdulla El Alas. One of his assistants was brutal. He used to brandish his heavy cane and drop it with force on the tender bodies of the little children. I had a hit on my left eye and had a weak eye sight ever since.

The Faqih himself was then away in Yemen. When my father agreed to open for me a bookshop, he gave me an opportunity to acquire a high school education at an early age. He had given me an order to permit all scholars of Arabic to have access to any book in the shop, for reference and study. I spent several hours daily reading, by imitation and later by habit and as a result of understanding.

In three years I made a profit of Rs. 3000/- for which my father purchase a shop in Dood Galli. Section B realizing a monthly rent of Rs. 11/- It would have been much wiser if we expanded the business, but the first World War had come; books were difficult to import from Cairo; and he thought that the shop was interfering with my English Education.

Further Education

In four years I was able to read hundreds of books on Muhammadan Law; commentaries of the Quran especially Tafsir Al Baidhawi and Tafsir Al Galalain, both concise but accurate. I had made references to other bigger commentaries like Fahr Razi and El Khazen, which unfortunately embodied many superstitious stories. I read the Talmud and portions of the Old and New Testament.

On the sayings of the prophet I memorized 200 traditions from El Jamai Assaghir, which constitutes a synopsis of the tenets of Islam.

Of pure Muhammadan Law I read Minhaj attalibin, Fath Al Moeen, Subul Assalam and chapters of Attuhfah, the Fatawa of Ibn Hajar on the Shafal Law. I had several reference books especially Al Muhadhab and the Bokhari.

I read many smaller texts. All this study helped me considerably to pass my law examination in later years in 14 months.

I was especially interested in history of which I read :

- Tarikh Ibn Al Athir (General Moslem History) Al Ghosn Arratib (Spanish Islam).
- The Conquests of Islam.
- Tarikh Ibn Khallikan (Biographies of famous Arabs).
- History of the Ottoman Empire .

I read the history of the Abbaside and Ommayad dynasties especially the historical fiction written by George Zaidan, the founder of Al Hilal. Many Moslem teachers and Ulemas used to come to the shop to read books and buy a few. Shaikh Omer Azzabidi a blind grammarian used to attend regularly and I

read to him from Al Kawakib a, very authoritative work on Arabic Grammar. I was no less interested in Arabic Literature, Arabic poetry and literary criticism .

Translating News

In the year 1915 I was able to discuss points of law and literary questions with men like Syed Abdul Rehman bin Obaidullah of Hadhramoot and its Mufti and with Syed Abou Bakr bin Shihab , the greatest poet born in the Aden Protectorates then . He had paid a visit to Sultan Ahmad Fadhl of Lahej and married a Somali girl.

By that time I was practically the only man who translated Reuters bulletin for men of importance like Syed Husain Bin Hamed El Mihdhar , the refugee princes of Lahej , Sultan Abdul Karim Fadhl, and many people who were interested in the news of the war. That was how I got the ideas of journalism into my head; but it took many years to mature for reasons which I shall mention in later topics.

My teacher of the Muhammdan Law and the Hadith was Syed Abdullah bin Hamed Assafi. He gave me special lessons in his house together with my friend Syed Zain Aidaros, may their souls rest in peace. Syed Mohamed El Hazimi, was the Qadhi of Aden. He was well versed in the inflexions of Arabic verbs and I had many sittings in his circle.

Few indeed of my school mates and colleagues of that era live today. Most of them died before the age of 45 . Peace be upon them .

February 2, 1961

Men, Matters and Memories (13)

I made three voyages in the year 1913.

1. a. Bir Ali and Balahaf in the Wahidi State.
 - b. Makalla.
 - c. Socotra.
2. a. Perim Island
 - b. Kamaran Island
 - c. Hodeldah.
3. Berberah, British Somaliland.

Balahaf was just a little fishing village, but many myths loomed around Bir Ali. The inhabitants believed that Imam Ali bin Abi Taleb, the cousin of the Prophet Mohamed, at the head of a huge army reached Bir Ali and bored the well, bir, known after him. On a slab, near the well. there, the Imam's footprint is extant to testify to this anecdote. Sultan Ali Muhsen of Bir Ali had married one of the maids adopted by my mother, who had brought up many orphan girls in her house.

Mukalla was ruled by the Quaiti Sultans. In 1913 Sultan Sir Ghaleb bin Awadth was the ruling Al Quaiti Chief . He was brought up and educated in Hyderabad, Deccan. He spoke Urdu and Arabic but preferred to speak the former. All his stewards, chokrahs and room boys were brought from India. He had tens of them in Mukalla. Many of them sang and danced, in the Indian fashion. Their dress was quasi Indian . A young Indo Arab musician enchanted the people of Mukalla and Aden. His name was Sultan bin Harhara, originally from Yaffa . He was a gifted lutist, and played Arabic songs, on Indian tunes. The Quaiti Sultans, themselves, claim their ancestors to be Yaffais.

Socotra

After spending two days in Mukkala, I left on the Dalhousie for Socotra . It is a huge Island in mid-ocean, 70 miles long. The Sultan bin Ifrir was kind and very friendly . His minister Ali bin Barahim took me to his house.

The Island was green. Palm trees stood majestically all along the beach and a stream ran down the hills. A party of surveyors went to trace the source of this rivulet. The population was a mixture of sub-nosed negroid types and small percentage of Arabs. Some of the ladies were nearly fair and very handsome. They had aquiline Him-yaritic noses, and wore Indian gold jewelry.

The language of the Island was described as the language of birds. I thought that was an adequate description. Many of the words were of a Greek Origin. I read somewhere that the Greeks had occupied the Island in the year 392 B.C.

Major H.F. Jacob, the author of the Kings of Arabia, was on this trip. I asked him if it would be possible to attract inhabitants to come and develop the Island. He said that nobody would like to live on it

being solitary , and so far away from the world. Moreover he added that the Island is cut off from all communications with the outside world, during the S.W. Monsoons, when sailing ships are unable to cross to the Island.

Fish Heaven

The population live on fish and carry their big catches on dhow, to South Arabian ports and Somali Coast. With the exception of basket making and pottery of a fine quality – pitchers and jugs coloured with a red pigment, the Island has some excellent grazing grounds. Any goats go about astray and the only beast of burden I saw was the donkey. I was told that donkeys were yet undomesticated in the forests and on the green hills. Rich fisheries abound and the natives make a grand feast when ever they catch a dolphin.

The next voyage to the Red Sea was very interesting. On our way to Perim we crossed the strait lying between Shaikh Said and Perim. the Fortress uphill was awe inspiring. The ship navigated very near the shore. I asked a carpenter if the sea was sufficiently deep to permit this sort of navigation and he then related a story :

Perim

In ancient times a mariner passed below this hill. He was chopping a piece of wood with his axe, when all of a sudden the axe fell down into the sea from his hands. He viewed it sadly sinking, and when one year later he came by the same route, he looked at the spot where he had dropped his axe. A voice came resounding from the deeps “O! owner of the axe ! Your axe has reached the bottom of the sea this day”.

" This spot is the deepest in the world," he said.

The Island had a population of about 1000, living on fish from the surrounding sea. There was a condenser for water and an ice plant. The Perimeans seemed to be the most contented people in the world ; fishing, swimming going about happy go lucky, importing Qat from the opposite shore in exchange for eggs and chickens. It was a coaling station and Shaikh Saeed Salem had an Arab Restaurant and a small grocery shop. The donkey served as a means of transport. The Governor of the Island lived in a bungalow on the hill not far from the Lighthouse.

There was a police station and the inhabitants occupied wooden chacks and huts, some employed by the Perim Coal Co.

Kamaran

Our next stop was at Kamaran. It was a Pilgrims quarantine ; about 800 inhabitants made a living once a year from the thousands of pilgrims who called at the Island on their way to Mecca and Medina. I could not understand why the Italians did no think of enchanting and annexing this Island to their growing empire then. It was a Turkish Colony and very inadequately garrisoned. But I believe Kamaran was already considered to be within the British Sphere of influence and had an international

significance as a quarantine. The people also depended on fishing and pearl fisheries. Pearls, however, appear to have been swept away from shores deeps.

The Italo Turkish War in the years preceding the First World War had then come to an end and the Governor of Aden carried the good tidings to the besieged population of Hodeidah. They did not know that the hostilities had come to an end. Hodeidah had a very shallow beach. The ship moored more than three miles away from the port. In 1927 I was sent to Hodeidah on behalf of the League of Nations to assess the War damaged. I shall describe Hodeidah at greater length when I come to that date.

Berberah

About the end of 1913 Berberah had a great attraction for merchants and adventurers from Aden and Yemen . The Wadad Mohamed Abdallah Hasson had revolted against the British occupation of his country and against the Roman Catholic Missionaries. Most of the strong tribes rallied around him. In 1933 I wrote a book on British Somaliland and dedicated one chapter to the biography of the Wadad. I shall mention that in due course.

Haj Abdullah Qodar and Qassem Mohamed Saad were then in Berberah buying skins for European firms in Crater, Aden. Qaseem Mohamed Saad was a cousin of my father. He was a man of limitless generosity to the extent of foolish vanity. On the night of our arrival, we were entertained to marriage festivities given by Abdul Qader Mohamed Hindi, the agent of Cowasjee Dinshaw in Berberah in those days. Next morning we went to have breakfast at a Somali meat shop . We purchased stewed mutton, one whole leg, dates and milk, my father and I, for the equivalent of a shilling.

February 9, 1961

Men, Matters and Memories (14)

On my return early in 1914, from my tours in the Red Sea, and the Arabian Sea. I was invited by Shaikh Ali Mahmood Farahat, of the big Adeni firm of Mahboub and Rehan Farahat to accompany him on a short trip to Lahej, as guests of Syed Alawi bin Hasson El Jifree, a distinguished member of the Abdali gentry, a prominent minister of the Lahej Sultans, a rich land owner and a man of letters.

We were carried from Dar Saad by a victoria drawn by huge brown horse, through the three mile forest of Almismar, extending from Bir Nasser to the Saber Village. Most of the trees were Sumar trees, very thorny but resilient and difficult to chop. The forest afforded a shady area for the grazing goats and their shepherds, and it served as green belt protecting the agricultural lands in the neighborhood, from the oncoming sands and shifting dunes, during the Shemal winds in summer, and even during the Azyab winds in winter. This rare forest in the Western Aden protectorate was swept away and all its trees were extirpated by bombs and fire, during the Anglo-Turkish skirmishes in the First World War, because it had served the belligerent armies as a hideout. Deforestation, for making charcoal for sale in Shaikh Othman and Crater completed the eradication of this once lovely forest, which led to the accumulation of sands all along the track from Bir Nasser to Galagil and Herran near El Hauta (Lahej), which blocked the way. No cart has ever since been able to ply between Aden and Lahej. Even automobiles today, find it uncomfortable to use the road, which is asphalted halfway.

Decree Of Fate

We were generously entertained in the palace of Syed Alawi El Jifree, who related to us many interesting historical stories about the trek of Yemenis to Aden and Djibouti from Mocha.

The problem of fast growing families and the difficulty of education was already the subject of discussion in Aden and Lahej. Shaikh Ali Mahboub told us the story of Ali Banabila a poor citizen of Aden. He said, "Shaikh Ali Banabila had a wife and 9 children. He was very poor and could not afford to support them. He just went to the Qadhi and divorced his wife. My father, Mahboub Farahat and other charitable persons in our neighborhood offered to secure a sterile wife for him. She had been married for 20 years without any children and had lost her husband. He agreed. Miraculously she became pregnant and at the end of the period of incubation she gave him twins."

Sultan Sir Ahmed Fadhl had gone, mourned by all his people who had lost in him parental and wisdom.

The ruling family in Lahej was composed of four houses: Fadhl Muhsen; Ali Muhsen; and Abdulla Muhsen; and Munasser Muhsen, all tracing their ancestry to Sultan Muhsen Fadhl. Only two of these houses in 75 years, so far, shared the destiny of the nation. For all these years the perennial poverty. No industrial development has ever been attempted and no education imparted till very recently.

No Rule: Music

After Sultan Ahmed Fadhl, the turban was bound on the head of Sultan Ali bin Ahmed bin Ali, father of the present Sultan Fadhl bin Ali and cousin of the late Sultan Sir Abdul Karim Fadhl. He was then about 45 and lived the life of a country gentlemen; visiting his land and his farmers, riding noble steeds, entertaining distinguished visitors, chewing qat and enjoying music played by a Sanaani flutist. He delegated all state affairs to his cousin prince Muhsen Fadhl, a younger brother of the late Sultan Sir Abdul Karim Fadhl. At the age of 20 the young prince dealt with all internal and foreign affairs. He had learnt English by self tuition and was remarkably active and intelligent . He was fair and unusually handsome. In a colonial report, published in London, one of the rival Princes of the Abdali State showed me a remark to the effect that the Colonial overseers considered Muhsen Fadhl to be a man of frail constitution, susceptible to pthysis. This prophecy unfortunately proved true.

The prince died some years later in Aden as a result of galloping tuberculosis. It was after the Turkish invasion of Lahej in 1915, in which Sultan Ali bin Ahmed bin Ali was shot and died, as a result of the wound, in Crater, at the Hassan Ali's.

One morning, in those days of thrift. I joined a picnic party, to the garden of my host Syed Alawai bin Hasson El Jifree. Most of the young princes were also among the guests, including Fadhl Abdul Karim, who was elected Sultan of Lahej in 1947, Prince Ahmed Mehdi and Prince Hassin bin Ali, son of the ruling chief then. We started competing in marksmanship. In my turn I aimed at a cocoanut on a standing tree, others were shooting flying birds. Just before letting the trigger off, Prince Ahmed Mehdi, a grandson of the Sultan, pulled the rifle from my hand and very nearly killed Prince Fadhl Abdul Karim, who was near me. By an irony of fate Fadhl Abdul Karim, killed Prince Ahmed Mehdi and Prince Hasson bin Ali in 1951; accusing them of conspiracy against him. He fled to Yemen, and is in Jeddah an outlaw today.

Bridle Or Rein

The Sultan sent for me next morning and said that there was a report that I had killed somebody the previous day. I was alarmed. He then said it was a cow. I felt some relief and apologized saying I may have done it inadvertently. The Sultan looked at me and said "I am glad you are not putting the blame on someone else ". He then said that I must pay the cost of the cow. I agreed. After a while he said. "They say you know English". I said I was still learning " Tell me the English word for " ligam " he asked. I said it was rein. He said he did not mean the leather belts but the iron piece which goes into the mouth of horse. I was a bit lost and he started outting jokes. Why don't you say "lagam", and I soon recovered my equanimity and said "I think you mean the bridle" "You got it" he retorted and ordered the price of the cow to be paid by the Sultan's cashier.

Agronomist

Prince Ahmed Fadhl bin Ali, was a poet, a musician and historian. He was interested in agronomy and horticulture. He planted many fruit trees in his gardens at El Hussaini and was the man who introduced chico, guava, sweet-black spotted bananas, mangoes, and others. He advocated agrarianism but was discouraged and remained unsupported. Lahej had always been a feudal state. Ahmed Fadhl had a scientific inclination. He subscribed to the English Magazine Science and asked me to translate for him some of the articles. The magazine published for the first time a description of the SUN.

My friend Prince Fadhl bin Ahmed, on my return to Aden, gave me a book, an anthology of Yemeni verse in manuscript, with other books on contemporary literature.

In 1914, all the Princes and the Sultan of Lahej lived in their country. People clustered around them. They spent their money in Lahej and knew what was going on in the land. Today, Lahej is deserted by all its princes who are living in Aden Colony. What good can ever come of this desertion?

I had paid a visit to Lahej also in 1912 about which I shall write in the next issue.

February 16, 1961

Men, Matters and Memories (15)

I was very fond of Lahej. There, I had many friends, especially among the Princes and the literates. In 1912 I accompanied my mother. She was a businesswoman and carried silk dresses, stoles, head dressers and cotton clothing for sale. She had maternal relatives there. On this occasion, she had decided to bring away with her, my brother Abdul Mannan, five years old, then. His mother had been separated from my father.

We went on camels. A cot was tied for my mother on one of the camels. We bivouacked at Dar El Amir for the night and took a rest in the garden of Mahboub and Rehan Farhat, who were the first Adenese to buy land in the Western Aden Protectorates.

We left Dar El Amir in the early hours of the morning and reached El Hauta just before noon. We had wasted two hours en route at Saber Village.

At Lahej, I was invited to luncheon by Prince Fadhl bin Ahmed Fadhl! His father was the ruling Chief, about whom I have already written in previous chapters of these memories. Prince Fadhl bin Ahmed was a scholar of Arabic and Islamic History. He knew English and was conversant with the History of Yemen. His own library was one of the finest in this Part of the world.

As a gentleman, he was brave, and very generous, but he was a very lonely man. He lived in his own house and kept a few noble horses, including Al Jawhara, which he loved like a dear child. No one could mount it except he. It was a bay horse and beautiful.

Horse Riding Days Of Old

He had his garden and wanted chicos and guavas. He asked me about books and desired to acquire one on agriculture in Arabic suggested "HOSN ASSINAA in ILM AZZIRAAH", (The beauty of agricultural Science) ordered it for him, later from Cairo. He also asked me to obtain for him a copy of KITAB UL KHAIL, the BOOK OF HORSES, but it was then out of print. I translated for him a small pamphlet on Dairy Farms.

During my sojourn in Lahej, I used to go riding every afternoon to Al Hosaini Gardens on one of the horses from the stable of Prince Fadhl. The "Lioness" was exceptional mare and was the "Diamond," which took me from Lahej to Dar Amir, one afternoon, in an hour.

Another good friend was Abdullah Alawi El Jifri. We went out riding together and played chess in the quiet evenings. At night we slept under a mosquito net. Mosquitoes were pestilential.

On the last Wednesday of the month of Safar of the Mohammadan year, I joined a picnic party to the garden of Sayed Alwai El Jifri. This is a Thanksgiving Day. Men women and children go to the beaches, lie on the sands and wash. They also go near streams or rivers (there are very few in Arabia), and men

gather in the nearby gardens and eat qat in the afternoon, amid rejoicing and music. I was told that people in this part of the world engender a superstitious belief in the holiness of this day.

The Audhalis appear to have once, in their history, failed to celebrate this fateful day and were therefore terribly defeated by their enemies on a battlefield on a subsequent WEDNESDAY, when many had their ears out off The Beidhanis never call this' day by its name They just call it "the day of light."

Gruesome Scene In Lahej Market

Next day, the inhabitants of Lahej were summoned to behold the execution of a highwayman, who had plundered unwary travelers and killed some of them, on the trade route, between Aden and Yemen. Sultan Sir Ahmed Fadhl sent out a force to arrest him. The Sultan had undertaken to keep the trade route safe for merchants going to Yemen and vice versa. The culprit had his hands folded behind him, joined to a long knife, which was embedded in the wall of house of Emir Hasson, the Commander-in-Chief of the Lahej army.

He stood facing, in full dress, a small force of irregulars mustered to shoot him. They came from various tribes, in order that the one who shoots him is not singled out, to avoid retribution or retaliation by the tribe to which the culprit belongs. "Shoot", came the order and twenty bullets flew astray. The accused then shouted at the soldiers and insulted them, calling them bad names. : " Are you females, unable to direct your shots, torturing me so shamelessly"? whereupon one of the soldiers stepped forward and shot him on the knee which dangled furiously. Another shot him on the neck and he was gone.

I have never forgotten that gruesome picture. It was brutal, but the Sultan of Lahej was able to stem the wave of highwayman ship, for many years afterwards, until TAMBAH, a Subeihi highway man appeared on the scene after 1922. I shall relate his story in good time.

Talents Around Qat Circles

In those days, the people of Lahej lived in thrift. They paid no taxes. They contracted no debts. Life was peaceful and expenditure on cars, radios, and other luxury goods was nil. They liked Qat but not liquor. They ate Qat moderately. Qat gatherings collected talented poets, men of literary ability and musicians. Many visitors came from abroad. Shaikh Attaftazani, the head of a wellknown Tariqa, arrived from Cairo. Sultan sir Ahmed Fadhl knew him when he paid a visit to Egypt some years before. The Sultan was himself a poet of repute. Sheikh Mohamed Mughallis was one of the famous poets of the ceurit in those days. Prince Ahmed Fadhl mentioned him and quoted some of his poems in his History Of Lahej" Hadeyyat Uzzaman ". I married his niece 18 years later.

I paid a visit to Alanad, and saw some interesting archeological remains, said to be remnants to Himyaritie civilization. No attempt has been made to drifter the writing on the rocks and no excavations were over made to uncover important monuments.

Most of the people I have known in Lahej have either disappeared from social life, died, became blind or poor.

One of the few who braved the ravages of the years, is Shaikh Mohamed Abdul Alim, unfortunately, living today is blindness.

February 23, 1961

Men, Matters and Memories (16)

Early in 1914, I had a serious attack of malaria. This disease was in those years prevalent in Aden. Rain water remained stagnant in the tanks and bred mosquitoes. Many of the inhabitants suffered and it was thanks to Dr. Hondivala that malaria was eradicated in this country. Recently however, the pest has returned. I was treated with quinine in the Civil hospital, but it did me little good. It just deafened my ears. The Civil hospital was run under the management of Dr. Me Ray, a surgeon and a missionary. He was also an optician. I showed him my eyes. He prescribed glasses, which I obtained from Hatim Brothers in Abdul Rehman Street, Bombay. Some year later, 1916, I was examined by Dr. Mashall, on the HMS Northbrook. He was the eye surgeon to the Royal family in London. He told me that I must change my glasses; and that unless I took special care of my eyes I should go blind before the age of 40. Fortunately, I have passed that age long ago.

Cauterization

My malaria remained persistently for some months, I was cauterized by an elderly lady on my wrists, back and head; The scars have not disappeared to this day. She also tied an amulet to my amazement I found two black beetles in it. Meanwhile I was taken to Sharifa Allia, the saintly sister of Syed Hashem Bahr, the patron of Shaikh Othman whose annual fare is attended by thousands from Aden and the Aden protectorate. She made three cuts, with a razor, on my back. I bled profusely. This lady who remained unmarried was as white and pure, as crystal. She was very pretty and young and was sanctified after her death. she is buried under the dome of her brother.

Quack Surgery

There were very few medical practitioners in Aden, but many quacks. Medical treatment was by trial and error, based on Kitab Al Azraq, a book in Arabic on medicines with prescriptions for maladies. Mamada and his sons Saeed and Abdul Razack, extracted ailing teeth. They were some of the local barbers. They also circumcised newly born babies. People had more faith in Badulla, the Hospital compounder, than in the doctors. Ali Kubba, a compounder of the King Edward VII Charitable Dispensary was a popular unqualified doctor in Crater, and so was Inayat, a hospital theatre assistant who incised my dangling uvula and caused sharp cough. A Somali shoemaker in Section D, did this surgery too and even removed tonsils, not without result of septicemia.

Child Mortality

There was very little prenatal attention. Antenatal deaths of poor mothers was not unusual. Child mortality was dreadful. Many orphans were left at the mercy of stepmothers, developing complexes and stupidity.

Magicians

Some fathers had as many as ten children and more who grew up spoilt urchins. Insanity was endemic. Many families had it and gave it to their posterity. My father lost 14 children, lovely boys and girls. He died mourning them and he sobbed bitterly in every funeral of a near relation or a dear neighbour, remembering his own irretrievable losses. My brother Saleh lost 12 children. And these are but typical examples of child mortality, caused by cases of pneumonia, smallpox, plague, whooping cough, malaria and influenza when none of the antibiotic drugs was known. Puerperal fever caused any number of deaths, inspite of the fact that there were available many experienced Arab and Indian midwives, called JIDDA . My Jidda was also the midwife of hundreds of sons and daughters in this town.

People were very superstitious. They still are. They believed in magicians who attributed diseases to the evil spirits.

March 2, 1961

Men, Matters and Memories (17)

I took part in sports football and cricket. I also played hockey, but I was badly injured and never played hockey ever after. Football has always been the favourite recreation of the masses. Khan Saheb , Yousuf Khan founded the United Recreation Club in 1911. Football was the mainstay of this club. Some of the champions in Aden were Mahfoodh Saleh Mackawi, Ahmed Yousuf Khan. Buddahi (Somali) who was famous for his head maneuvers with the ball, Samboo, Long shanks and the wonderful goalkeeper Hariri. My brothers Saleh and Abdul Manan were good full backs. So was Mohamed A.R. Mackawi (Addob). The company forming part of the garrison of Aden, presented a strong football team. Their centre forward was knick named Tricky. He managed the ball with such dexterity that it was always a difficult task to stop him sending it flying to the target. His dash, with the ball, forward like a bullet, left fans spell bound until the ball was either arrested or it hit the goal.

Mackawi was a wonderful player in the field. The goalkeeper of the Company was a tall, handsome looking, robust, young Scot. He caught the ball each time it came within his grasp, and only on very rare occasions did it escape through his hands into the net. The K team wore sky blue shirts and the URC yellow striped shirts.

The Mohammedan Cricket Club conducted matches under the good care of Abdulla Yacoob Khan now Khan Saheb and the first man to write the ancient history of Aden. He was the first man to use the blind touch method in type writing. It was due to his energy and sacrifice that the M.C.C. lasted for a long time before it became a football club.

FATHERS

I passed the fourth Standard in 1914, at the Marist Brothers School Steamer Point, which boasted of a very capable team of teachers, Rev. Brothers Valerian James, John and the good head master Gregory. They not only attended the classes, to impart knowledge and build up character but also participated in indoor and outdoor games. Marbles, billiards, darts, striking with the hand ball and football in their cloaks, and long shirts and rosaries dangling from their waist belts and often with their hoods on. We had, attached to the school a fully equipped gymnasium. Some of the boys, living today, who were then in this school, are Pedicles Mavroudis, who was the manager of the Aden Salt Works for some years; Robert Coutinho, Leon Dalbourgo, Peter Pereira, Ustaz Ahmed Al-Yacoob, and Uthman Showala, Many others are now dead. Peace be upon their souls.

None was more cheerful and kind than those monks, our kind teachers, I have known for a long time.

In later years Aden has had a good teacher, sincere and well meaning. He was father Dominic, the headmaster of St. Joseph High School. There are at present hundreds of teachers, some very highly qualified and there is every hope that education will make steady progress and produce men and women capable of administering the Colony efficiently to enable it to march with the marching world.

THE WAR

In the earlier months of the year 1914. I made friendship with Mr. Hass, Consul for Austria and director of Messrs. Alois Schweiger & Co. I exchanged stamps with his wife who was a very nice lady. She gave me some wonderful sets of Austrian stamps in exchange and I taught her daughter, the handsome Ulanda, Arabic. One day her mother came while we were talking quietly. She looked at us with her smiling eyes and said “DON’T FALL IN LOVE”. It was perhaps a timely warning; because the War came soon afterwards and separated us.

PROPAGANDA

Mr. Sohuler, was a clerk of the firm. He carried a camera and took photographs everywhere. The Austrians were very shrewd and made friends with many of the Arabs in Zafferan Road and in Section A & C. When I went to say goodbye to them, a fat chap with an aquiline nose said to me “We shall come back”. They never did.

After July 1914, I used to spend long hours with Rev. Brothers, discussing the War, its causes, progress and possible effect on humanity. I owe to them my appreciation of the viewpoint of the Entente.

The first 12 months was uneventful, Anti – British propaganda flowed into Aden from Beirut, after Turkey had joined the Axis in November 1914. Arria-al-A m m (Public Opinion), in red newsprint and Al-Iqbal, by its editor Abdul Baset Al-Unsi, spoke in high flown Arabic, and with fiery enthusiasm of the German military power.

March 9, 1961

Men, Matters and Memories (18)

The only source of news we had in Aden, in the years immediately preceding World War I was Reuters Bulletin. No other local journals, no radio. Newspapers from Cairo, Beirut and the United Kingdom reached this end fairly regularly. I had then subscribed to the TIMES, Weekly Edition, in orange cover and to Al Hilal Arabic Monthly, edited and published by George Zaidan, and imported a copy of Everyman's Encyclopedia.

Those years presented a curious contrast between thought and action.. the Boer War was won by England. The Russo Japanese War ended in favour of Japan. The Italo-Turkish War made Italy a big colonial government and the Balkan War totally destroyed European Turkey, outside Constantinople itself. It was, nevertheless, believed that mankind was making notable progress in physical comfort. Prosperity, intellectual attainments, spiritual breadth and depth, freedom, and that the rapidly growing world commerce was paving the way, in conjunction with international finance and international labour organizations, for a peaceful evolution toward a new world order, in which the lion should live with the lamb, swords should be beaten into plough shares and WAR, the primeval curse of humanity should be exorcised eternally.

Fringe of War

Men like Andrew Carnegie and Alfred Nobel dedicated their wealth and fortune to peaceful purposes and peace propaganda and many of the Governments of the World participated in Peace Conferences at the Hague between 1899 and 1907.

When people all over the World were reading about the blessings of science and the prosperity it was bringing the human race, all actions and tendencies were predisposing mankind to face one of the greatest calamities in the annals of the World. Compare the situation today.

Self-Interest

At the commencement of this century there were just fifty States compared with at least 100 today, sovereign states, in existence, at least in theory. Kaiser Wilhelm II claimed that Germany was the strongest among them; yet she was not strong enough to stand in the face of all others combined. This was what actually happened. They could have united to save the world but instead, each for herself proceeded to act as if she were self sufficient, placing before herself its own self-interests. Their supreme guide was conventional understanding, traditional usages, international law and diplomacy.

Today, this great error is being half heartedly avoided.

Anarchy

In the prewar years 1900 / 1914, force and power were the final arbitrament among the big nations, which were classified as Powers and Great Powers. There is not much difference today. They were then a conglomeration of divided, selfish and jealous entities. The world was, and is today, enshrined in a state of international anarchy.

Universal elementary education, the widespread publication of newspapers, the constant increase of armaments, the birth of patriotic poets, the compilation and teaching of national histories, all these were powerful agencies of spiteful propaganda.

Have we much progressed since, beyond the realm of self interest self aggrandizement, injustice, and spite ? We have at least added to these detestable trails, apartheid .

It was Napoleon I, who had awakened the spirit of nationalism in Europe, and early in this century NATIONALISM tended to become strikingly intolerant. It emphasized what was peculiar to individual nations rather than what was conducive to the prosperity of humanity at large.

European Empires

The Ottoman Empire had fallen on its knees. Other Empires rose from oblivion or nothingness. The Italian Empire, The French Empire, The British Empire, The Belgian Empire, The Dutch Empire, The Portuguese Empire and so on and so forth. Imperialism ruled supreme and Germany sought to rule the World and add to its African acquisitions. Lebensraum was her objective and economic superiority. Great Britain was her biggest rival in world commerce. All other empires in the European continent aimed at consolidating their valuable sources of prosperity, in Asia and Africa, without sympathizing with the well being of those backward races.

Aden And Outside

Nationalism was and is today a sentiment, a pride and a defence mechanism a protection against aggression as it is today in the Arab World. In 1914, it predisposed Europe to War, because the Great Powers had fought desperately in the economic field. They set up gigantic tariff barriers, for the exploitation of the colonies and the backward races. This nationalism was invoked by manufacturers, traders, industrialists, and investors. It was over the Colonies that economic competition grew most intense.

Pallonjee Dinshaw and Cowasjee Dinshaw and Brothers kept copies of Reuters Bulletin in their shops for the benefit of their customers. The P & O Steam Navigation Co. Ltd. were the publishers in Aden. I translated Reuters for many of my friends, especially the Sultan of Lahej and his other cousins, who were refugees in Aden after the Turkish invasion of Lahej in 1915. Another translator was Mohamed Muhsen a cousin of Khan Bahadur, Mohamed Salem Ali and a grandfather of Dr. Salem Abdul Khaleq.

News Service

Shaikh Bakkar Basharahil held a daily Qat gathering at which many of the elite of Aden attended including K.B. Syed Husain bin Hamed El Mihdhar, Prince Ali bin Ahmed Fadhl, Prince Fadhl bin Ahmed Fadhl, Syed Abdullah bin Hamed Assafi, and many Hadhrami savants who paid occasional visits to Aden. All waited for me to bring the news at 3 pm. every day.

I used to translate some of the articles of English Newspapers and many of them received copies of Egyptian papers. There were some in Aden who thought that Germany would win the War.

Martial Law

After General Saeed Pacha, the Turkish General had occupied Lahej and smashed the Lahej army of 2000 strong at Tannan, north of Lahej organized by Prince Muhsen Fadhl bin Ali. Censorship of all postal material was imposed. Major Cleaveland was appointed Chief Censor.

He intercepted a letter containing maps and plans of the fortifications of Aden addressed to General Saeed Pacha in Lahej. It was suspected that the sender of that fateful letter was Yasin, a young Adenis boy who lived in Crater. He denied but was court martialled and shot at the Isthmus near the small tunnel. The building near which he was shot has always been considered a “haunted house”, ever since. It was a great calamity which the Adenis shot felt. The victim was a promising young man. He was a beloved friend of hundreds Adenis. It was later discovered that a woman was behind the conspiracy. Old friends turned against him concocted the crime which ended his life prematurely.

March 16, 1961

Men, Matters and Memories (19)

IN 1915, the Turkish army came down from Yemen, occupied from DHALA and the Huashaibi Protectorates, and proceeded to invade the Abdali State of Lahej with field guns and machine . Fadhl bin Ali had organized a resistance force at Tannan, North of Lahej and South of the Haushabi Sultanate. Sultan Ali Manai the Haushabi Sultan at Museimir offered no resistance to the Turks. The Turkish advance Aden wards was part of the major plan to block the Suez Canal and Red Sea in the face of the British merchant navy.

The Abdali army at Tannan, proved hopelessly weak and unable to resist. It retreated in panic towards Lahej, leaving behind large quantities of rations and military equipment, built up in many months by the Lahej Government. No sooner was this army routed Than The commander of operations ordered the evacuation of Lahej.

REFUGEES ARRIVE

The populace of pleasure fled over night to Aden with whatever valuables they could carry. Thousands of refugees thronged the long corridor traversing the Mismar wood, guarded against marauders by the British and Indian soldiers who were to help the Lahej force. General Shaw , Political Resident Aden and Commander –in-Chief was stationed with a small force of naval ratings at Dar-El-Amir. They had been borrowed from the H.M.S. Espiegil and H.M.S. FOX, which were placed in the harbour for defensive purposes. The Aden garrison was inadequate; the Governments of Aden and Lahej both underestimated the prowess of the Turk. If General Saeed Pacha had decided to march upon Aden its doom would have been sealed.

Shaikh Othman ABLAZE

The Political Resident waited for the refugees from Lahej to reach Shaikh Othman, Sultan Ali bin Ahmed bin Ali , the Sultan of Lahej himself left his palace at night on horseback with a small bodyguard. He was mistaken for Turkish reconnaissance force and was fired at. He got a shot on his thigh. The Indian Commander took care of him and sent him to Aden for medical care. He did not survive long. On the night of the Turkish invasion of Lahej, like a good pioneer of journalism, I climbed up the Shaikh Othman Police Station clock-tower, from which I saw the huge blaze caused by bombing and arson.

LAHEJ CAPTURED

Some of the Lahejis had adopted, the scorched earth policy upon their evacuation of Lahej. The sound of explosions was heard by me on the clock tower. Shaikh Othman was in a state of tumult that night. I had to pass the night outside a hut of a near relative in the street. Next morning I saw the trek of people from Lahej. He told me that everything was over and advised me to go to Crater. On that night the Aden Government decided to evacuate Shaikh Othman.

That they may be able to save the fortress by bombarding any Turkish force on its way to Maalla and Crater from Shaikh Othman via Khor-maskar. The idea was good but Shaikh Othman was plundered outright. Its population was tendered homeless. Subsequently the Turks occupied Shaikh Othman, but just for a short time. They soon repaired to their Headquarters at Lahej, many women were killed or ravaged. I returned to Aden, the same day.

The Crater water supply coming from Shaikh Othman was cut off and there was a sharp shortage of water supply. Condensed water was rationed. It was sold in a horses' shed opposite the Taxi Stand at Crater at about 1/- a tin of four gallons This, however, did not last long as the British armies soon reoccupied Shaikh Othman and fortified it. Many of its inhabitants were repatriated.

It was at first considered that Germany would soon win the War, but after the battle of the Marne, people found that the Allies were a hard nut to crack. Merchants and exporters in Aden became active.

TRADE BOOM

The Government of Aden appointed a controller of trade and allotted quantities of goods –food-stuffs, textiles, luxury goods and Potash – under a permit system, to be exported from Aden to Jezaan and Meedi. Syed Mohamed El Idrisi was the ruler of these two ports and also of Sabia, ABUARISH and Lohyyah. Hodaidah was under Turkish suzerainty. Cargoes left Aden for the Red Sea ports, by dhows. There prevailed any amount of corruption and forgery of permits, changing 1 maund into 1 bag or package and 10 bags into 40 and so on and so forth.

Lt. Colonel H.F. Jacob, Major Wood and Captain Reilly were some of the administrators in this Colony.

I started filling in printed permits for the Crater merchants.

Many others did. likewise. I made a substantial income from this new profession. Arab merchants trusted me with their applications.

The Indian merchants did not participate in this export boom.

Abdul Habib Khormaji was the Superintendent of Wharves.

There was a frantic demand for export permits and in a fanfare one of these permits was purchased by Ahmed Ali Hindi for a fabulous sum, which drew the attention of Government to the huge profits people made from this trade.

My mother started textile merchanting. She purchased cotton goods, napkins, head dresses, and so forth from Parmanund Laljee and Siraj for sale on credit to purdahnashin ladies. I helped her in keeping accounts, and in conducting the local sales.

* * * * *

Turco-Somali Matrimony

General Saeed Pacha was a tall, robust military officer with a commanding voice, and wide eyes. I saw him in Crater after the cessation of hostilities. He gained great popularity in Yemen and parts of the Western Aden Protectorate. He married in Lahej and raised a small army of Somalis.

March 23, 1961

Men, Matters and Memories

N/A

March 30, 1961

Men, Matters and Memories

N/A

April 6, 1961

Men, Matters and Memories (20)

My father lived in Section D Crater and I lived in the same section in another house. The Front Bay, the Daswin Bazaar and the Clubs Place, recently named, were occupied by the British Infantry and the Indian contingents. The Royal Artillery occupied Ras Boradly, Tarshyne and Ras Morbut in the year 1910 to 1915. In the latter year the bulk of the troops were moved to Shaikh Othman. The Indian Station Hospital was in the premises situated behind the Crater Tennis Gymkhana. I knew one of the Medical Officers there, Dr. Qureishi, who claimed Arabian origin. I taught Arabic to one Indian doctor in that Hospital; and in exchange he taught me Italian.

By the end of 1915, I had passed the Sixth Standard English which was then the highest class in our educational system. I took French as an additional subject and had many lessons in elementary Latin. The standard of education in the Marist Brothers' School was high, and typewriting, Script Shorthand, drawing, music and book-keeping were some of the auxiliary subjects, imparted to the Students. Lt. – Colonel Beale, the editor of the "Aden Focus," the first English review, sponsored by the Aden Government, and Master Hamood bin Hasson, the author of Simplified Arabic were the examiners in that year.

In 1916, I thought of marriage. I had a bride in mind. My mother had another for me. She is 80 today. Maternal Grandfather Shaikh Mohamed Yousoof Munshi was in 1903 the Deputy Postmaster in Aden. That was then one of the highest Government posts. He had married five Arab wives here and two Indians in Bombay. He had three sons – Dr. Zahuruddin, Shaikh Ghaziodin who was postmaster of Junagadh State (Kathiawar) and Shaikh Nizamuddin Headclerk in the Postmaster General's Office Bombay. He was descended from an Arab origin. My maternal grandmother was a descendant of Shaikh El Hakami, a well know Yemeni Saint. The ancestors of my father were from Hamdan in Yemen. His mother was Yemeni from the tribe of Dubaa. He had married four Arab wives in Aden and had lost a daughter AZIZA, by his first wife, before my mother. He thought of another bride for me; but I insisted on the one of my own choice. It was not usual that sons rejected the decision of their parents.

Shaikh Ahmad Taha Al Hitari, one of the illustrious citizens of this country, a historian and powerful orator, intervened. He spoke to my father and subsequently wrote me an epistle in six pages in rhetorical Arabic. It was one of the best letters, I had received from a friend, in high-flown and flowery Arabic, which I treasured for many years and almost memorized. I won, and I married a woman I loved and never forgot. She was the daughter of Ahmed Saleh El Gammal, a respectable inhabitant of Aden.

My father performed for me one of the most memorable festivals and marriage celebrations ever held in Aden. Thousands of people from the Colony and Aden Protectorates attended. All the Princes of Lahej participated and some of them danced. Valuable presents were given to me.

After leaving school, I prepared plaints and complaints, and wrote Memorandums of Appeal. My father's success aroused the jealousy of a rival who wrote to the Government that my father had accepted a gratification, in the form of postage stamps, from Shaikh Mohamed Abdallah Basindwah.

My father lodged a complaint against him for Defamation. It took several months in the Court of Major Strong. It revealed to us many friends and foes, and I took an active part in dealing with witnesses in the case and in preparing cross-examination. It was a very interesting experience, in those days of intrigues and conspiracies. The War was becoming colossal. Men made money in tons from exports to the Red Sea and from smuggling.

The defamation case came to an end. Major Strong Find the defendant Rs. 1000/- and he was deported Aden to Bombay.

Once, while the case was in progress the defendant objected to my presence in Court. The Magistrate left his chair and came out to the verandah, in the premises, now occupied by Air India, and asked me to leave the Court. I told him that I was a responsible citizen and had a right to watch the proceedings. Major Strong was not angry but he said I had better leave the Court. I obeyed.

* * * * *

Spiteful Beast

My father –in-law Shaikh Ahmed Saleh El-Gammal owned many camels in Aden and had camel carts for the transport of goods from Crater to the Maalla Wharf and vice-versa. One of his camels was a huge recalcitrant beast. One day Ahmed Saleh beat this camel severely with a stick several times. He knew the nature of the camel, as a very spiteful animal. He used to sleep in the street near the door of his house and told his grooms to let the camel loose that night to see how he would behave. He left his cot with pillows covered by a bed sheet and waited on the roof of the house to watch the aggrieved beast. At midnight, the camel came to the bed and threw down his full weight on the cot to avenge himself. His master laughed on the roof and said “I knew you were bad”. The camel stared at his master, who was out of reach and fell dead as a result of utter disappointment.

April 13, 1961

Men, Matters and Memories (21)

Sherif Hussain of Mecca was an internee in Constantinople during the regime of Sultan Abdul Hamid II of Turkey and the Turkish Empire, but he was released by UNION & PROGRESS PARTY, who had by then (1915) overthrown the age-old Turkish Caliphate, dominated the Kingdom and joined the Germans in the First world war, (November 1914). All the Arabs countries were then at least, theoretically, part and parcel of the dwindling Ottoman Empire, "The sick man of Europe". Yemen was also under the suzerainty of the Turkish; so was Egypt receiving instructions from Al-Bab-alAli, (The Supreme Porte).

Although Mahmoud Nadim was the Turkish Representative in Yemen with many scandals to his credit, including the chase of a very handsome Pariah girl in Zabeed, who had run away from his Harem at Beit-ul-Fauih, the Imam Yahya, who was assassinated in 1948, was residing in the famous fortress of Shahara, on the lofty mountains to the East of Sanaa. He spread hatred for the Turks, and disseminated venomous propaganda, against Turkish imperialism in Yemen. But he remained inert in his well guarded castle in order not to excite a counter action on the part of the Turks. He was clever, far sighted, and was considered one of the great savants of the Moslem Shariah ; but he was a reactionary. The Turkish control over the remoter parts of their empire was loose and weak. But nearer home, in Syria and in Lebanon, they had maintained well equipped contingents , even, in Mesopotamia (Iraq). One of their generals, Jamal Pacha, engraved everlasting cauterizations in the hearts of the Arabs because of his brutality in killing the Lebanese and Syrians during the earlier years of the First World War . Before that, the Arabs in many parts of the world including Aden, raised their hands with supplications for the triumph of the Turkish Arms. Another repercussion to that barbarian rule in Syria by Jemal Pasha, was the declaration of the Arab Revolution , by Sharif Hussain of Mecca, who was given assurances, for the Freedom and independence of all the Arab Lands, by Britain.

A number of Moslem countries, and many of the people of Aden, disapproved of this Revolution of Sharif Hussain because they regarded the Ottoman Caliph as virtual head of Moselms all over the world, and that it was high reason to disown his spiritual shadow over the Moslem world. The Khilafat party in India, led by Mohamedaly and Showkat Ali, remained antagonistic to the Arab Revolution till 1940. But, when Mohmedaly was on his death bed, in London, he asked that his body should be buried in Jerusalem.

WORD IS BOND

The Arabs were impressed and swayed by the rhetoric and argument of the Quran upon the advent of the Prophet Mohammed. It is a characteristic of the Arab mentality to be influenced and moved by words.

Once an Arab is convinced of the righteousness of his cause, he forgets to assess the power of his opponents. Even in Court, an Arab would neglect to prepare his case and produce evidence in support of it, once he is sure of his case and his rights. He very often loses. In this manner Palestine was lost to the Arabs. They did not take sufficient guarantees from the Allies; and England and France preferred to betray them. They gave The Holy Land to the Zionists. This was simply because the Arabs had long dealings with the British people, who had established a conviction that an Englishman's word was his bond. This conviction suffered a serious relapse after the loss of Palestine.

LET DOWN

The British Government helped Sharif Hussain and his son Abdullah and Feisal in their struggle against Turkish imperialism and all had expected that she would stand by them on the Palestine issue; but Britain proclaimed the Balfour declaration. She did not therefore honour her pledges to the Arabs, and her only excuse was that she was fighting for her life, although the Balfour declaration, could have been avoided, if the statesman responsible had thoughtfully pondered over all the repercussions and calamities that it would entail.

Soon after the Balfour declaration many of the Arabs in this Colony became sympathetic towards the Arab Revolution, but very soon afterwards many came from Java with an anti-Hashemite policy promulgated by the Irshad (Guidance) Association. I was a constant visitor of Shaikh Mohamed Aref, the Head of the Ismailite School and his nephew Shaikh Khaioddin, both very highly religious personalities of the Ismaili Shias. They were believers in the sanctity Of imam Husain bin Ali bin Abi Taleb, and the descendants of Fatima the daughter of the Prophet Mohamed. They upheld the Fatimide dynasty in North Africa and Egypt and the Suleihites in Yemen. They and the Irshad Association were poles apart. Queen Arwa, a Suleihite, ruled over Aden and hers was a golden era, in this part of the World. I was therefore a protagonist of the Hashemites and their Revolution in Arabia. I thought that the movement of Sharif Hussain was well timed and was fully justified. It was time that the Arabs had thrown away the Turkish Yoke.

Some British Naval vessels during the 1914-1918 World War helped Sharif Hussain with supplies from Aden, which they landed in Jeddah and Yanboo. Lawrence of Arabia played an important role in the War against Turkey.

* * * * *

Shaikh Mohamed Aref the Head of the Bohra Islami School in Aden was a man of very saintly character. He was an authority on the Shia Law, and had written a commentary on the Sharaiul Islam. His knowledge of Arabic was high and he had a good knowledge of Ayurvedic medicine. He is an Arab and

his nephew Shaikh Khairuddin Alamuddin was no less than he was. He was known for his piety , hospitality and charity. I used to spend hours with him, learning the rules of Arabic Poetry. After his death, he was consecrated as a Saint of Islam.

April 20, 1961

Men, Matters and Memories (22)

The dawn of 1917 found me a married man, in a new house in Section D, well furnished, from Bombay, and with one additional room and a wide courtyard. For some years, I had been responsible for a large family – a mother, a maternal grandmother, three brothers, Saleh, Abdul Majid and Khaled, the last was just one year old, and three girls adopted by my mother, one of them was a foster sister; they helped in keeping the house.

I got rid of the taxi, which I had owned by selling my share to fitter Ahmed Khan, who ran a garage in Section A/4 and the first of its kind managed by a local man.

Marriage Dispels My Gloom

Marriage gave me a feeling of manhood and a bigger sense of responsibility. It gave me a friend to whom I could contrast my inner feelings. I had loved my mother. I had a great regard for my father, but I could never imagine how much more open can love be by closer proximity and deeper attachment. Both my wife and I were very young, but then it was the fashion to marry early in life.

I had worked for 18 years, without a rest, with a feeling of gloom, and even morbidness but not malignity. Under the influence of my new experience I felt cheerful and even gay. I looked around, with confidence and viewed the world from a new angle. The first thing I considered was how to make my home happier.

Prospects of Clerical Job

In March 1917, a friend and colleague, Shaikh Ahmed Ali Hariri, belonging to one of the oldest Adeni families came to me with an idea. He proposed to me a post of a correspondence clerk in the firm of Clayton Ghaleb & Co, Ltd. He said the prospects were attractive and the manager was Louis El-Khazen, a young Lebanese gentleman. I promised to think it over.

What's Wrong With Govt. Service

I discussed the proposition with my father the same evening.

"Father", I said, "don't you think it would be much better to join in Government's service?" "No", he replied and he enumerated a number of reasons.

"First, I don't like to see you in Government service, for your own sake. You will never be able to adapt yourself to official routine, and what is more important you will have to start from the bottom rung of the ladder, while you have been used to lot of money already. Government, moreover, will not permit you to do any work in your leisure hours, to add to your income. In trade you will certainly fare better," he said. He then told me that he himself was a coffee merchant and so was his brother, Hussain

Lokman. It was because foreign capital had captured the bulk of the trade in Aden that he had to join Government service and his brother to become a broker of P. Bardey. He told me that his father Ibrahim Lokman was a very successful contractor. With his son-in-law Suleiman as partner they had taken the contract of street lighting in Aden, and a sub-contract for opening the large tunnel in Crater. Suleiman had built the house in which Mr. Tivari lives today and that my grandfather had purchased the garden owned at present by E.C. Patel. He then mentioned many houses in Section F and in the Maidan which were the sole property of my paternal grandfather Ibrahim. All that wealth was the result of a lucrative business . I was impressed by his narrative.

Mind Made up: I Seek Interview

Next morning, I saw the manager Louis F. El Khazen. He was a few years older than I, a graduate of the College of the Jesuits in Lebanon and a man of parts. He came from a very noble family residing in Jounieh, on the shores of the Mediterranean. He loved French and composed poetry in a very picturesque style. He wrote a poem “Life is a cigarette and a glass of wine”. in lovely quatrains. Thirty years later. I heard a song by Mohamed Abdul Wahhab in Arabic in the same spirit and flow. He treated me as a brother. I never felt like a subordinate. He frequently invited me to lunch. He discussed with me the war, and the atrocities of Jamal Pacha, the hangman of Syria and Lebanon, where he had erected gallows in the streets to execute the nationalists; he ravaged the country and decimated its peaceful population.

Louis El Khazen was generous and kind. His friend Albert Sfeir paid us regular visits, and to both of them I owe a great deal of my comprehension of the European way of life.

I had developed some vanity in view of my illiterate environment, but the fact that I had become a friend of intelligent and educated men of talent gave me the ambition to rise and learn.

Mr. Khazen entrusted to me the English correspondence and the cash.

He kept the accounts and made the entries in his own artistic handwriting. For five years Louis never uttered a painful word!.

In the afternoons, I continued to write petitions, draft memorandums of Appeal, prepare Export Permits, and add to the comfort of the family.

Very soon I took over the management of the Imports section, and transit trade. Coffee came from Abyssinia for transport to London and so did hides, in huge quantities. My past business experience was of immense help to me in my new career.

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IN MY DAYS

Early marriage has its pros and cons, and few marriages were successful. Bigamy was often resorted to, but so was divorce. The woman received no education at all. Very few learnt chapters of the Quran, without understanding them. They were strictly under purdah. If a lady left, her house to visit a near relation she had to do it in the early hours of the morning when all the men were in the mosques. In the event of death, however, the woman was permitted to come out of her apartment but she was to go out barefooted, to give the indication that she was in mourning.

April 27, 1961

Men, Matters and Memories (23)

In 1917 the situation in Europe was tense and the prospects of victory were still remote. In the vicinity of Aden pitched battles were fought on the barks of Lahej. There were losses on either side, and for the first time the RAF strafed the town of Al Hauta, the Headquarters of General Saeed Pacha, the Turkish General ; but his own house was spared. Damage was caused to several buildings, which have never been repaired since.

A large number of people in Aden and Shaikh Othman were arrested and interned in a concentration camp at the Isthmus. One of the internees was Saleh Hasson Turkey, an intellectual, and a talented violinist. He was a petition writer and a friend of Dr. Young, a missionary at the Keith Falconer Mission, Shaikh Othman. He always thought that many of Moslems in Aden were hypocritical. He is a good Moslem and is now nearly 100 years old. I was approached to the Political Resident, because he had pleaded that he was being victimized he was released.

BUSY TIME

In the early weeks of the year 1918 my responsibilities in the firm of Clayton Ghaleb & Co., Ltd. began to increase. Mr. L.El Khazen fell seriously ill and was advised by Dr. Captain Binning to go for medical treatment to Cairo. I was the Arabic coach of that doctor, who was a friend of the firm. Louis left me in charge of the affairs of the company: I managed the business, kept the accounts, conducted and supervised exports and imports, I did all the correspondence, both in English and French . I sent messages by cable regularly to Manchester and Djibouti, and I had the cash. My able assistant's were an Indian broker Gurdhar Damodar, and a Moccadum of Coolies at the Maalla Wharf, Mohamed Kohlani.

U. BOAT HAVOC

I received 1500 bales of hides and 1000 packages of coffee from Abyssinia with instructions to bale the hides for export to Europe and to clean the coffee and prepare it for shipment to London, in bags of 50 kilos. I had a very busy time.

The Uboat campaign was extremely dangerous in the Mediterranean. S/S Wolsey Hall was sunk with a big consignment for our client in Aden. I had to prepare claims of compensation and forward them to Manchester. Ships were rare. I knew that and had therefore to spend many a sleepless night supervising the packing of the hides and the cleaning of the coffee. In less than two weeks a ship was announced with plenty of space for clean cargo . Freight was charged, not by weight but by measurement. The cargo had to be well stacked in a compact manner to avoid unnecessary waste.

FORTUNATE

I went to book space in the ship but was notified that there would be a ratable distribution of space among the shippers. I was able to ship 50% of my stock of hides and coffee. However one of the shippers thrust bundles of bees wax between his bales of hides thinking of making on the roundabouts what he lost on the swings; but he was disqualified. I got the chance to ship the balance of my stocks.

Next day, I went to the National Bank of India to receive a cheque and some cash to pay the freight money, to Cory Brothers. A day later, I found in my cash an excess of Rs. 4,900. I was amused. I did not know how that wealth had dawned upon me. I went to the Bank again. There, I learnt that Eduljee the cashier of the Bank had paid Rs. 5,000/- in excess to someone. I thought of the excess I had in my cash, and after some discussion I brought the money and saved the cashier of the Bank.

On the same day I received the bonds that I had executed in the presence of the Controller of Exports. Every exporter had to bring back from London those bonds duly attested that the cargo had reached its appointed destination. I placed the bonds, the cheque and a big amount of cash in a thick envelope bearing the name of the firm and left Crater in a cab for Tawahi.

It was Ramadhan , and we had a very hot summer. I was fasting, and on the cab enroute to Tawahi, I fell fast asleep. I was awakened near the office of Cory Brothers to find that the envelope had disappeared. Imagine the state of confusion and fright I was thrown into. I ordered the driver to return to Crater. It was very windy . I could not see anything on the way . It was a calamity.

What was I to tell my principals . Where was I to bring all that lost money from and the cheque and the stamped bonds ? The cargo was in the ship's holds but may not be allowed to continue to remain there without payment of the freight in advance. Some shippers were ready to unload it and put theirs on instead.

NEARLY DOOMED

I reached home late that afternoon, dejected, sick hungry and very thirsty. My wife and my mother were alarmed at seeing me in that state of utter disappointment. I thought I was finished. I tried to sleep but in vain. How could I ? Anxiety was shaking me all over. I left my house and went to the office. Assadah, a Yemeni coolie stood gazing at me. I saluted him and he held out the lost envelope. I was dumb-founded. I could not even say a word of thanks. He went away hurriedly saying it was time to breakfast. I was almost unconscious.

The shock I had sustained was such a severe experience that never afterwards have I slept on a moving vehicle – a cart a car or even a train. In 1951, I traveled at night from Glasgow to Birmingham, awake all the time.

SQUARE

Later, that year, 1918, Assadah was involved in an arms theft case along with another man, Sadek Sambal. The arms were taken away from the Military Arsenal at the Isthmus. He was sentenced with Sambal to rigorous imprisonment for five years. I heard the news and went to see them in Jail. I preferred an Appeal on their behalf and they were released. They came to pay me my fees but I told Assadda "We are now square". He was grateful but left Aden shortly after that.

May 4, 1961

Men, Matters and Memories (24)

I took over the management of the firm of Clayton Ghaleb & Co. Ltd., from Louis El Khazan, who had left Aden for Cairo for medical care. I started dealing in a big way. I booked hundreds of indents for the Aden cloth merchants, who signed contracts for supplies of manufactured cotton goods from Manchester, delivery in “2/3” months subject to “force majeure”. or circumstances beyond our control, a term which I was called upon to explain in Court, before Taher Ali, Judge of the small causes court, as an expert witness, in a dispute over late delivery between Herbert Whitworth & Co., Ltd., a competitor, and one of their clients.

Some of our buyers were Parmanund Lalje, Bhagwandas Dvjee, Hirachand Sunderjee, Vanmali Virjee, Nathoo Mulji, Morarjee Indarjee, Awadth Badheeb, and many others. All were well established traders in Aden, with a good business reputation and a sound financial status. The only business upstart was Shaikh Ali Ahmed bin Rabia. He was not successful but was more fortunate on departing to Singapore.

REAL BOOM THOSE DAYS

In 6 months I was able to book orders worth £ 25,000/- There was not a single breach of contract. All the agreements and indents were executed on forms supplied by the Aden Chamber of Commerce, with one rupee adhesive stamp.

The goods in brisk demand were the MAHMOUDI (white Shirtibgs), for British Somaliland, the Grey Sheetings (Abou Haron) brand, our competitors supplied Grey Sheetings Askari brand, of American origin, called Aboujedid in Abyesinia. There were big orders for FOULARDS or headdresses for men, a speciality of the Kuwait market and various qualities of TOBES, Some with broad silken borders, for the Abyesinian markets.

In Aden, we sold large quantities of mercerized coloured cloth and Zingibari footas for ladies besides many other sorts of cloth of different patterns and designs. It was a big boom. Yemen purchased big quantities. Drafts were readily accepted upon the arrival of the goods in Aden. Ships reached safely, fairly regularly. We never had to pay any damages for late deliveries. But we were protected by the clause “force majeure”. Prices soared from month to month. The price of Kureisha cloth was Annas seven per yard. In three months it went up to Annas fifteen. One client, Awadth Badheeb made a profit of about Rs 7000/-. He made a sale in advance otherwise he might have been able to double his profit.

In July 1918. Louis El Khazen returned from Cairo, in good health, with his brother Majid El Khazen, a promising young educated Lebanese of exceptional noble manners and charming character. He was kind, polite, cheerful and unusually generous. He kept the accounts. The work was expanding. Alexander Ghaleb, a man nearly 70, noble looking and rather grim, principal partner and shareholder, came to Aden from Manchester. He expressed his appreciation of the work I had done and gave me a very good cash remuneration as a gratification.

LURE OF LAND HOLDINGS

On the 7th August 1918, I was endowed with my first son. He is Ali Muhammed Lokman, The well-known poet, politician, Legislative Council Member and Journalist today. His birth gave me an impetus to view life with more hope and greater aspirations. On the same day, I went to the office rather late, having remained awake the whole night waiting for the advent of the newcomer . Majid EL – Khzan went to E.C. Patel and purchased for Ali, a gold, solid gold, wrist watch, a most treasurable gift from a sterling worth friend.

By this time I had collected enough money to be able to buy 14 houses, in Section (F) opposite Khawas mosque, which gave me an additional income of Rs 120/- monthly. I was then a landlord of some sort.

Louis continued the work I had started and booked orders for £ 50.000/-, by November.

WAR COMES TO AN END

On the 11th November, the First World War came to an end. Many people sighed in relief and thought that the massacre of the human race had halted. Profiteers and black-marketers lamented the declaration of the armistice although the business of re-export remained very active. Goods continued to be shipped from Aden to the Red Sea Ports.

Mr. Robertson, a Eurasian was the British Consul at Hodeidah. He was short and, rather podgy, but was very intelligent and conversant with the prevailing intrigues in the Red Sea Area .

Imam Yahya had annexed Holdeidah, Lohayya and Meedi but his drive stopped there. Syed Mohamed El Idrisi was the ruler of all these ports and also of Sabia and Jazan. Imam Yahya could easily have added these last two to his kingdom and it was merely inertia that had retarded his advance northwards.

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Loud Sub titles

Many people came to Aden after the War to attend the Silent Cinema, in the Cinema House of Master Hamood and the Pictures offered by Abdul Aziz Khan, the former in Section E and the latter in Maidan, Crater. There was also a Picture House in Tawahi. I used to go often and was offered a free seat because I translated aloud the captions on the screen.

Unknown

Woollen Cloth was then almost unknown to Adenis . They put on coats made . of silk mer- cerised striped cloth krown as Baladi . Of this pattern overcoats or " Jubba " were cut .

May 11, 1961

Men Matters and Memories (25)**- Erstwhile Qat Addict -**

The British armies, in 1917, had partly recovered from their heavy losses incurred in the previous years of the War In 1915 . They lost 13000 men in one battle at Neuve Chapelle, and 60,000 picked soldiers in the second battle of Y-pres; but the British navy gradually proved its striking power and ultimately foiled the German U. Boat campaign, the aim of which was to blockade the British Isles and drive its people to starvation and ultimate surrender.

Sharif Hussain of Mecca and his four sons Feisal, Abdulla, Ali, and Zaid fought most courageously against Turkish Imperialism in Arabia . They were most disappointed upon the Balfour declaration on November 2 nd , 1917 on the eve of the conquest of Palestine by Genud Allenby .

I met Mr Howard , a very intelligent Jew of Aden . I said innocently , " Jersalem has fallen " , "NO", he replied. "It has risen, because Jewry will now rise from oblivion." But it was with the help of the Arab soldier that Palestine has been redeemed and liberated. The Arabs would rule the country since it was their Holy Land." I told him. "You may think so! but the Jews have contributed everything in their power to return to the land of promise. We have the pledge of Britain and France " he replied . I didn't realize then, that pledge would mean the ejecting of One MILLION ARABS from their homes.

There were 4000 Jews in Aden and 50,000 in Yemen and the Aden Protectorates. They were treated as DHIMMIS, in Yemen (protected by the State). They paid no taxes and went about unmolested; They were traders, perfumers, goldsmiths, silversmiths, tailors, brewers, money lenders, bakers , hotel keepers, mattress makers, weavers and wewe. They also made reed nets for windows for women to look through since women were not allowed to gaze through open windows . When I was in Sanaa , the capital of Yemen in 1918 , I spent a day in the Jewish quarters known as Qaa El – Yahood . They were very prosperous .

At the end of the War in 1918, they brought General Saeed Pacha to Aden from Lahej. The Aden Army Command presented him with his sword in recognition of his having been a noble enemy, who had adhered to the international rules of War. He passed by my office in Crater. I saluted him on his way to say the Friday prayers in the Aidarous Mosque.

The Shaikh Othman refugees in Crater were repatriated. In fact many had gone back when the British forces embedded themselves on the frontier at Rubat, three miles north of Darsaad, after the Turks had withdrawn to Al Hauta. A big proportion of the refugees remained in Crater, until they were rehabilitated. The majority of the inhabitants lost their identity documents, title deeds, register sheets. They suffered, in later years, when they were called upon to prove their nationality or the nationality of their ancestors.

After the war, many of the inhabitants of Shaikh Othman were given compensation from the War Compensation Funds.

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On a Sunday morning in 1918, I came down to my office, in my residence in Section (D). Before opening the door I observed a small package lying on the floor, picked it up and it contained 500 rupees, In Indian currency notes, with some personal notes and figures. I deposited the bundle in my drawer. Two weeks later Syed Abdul Rahman Baharoun, a friend and client, paid me a visit. I remonstrated him for his long absence and while talking about his affairs he related to me, how he had lost Rs. 500/-. I showed him the bundle and he recognized it, I gave it to him. In the afternoon, he came with a present. It was a bundle of Qat leaves. I said, I did not chew qat but he replied that it was harmless and that I might like it a lot. We sat together and during the whole afternoon I chewed the shrub and found it delicious. That evening I felt doped. It was my first experience of the leaf, but it was enough to develop a habit. In one year's time I fell ill.

No medical treatment could eradicate the persistent illness. In 1919, Dr. Own, Turkish Medical Officer who was the personal physician of King Abdul Hamid II of Turkey, came from Yemen. He had an attack of typhoid and I had him admitted in Hospital. When he recovered, he was thankful. He observed how weak and feeble I looked. I explained that it was due to my addiction to Qat. He gave me several injections in the spine. I recovered and he emphasized that qat in Yemen, caused debility to its addicts. I gave up the habit for some time, but had relapses and went on chewing it for some years before I determined to stop it for ever.

The socialist idea began to infiltrate into the interstices of our life through the labyrinths of flow of newspapers, tourists, visitors and leaflets; but illiteracy, on one hand, and the antagonism to the communist creed on the other, retarded the dissemination of the new ideology.

Arabs of South Arabia are staunch Moslems, fanatical and superstitious. They thought Bolshevism had eradicated the institution of marriage and substituted concubinage for it. It prohibited ownership of property and land, while Islam allowed it, and worse still, it disbelieved in God and fostered atheism. Sheikh Ahmed Taha El Hitari, Imam of Tawahi mosque, spoke against communism during Friday sermons.

Big changes were brought about all over the world. Aeroplanes were carrying passengers in Europe. Petrol was shipped from Abadan in big tankers, which passed by Aden. The League of Nations was established at Geneva in Switzerland. Wilson's 14 points were bitterly criticized, especially after the United States of America had agreed that England should annex Egypt as a Protectorate, and after England had allowed France to annex – under the disgrace Sykes Picot treaty, addition great harm done by the British bringing Zionism in the very heart of Arab.

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Many merchant made huge profits during the War, but that wealth did not last long. Japan started pouring out luxury and fancy goods and drowning this market with enormous stocks. Overstocking resulted in big losses. Then the drain of export goods to the Red Sea stopped, and shippers began to look for new outlets.

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In 1919 a daughter was born to my Fatima. Unfortunately, my wife was frightened by a lizard had got under her skirt, She swooned and soon afterwards premature birth to the child who lived just for a day. She was very beautiful, we all were sorry to lose her. I had lost many brothers and sisters and bitterly mourned them, but the death of my daughter pierced deep into heart. It revived my sorrow for my sister Nema.

May 18, 1961

Men, Matters and Memories (26)

Immediately upon the cessation of hostilities in Europe on the 11th of November 1918, Sultan Abdul Karim Fadhl of Lahej proceeded to his capital, in great pomp. He was received at AL-HAUTA by his people, after an absence of 4 years, with hope and fear. Many of them had co-operated with the Turks. They were allowed by General Saeed Pasha, to cultivate and utilize the lands of the Princes who took refuge in Aden, during the War.

Time had come when they would be called upon to render accurate account of all the proceeds of the lands.

During the War some of the Princes seeking refuge in Aden had agents in Lahej, many of them, and they continued to send supplies of vegetables, fruits, Kirby hay, firewood, eggs, chickens, ghee, millet, and oil on their camels into the Colony.

The time honoured Caravan did not stop. Many local contractors provided supplies to the military authorities at Shaikh Othman, Saleh Ali Own and Ali Hasson Shamakh supplied Kirby. Mohamed Saeed Ahmed was a partner of Ali H. Shamakh. My cousin Yousuf Husain Lokman, was the Government Storekeeper at the depot. The camel in this part of the Aden Protectorates was the only beast of burden, apart from donkey, for transport of the local produce.

Marauders Infest The Way

In 1919, I was approached by my friend Ali Hasson Shamakh to plead a claim on his behalf at the Court at Lahej, against a supplier of Kirby, who received a big sum of money in advance and just scampered away. We were given two horses by Prince Fadhl Abdul Majid, at Dar Saad and were joined by several travelers on camels and donkeys. The way was not yet safe. Marauders pestered unwary travelers on the way to Lahej

Just before midnight, we reached the Ozaibi country five miles from Lahej. We were intercepted by a highwayman, who shouted upon us to surrender all we had. I was on the alert. I refused to stop and called upon my companions to keep on marching. The plunderer came nearer, but I called out to him that should he obstruct our way, I should then open fire. He shrank back and called out to the villagers in the vicinity to come to his help, as if we were the intruders. No body helped him. There was some confusion. One of our companions was Shaikh Mohamed Kurd of Al-Hauta. He came near me to encourage me to defy the highwayman. I felt that without audacity we might lose the battle. It was the only characteristic that would lead to safety and it did. He went out of our way. We reached Lahej in the early hours of the morning.

My First Court Case

Before noon I was granted audience by the Sultan and I related the incident of the previous night. He summoned Shaikh Mohamed Fadhl Ozaibi, the chieftain of the tribe and made me rehearse the incident in his presence. The magnanimous Arab chief was disconcerted and felt ashamed that peaceful travelers should be waylaid by one of his tribesmen. He promised to take drastic action against the offender.

We were for two days the guests of Prince Fadhal Abdul Majid, son of Sultan Abdul Majid Fadhl, a great friend of my father Ali Ibrahim Lokman.

The case was amicably settled after one hearing in Court, where I made my first appearance as a pleader on behalf of my client Ali H. Shamakh. It was an exciting occasion. I spoke well and lamented having had no appear in Aden Courts. I began. to think that I must do something to qualify as a lawyer, but it took me 16 years to find an opportunity to do it.

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Benevolence

Prosperity and success in my work generally gave me a sense of benevolence. I began to help friends and poor relations. I lent them money; but I was never repaid; hundreds of rupees. I also advanced money to a friend for his marriage celebrations, a Laheji national. He promised to repay me from the proceed of his Makhdara (marriage gifts and donations); but he preferred to keep the money for himself. I had to file a suit in Lahej and I was granted a decree against his uncle and surety by Prince Abdul Qawi Munasser, which I never realized. All Princes of the Lahej State had jurisdiction to try cases, award decrees, and also sentence accused persons to imprisonment. Prince Fadhl offered to imprison the judgment debtor, but I declined.

May 25, 1961

Men, Matters and Memories

N/A

June 1, 1961

Men, Matters and Memories (27)

Unexpectedly, Clayton Ghaleb and Co. Ltd. went into voluntary liquidation at the end of 1919, soon after World War I. It was an Anglo-Arab concern, and I had thought it was a good combination. Here in Aden, similar partnerships should be formed and Anglo-Arab companies should be floated. The attempt has never been made and Adenis were always ignored till the Adenisation scheme was introduced and even this scheme is finding a spoke in the wheel. Clayton Ghaleb had to close down in Aden and elsewhere. I remained in the office to the last day. The manager, El-Khazen, started a business in partnership with his friend A.Sfeir, in an office next to Cowasjee in the Esplanade Road, opposite the old Court House. They allotted to me a room for an office to write petitions. In a month's time I was introduced to Major Holmes and Commander Crawford, who had seen service in the British Navy during the War, in the Red Sea area. Both came to Aden on an oil exploration mission. They were thinking of Farasan Islands, which were, till then, part of the Idrisi domain.

Chemist

Through them, I came to know Mr.Ashworth, a very highly trained chemist and druggist, who inaugurated an English Pharmacy in Tawahi. I had been reading chemistry in the previous year and had translated a pamphlet published by Eno's Fruit Salt suppliers. I was able to impress the chemist, and he offered to appoint me as sale manager of the pharmaceutical products of Allen & Hanburys in Crater. I secured a shop, now in the occupation of Air India. I was able to sell large quantities of patent medicines to merchants coming from Sanaa in Yemen , Hodeidah and Taez. Very few from the Aden Protectorates understood anything about these medicines but Amir Nasr of Dhala purchased some regularly.

Witchcraft

Almost all diseases were attributed to evil spirits in this part of the world. Patients flocked in numbers to Husain Suleimani in Crater and to. El-Ammari, another magician at Shaikh Othman. El-Ammari was an awe-inspiring man. In cases of insanity, he undertook to oust the djinn from the head of the patient and then give him a talisman to tie on the right hand for protection. Many of the chiefs and princes of Aden Protectorates sought procreative medicines and vitality drugs, blood purifiers and aperients. Chemist Ashworth trained me in dispensing medicines and I very soon found myself confronted with endless questions from the sick. The prevalent diseases then were malaria, venereal diseases, mumps, tubercular glands, cough and skin diseases.

I had no telephone but I sent a daily report to Ashworth by post. He came one a week to answer questions and give instructions. I had my stock replenished weekly.

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Amin Rehani, the American Arab author, came to Aden in 1920. I spoke to him. I thought he was vain and pedantic. He proceeded to Sanaa to meet Imam Yahya. His tour of Yemen was an enterprise. Few

outsiders had gone through the Arabian Felix. On his return he published his famous book “THE KINGS OF ARABIA.”

On July 15, 1920. I had my third child ABDUL RAHIM . Today he is the principal of Aden College. Like his brother Ali he is a graduate B.A. Fuad University Cairo, B.T., American University Cairo, and he holds a Teachers diploma from Exeter University in U.K. He is also an M.B.E.

Between 1917 and 1919, I had three brothers born. One was Khaled, the manager of Cold Store today, Mahmoud a successful Barrister-at-Law and Hamza, a merchant, a teacher, a careful historian and a Muncipal Councillor.

A Strict Judge

In 1920, Aden had three Judges-with-Magistrates. Mr. Taher Ali and Major Tate, as chief Magistrate and Mr . Mohamed Yasin khan . The latter was very strict. He passed sentences of flogging against criminals. He came from Tanganyika where the German magistrates used to flog offenders with a rhinoceros whip. He was dissatisfied with a translation of a document in Arabic , and rejected it. Mohamed Surman, the head interpreter, suggested that the document should be sent to me to translate it. It was accepted. Subsequently Major Tate prescribes an examination to be held in Court, for the petition-writers and then a Sanad should be given to every successful candidate. I was the only applicant and my papers were handed over to the Deputy Inspector of education in Aden, for examination. He saw the papers and sent for me to join a course of study for the Senior Cambridge . TWENTY-ONE young clerks and teachers joined the classes but in six months this number boiled down to eight and in December 1921 , Abdul Shakoor Faquir Mohamed and I only passed. I was first. I passed with seven credits and in French.

June 8, 1961

Men, Matters and Memories (28)

Aden Had A Railway 1919-1930 WE WERE TRAIN TRAVELLERS

Immediately after the defeat of Turkey in the First World War, Lahej was restored to its legitimate Sultan Abdul Karim Fadhl, who was knighted by H M. The king. The Government of Aden consented to the importation of a narrow gauge railway of the type used in khatiawar in India.

From 1919 onwards, up to 1930, the Aden Railway transported from Lahej, charcoal, fruit, and goods. Big quantities of coffee, ghee, potatoes, garlic and skins from Yemen reached Aden via Lahej. The population of Aden was growing fast. It was nearly 45,000 in 1920. More water was needed, and plenty of it was brought from Lahej by this means of transport for the army stationed at Shaikh Othman. The army maintained a mobile force of Cavalry and a Camel Corps. The Shaikh Othman police had also a mounted police force called the Sawar.

The Aden Railway helped immensely to keep Aden supplied with fodder for the animals and fruit and vegetables. The terminus was at Khodad, a little distance from Husaini, from which water was carried to Aden. Khodad is about a mile from the Hussaini gardens.

Tramcar With Eight Wagons

There were two main stations in Aden. One at Maalla, facing the beach, or “hard” as it used to be called, since reclaimed, the other was at Shaikh Othman, where Bilqis College is at present being built. The rails were placed on sleepers and on them ran a tramcar for passengers between Maalla and Shaikh Othman via khormaksar. There was one train for passengers with 8 wagons and a goods train.

During the fair of Syed Omer bin Ali of Waht, thousands of people from the Colony traveled by the Railway to Saber to see the fair, for blessings and romance. The train halted at Saber on this occasion. A return ticket cost Rs. 1/2 .

Mr. White (I am writing from memory), was the chief officer in charge of the system. Many Aden boys were employed including Abdul Karim Dhorani as assistant Station Master, Murshed a signaller. Maharsingh, a garage superintendent, Shatram Baboo, store-keeper, and three engine drivers; Mohamed Saad, Mahmoud Misri and Suleiman, a Moslem Indian. Mahmoud Misri was imported from Khartoum. Another, local engine driver was Saeed Ali. Jalaluddin and Khairuddin were two Indian fitters. Holmes and De Souza were top officers. Mohamed Saeed Ahmed was station master at Shaikh Othman and later at Lahej . Many Lahej nationals secured employment . One of them was Tombushi.

Imam Yahya

Imam Yahya became the supreme ruler of Yemen after the Turks had evacuated the country for good. In the treaty of Versailles Yemen was reserved as a British sphere of influence, and for this and other reasons, a Striking force was maintained in Aden. The Imam Yahya had started action to annex the ADEN PROTECTORATES, on the plea that they formed an integral part of his realm. In the years following the 1918 armistice, he had invaded and occupied Dhala, Nawa, Rubaiatain, Cuban near the Upper Yafila frontier and encroached upon the Audhali country . Some fighting took place in Beihan, whereupon Sharif Ahmed am Muhsen of Beihan, father of Sharif Husain, came to Aden to seek British assistance. He was a friend of my father.

Hodeidah, meanwhile, had been handled over to the Idrisis by the British and Imam Yahya commanded Syed Mohamed Shami to oust this dynasty from the shores of the Arabia Felix ; and he was successful . Mr. Richardson was British Consul in Hodeidah.

Br. Delegation Interned

The Aden Government, subsequently, dispatched a delegation under the leadership of Lt. Colonel H.F. Jacob, the author of “Kings of Arabia” to meet Imam Yahya, and prevail upon him to secede his grip on parts of the Western Aden Protectorate, and recognize British protection; but the Imam was adamant in his claim and when Colonel Jacob reached AL QUHRAH Country, around Bajil. 60 miles from Hodeidah, he was detained by the tribes, with his companions, including Captain Reilly. They remained in virtual imprisonment for some months and then had to return to Aden after prolonged negotiations with the Government of Yemen. I was told by Lt.Col. Jacob himself that he was sorry he could not meet Imam Yahya, whom he considered to be the most interesting Arab chief in the Arab World. He was his hero as much as King Abdullah of Jordan was, some years later, the hero of Glubb Pacha. The Quh’as treated the delegation well, and Col. Jacob read the Quran of Arabic and they were amazed by his good accent.

The Yemeni armies marched upon the Dhala State and other smaller states near the frontier and would not budge an inch. The Zaidi system of tax collection was introduced and the people found it hard to cope with the demands of the tax-collector.

The Commander in Chief, ADEN, after many requests to vacate the Protectorates, ordered the RAF to bomb several towns of Southern Yemen – Taez, Mawia, Qataaba, and the Yemeni Headquarters in Dhala. Sir Gilbert Clayton had made little success in achieving a settlement, but in 1927, Sir Sultan Abdul Karim Fadhl, of Lahej.Syed Alawi bin Hasson Aljifri intervened in the dispute. They went to Taez and met the Governor. Deputy of the Imam. It was agreed then that the Yemeni armies would vacate the Western Aden Protectorates. That agreement paved the way for the 1934 Status Quo treaty.

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Valuable Services

The Railway rendered very valuable service to this part of the world. It was even thought that it would be extended to reach the Yemen frontier. It was a profitable venture, but thefts all round, and on a large scale, of stores, stocks, even sleepers, used for cabinet making by carpenters, and other railway accessories, provisions and embezzlement brought about insolvency.

The project was abandoned and the idea was never revived or entertained.

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In 1940 The Italians broadcast that they had destroyed Aden's railway in an air-raid. Little did they know that the railway had been dismantled ten years before.

June 15, 1961

Men, Matters and Memories (29)**- The Greatest Teacher Aden Ever had – my interests widen with a trip to India –**

Mr. Ata Hussain B.A.B.T. deputy education officer in Aden from 1921 / 1929 was the first sincere and enthusiastic educationist to formulate an educational system for Aden to prepare boys for higher studies.

He was a man of exceptional literary ability and during his tenure of service he prepared many intelligent boys for the Cambridge Examinations, including Syed Mohammed Abdo Ghanem, C.B.E. now Director of Education. He had himself, passed, in Aden, the L.L.B. (London) and the D.Litt (Columbia). His general culture and his knowledge of sociology, psychology and literary criticism was broad and vast. His only drawback, and rather primitive country he would not accept anything less than perfect. He, himself, was above criticism. He was a perfect symbol of the reflective man, of deep insight. He hated his enemies and laughed in their adversities and parted with his best friends, for the slightest error. He was far ahead of his contemporaries.

Constant companions

He was my teacher, friend and guide. For 8 years I was his constant companion. Day in and day out we were together. I read 12 plays, in detail, of Shakespeare for the High-Certificate of Cambridge besides Shelly, Milton, Coleridge, Wordsworth Tennyson, O,Neil, Fowler and many others .

I obtained the teachers, Diploma and sat for the London University Examination in Oriental Languages (Arabic). He instilled in me courage in politics, love of freedom and it was in those years that I began to feel how backward Aden was. Today, I feel that I owe my success in life to four men, who helped me and cared for me. One of them was Ata Hussain. I have already said, how much I owe to my father.

Ata Hussain worked like a bee and produced results sweeter than honey.

A number of highly educated inspectors of education came to Aden before him, Qadiri and Qassimi but did nothing of a lasting effect.

I joined the Gujrati School after the English Pharmacy had closed down. It was subsidized by Sir Hormusji, a philanthropist of Aden. There were many India merchants in Aden who greet me as their teacher: S.M. Patel and his brother, Ghandi Ghurder, Manordas and many others.

On the 22nd January 1922 I had my fourth child Munira the wife of Syed Mohamed Abdo Ghanem C.Director of Education and mother of six bright children One is Qais, a student of medicine in Edinburgh, Shihab a student of Engineering in Aberdeen and Azza the first Adeni girl to go to the University of St. Andrews. Scotland.

Visit to India

In 1923, my father decided that I should go on a tour of India and bring back from Surat my paternal aunt, who had grown infirm. I accompanied my two brothers Saleh and Abdul Majid. It was the longest voyage I had undertaken till then, on board. S. Victoria. We reached Bombay in 4 days and were received at the Ballard Pier by my uncle (maternal), Shaikh Nizamuddin, Head clerk of the Post master General's Office, Bombay (Pension Branch). It was our first meeting and he was very hospitable. We all lived in his nice house in Bandra, in the suburbs of the great city. Next morning I left my brothers with their granny (my uncle's wife,) and went with a neighbour Mr. Lopez, to see the metropolis. We started at dawn and walked through all the towns of Mahim, Matunga, Parel, Byculla and the through Mohammed Ally Road, Hornby road, Colaba, to the very end of it.

Widening my outlook

We halted at noon. It was a tiring journey but was very interesting seeing this fascinating city. In the 7 days I showed my brothers the Zoo, which I saw for the first time, and the Museums, the University, many of the high schools, the huge docks the grand theatres the fine picture houses, the rich libraries including the Asiatic Society Library, which was recommended by Ata Hussain, the big shops, the Jivraj Cotton Mill, to which I was given a letter of recommendation from Joomabhov Laljee in Aden, the Virar Lake, which supplies the city with potable water, the Towers of Silence, the J.J. Hospital and many other places of interest.

It was an amazing experience. Travel is always a means of improving a man's education and general culture, provided he has a background of knowledge, or what psychologists call apperception masses. Later in life, I found some Yemenis in South Shields in England who had spent decades in that locality without knowing that there were amusements available at the other end of the town. They lived in Cuthbert Street, and visited the docks for work.

We traveled from Bombay by the Express Train to Surat, Devlali and Nagpur where I found my relations. They are originally from Hamdan in Yemen. My aunt related to me how my ancestors had disseminated the Ismaili School of thought in Central India, principally in Ujjain. My great grandfather had a gunpowder factory in Mhow, central India and supplied ammunition to the Peshwas. When the British armies invaded Central India, he had to close down. In later years (1936), I was in Aligarh University, where I delivered lectures in the UNION HALL. I got this fact corroborated by one of the historians, who delivered a lecture on the manufacture and history of the development of arms in India.

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A Shrewd Critic

As an educationist he was no junior to men like Welpton and Dewey . Major Murphy once showed him a book on education and told him it could be a useful guide. Ata Hussain read it overnight, and wrote a criticism of the book, next day, in 21 pages. When Major Murphy read those literary comments he was amazed.

June 22, 1961

Men, Matters and Memories (30)

Preach Islam To Untouchables In India

Meeting Dr. Ambedakar

From Surat, the sleeping on the River Tapti, my brothers and I left by train to Baroda the Capital of the Sarwar. Here we visited the Red Palace, with its old furniture, the White House with its furniture ,crystal glass, its elephants, golden cannons, silver and wooden carts, wonderful orchards with its unusual splendour.

On the night of our arrival, I asked the innkeeper to give us milk with the breakfast. He gave us half a bucketful for about a shilling. Every thing was cheap; but the people generally very poor.

On the day of our arrival, a poor shoemaker received Rs . 10,000/- in a lottery. I passed near his shop, to see a lad mourning his sudden death. He left a widow and it was fortunate.

Suttee was by then forbidden by English Government in India Instead she . interited the money or she could have had to be burnt with him in a crema.

The Rajah Went Horseracing

We reached Junagadh two days later after spending a day at Ahmedabad, I purchased saddles for my friend Prince Fadhl Ahmed of Lahej, and ordered them to be despatched ahead of me to Aden . I, at Ahmedabad intended to pay a visit to Mahatma Ghandi, who was then in but I was informed that had been transferred to another jail in Poona.

In Junagadh I was obtained by my maternal,uncle Sheikh Ghazlooddin Mohamed Yousoof, Post-Master General of the Junagadh State. He was clever in the Qadiani principles and I had to argue wih him at great length. He was adamant about his beliefs, a religious and a knowledgable man.

Junagadh was under the drainty of Nawab Mohabbat Khan whom my uncle took me to see. He was living in the lap of luxury while the people suffered poverty and ignorance. India then divided into English India”, ruled by English Governors in the rich provinces, and the Indian Protectorates, under sway and inefficient administration of more than two chiefs, rajas, maharajas and nawabs. The Raja of Sarwar, for instance, spent his time in England,taking part in horse races, leaving the State at the hands most of his lieutenants. I visited many districts in Khandesh and was amazed at the vast wealth of cotton fields although a million rupees worth of cotton stocks had been burned to the ground as a result of sheer negligence, while the people were groaning and suffering from starvation.

In Jungadh I met many of the Indian merchants who had business connections in Aden, Parmanund Laljee and Kanjee Laljee. The Nawab of this State had collected about forty lions with their cubs from his Province, abounding in wild animals lions, tigers and huge reptiles.

Crossing swords with Dr. Ambedaker

It is arid and almost rainless with many big reservoirs for preserving rain water from season to season. One evening, I climbed to the top of the Gilnar Gates to watch a lion which was prowling near by without any signs of restraint.

There were several gates to the city. One is known as Talao Gate, in the vicinity of which was a lake, usually dry except after rains. Tobacco is grown extensively. Famine is not infrequent and the people lived in poverty and squalor.

India was divided into three principle social classes the Brahmans or priestly caste the Vaisyas or agricultural caste and the Sudra.

The members of the first three castes are called twice born or regenerate. The second birth or regeneration consisting in the study of the Vedas which is denied to Sudras. The Sudras are the depressed classes, the untouchables, the 70,000,000 Harijans who were deprived of almost all human rights. The British Government in 300 years could do nothing to alleviate their distress and left them literally in the dust. But Ghandi did a lot and in 1936 I found these Harijans in much better circumstances, after the Great Mahatma had sponsored their cause.

One morning I was passing through Kandewadi on my way to Girgaum street. A beautiful Lass was coming from the opposite direction. She was neatly dressed and with her right hand raised above her head. she declared in a loud voice " Main Achut " Her path and she had ample space to jog on. I became inquisitive and I learnt that she was a Harijan. Any person of the higher classes who touches her must needs subsequently wash his body in a sacred river to purify it. He was "contaminated" even if her shadow should be cast on him.

The Harijans are believed to have been the original settlers of India. The invaders drove, them to the South but failed to exterminate them. Their safety was due to their numbers, endless numbers.

I had met Dr. Ambedakar , one of India's great minds and souls. who was himself an untouchable. A social and political thinker, he was held in high esteem and became lecturer of the Law College in 1936. I attended some of his lectures in later years. He received me in his gorgeous house in Dadar. He was noble looking with smiling large eyes in a big face, sitting among his law books in his well furnished apartment. He had one of the finest law libraries, the envy of every ambitious lawyer. I told him that the Harijans might be doing a wise thing to embrace Islam. He listened patiently. But he did not reply. I said that would bring them on an equal footing with the Hindus. Then he spoke very sedately. He said the Harijans were themselves staunch adherents of Hinduism, and would not change their religion en masse. Few may change and have changed. It is left to time, he said. He himself was disillusioned and later adopted Buddhism.

He asked me if this class system was known in Arabia. I said that it was. We have the sweeper class, the slaves, the Hajris and Mawalidas, I told him, originally these people came from Africa-a band of mighty

conquerors. The Abyssinians had occupied Yemen but were subdued by the Persian Azadian army before the advent of Islam. Both Persians and Abyssinians were routed by the Arabs, who regained their supremacy in Yemen. They became serfs or menial servants and among themselves intermarried and remained nearly a segregated community at the bottom, the sweeper class

But after adopting Islam, they were allowed to perform their religious rites in the mosque, and enjoyed the benefits of state protection Even intermarriage is allowed if an Arab should choose to marry one of their girls... As to the Hajris, my conviction was that they trekked from Yemen into Hajr, in Hadhramount, where they populated this very malarial province then uninhabited. They multiplied. For centuries the slaves were brought by traders until slavery was abolished. Playfair, a British historian, also thinks that the sweeper class is a blend of these hybrid races. They work in the fields, they clean coffee, they are grooms, drummers, musicians, they make baskets but they are not untouchables. The higher class Arab does not eat from the same plate as a sweeper, but he does share food with the others, the slaves, the Hajris and the Mawalidas who are a mixed race of slaves and free Arabs. Some of the women of these classes are very pretty and attractive, I said. The males are preponderantly dark. Many princes in Arabia are the sons of slave girls.

From Junagadh I traveled Northwards till I reached Simla.

Contrasts

People in India, till 1923, were either very poor or very rich with no middle class. The poor were mishandled, underpaid, exploited and kicked about. I saw a man very badly treated in the Bombay custom house. I was told that this poor porter was a descendant of one of the Great Moghul Emperors of India. Many families in the Villages lived on Rs. 3/- per week. They eat rice and forest roots.

June 29, 1961

Men, Matters and Memories (31)

Disguised As A Hindu I Enter THE TEMPLE OF CROCODILES

One fine April morning in 1923, I left Junagadh, on my way to Northern India. The sun shone brightly and flowers blossomed everywhere.

I traveled on the narrow gauge railway to Mehsana and from there to Palanpur. The fragrance of roses, narcissus and full (white rose) filled the air with a most refreshing aroma for miles on end.

Next day, I stopped at Ajmir, the holy city of Rajputana. Here, I visited the Mausoleum of Khawja Moinuddin Awlia. It was a big tomb made of silver and gold with a gold box containing the original copy of the Quran. It belonged to the 3rd Caliph, Othman bin Affan, during his regime, some years after the death of the Prophet.

The Mosque with domes of gold

Outside the golden room stand two huge utensils sufficient to cook 5 bags and 2 bags respectively of rice, for visitors to the Saint, during his annual Urs, (fair). Urs in Arabic means marriage ceremony. Thousands of visitors attend this Urs from all parts of India. In the mosque, with its three gold domes sit at least 150 beggars living on the charity of visitors. Many of them were very sick, and some lepers .

Next day I went by cab to Pushkar Raj with Hindu family. I had to disguise myself in Hindu attire, to be able to enter the Temple on the lake, which was full of crocodiles, thousands of them.

Pushkar Raj was hundreds of temples on the banks of the huge lake to which numberless pilgrims flock. In those remote years, they used to go over hill and dale on foot or by cab to wash in the sacred water, with the crocodiles hovering round them, receiving round nuts, gram, peanuts and sweets thrown to them by the pilgrims.

We had to change the horse of the cab enroute. I climbed a little rock seeking some water from a hermitage. The Sadhu or hermit pushed a little pipe for me, to receive the water in my hands. I tried to adjust the pipe, when the Sadhu pulled it in and said that I had it in and said that I had contaminated it, I was scared. He peeped through an aperture and said "You are a Moslem, in disguise," I replied : " since you knew this why didn't you foretell that I would touch your pipe?" and went away. He called me back and poured water on my hands and I drank. I thanked him.

Board of Human chessmen

From there I traveled to Delhi. I was fascinated with New Delhi. It is a circular city, all white just like the houses of Bath in England, I visited Kutab Minar, the Jantar Mantar, the ruined city of Fatehpure Sikri, and the “Purana Qila”, from which Nadir Shah had stolen the Peacock throne of the Moghul Emperors, valued then at £6,000,000. The tiles of Diwani Khas were made of rubies and emeralds and on the walls was written in gold, “If there be a paradise on this earth, it is here and no where else . ” Everything was charming the architecture, the painting and the chessboard on the huge courtyards on which living beings and animals represented the chessmen.

Relics of Moslem culture

I visited Agra subsequently, and saw the majestic Taj Mahal, the Tomb of Shah Jehan, the son of Akbar and his wife Mumtaz Mahal. I stood aghast as I looked at the sculpture and engraving in marble. I mourned the decline of that great culture of the Moslem Emperors.

I reached Simla. I found a party planning to go up the Himalayas and offered to join in the adventure; but I was told that it was not possible to climb without long training. It was the greatest achievement of Lord Curzon, who had spent a huge sum of money to cut 103 tunnels for the Kalka-Simla Railway. It took me 12 hours to reach the seat of the viceroy of India. I was allured by the charms of the Himalayas in spring-time. Flowers, peacocks, fruits, lovely women with red cheeks, plump and handsome, in the villages scattered all along the mountain.

Five days in the Himalayas

I spent five days in a bracing cold climate such as I had never before experienced. I paid Rs. 5/- daily for Islam Hotel accommodation with central heating.

Food was excellent. I met a young lady teacher, who was on holiday and knew the place. She showed me round. The city is built in terraces and the top most is flat and overlooks the running streams and waterfalls below. From there I saw the snow, covering the cranium of the earth like a white cap, and below the Sutlej moved down from the mountains to the Indo-Gangeatic plains, like a streak of silver.

July 6, 1961

Men, Matters and Memories (32)

On my return journey from Simla, Southwards, I visited the gorgeous mausoleum of Khawaja Kamaluddin, the patron of Northern India. In a subterranean lake, under the tomb, visitors go down with empty bottles to fill them with the sacred water, for their sick relatives in far off countries. I met a Moslem peer, a living Saint with some of his disciples, standing by the epitaph, reading the Quran, dedicated to the buried Saint. The peer, Azziz, spoke Arabic fluently. I introduced my self and he told me afterwards that he was a Mujtahid, an independent interpreter of the Shariah Law. He was neither a Sunni nor a Shia.

The Miracle of Knowledge

From Delhi, we purchased a basket of sweet, seedless mangoes. I ate so many of them that I suffered of bacillary dysentery. The peer gave me some ayurvedic pills, and the pain subsided. He was about 48 and looked dignified in his snow-white shirt and big turban. I said "May I ask, how were you recognized a Peer?" He smiled as he was the cheerful type of man; and holding his long rosary, he said very unceremoniously "All good Moslems are Saints, but there are those who know and those who know not." I am called a Saint because of my knowledge of Law and the general ignorance of those around me. "Have you performed any miracle". I asked rather hesitatingly. He smiled again and asked "what was the greatest miracle of Mohammed ? " I replied "The Quran". He then retorted "It was knowledge", while all those around him were "illiterate. "What is your objective in life ? " " To propagate Islam", he replied.

At Bhopal, he was received with much respect and all his companions were generous of funds, because I purchased a few souvenirs from Agra, made of marble miniature Taj Mahals and paper weights. I had to sell my jacket and buy a railway ticket.

Slum Life Of Villages

After having visited the monumental tomb of Akbar the Great Moghul Emperor, Itimad-ud-Dawlah and the Taj-Mahal in Agra, I found nothing attractive in Bhopal, with the exception of the Grand Lake and the huge Palace of the Begum. The Moslems of Northern India live in the very happy reminiscences and dreamy recollections of the achievements of the Moghul Emperors, just as the French people live in the historical past of the Bourbons.

In Central India I visited Hoshangabad, the town of cheap fruit, Kajgaon and Itarsi, in East Khandes, one of the richest rural districts in the cotton plantation areas. From Itarsi, I hired a bullock cart to go to Parola, a village in the very heart of the Indian continent. I traveled about 22 miles in a fascinating country, a wide expanse of land, far off horizons and fertile fields. The rains had not yet come. There was little greenery. Many villages were poor, primitive, under developed and dirty. It was a slum life with very few decent habitations.

I reached Parola in the afternoon, and was received by my uncle Doctor Shaikh Zahiruddin. He was the only doctor in charge of the district. He lived in a tidy villa with his family. His eldest son who was then just seven, is today the Chief Officer of the State Bank of Pakistan. His name is Qamaruddin Zahiruddin Shaikh. He showed me his young pretty daughter, then 14. He said to me “I had intended to marry you to her”. I gave her golden headdress as a present from my mother and wished her good luck. She died some years later in confinement, and left two children.

I picked up my two brothers from Junagadh and departed for Bombay. The chain of well organized railway communications facilitated my long travels in miles within a short space of time.

Arab Underworld In Bombay

I met many of the big and wealthy Arab merchants in Bombay, who were importing pearls from the Persian Gulf : Mohamed Ali Zainul Reza El Bassam and Sudairawi . Many adventurers lived in Bellasis road, in an underworld of their own, gambling, horse racing and importing horses from Arabia, for sale in Bombay. They had some very beautiful noble horses. They were a dangerous lot, but I was taken to their haunts, by a man who knew them.

* * * * *

Rich merchants Of Aden

Illness and death come to all of us. Which of you has not lost a dear parent or a beloved child? You can endow in perpetuity a cot or a woman’s bed in the renovated Kdith Falconer Hospital for £500 or £1000 in the name of that one whom you have lost and the name of that loved one will be blessed by countless poor sick .

July 13, 1961

Men, Matters and Memories (33)

In 1918 Flue Epidemic Swept 6000 Inhabitants

Bombay , certainly, Is a great metropolis. It is the gateway to India. Ballard Pier, Hornby Road, Colaba, Sir Firoz Shah Mehta Street, and Chaupati district are lovely places. The Marine Drive has recently been added. In 1923 the Corniche was under construction and people gossiped about the embezzlement made in that huge project. After spending a week in the city, I took my brothers to Poona to pay our regards to Mahboobbi, my mother's aunt who was living in Chuna Patti on the Sangam River. She had a fine tenement and garden, where she lived with her son Jamaluddin, who was the House Keeper of the College of Agriculture in the city.

I had also a power of attorney from my friend Ali Hasson Shamak, contractor, to claim on his behalf the settlement of outstanding bills for supplies made by him to the military authorities in Aden.

But the principal objective of my visit to Poona was to meet Mahatma Ghandhi in Yeroda Jail, I knew Dr. Chabukeswar from Aden. He was then in charge of the goal. I contacted him from the Military Accounts Office in the city, by telephone. He recognized my voice and promised to arrange for me to enter the goal and pay my respects to the great leader of Indian freedom but it was a question of time and I could not wait for long.

Into The Harem

On my way back to Bombay, at night, I got down from the train to bring some water from the tap on the Station, but the Railway suddenly moved and I had to abandon the pitcher and run after it. The Station Master whistled for me to stop but I could not leave my younger brothers without any one to look after them. I jumped on the footboard and opened the door of a wagon just to find that it was reserved for women, who were alarmed, thinking I was a thug or a dacoit. The country was infested with them. I slammed the door and went into the next wagon, where many Indian soldiers were fast asleep. They were awakened and one of them caught me hard by the arm and questioned my identity. He was convinced, by my foreign accent that I was not a thug. I remained scatted on the ground to the next station which we reached after 30 minutes.

Called Home

My uncle Shaikh Nizamuddin in Bombay offered me free accommodation if I agreed to stay in India and study Law. He said I could work, part time, in teaching Arabic in the Anjuman Islam High School. He had just one son Shaikh Burhanuddin at present, the Chief Inspector of the Wireless Branch, General Post Office, Karachi. I very nearly agreed but an urgent letter came from Aden that my wife was seriously ill, when I left her, three months before she was in the best apparels of health. The last time she was sick seriously was in 1918, during the epidemic of Asian Flu. Aden lost 6000 of her inhabitants in that horrible epidemic. I had a temperature of 105 deg, and she had 106 deg. We survived it and so also all the family. The only precautionary measures suggested then was disinfection with naphthalene. When I received the unwelcome tidings of my wife's sickness, I had to pack up for Aden.

Before my final departure, I paid visits to Mr. Horney man of the Bombay Sentinel and to Syed Berelwi, the Editor-in-Chief of the Bombay Chronicle. I arranged that I would be their Aden correspondent I told them that, in Delhi, I had an interview with Mr. Sharma, the minister of Education. I had told him that Aden demanded a rejuvenation of its educational system. He was interested but referred me to the Aden Government. He said it was for them to make out a plan. I promised to do so.

Late in 1923 I was in Aden. My wife was really ill. I showed her to Lt. Colonel Sir Baker, a very capable doctor. He examined her carefully and said that she was ill, and that it was only with the greatest medical care that she would be able to live. She did live and she gave birth to Ibrahim, Hamed and Mustapha. Ibrahim is Acting deputy Director of Education, Hamed is the Publication Officer, B.P. Refinery but Mustapha died immediately after his mother died in 1928. She had remained on sick bed for a long time. I tried to take her to India for treatment and a change, but she would not leave Aden or travel by sea. She swooned once on the Post Office Pier on seeing the sea below through chinks in the planks covering the floor of the pier, before its reclamation.

July 20, 1961

Men, Matters and Memories (34)

Aden Cinderella Of the Empire “Is this a scrap of paper?”

After my return from India I realized that Aden was very backward, and I began to look at it with great compassion. I felt that Aden was the Cinderella of the British Empire (I wrote an article in the Bombay Sentinel under this headline) and that unless drastic improvements were introduced in our educational system there was little hope for advancement. My travels in India gave me a much wider outlook. I had met people in power, governing and administering, in responsible positions. I visited important industrial centers, factories and mills. I met some very rich people, and huge masses of poor and ignorant folks. I found some very highly educated persons, and spoke to them about Aden, including the Editor-in-Chief of the TIMES, and for the first time I viewed big crowds moving in organized processions clamoring for HOME RULE, as the only salvation from imperialism and foreign domination. They boycotted British manufactured goods, wore Khadder (native grey sheetings) and picketed grogshops. They gleefully suffered punishment and rigorous imprisonment and all embraced Gandhi's lofty principles of non-violence, by declaring Hartals (strikes), and demanding freedom.

In A New World

I found myself in a new world I was inspired with new ideas of patriotism and a nationalistic spirit. for many years afterwards I eulogized the aims of the Indian Congress.

In 1924, my tenure of service in the Gujarathi School ended and I published a 60 page pamphlet in English, entitled “IS THIS A SCRAP OF PAPER”, between Government ideals and educational realities in Aden, printed by the TIMES Press in Bombay.

The Foreword was written by “Junius”. a man of great knowledge. He said,
“But a few words are needed to submit this brochure for the consideration of the Government and general public. I invite all to look at this picture and to mark the difference The era of transition has ended and the era of test has begun”.

The era of test indeed !

Words and Deeds

The Book is divided into two parts: Picture I : WORDS, and Picture II : DEEDS .

In part I, the Indian Educational policy was explained. Aden was then governed from Bombay as a district of the Bombay Presidency. The Court of Directors in India in a memorable despatch had definitely accepted the systematic promotion of general education as one of the duties of the State : the diffusion of Arts, science, philosophy and literature of Europe, and in short European knowledge.

Anti Change

But the British rulers left the traditional modes of instruction undisturbed, although the systematic promotion of general upon to be :

- a. Formation of a department of Public Instruction.
- b. Establishment of Universities
- c. Teachers Training Schools
- d. Increasing the number of colleges and maintaining those in existence.
- e. Augmenting the number of Vernacular Schools.
- f. Giving grants-in-aid to national schools and private institutions.

The Pamphlet discussed what was said of the functions of local authorities, responsible for the education of the people, Primary and Secondary Schools, ethics of education, female education and the peculiar difficulties arising from the social customs of the Moslems (this is a bygone era), Technical and University education, Industrial Schools. Commercial and agricultural education, Inspection, Administration, School Hygiene, and Educational Services.

The Pamphlet gave an elaborate description of the ideals of Government to disseminate knowledge and spread education in British India and its dependency ADEN.

The King's Speech

One page 23 a synopsis of the speech of His Majesty KING GEORGE V, delivered at the Calcutta University in 1912 was reproduced. In it he said :

“It is my wish that there may be spread over the land networks of Schools and Colleges from which will go forth loyal and manly and useful citizens, able to hold their own in industries and all the vocations in life.”

This was the wish of His Majesty the King.

Today, in Aden, we steadfastly adhere to the fulfillment of this Royal Wish, here and in the Aden Protectorates.

The Pamphlet described at length the cardinal principles of the Educational Policy, then in vogue in British India. These were :

1. The steady raising of the standard of existing institutions by providing better trained and better paid teachers.
2. Manual training, gardening outdoor observation, practical teaching of geography , school excursions , organized tours.

3. Higher Studies and research facilities, for higher work without having to go abroad.

July 27, 1961

Men, Matters and Memories (35)

“BLACKLISTED FROM GOVERNMENT SERVICE I BECOME A TRADER ONCE AGAIN”

According to the Census of March 1921, Aden, covering an area of 80 square miles, including Perim, had a population of 56,500. This figure was 10,335 more than that of a decade before. Of the total population, 10,484 were literate. The bulk of the illiterates was composed of females. There were 38 primary schools catering for 2,219 pupils, out of 4,608 children of school going age. Thus 50 % of the local children remained in utter illiteracy.

Secondary Education

There were in Aden, in 1921, 10 recognized and one unrecognized secondary schools, and in these institutions, there were just 268 boys, and 158 girls; the girls were in the Convent Schools.

No candidate till then had been sent up for the Matriculation Examination of any University, in 84 years, and it was sheer waste of Public funds to spend on and maintain 11 secondary schools, for the education of 268 boys and 158 girls. There was not a single school for Moslem girls; but the Aden Government built the Saila School at Rs. 130,000/- considered a fortune in those days, destitute, however, of competent teachers and upto-date equipment.

Ata Hussain, Deputy Educational Inspector, taught two persons, who passed the Senior Cambridge Examination and four who passed the University of Leeds Teachers Certificate Examination in Paedagogics . I was one of them in both examinations.

This useful work was demanded to be put on a permanent footing, but it was not.

Wider strides have since been achieved in the field of Education in Aden. There is room for much to be done.

In 1921 / 1922, the Aden Port Trust contributed Rs. 5,000/- and the Aden Settlement Rs 10,000/- towards recurrent expenses, and an estimate was placed for the consideration of Government, a sum of Rs. 20,000/- in monthly salaries to teachers, an efficiency bar was prescribed for promotions.

Rupees Two Per Head

Eleven primary school's were proposed, five industrial schools and five private institutions. A sum of Rs. 22,452 paid on grants-in-aid was to be saved by closing down 11 superfluous private schools.

The estimates for 1924 / 1925, as recommended , came to Rs. 180,000 or Rs. 2/- per head as compared with £. 115 in England per head per annum.

Headmaster Government School

In the middle of 1924, I was offered the post of Headmaster of the Government Secondary School. Soon afterwards Mr. Lory, director of Public Instruction, Poona was sent to Aden to examine educational possibilities in this Colony.

He was on his way to England on leave. He remained for ten days. I accompanied him to the Urdu School in Crater. He visited several other schools and attended the class which I managed. It was the Sixth Standard Junior Cambridge Class.

I remained the Headmaster for nearly five years and when I had hope to be made permanent, Aden Government chose to import an Indian Headmaster from the Punjab, and demoted me to a Senior Assistant Teacher. As a protest I resigned. Ata Hussain left Aden. This new headmaster was promoted to Deputy Educational Inspector and another Indian was imported to become Headmaster.

I was blacklisted from Government service and although I attempted to secure the post of the Court Registrar and the Secretary of the Aden Settlement, I was told that “there was no vacancy”. I remembered my father’s warning that I shall never be able to remain in Government service.

I became a trader once again groceries imports re-exports, substantial profits. Unfortunately, disasters came unexpectedly. I lost my wife, but remarried from Lahej, because my friend Prince Fadhl bin Ahmed insisted that I should do so to forget my sorrows. He paid the dowry and all the marriage expenses. I had two more children. One is Fadhl, who has now completed the Higher National Certificate in Mechanical Engineering in Carrington . The other is his sister Khadija .

On the 18th. October 1930, my brother Abdul Mannan the manager of my business, was electrocuted in the shop, in the main bazaar. I was sick at home. The shop was looted by intruders and I lost all my books of account and substantial sum in cash. The business collapsed.

August 3, 1961

Men, Matters and Memories (36)**Aden Dhala Link Forecast In 1924****First Literary Club In South Arabia**

Shaikh Abdul Aziz Athaalibi, a Tunisian Arab, who lived in exile, because of his Anti-French policy came to Aden and Lahej in 1924. He was a scholar of Arabic and French, was an eloquent orator and a political thinker. 6 feet, corpulent, old, but very energetic.

He reached Sanaa and met the Imam Yahia. He told me, when we met, that the Imam was conversant with Moslem Law; his knowledge of Arabic literature was good and he kept a breast of world affairs; but he was a xenophobe and would not welcome any reforms based on modern technique.

Charity Aside Right Remains

The nation was in a state of stupor and fearfully unresponsive. Poverty was perennial but he said there were a few rich men traveled from Sanaa on a mule to Hodeidah. I stopped at a roadside inn near Menakha and spent the night there. In the morning, I asked the innkeeper "How much do I owe you"? He claimed half-a-thaler. I paid him a thaler and said "keep the change." Just before noon, in the full summer he came running after me, panting and half dead. I was surprised and asked, what was the matter ? It took him some time to retrieve his breath. Then he said he had made a mistake in the account. He did not include 20 bogshas for coffee I said, 'but I had given you Ratf a thaler, more that what was due to you.' Ah:" he replied , " I thought that amount was just a gift from you."

Syria and Lebanon were French Colonies, in those fateful years. I asked Shaikh Athaalibi what he thought of their struggle for independence. He meditated for minutes, and replied "Only a world war will force France to abandon her grip on these Arabs lands". I was young and I thought he was rather pessimistic; but events proved him right. Syria and Lebanon fought hard for their freedom but failed to achieve their independence before France was defeated in World War II.

Old Order Never Changeth

Today, I view most painfully the plight and tribulations of the Algerians, in their struggle against French tyranny and I often feel that only a general universal conflagration will bring France to her knees and force her to retreat from the shores of the Southern Mediterranean forever.

In Aden, Athaalibi expressed his amazement at the lethargy of the people and said the least they were expected to do was to establish a literary club. Anybody could form an association or a club then. No previous permission or license was pre-requisite.

We Give Aden A Club

Syed Abdulla Alawi El Jifri and myself held a meeting and we formed the Arab Literary Club. More than 200 members joined. I made a speech to a tinguished audience of our backwardness in general culture, political stagnation and helplessness. I called upon them to work, heart and soul to raise the status of the Arabs who were in decline and allowed themselves to be ousted from the field of commerce, contenting them selves with second rate positions. The response was, at the outset, quite encouraging but personal animosities, jealousy for leadership and supremacy, very soon divided the members into groups, of self seeking aims. Membership dwindled and after 4 years, none paid his subscription with the exception of 12. Two alone contributed generously towards the recurrent expenses of the Club. One was Prince Ahmed Fadhl bin Ali and another in Hadhramount, Syed Abou Bakr bin Shaikh El Kaf.

As Honorary Secretary of the Club, I contributed regularly to Arabic and Indian Newspapers, writing about the Arabs. I was the only speaker in meetings, parties and even in concerts. In time a number of youths sprang up but as politics became the mainstay of the Club most of the Arab merchants shunned its meetings.

Fall Out With Sultan

The club received many of the leaders and learned Arabs who came to Aden and invited the high officials, in Aden like Sir Systems the governor of Aden.

Sultan Sir Abdul Karim of Lahej ultimately decided that at the annual elections, I should be left out. I had been planning a big scheme to make of the Club a powerful party and to issue a newspaper sponsored by the Club, but the members wanted a change and a new secretary was elected . I continued to help the Club, which , however became a qat mabraz.

I then remembered a remark made by Abdul Rahim Khan, Police Inspector. Crater, that all that enthusiasm shown at the opening ceremony of the Club in 1924 was merely an effervescence bound soon to subside.

* * * * *

Blessed be the soul of Shaikh Abdul Aziz athaalibi. I took him from Crater by cab to see the Shaikh Othman Gardens. The Isthumus and Khormaksar were a mere uninhabited desert. The Indian Cavalry was stationed at the camp now occupied by Champion Lines, under Risaldar Malik Dad Khan . Athaalibi looked round and said these very words “In a few years all this area will become populated. Buildings will be raised from Crater to Dhala in the western Aden Protectorates. This country will recover much of its past commercial importance.”

August 10, 1961

Men, Matters and Memories (37)

Assessing The War Damage In Hodeidah On behalf of League Of Nations

Major Fowle was the First Assistant Resident in Aden. He was a man of action and foresight; he had served in Iran before he had come to Aden and published his impressions of that country in a book, a copy of which came to my hand. I read it and found it quite an interesting volume of information.

One morning in April 1927 he sent for me, and delegated me to proceed to Hodeidah in Yemen to investigate and assess, on behalf of the League of Nations, the War damaged caused to the inhabitants of Hodeidah, as a result of the bombardment of the port by the Italian navy during World War I.

I accepted the offer and in a few days left Aden by S/S Falcon of Cowasjee Dinshaw, with Dr. A. H. Taqi, of the Civil Hospital , Crater. The Aden Government, regularly every month, used to send a doctor to visit and examine all the personnel in the Red Sea Lighthouses, inspect health conditions and carry rations and other requirements.

Lighthouse Lunch

We stopped at Perim for a day, where we were entertained by the engineer and staff of the Lighthouse. Next day the ship anchored at ABULAIL rock, which is surmounted by a majestic Light house. The Island is awe inspiring and solitary. The inhabitants, about 9 men and 6 carpenters who were working in the construction of some shacks for the staff, received us like rain in the desert. They had some excellent fish which they cooked for lunch. They did a lot of fishing on the beach and the sea is very deep. The ship was actually only a few feet from the nearest landing. On our return to the ship in the afternoon, I accompanied the First Engineer and we walked on the coral reef, where we came upon a beautiful and valuable red coral tree, branching from the reef. He carefully carved it out and felt elated with his find. He took it carefully to the ship to dry and harden.

Faded Prosperity

After seven hours of cruising we arrived in Kamaran. Near the Island, we found many divers looking for M.O.P. shells through glass fixed to Kerosene Oil tins. Some fishermen found pearls on those shores.

On our way to ABULAIL and KAMARAN, we by passed Mocha and were able to see its old light house on the shore, the land having receded considerably owing to heavy silting up of the beach. This town was in ancient days the principal port of Yemen and from here some of the best coffee from Buraa, Odain and Sanaa used to find its way to the outside world including the lovely matari coffee from the province of Sanaa with its intoxicating aroma. Hence, the famous brand MOCHA COFFEE. Mocha itself is but an arid desert land. Many Indian and even European merchants had started factories in Mocha by which is meant business centers, and not industrial establishments. This was in 18th century.

Painful Tradition

The Turks developed the port of Hodeidah, which became an important center of trade. They had introduced a few reforms of importance; a school, military barracks and discipline. The Idrisi dynasty annexed this port to their Kingdom of Sabia. The only useful reform, which Syed Mohamed El Idrisi had introduced in the Tihama was in the method of circumcision which is a compulsory operation among Muslims, was performed, not in infancy, but at the full age of majority, in full fledged youth and on the very eve of marriage. The bridegroom and the bride sit together in a congregation of relatives and friends and a barber operates on the bride-groom with a very sharp knife peeling off the skin from the lower part of the abdomen. If the bridegroom makes the slightest jerk as a result of pain, the bride walks away and he is condemned as a coward. This custom, Syed Mohamed El Idrisi had exterminated and circumcision was performed in the normal way. When I arrived at Hodeidah Imam Yahia had annexed it to his realm.

Deserted Bank

The Ottoman Bank had a stately edifice, very well decorated with pieces of mosaic work on the walls, and the ceilings; and fine tiles on the floor. Beautiful doors with Arabic engravings, and windows with coloured glass panes, an excellent lounge, a counter and offices, all shut and abandoned after the Turks had been ousted from Yemen, subsequent to their defeat in the First World War.

There were quite a number of rich and prosperous merchants in Hodeidah in 1927 ; many addicted to Qat Mizgaggee Sharif Ahmed Rifaee, Taher Rajab, Cowasjee Dinshaw, Livierato, Sajoo, Aref Kharsa, Syed Sakka and others. dealing in coffee, jute bags, skins and hides, dry fruit and Ghee. The inhabitants had many local cottage industries – red leather, baskets, pottery, ropes - and weaving and dying.

Tantalizing Women

The Turks taught the people the art of cooking. The women dressed in a modern fashion and wore high heeled shoes even in those remote times. Some of the ladies of mixed blood-Arab and Turk looked fascinating, fair, handsome and tantalizing.

The port stood on the shores of the Red Sea.

Shallow water due to heavy inflow of sands, coursed up the beach. At low tide, one could walk far into the sea. At high tide passengers were carried on stretchers by porters to the dry sands and from there to the wharf which was then in a dilapidated condition. Sailing boats and rowing boats were used for the unloading of cargo from the small ships which called at the port. There is a big change today.

The Russians have now constructed a Six Kilometer artificial harbour with wonderful jetties.

August 17, 1961

Men, Matters and Memories (38)

League Of Nations Awards Damages To Cowasjee, Livierato And Many Others Little Bombay In Hodeidah

The Tihama, or marine ridge on which Hodeidah stands, is dry and dreary. The climate is exceedingly hot in summer and it lacks water, although wells were bored at El Hali about three miles away from the town and fresher suppliers of water were carried from Taef, farther away to the South. What was even more interesting was even import of condensed water from the Island of Kamaran, in huge green glass bottles covered with ropes, in small sailing boats. Those bottles are called gamadanah. They are also used for preserving vinegar and are imported from Assab, where the Italians used to fill them with Italian wine.

In Hodeidah some people fermented liquor in these gamadanas and sold it secretly.

A large proportion of Hodeidah is of Indian origin and at least one whole locality is known as the Indian Section. There are many Indian names-Sajoo, Peroo. Agami, Gaaman and so on. There were, in addition, many Bohras and other Indian merchants.

They had built a tennis Court near El Hali, and planted some trees.

Palida was one of the important Yemenised merchants. The palace of the Governor, Syed Husain Abdul Qader, was pitched in that area, with a small garden around. This Governor was beheaded in 1948, in the first Revolution in which Imam Yahya was assassinated.

Yemeni Hospitality

I spent 50 days in the town, met many people, carefully investigated the WAR DAMAGE, recorded evidence and gave awards to Cowasjee Dinshaw, Livierato, Taher Rajab, Sajoo, and several other persons.

During my sojourn, I was very generously treated. I was invited by many of the noble families and saw their beautiful houses, with artistic staircases, carved ceilings and Arab engraved doors, which would remind one of the doors of houses in Zanzibar.

I was given a flat in the house of Cowasjee. Their agent Khan Saheb provided me with a cook who was really a chef, of mixed Arab and Turkish blood. He cooked for me most delicious dishes. Food was excellent, plentiful and cheap.

The Aden Government had two representatives one of whom was Hasson Kanhooni, a Persian whose mother tongue was Arabic. He wrote Arabic with the pen of a calligraphist Naskh, Riqaa and the Farsee (Persian), styles. His knowledge of Arabic literature and Moslem History was simply marvellous. He

looked after British interests, after the departure of Robertson, the British Consul. Saleh Jaffer was the Frontier Officer.

Hasson Kanjoooni used to bring me daily a bundle of Tolaili, and Remi Qat. I have never tasted a better stuff. I was addicted to this deleterious plant in those days of ignorance.

Turkish Patronage

Syed Ashuraee, the Chairman of the Municipality, gave me a horse to move about in town; he was a member of the Shuraee family. They were one of the wealthier families during the Turkish rule. Turks had their favourites among the people and made them rich. , and do all colonial Governments. Syed Ashuraee was generous and entertaining, although their welfare had not been then what it used to be.

The bazaar comprised tens of small shops, cheek by jowl with a number of big stores with common eaves, covering all the winding street, without an outlet for bad odour, making the passages dark and stinking. Behind these shops is the cemetery, reminding all the people who was by day and night, of the day of RESURRECTION.

No roads but sandy tracks. Most of the houses were already shaky and in ruins. Whole areas comprised nothing but huts.

British Overtures

A few days after my arrival many of the Zarnookis from Taef came to see me. Some of the Shaikhs told me that they were prepared to receive overtures of British Protection and would unfurl the Union Jack over their ramparts and houses, in their country. I told them I was not a political representative of the British Government. I had come on behalf of the League of Nations. I admonished them for trying to pull out from their mother country and said that if they had any complaints they should approach the League of Nations for redress. They went away.

The whole administration was corrupt. Everybody wanted money and personal comfort. A man in the telegraph office came to see me with a telegram containing a secret message and offered a copy for a reward. I said I was not interested. He Left disappointed.

The people were undisciplined, uneducated unpatriotic and unguided. They are even so today. They have no freedom of speech and any one who has an idea to offer finds himself in jail or in exile.

I returned to Aden after having had to wait for a ship nearly 3 weeks on end. My report to the League of Nations was adopted, and I was paid a very handsome remuneration by Major Fowle, who recommended me to Government but his recommendations were shelved. He gave me a good testimonial nevertheless.

August 24, 1961

Men, Matters and Memories (39)**“OUR FATHERS WERE OFTEN BROUGHT UP THE HARD WAY – BY THE BIRCH”****A Teacher Got Less Than An Office Boy**

My first enterprise in, Architecture was in 1924 when my father entrusted me the construction of three houses into a three storied tenement. He gave me Rs 24,000/- and in 9 months the building was ready, and the whole family repaired to it, in Avicenne Street.

Building material was cheap and labour was even cheaper.

Timber cost Annas 12 per cubic foot for Benteak wood and as. 10 for deal wood. Even teak wood was very cheap and was available in the market. A coolie received as 7 per day, a mason RS 1/8 and a carpenter RS 1/12 a day. There were many able carpenters who carved fine doors in the Arab style and fashion. One of these craftsmen was Ahmed Husai, an old carpenter and distant relation of my mother. I had seen him engraving on the flaps of a door long verses of the Quran with his chisels, for a mausoleum of a Saint in Mecca.

I engaged him to do the wood work of our house. My father did not like him but I was able to make him forgive and forget. Lintels were unknown. Walls were raised on arches.

In the new abode, the family was better housed-plenty of room, more light and better ventilation arrangements.

Teaching Aden’s Teachers

I secured my Teachers’ Diploma (University of Leeds), in 1925. Soon afterwards the Education Department entrusted to me the Teachers’ Training Classes at which the Headmaster of all the primary schools attentended, including Shaikh Kamel, Naeyef Husain, Qassem Kayed, Fara Muheis and many others. Some of the teachers of the Anglo – Vernacular School also joined – Saleh Mohamed Mashjee Syed Ahmedali, Hassan A. Rehman---We read the Principles of Education, by Welton, Welpton, Findlay, Pestalozzi, and Dewey: Psychology by Mac Dougal Brierly, Adams and Kerr’s School Hygeine, and Class Management. We were supplied with excellent anatomical charts, a copy of the Encyclopedia Brittanica and the Encyclopedia of Education by Dewey together with many useful books by Sigmund Freud, Jung Adler and Renan on Psychoanalysis.

Study of Education was a new Science introduce by Dr. Ata Husain, the Inspector of Education.

Break His Bones

In the earlier years of this century teachers were unguided and even misguided. The cane was their guide. Even Major Barret, Political Assistant Resident, after whom the market in Crater is named, once said to me in connection with a recalcitrant student “Use the cane. Beat him till you break his bones” Many school boys who have been brutally treated by the teachers with physical punishment and unwarranted privations became spoilt urchins. I think that any pain inflicted on a pupil does him great harm. Punishment does nobody any good even if imposed on a criminal. Boys and girls, at home and at school, need care, love and guidance. We must never beat our children, never beat our children, never! Corporal punishment is hideous.

If we ever desire to have a respectable family we must never inflict serious pain on our little darlings and if we do we merely create in them irreparable complexes that dig deep in their subconscious mind.

A qualified and successful teacher is he, who never brandishes a cane at his pupils. Any teacher who indulges in punishment is a heartless being-male or female.

The teachers in the twenties received very low salaries. Faqih Saif in the Primary School had a monthly pay of Rs. 10/. A peon received a higher pay.

Qat In The Classroom

He was once discovered chewing QAT in the class by the Inspector of Education and was reprimanded. He subsequently resigned. The inspector sent for him and advised him to remain in service in order to qualify for Pension but the Faqih retorted “Yes, I know I will qualify for a pension of Rs 3 per month after 20 years when I am unable to gain a penny more. Thank you for the good advice”. He left.

Shaikh Kamel is today Qadhi in Lahej. Qassem Qaid made fortune in Tanganyika. Moshjee died in Kamaran Island. Very few others still live.

August 31, 1961

Men, Matters and Memories (40)

THE GREAT PLAQUE OF 1927 LEAVES ADEN A DESOLATE LAND

Bubonic plaque broke out in the year 1927. It started at Tawahi out of sheer negligence in taking sufficient precautions, when a seaman carrying the seeds of the epidemic disembarked in the harbour. The infection spread into gigantic proportions and became uncontrollable.

Inoculations were imposed but the paucity of medical practitioners and the inertia of the public to go to Hospitals for inoculations led to the spread of the disease in all towns.

Doctors were imported from Bombay, since mass inoculation was necessary to stem the disaster.

Military areas were segregated and a section of the population left the Colony, which looked deserted, with every infected dwelling painted with coal tar as a means of disinfection. The inoculation resulted in a severe reaction for two days but it was safe.

9,000 Dead

The toll reached the fantastic figure of 9,000 in less than three weeks. Many young men and women and many children lost their lives. I lost a brother, Jaffer and many other relatives. Many huts were constructed at the Infectious Disease Hospital. Hedjuff, to accommodate patients and hundreds were segregated in that area.

Many recovered but many more died and were buried in the (C) Class Area, which was then a desert.

I went to the mosques in Crater, Tawahi and Maalla and spoke to the Prayer Congregations about the plight of the poor patients and their helpless families. I was able to collect about Rupees eight thousand (or EAS12,000). A Committee was formed and I was delegated to ask for permission to enter the I.D.H. and carry provisions to the sick – oranges, apples, sugar and tea, white-shirtings, bed sheets and so on.

I paid funeral expenses in many cases and helped the bereaved families. Sir Stewart Symes, the Political Resident of Aden, was pleased to know about this social service. He called me and other members of the Committee to Government House and discussed ways and means of enlisting public cooperation to subdue the epidemic.

Many suggestions were made, with little useful results. Many families left Aden but the deserters to Yemen and Somali land returned when “all was clear”

Dacoit Repents

Tambah, a dreadful highwayman in the Subeihi country, who had for more than two years ravaged the trade routes between Lahej and Yemen atoned for all his misdeeds, abandoned himself to the sultan of Lahej and came down to Aden to make a treaty with the Aden Government.

I entertained him and drafted a treaty for him to a present of two lambs and some ghee: but plague was raging like wildfire and on the same-night, I advised him to get himself inoculated, but he abhorred the suggestion and decided to leave Aden.

I told him that the Prophet Mohamed had ordained in such circumstances: “ Do not go to an infected area: but once in it, do not leave it”. The numbers of biers finding their way to the cemetery was appalling and he left in great haste.

At Lahej, he died of plague, having caught the infection in Crater.

The calamity was destructive but we did not earn sufficiently from it to avoid yet another and worse evil. In a year's time Smallpox raged in Aden like wildfire. It was discovered that the proportion of unvaccinated members of the public were so great that this new epidemic very soon decimated the population and another toll accounted for more than 8,000 of the people of Aden.

My son Hamed was not vaccinated and got the infection. Fortunately he was saved, and is today the Information Officer in the B.P. Refinery, Little Aden.

Again in 1928 I convened a number of charitable Adeni personalities in the Arab Literary Club.

A good sum of money was collected from philanthropists (about sh: 11,000/-), and help was extended to all those who needed it. Many a dear friend and relation passed away. I still remember, with horror, the disfigurement of handsome faces and the fright of many a mother, seeing death tear away her dearest ones from her.

Some Were Stubborn

Very few of those who had been previously vaccinated caught smallpox. But some people were exceptionally stubborn and refused to be vaccinated.

Mr. Manilal an Indian lawyer, refused to be vaccinated. He said that he can never allow foreign matter to enter his body in the form of a lymph or anything else. Vaccination was then compulsory but he said he was prepared for punishment.

Between the years 1898 and 1928, smallpox and plague were endemic in this region. In thirty years, epidemic broke out several times, but we have never had another outbreak, since.

September 07, 1961

Men, Matters and Memories (41)

DEBARRED FROM PORT TRUST, COURT AND ADEN SETTLEMENT AS FATHER'S WISHES COME TRUE

In 1926 my wife, mother of Ali, fell seriously ill. I was alarmed. I spent a lot of time near her sick-bed which resulted in my frequent absence from my duties. My teacher and guide Dr. Ata Husain demanded an explanation.

I told him. He called me and said, "if I were you I should take her to an incinerator." This frivolous behavior and gubernatorial criticism disappointed me so painfully that I just discarded his friendship.

He ran rough shod over me. He accepted my resignation and recommended that I should be black-listed. He wrote abusive articles against me in an Egyptian Magazine "Asharg Al Adna" under the name of Musa Dawood.

The Aden government welcomed the fracas between us and all my applications for service in the Court, the Port Trust and the Aden Settlement were turned down. I was upbraided for my temerity in throwing away a very prospective post; but I recollected my father's good counsel, not to join in government service. I decided to fight my way through the fog with bonhomie.

Deeply I regret the misunderstanding with Ata Hussain.

Dr. Sir V.H. Roberts and Dr. Sir Baker both advised me to take my wife abroad for a change of climate; but she refused because she could never ride the sea. The post-office pier at Steamer Point was covered with thick planks, upon big wooden pillars, and the water below could be viewed through the clefts.

I took her for a stroll. When she realized that the sea was below her, she fainted.

Change Of Climate

I decided to take her to El-Hussainy gardens at Lahej. There, Sultan Ahmed Fadhle the poet cum - musician gave us his house and ordered his gardeners and farmers to give us every comfort-vegetables, fruits, roasted meat, a good horse to ride every afternoon, and mosquito-nets. We had a surfeit of his hospitality.

He was a philosopher, in his own way. He wrote a history of Lahej, "Hadda – yat – uz -Zaman". He did not believe in the rigid tenets of religion and thought that every age may have its own set of laws and rules of life. Never I met a man more cheerful than that convivial prince.

In that arboreal environment of Al-Husaini and in my grief for the illness of my wife I composed poetry in Arabic and in a poem I described the beauty of Al-Hussainy orchards. Prince Ahmed Fadhl composed a tune which is played to this very day "Ala-El-Hussainy Salaam" (Greetings to Al-Hussainy Orchards) I

wrote many poems afterwards but gave up writing verse after Ali, my eldest son emerged as a bard of fame and popularity.

Brief Respite

My wife relived every moment of those days of happiness; unfortunately, for a very short time.

We returned to Aden after 40 days and her illness returned.

My two brothers Saleh and Abdul Majid asked me to get them married. My wife suggested her sister as a suitable bride for my brother Abdul Majid.

Saleh betrothed the daughter of another notable citizen. The celebrations were grand but sad because my wife could not enjoy the rejoicings. She remained kind, cheerful and looked more beautiful in her illness.

She abandoned herself to God and when her doctor prescribed wine to help her in her weakness, she shunned it. She was a very religious woman. I had poured the wine in a bottle which remained untouched for 10 years afterwards. I threw it away lamenting her absence with every drop that fell on the floor.

Misery And Adversity

The next two years after her death in 1928, were days of misery and adversity. I lost her, and four months later I lost my son Mustapha, 2 years old. He developed whooping cough and pneumonia.

In 1930 I lost my brother Abdul Manaan, who was electrocuted in my shop. I fell seriously ill and for years I suffered from a feeling of guilt and had nightmares. I was saved by reading psycho-analysis by Dr. Stekel.

My friend Emir Fadhl bin Ahmed could not see me engrossed in sorrow and dejection. He called me to Lahej, got me married to a girl of a very noble family, mother of son Fadhl (I named him so, after the generous prince.) He paid the dowery and all the marriage expenses but she did not live long and unfortunately died soon afterwards.

Her son Fadhl is now a production engineer from Accrington who returns to Aden next week.

September 14, 1961

Men, Matters and Memories (42)

WITH ARTICLE IN THE PRESS, ARGUMENTS WITH OFFICIALDOM, I BECOME A REBEL FROM BAD ADMINISTRATION

Between the years 1924/1930, I was a free contributor to many Arabic and Indian Newspapers; it was not safe to write under one's own name. The local authorities did not like newsmen. Under my name, I wrote literary, social and historical articles.

As local reporter I sent regular newsletters, commentaries and sharp criticism on the administration in the Colony, the inefficiencies of debarring Adenis from the Government high posts, which were held by Goans, Parsees and Indians. All managerial situations were allocated to non-Adenis.

The most popular Arabic weekly was Ashoura, published in Cairo by Mohamed Ali Taher of Palestine. News of the struggle in the Holy Land was eagerly awaited week after week. The other papers to which I was a regular contributor were: Al Jihad Arabic Daily (Cairo) Fata-Al Arab Daily (Damascus), Al Balagh Daily (Cairo), Al Jamia El Islamia Daily (Jaffa), The Bombay Sentinel, Bombay Mainland and The Bombay Chronicle. I also sent newsletters to Al Bayan and Al Huda Arabic Dailies in New York and for some time I was commissioned to correspond with the fiery Al Qalam Al Hadidi, in Valparaiso (The Iron Pen)

Top Adeni Officials

The only high Arab officials in Aden were the interpreters at the Residency Office (now Secretariat). They were Khan Bahadur Ali Jaffer, Khan Bahadur Ali Ibrahim and Khan Bahadur Mohamed Salem. They had to deal with the chiefs and leaders of the Aden Protectorates.

The Aden Settlement (Municipality) had many Arab clerks, who had to work as candidates for a long time before a permanent appointment. Monthly salaries started at Rs 30/. The Secretary was Abdul Rehman Nowroji. Almost all Government Departments were hermetically sealed in the face of the Adeni. There is not much improvement even today.

My friend Abdul Shakoor Fakir Mohamed, who had passed with me the Cambridge School Certificate, secured a post as assistant chief clerk in the Residency Office but he died soon afterwards, much lamented. The Secretariat remained taboo until last week when three Adenese were admitted.

The stories of trouble in Palestine raised the leadership of Ashoura Newspaper. Contributions from Aden were read with profound interest.

An earthquake rocked parts of Palestine in 1927. I went round collecting donations for the homeless and was able to remit to the Committee formed in Cairo a sum of Rs 7000/.

Letters From Arab Leaders

I received many letters from Arab leaders in Cairo and in Palestine. Shaikh Abdul Rehman Azzam, who became the Secretary of the Arab League, wrote to me a word of appreciation. So did Emir Shakeeb Arslan, a writer of great fame, a historian and one of the great political thinkers in the Arab world. He wrote an article in Ashoura under the heading “NO WONDER! IT IS LOKMAN”.

That praise gave me big name in the Arab World. He was a refugee from Lebanon. I was in regular correspondence with the great Arab leaders in that period of Arab awakening.

During the Italian atrocities in Tripoli and Cyrranaica I wrote protestations to the many newspapers, voicing the indignation of the Arabs of South Arabia, especially when Syed Omar El Mukhtar the great Tripolitanian nationalist was destroyed ruthlessly. I collected from Aden Rs 8000/---and sent it to a committee in Cairo for the victims of those tyrannies. The high officials in Aden disapproved of these activities.

Scapegoat

In 1929 I had returned from Jigjiga (Ethiopia), with many stories to tell the world. Subsequently, my brother Abdul Majid also came back from that end and sent an article under his name to Ashoura newspaper. The Italian Consul complained to the Aden Government. It was a description of intrigues in the country, in preparation for the invasion of Ethiopia.

Major Wightwick, the First Assistant Resident summoned me before him and burst out reprimanding and threatening me with punishment for writing that article. I was not the writer. I tried to explain but he called upon me to “shut up”. He was thundering for 15 minutes.

A fortnight later a young Faqih Mohamed Noman delivered a very critical speech in the mosque at Shaikh Othman against Italians.

Major Wight_wick (after whose name we have the Wightwick gardens in Crater)summoned me and three others – Ahmed Al Asnag, Syed Ali Ismail and Shaikh Mohamed Salem to appear at the Residency Office. El Asnag was away in Europe. He had accompanied Sultan Omer El Quaiti of Mukalla as an interpreter. The First Assistant Resident very unreasonably upbraided us for that speech in the mosque. I had not even heard it. We all tried to argue. “DON’T ARGUE” was the ordinance.

A few days afterwards many of my friends approached me to establish the ARAB REFORM CLUB, in Crater. It was the first political institution which aroused nationalism and patriotism in this part of the world, unknown before in its past history.

September 21, 1961

Men, Matters and Memories (43)**GHANDI VISITS ADEN****Historic Reception At Parsee Gardens****What He Said About Our Freedom**

Mahatma Gandhi – the prophet of Satyagraha or Non-Violence in India, in her struggle for freedom from British dominator, was on his way to Aden, in 1931 for the Round-Table conference in London. The Indian Community prepared a grand reception for him at the Parsee Garden; but no one dare go and meet him, on the arrival, of SS Rajputana at the inner harbour at Steamer Point. Politics was taboo in this Colony. Any one who dabbled in politics was carefully watched. Almost all the Arabs tried to keep away saying. “We have no interests in antagonizing Government. Gandhi was considered an enemy of the British Government!

People Wishes

I proceeded to Tawahi and waited on the Prince of Wales Pier. Nobody came till 8AM when Husseinbhoj Laljee, a friend of mine, arrived alone. His son, who was a disciple of the great leader of India and Staunch Satyagrahist, was on the Rajputana. He engaged a launch and I just stepped into it.

Near the gangway, no one was allowed to go on board. Mr. Ghandi had insisted that the Indian national Flag should be unfurled at the meeting in the Parsee Garden. The local authorities were hesitant. I saw Gandhi standing on the deck with Sarojini Naidu and Malawiya.

The sea was rough and the launch went along side the gangway, where upon I jumped out and in a few seconds I was talking to the President of the Indian Congress, who was destined to change the face of Asia. I introduce myself as the President of the Arab Reform Club. I said I was commissioned to convey the best regards of members and to say welcome to him. He reciprocated the good wishes for the Arabs and shook hands with me. He rarely did so. He just raised both hands joined together before his kind face.

Sarojini Naidu, the famous poetess of India and the pioneer of women’s emancipation, congratulated the Mahatma saying, “You have become a very important man. The Arabs know all about you”. He looked at her with a broad smile and friendly grin. He then said: “ You have clubbed in Aden.” “Yes I replied. “ What have you been doing so far?” he asked. “ We are just waking up from a profound slumber,” I replied humorously. He laughed and just then a Police Officer came up to him, with the consent of the Political Resident to unfurl the Indian Flag. We all disembarked.

He wore nothing on his body with the exemption of his meticulously clean white loin-cloth a pair of Indian Champals, his silver-white nickel glasses and his silver pocket watch attached to his waist.

Living Deity

“Ghandiji Ki Jai” was the sky-high slogan chanted by hundreds of Indians, who had arrived at the Prince of Wales Pier, after hearing of the agreement of the Aden Government for Ghandi to land. Ghandi, the man, who stood firm and steadfast bravely and in high spirits in the face of the greatest empire on earth and all her great political leaders and thinkers, including strong men like Sir Winston Churchill, walked down from the Pier to the house of Cowasjee Dinshaw surrounded by men , women and children, everyone of them striving hard to find a way to touch his sacred body, like the Moslems, who perform the yearly pilgrimage in order to touch and kiss the “HOLY BLACK STONE” in the Kaaba in Mecca.

Ghandi was a living Deity. He had divorced wealth and wife. He had abandoned his children to the mercy of destiny and dedicated his life to the freedom of India. (In 1936 I met his son Harilal alias Abdalla Gandhi (who had embraced Islam, and was a heavy drunkard). Gandhi lost a family but created a nation.

I moved all the time by his side. He was very cheerful and when he spoke his sayings were axiomatic yet humorous. At the Cowasjees I asked him: “Do you approve of our clamour for ending imperialism in this part of the World?” He looked at me and said: “This is a fortress. Go slowly and carefully. Imperialism is stil strong but this will not last long.”

Hindu-Moslem

I accompanied the great nationalist in the same car, to the Parsee Garden. A tent had been erected and a word of welcome was read out. He then sat on a parapet in the glaring sunshine, bending his legs under him, frail in body, yet strong in soul, and called upon me to translate his speech. He said “My friends, Arabs of Aden. I am thankful to you for having sent, on your behalf, a delegate to meet and welcome me, to the ship.” His voice was clear and sonorous. He then related a chapter from the Quran and praised the tenets of the prophet Mohamed and Caliph Omer. He said they were great leaders of the human race. He mentioned that the Prophet had prohibited liquor and that was a divine revelation. Islam like Hinduism and other religions of mankind advocated brotherhood and friendship he affirmed. He then called upon the Indians in Aden to be very friendly with the Arabs and help them. Subsequently he mentioned that he had stipulated that the Indian National Flag must be unfurled on his arrival at that meeting. It was; there were mad cheers by all those present. He said that that flag was the emblem of Indian Nationalism and Integrity. It was the sign of her freedom.

Liquor Sale

Gandhi then thanked the Parsee Panchayat for lending their garden for the meeting and said, "I am, however, sorry that the Parsee Community should indulge in the sale of liquor in this Arab country, where liquor is prohibited by Islam. They should give up this trade for the sake of the Arabs of Aden."

He then spoke about the struggle of India for her independence, or Sawaraj. He told his audience that he was on his way to the London Round Table Conference and that he would not accept less than Independence.

I published the whole speech and described this visit, in th Fata-Al Arab, Arabic Daily of Damascus.

September 28, 1961

Men, Matters and Memories (44)

DREAMS OF ASIAN AWAKENING AND POLICE WARNING OF DRASTIC STEPS Switch to Pan-Arabism Cause Clash With Foreign Elite

The population of Aden had increased. Foreign capital poured in and commercial relations became more complex. In 1928 Indian lawyers were permitted to practice in the Aden Courts. A. Bhatt, Manilal Doctor and Shaikh Abdallah were prominent among them. The lawyers made a very good living. Shaikh Abdallah had a force of leadership, but he never agreed to consider Aden as an entity by itself separate from the rest of the Moslem World, I always thought that Aden should be reserved for the Adenis first till it was free...He argued that this Colony must be open to Immigrants from the whole Moslem worlds, without distinction of racial differences. In later years, he organized the Moslem Association with this objective. He was assisted by Yassin Mohamed Rajamannar, the founder of the Aden Commercial Institute, who had embraced Islam in Aden, and who had served the cause of education more than any other teacher from abroad. He is now gone but he left footprints on the sands of time, which will never be effaced.

I Change To Pan-Arabism

By that time I had established the Arab Reform Club in Crater, and another, bearing the same name at Shaikh Othman . Syed Abdo Ghanem of Tawahi founded a third in Steamer Point. Shaikh Abdalla did not participate in these Clubs as he said they were communal. He insisted that all Moslems were connected by the strong ties of Islam. He was nominated as a Councilor of the Crater Township Authority. I was also a Councilor for a few months.

Finding that educated men from India and other parts of the world were not sympathetic, I started propagating Arab Solidarity and disseminating Arab aspirations – a free Arab world, An independent Arab Palestine, a free Tripoli and the promulgation of knowledge and culture in Aden and South Arabia. I purchased a Radio for the Club, around which the members gathered every evening to hear the news in English over the B.B.C. which I translated for their benefit. In those days I proposed to the B.B.C. to broadcast Arabic and the proposal was adopted. When I was in London in 1955 I was invited by the B.B.C. to remind listeners of that occasion .

In The Wake Of M. Ghandi

I was an admirer of Mahatma Ghandi struggle for freedom. I knew him personally (see last week's) and when he returned from the Round Table Conference in London, he was received by Colonel Reilly First Assistant Resident in 1931 on the Prince of Wales Pier. Colonel Reilly subsequently told me that Ghandi's first question was "Where is my friend Lokman?" I was forced to remain in the background, during the second visit of the Mahatma to Aden. On his birthday celebrations in Crater some months later, I addressed a huge Indian audience. I said: Manu 4000 years ago, was a great prophet of Hindu

Law and faith. There is only one man who has emerged since, with the same spirit and greatness. It is Mahatma Gandhi. Let us all follow his percepts in this age of awakening in Asia”.

Threatened With Drastic Steps

Next day I was called by the Police to meet Mr. Champion, the Acting First Assistant Resident. (later Sir Reginald Champion, Aden Governor), I went to see him. I stood all the time. I was not allowed to sit. He asked me “What have you been saying?” I related whatever I had recollected. “It was extempore” I said. He asked “ Was it your business to say those things?”

I said “It was anybody’s business to speak highly of a great man!” “He listened carefully and then said that Government was determined to take drastic steps against me. “May I argue with you”, I said “No, you can go now.” I was in the service of Mr. A. Besse, who knew about my social and political activities, but never said a word in spite of intriguers and tale tellers. My Indian friends disconcerted and when I met Shaikh Abdalla and told him the story he thought it was very strange “Are we not living in democracy,” I asked him. He replied “No, not in a Colony”. “You should become a lawyer,” he added. “Only then, you can fight” he concluded. I felt my heart drooping. I was responsible for a big family.

Soon afterwards I left Aden to represent A. Besse in British Somali Land.

October 5, 1961

Men, Matters and Memories (45)

A. BESSE: RECOLLECTIONS OF THE FATHER OF ADEN COMMERCE

Early in this century Antonin Besse, a French national, came to Aden as a merchant. He lived in Section A. He spoke French, Arabic, English, was flawless and he spoke Arabic with a Yemeni accent. He had lived in Hodeidah for some years. He was a talented man, thoughtful, educated, experienced, in many ways, critical, inventive, sober, respectful and respectable. His business acumen was unique and his knowledge and mastery of commerce and finance was second to none in Aden. He employed men of expert knowledge in business and paid them very generously. His energy and physical fitness were proverbial in the whole of the Red Sea area. He climbed to the summit of Shum Shum Hill everyday, during his stay in Aden in winter and spent the summer in his garden at La Paradou in France.

Was No Speculator

His presence of mind was marvellous. He had ready answers for all questions and discussed not only in commercial but social, political and even educational subjects. He was a very busy man and was often curt when antagonized, uttered harsh words and even insults; but he readily apologized whenever he thought he was wrong. He knew people, and it was interesting to hear him speak about them. He was satirical in his comments, and letters to his agents, which I translated for him for many years, were full of ideas. It is easier to sum up that wonderful man and say of him that he was a genius; but a man of the category of Besse cannot be done justice, unless his whole life was described in full detail. I wish I could do that to do justice to a man from whom I had learnt much. But I know only a section of his life and that is not enough to judge him thoroughly. I am sure all those who wrote about him had little time near him, to be able to write his biography. He was always very busy, discharging his big projects.

In business he was not a speculator. He shunned speculation unless it was done in proper perspective and based on a careful forecast. He had his office on the second floor, but he used to descend several times a day to the ground floor to see his employees working, in the office, in the godowns of skins, hides and coffee and in the garage in the Aidarous Valley. He never allowed the grass to grow under his feet.

Sought Perfection

He would reprimand an employee, who made a mistake and would appear much upset for short time. He once saw me amazed and said, "My son, (he would call everyone his son: "YAIBNI" in Arabic) "I do not shout from my heart", (meaning "It is not emotional") "I shout from my head", (meaning "I know what I say") and he smiled.

He was kind, whenever it was necessary to be kind, but he never tolerated stupidity. He sought perfection and advocated it. He himself was perfect in his thinking and his business. He never condoned serious errors and often dismissed men with long service, because they proved dishonest or incorrigible.

He used to start work at 5 A.M. everyday, and stop at 4 P.M. to go for his daily exercise over Shum Shum Hill. He drove his car at an enormous speed, but he told me “I never had an accident in twenty years”. He planned, laid down policy, formulated private telegraphic codes, and dictated most of his letters. He was tireless. In six years, during which I served him as a secretary, a translator and an agent of all his branches in British Somali Land he was once in bed and even then dictated his letters. He was the first man to employ lady secretaries in his office here.

Sense Of Humour

His success was really due to his true sense of humour. His sarcasm was biting, but it was based in his able understanding of human nature and knowledge of human affairs, and so was his careful forecast of events in the business world. He had explained to me in 1941 that he had doubled his capital by investing all his moveable and immovable property in purchasing heavy stock for late delivery. That was speculation based on principle and good forecast. He knew that prices would soar high and captured the opportunity.

Called A Spade A Spade

He was courageous and never hesitated to call a spade a spade. He always looked for men of quality and capability but he was a very difficult man to work with. Very few remained long in his service. Very few Adenese joined his firm. His business and accounts manager was Mr. Parekh, a young Hindu gentleman, as shrewd and nearly as clever as Mr. Besse himself. Parekh employed Indians, who have remained in the firm all these years, although Parekh himself left the firm, after he had been elected one director of A. Besse & Co. Ltd.

Created Markets

Mr. Besse created markets for his imports of foodstuff, dyes, oils and pharmaceutical products. He sent a number of men from Aden to foreign countries to be trained. There were at least two Arabs who were sent to learn all about aniline dyes.

He had a friend in Sheikh Mohamed Abdul Qader Mackawi, who was also a man of exceptional intelligence. Another friend was Mohamed Salem Baobeid. He made him rich.

Mr. Besse worked in big way. He had his own ship-building yard on the hard at Maala for building dhows, lighters and launches. All the lighters were previously made of iron. He utilized local timber imported from Arabian ports. He was the proprietor of the Halal Shipping Co. and purchased three ships, and gave them Arabic names: Al Halal, Al Amin, Al Hak. His dhows were Al Qarn and Al Mustsahhel, in 1931.

He died in 1951 in England.

October 12, 1961

Men, Matters and Memories (46)**I UNDERTAKE A HAIR-RAISING TRIP TO SOMALILAND****Oblivion Overtakes A Busy Port**

Late in the year 1929, I was offered a post of a translator and Arab Secretary in the firm of Mr. A Besse. He offered to supply me with goods for my shop on credit. I agreed, and one year later he sent me to inspect the accounts of his Somaliland branches.

I left Aden on the day of the death of Shaikh Mohamed Omer Bazaarah, after attending the funeral. I was in the same boat as Mr. Dinshaw Hormusjee and many others, who were invited by the Berberah Government on the occasions for the Royal visit of the Duke of Gloucester to Somaliland on his way to Addis Ababa, for the Coronation of Haili Sellasi, Ras Tafari, Emperor of Ethiopia, who had succeeded to the throne after his aunt Empress Zowditto.

Lost Power

The duke was received well in Berberah, Hundreds of Somali Aqils and Ogazes (Elders and Sultans), attended the huge reception in their gaudy red robes and golden scimitars and filled a big Shamianah erected on the pavements of the Berberah Tennis Courts of the Indian Club.

The Somali Chieftains fascinated me. They had then lost all power and control over the country. Some of the Dolbahanta Sultans were in exile in Seychelles. The Somaliland Government continued to pay regular stipends to many of the Aqils, but had reduced the amounts considerably. None among them retained any administrative functions in the country. All the district commissioners were British Officers.

I went through the accounts of the Berberah branch under the management of Shaikh Omer Awadth Badeeb, who had been in the service of the firm for more than 18 years, assisted by Abbans (Somali Brokers), from among the Ba'aila subtribe of the Rer Ahmed tribe, who were in 1882 the recognized Chiefs of Berberah and the surrounding country side. Every firm – European and Asian Including Arabs) had its Abbans. The Saad Musa, Esa Musa and Bahendiera sub-tribes monopolized the trade of the Abban system. They were the go-betweens, or the intermediaries between the Somali nomads; bringing cattle to the town and skins, gums and other products and the local buyers and exporters to Aden.

On A Dhow

After carefully inspecting the accounts and checking stocks and balances of Shaikh Omer Badeeb, who was honest but-intolerant of inspectors from Aden, I decided to proceed to Bulhar. I was warned that the land route was unsafe and rather expensive.

Bulhar was once a very thriving port in the Horn of Africa. The Wadad, Mohamed Abdallah Hasson, a nationalist warrior, had a very nearly paralysed the trade of Berberah by his constant attacks and incursions. The Darawash (the rebel Somalis led by the Wadad), came as far as Dobar, the Berberah Watershed, eight miles to the West, and threatened to cut off the water supply.

Traders and seekers of profit from Aden and Berberah established “factories” and built houses and edifices at Bulhar which shined for many years. Regular dhow traffic was established. Even ships of Cowasjee called at the port with cargo. Foodstuffs for the whole country were obtained from the merchants stationed in this area. But no sooner was the Wadad subdued than Bulhar was thrown into oblivion. It lost its luster, and stopped functioning as a port.

I traveled by dhow, which was laden with sugar and rice for the Bulhar agent. I was accompanied by Kabari, a shrewd Somali attendant frail in body but very active in mind. I asked him to buy fishing gear but he told me he had one on board. Both the inner and outer harbours of Berberah abound in fish of all sort. As soon as we left the pier we encountered a huge whale, which stretched itself from one end of the bay to the other. We were saved from collision with the monster by a hair – breath escape, Subsequently we caught several king-fish and in the outer-harbour we came across a tortoise floating on the water, almost like a little island. I was reminded of the anecdotes of Sinbad the Sailor.

It was a very interesting and enjoyable experience. There was no wind in our sails, and we moved at a slow pace. In the afternoon we were suddenly caught in a terrific gale. The dhow began flinging itself continuously up and down, to and fro. It was tossed by waves of uncontrollable dimensions. Fortunately, I was not a bad sailor but the storm was furious. The sea was seething and bubbling and I had to crouch in one corner of the boat in order not to be plunged onto the waves. The boat was very nearly inundated and some of the cargo was damaged but it was closely protected with tarpaulins. One of the sails was torn and some of the rigging lost. The boat kept sailing and I expected her to founder any moment.

Bitter Experience

Kabari did not neglect me inspite of the duties he had to perform to save the dhow from sinking. He came to me with some water and very nearly lost his balance into the angry sea. We wore our hearts on our sleeves. For four hours, we were enshrouded in darkness, and when tempest cooled down the clouds cleared up and at 10 P.M. Bulhar was in view. The foaming sea remained rough, and the waves tossed us backwards and forwards, rocking us violently. The nacoda and his crew were trying to replace lost rigging and repair the sail, which had nearly gone with the winds.

While pondering over the bitter experience, I saw Kabari flinging himself into the water. I learnt later that he had gone warn the Bulhar agent of my arrival and impending inspection of his accounts. The agent was a nephew of the Berberah manager.

Another dhow reached the open sea harbour with many women and children on board filling the air with heart-rending sobs and screams. Many of them were ill for many days after that fateful night, I was told afterwards.

Next morning, the nacoda was unwilling to moor the boat lest she dashed against the sands and be wrecked. I was feeling very sick and hungry. Seeing a voluminous wave making headway for the beach I jumped into the sea and was carried right to the shore with the surging wave. I rose up to see standing like a huge statue; Shaikh Nagee Bin Biraik. His forefathers were rulers of Sheher before the coming of the Quaiti Sultans. His father was agent of M.O. Bazarah, in Bulhar.

It was in winter and I was shivering with cold. He gave me his turban to cover myself. I saw myriads of sea-gulls taking off, like huge umbrella covering the shores.

October 19, 1961

Men, Matters and Memories (47)

JOURNEY TO BERBERA

Overland by Camel through Lion and Leopard Country

I was terrified to be held the whole town of Bulhar in shambles and ruins, half submerged under the sands. There were many huts in the outskirts inhabited by nomads, offering camel's milk, boiled mutton and roasted camel meat. They bartered the skins of their blackhead sheep and goats against rice, sugar, tea and dates. Kerosene oil was also in urgent demand, both the Palm Tree and the Gazelle brands.

Palm Trees

The Bulhar agent had in stock a large quantity of Ambergris, for which he paid a big price thinking it was good bargain, but I found it was imitation of Ambergris and that the agent was cheated.

Strange enough I observed hundreds of palm trees on the beach, and began enquiring. In 1927, there was a destructive famine in Somaliland after a long drought. Many poor folks repaired to Bulhar section with their cattle. There is a hill road between Bulhar and Buramo, 7,000 feet high near the Ethiopian frontier. Tribes very often came down to the beach from those highlands. During the famine H. Premjee was given a contract to supply dates to the refugees, and the seeds embedded in the fertile soil gave rise to that sort of vegetation.

I entertained a strong feeling that palm trees could be grown in Somaliland extensively, in some parts of the country.

Return to Berbera

After completing my work in Bulhar I decided to return to Barbera, The storm which was then more than three days old continued to whistle violently; and the land route was difficult and unsafe. No travel by air was possible then. I was on the horns of a dilemma. I asked Shaikh Badeeb and Haj Salem Bin Biraik about the overland route. They told me that the terrain was rugged and difficult in some parts and that westwards it was infested with wild animals – wolves, leopards, and lions. Floods came down streaming from the Nogal and the Haud highlands, which very often obstructed pedestrian and caravans. The only solation appeared to be to call a truck from Berbera and load it with sheep and goatskins in Bulhar after arrival. That would have meant waiting in the deserted village for some days. I called Kabarai and consulted him. He referred me to Haji Mahmoud Waraba, the nacoda of the dhow that had carried me to Bulhar. Both then agreed that I should travel overland with an armed escort.

Kabari, Shaikh Awadh Badeeb and I went to the village to find a camel and a camelman. We found many women busy making mats, ropes, hand made carpets, decorated with coloured bead, trays

and fiber jugs. They also boiled chopped meat and dried it: some mutton and camel meat was made into cutlets. This can last for a long time. If boiled it is again tender and edible.

In the Desert

I hired a massive camel, belonging to a wonderful elderly looking camelman and I engaged an ILLALO (a detective) Hirsi by name, who looked like a Masai from East Africa rather than a Somali. He was dark and short with a flat nose. The camelman had a peculiar gait. He walked as if descending from high ground, resembling his camel, possibly a result of long companionship. He was “assan”, brownish in colour.

I carried with me some milk and water, my suit case and bedding; after two hours it was pitch dark; the gale was raging and the breeze was very cold. We heard wolves howling nearby and I was told that lions very frequently came down in that area in search of a prey. I was not scared and instead started looking at the skies Polaris in the North and Venus in the East.

Jungle Massage

Suddenly, a stream came in our way drifting towards the sea. We had to deroute westwards on this marine ridge until found a crossing on the coral rocks, where the stream was thin. There were many shrubs growing profusely in several places but it was too dark to distinguish between them. Late that evening the moon appeared and lit the vast plains. Hares, foxes and squirrels shot out and at midnight we reached a village and a tea-house surrounded by thorns. I descended from the camel and a fire was lit. I felt absolutely stiff and could not bend my back, whereupon the camelman made me lie on a mat in the compound of the tea house and started pressing me very vigorously. The massage gave me much relief. After one hour we continued our trek. We had already crossed 36 miles. At day break we met many women carrying milk in water skins.

Big Thirst

Our supply had already thickened and curdled. We purchased some fresh milk. The camelman and the Illalo between them gulped more than a gallon. It was amazing how much they could drink.

We reached Berbera at 9 A.M. where everybody thought that the venture was brave and that I was fortunate to return safely. I thought that there was an excellent security system. Very few crimes were committed. I paid generously for my transport and escort.

October 26, 1961

Men, Matters and Memories (48)

MY TALK TO SOMALIS CAUSES A RIOT

Commercial activity

I lived in British Somaliland for some years, between 1930 and 1935. I was the manager of A. Besse in Berbera and had the other branches of Hargeisa and Burao under my control. It was a period in my life of hard work and exciting experience. I sold ship-loads of rice, sugar, kerosene oil, petrol and other petroleum products. I purchased and shipped one million sheep and goatskins as well as gum and cattle annually. I captured the whole market and gave goods on credit to every merchant in the land. I engaged hundreds of camels and tens of trucks to fill the cargo to Erigavo, Burao, Hargeisa, Buramo and Jig-Jiga, and regularly visited all these towns.

There were several European firms in Berbera buying skins, but inspite of the sharp competition A. Besse had the upper hand in the market. The Halal Shipping Co. Motor Vessels – El-Amin and El-Hak – called at Berbera weekly to carry 1500 to 2000 sheep and goats, for the Arilai (Somali dealers in livestock). This business was carried on for many years by Cowasjee Dinshaw, who had a branch at Shaab (Berbera) before I was able to capture it.

Socio Political Activity

I visited Burao on an inspection tour. I was entertained by Shaikh Abdus Sadeq the Qadhi of Burao. At Maghreb prayers in the mosque he asked me to speak to a big congregation.

I told the audience that Somalis and Arabs were brothers in Islam and were ethnically of the same origin. When the Abyssinians were driven back to from Yemen by the Azadian or the Persian army of liberation and the Arabs, in the year (593 A.D.) a constant influx of semites in Somaliland took place.

The Arabs absorbed the Galla element, which was supreme in the country, and drove them inland. The two main Somali divisions, Darod and Ishaq, were of an Arab blood. I mentioned that several Somali words were Himyartic, such as “rob” which means “rain” I then said the country was devoid of schools.

There was not single primary school. A few indigenous schools taught Qoran to boys. Illiteracy was rampant. I suggested that the people should pay the Zakaat (annual charities) to a responsible committee and gradually build schools and eradicate illiteracy among boys and girls.

Suddenly, I heard obstreperous protests. Several Wadads (religious leaders) left the mosque. There was a commotion. Some of them outside the mosque began sloganning “Wa-Wahhabi” I stopped speaking. A few young men asked me to continue but the Qadhi thought that the situation had

become tense. People gathered in larger numbers outside the mosque. The Police came with a truck and pulled me out. They carried me to the Military Camp, and there put me in the house of Mohamed Saleh Abdil Nabi (Hamchari) now employed in the Secretariat at Mukalla. I was bewildered, but the police inspector returned after two hours and told me that I had broached a very delicate point in the life of the people. They used to pay all the Zakat yearly to the Wadads, who squandered it. I suggested depriving them of it, for building schools. The idea was marvelous but the Wadads resented it and they could have easily killed me, if I had come out of the mosque, No murder is caused in a sacred place. Next morning I motored to Shaikh.

Complaint to Court

I was taken to a District Commissioner who was very kind. He told me I was very courageous to say those words. I said, “I did not know that I was running risks”. He laughed and said I was stigmatized as “Wahhabi” or follower of the dissenter, Mohamed Abdul Wahhab who inaugurated a new faith in Nejd (Saudi Arabia). Besides, it was prohibited to teach girls.

I wrote the story to Ashoura Arabic (Cairo) weekly. A Wadad misinterpreted my anthropological theory of the Somalis and falsely spread that I had blasphemed this noble race. Some Somalis in Aden went to the court with complaint against me. Khan Bahadur Mohamed Yasin Khan, Chief Magistrate, read the article in the paper and told the complainants that I had praised them and that they should have been thankful. They were not convinced for a long time.

In Berbera, I started a school and a Club (The Reform Club). Soon Arab and Moslem Indian merchants contributed towards the expenditure. Soon afterwards I organized a football team games. I went to the mosque and spoke of the backwardness of the Somalis and the Arabs in the country. Many young men rallied around me. One of them was Mahmud Ahmed Ali (today director of education in Somalia).

Another was Adan Ismail (a medical officer at present). I had pushed Mahmud Ahmed to leave his village and accept a scholarship to the Sudan.

There was an awakening, and I was happy that my speeches had borne fruit.

Church in Berbera

On Xmas day in 1933, I received a photographic copy of a letter addressed to Father Adolphe, a Catholic Priest, stationed at Jig-Jiga (Abyssinia); dated 1916 asking him to establish a Church in Berbera. It was signed by Syed Assakaf, Qadhi of Zeylah, Mohamed Saeed Hamomi, Police Inspector and two others. I was shocked to read that a Moslem Qadhi should seek the establishment of a church. I called Mohamed Ahmed, Adan Ismail, Haj Ahmed Aboubekr (a merchant) and Ali Hindi (another merchant) and many others to a conference. We decided to send the card (Photostat) to the Qadhi of Zeylah for an explanation. A small sailing boat was engaged and dispatched. Hasson Obaid, Custom Officer, helped in finding a messenger.

When the Qadhi read the letter and saw the card he ran out like a mad man from his house to the District Commissioner of Zeylah with the letter. It was a forgery. Someone had cheated Father Adolphe and said the letter was signed by the Qadhi and other Moslems.

A few days later the news spread like wild fire throughout Berbera and a delegation composed of hundred of Aqils and Wadads approached the District Commissioner of Berberah to send away Father Adolphe from British Somaliland. He came to my office and was very angry. He had distributed hundreds of those cards. Ultimately he repaired to Jig-Jiga where a Church was functioning.

Governor Requires

Sir Lawrence, the Governor of Somaliland, sent for me and asked me the object of my activities. I said, "I just wished to teach the people. I am a merchant, but I am also a teacher" He said, "You will just make the people unhappy". I told him that with education they will never be worse. He did not mention the case of Father Adolphe, although I was informed that the latter had made complaint.

November 2, 1961

Men, Matters and Memories (49)

“THE WADDAD” LEADS A HOLY WAR IN AFRICA The “Darawish” (Disciples) Follow him Unswervingly

The Waddad, Mohamad Abdullah Hasson was born in Kirit, Dolbahanta country in the year 1865. He belonged to the Rer Suleiman Bahajiri, and his mother was a Dolbahanta, Farah Garad Rer Ali Gerei. The Dolbahanta were richest in stock among the Somali tribes, the biggest in number and the strongest in the 19th XIX century. So were the Ogadens, who had among them a number of learned men, notably the Shaikhash and the Aba Yunus, well taught in Moslim Law.

In 1890 Mohammed Abdullah Hasson was in Aden. He was a friend of my father, and had an opportunity to visit Europe, from which he returned to Aden with exciting stories of culture and progress. He subsequently went on a pilgrimage to Mecca, where he attended religious circles and adopted the Salihhiyah Tariqah, which was founded by Sheikh Mohammad Saleh. He studied Mohammadan religious law and the Arabic language in which he excelled. He returned to Berbera in 1895, as a religious teacher and Tariqah leader. He was at loggerheads with the missionaries. He propagated a Fatwa that Qat (a mild narcotic shrub “KATHA ADULIS”) was a prohibited plant and that it was against the dictates of religion to drink liquid fat, in which many Somalis indulge and developed indigestion, and fell ill.

Wadad Leaves Barbera

One of the missionaries in Berbera is said to have directed a shot against the caller to prayers one morning. There was a commotion in the town, fanned by Waddad. Later, he left the port for the 5000 foot hill station of Shaikh, on his way to Burao. My disciples clustered around him. My maternal grandmother’s brother Muhammadi Abdullah served the Waddad, as a clerk and interpreter. He related to me many aspiring stories about the courage, eloquence, and generosity of this great African nationalist in 1911. I visited Berbera in 1913, when the British expeditionary force was facing a relentless war with the Wadad.

He was then carrying regular sorties against the British armies and had come with his men, the Darawish, as far as Dubar watershed, eight miles to the west of the port. I met MAASHDON, an Arab from Aden, who also served the Wadad and knew much about him.

Berbera in 1930

When I was in Somaliland and, I found that most of the Somalis considered the Wadad to have been a blood thirsty tyrant, and few indeed spoke highly of his nationalism and patriotism. I read some books and interviewed many of the Somali elders, including Jama Awad of the Arab Golinai Tribes, Berri Elmi (Baaila Tribes), Hasson Elmi, Mohammad Abdulla Saad (a very intelligent Arab born in the country), Farah Omar, who became a nationalist, later in his life, after serving British Consulate in Harrar and Awadth Dahman Saadi. I was also fortunate in acquiring a book in

manuscript, written by the Wadad Mohamed Abdullah Hasson, in his own handwriting. In this book he laid down his own philosophy of the Moslim religion and explained the reasons why he had waged war against Britain, France, Italy and Ethiopia.

Markmanship and Horsemanship

Thousands of Somali tribesman went to seek his blessings and join the rank and file of the army of liberation, in the Holy War, He told his DARAWISH, "Shoot at stakes. For every correct shot, God will reward you for killing an infidel." He encouraged marksmanship and every Darwish purchased a rifle. Ammunition was smuggled to the Darwish. He also told his disciples to rear horses and learn to ride them, because he said a warrior paves his way to Paradise on horseback in the battlefield. In this way, there were more horses in British Somaliland during his regime, than in the whole of Africa. His headquarters was in the NOGAL valley where thousands of horses grazed. He never permitted intertribal plunders but he killed his opponent enemies mercilessly and destroyed spies on suspicion. His generosity knew no bounds. He gave 1,000 sheep and 100 camels, in one sitting, to any one man, who deserved the gift.

His disciples were called the Darwish and were fanatically attached to him. They shed their blood to have his blessings.

One of his followers, Ismail Merai, was on a mission in the Jihad (War), and was away from his wife for a long time. One day he came near her village and went to see her. When she saw him she went to bring milk and honey to entertain him. On her return his foot was still on the stirrup of his horse and his hand held the reins. She looked at him with remonstrances in her eyes. Food was served, but he did not touch it and spoke in verse.

My dear wife, do not doubt my love, I have not loved another, I have not touched another female and shall never do. Please listen carefully, So that you may excuse my absence. The Wadad, my Ustaz (Professor) sent me to Jihad, I fought in the name of God, I saw the end of infidels, I have come back just to see you and to return to the battlefield, After anointing my brow, With my teacher's blessings. You have served food, But I have decided not to enjoy it, I have dedicated my life to God, Jihad is not yet over, I am going to fight, Leaving all these luxuries and you. I shall not sleep in your bed, until victory is our, Or I die, under the banner of the Holy War.

Farewell

The Wadad sent one of the Darawish to bring him information in British military movements. The man mutilated parts of his body. He reached Burao and said the Wadad had done that. He was treated and given medicine. In good time he carried back the news his Ustaz wanted.

I told the Somalis that the Wadad was a great hero and the younger generation began to collect stories about him.

I was nicknamed “Ina Abdullah Hasson” and “Libah Yara” or “The Son of Abdullah Hasson” or “The Young Lion,” in a way that they nicknamed people generally. Major Hoarseley, a District Commissioner was called GAANLOW and one with a lame leg (Luglow). A man who told lies was nicknamed BAINALAI and so on.

THE WADAD’S REVOLUTION

In his book the Wadad drew out four circles, one allocated to each of the four imperialist powers and the names of the tribes who were directly under their suzerain. He called upon all the tribes to throw off the yoke of Colonialism otherwise they would be considered infidels. Their mother country made it incumbent upon them to join a Holy War against the Kaffirs (non-Moslems).

This was at a time when the European powers were opening new colonies and exploiting new fields in Africa. There is therefore, no doubt in my mind that the Wadad, who was called the MAD MULLAH by the missionaries and the British Officers, was the pioneer and father of Africa Nationalism in this country.

November 9, 1961

Men, Matters and Memories (50)

THE HAPPIEST YEARS OF MY LIFE

Playing Hard, Working Hard and Delving Into Somalia's Past

I spent four years in Berbera and other districts in British Somaliland. I think they were some of the happiest years of my life. I went fishing huge sharks, kingfish, Sakhla and Durab, in a sailing boat at Ras, the end of the inner harbour. I swam at Shaikh Juberti and played football. I published the first newspaper in manuscript "SHAMSAN", (Shum Shum hill), and many young boys in Berbera came weekly to read it. A copy was sent to Aden, for the benefit of the members of the Arab Reform Club.

Somali Climate

Rains in British Somaliland are intermittent. There is very often a long drought, but between November and March, the climate is very pleasant; this is the "JELAL" season; rains are not heavy in these months. The "WAJINA" rains in the last two months of the year and the "HEES" rains in January and February improve the health of the cattle, especially the Blackhead Sheep and the goats. The quality of the skins these months is excellent.

Nights are cold in the highlands. It is warm during the day unless it rains. In the lowlands, in summer, it is usually very hot during the day, but in the Khareef season, between April and September the mornings are pleasant till noon, when the weather warms up. The temperature rises to 116 degrees Fahr. In mid-summer during the day between 11 A . M and 4P . M; at night the temperature drops.

The "GOW" rains, in May and June, make the country look green and fertile. The cattle deliver during these months and there is then an abundant supply of milk. Sheperds and farmers collect funds for the rest of the year; but if the "gow" rains fail then it would be calamitous.

Migration

Hundreds of merchants and workmen leave the coastal strip and the lowlands for the colder highlands areas – Burao, Erigavo, Hargeisa and Buramo. Fruit, Qat and cereals reach Hargeisa from Jig-Jiga , Harrar and Fiambera, near Jig-Jiga. After September, the trading season starts and dhows from the Persian Gulf and Aden reach the ports of the Horn of Africa, Zaila, Berbera and Hais, with dates, rice and sugar. They return with loads of skins, gums, cattle and guano. All the immigrants come back.

Diseases

Malaria is endemic. Relapsing fever is a fearful malady in the south. I spent a night in a valley, in Bunadda, and had a relapsing fever for many days. I was treated by Mr. Timms, a very kind British medical officer in Berbera. He thought I was fortunate to get over it. Tuberculosis, as a result of malnutrition, is not usual.

Eye disease, as a result of glare, and reflection of light from the quartz on the sands and the rocks, impair the eyesight. Goggles help to protect the eyes, although an eye-specialist once told me that the people of the land do not need them. A new comer has to avoid sunstroke.

Recent History

The Egyptians had occupied Berbera for many years during the period of Empire Building, by Ismail Pacha, who had contracted a big loan from the Rothschilds and Oppenheims and was unable to pay it back. They constructed a Jetty, “The Iron Jetty” at Shaab, a mile away from the native town, a grand mosque, in the same area, a light house, further north, and discovered the Dubar Springs which supply Berbera with fresh water. They also built a mausoleum for Shaikh Yousuf Al Konain, who, it is believed, had introduced Islam into the country.

After the British occupation, in 1882, the British garrison and the British Officers occupied the Shaab district. Very few had their families with them. They remained socially aloof and had never, to my knowledge, invited any Non-European to their social evenings. They were however, kind to their Somali servants. Local talent was ignored. The Indians were the chief officers in almost all the departments, the Treasury, the Customs, and the P.W.D. There was no education department. (1930/1934), and two Arabs – Mohamed Abdul Nabee (Hamchari) and Hasson Obaid, were the only high Arab officials, a few Somalis in the lower grade.

Trip to Hargeisa

I left Berbera one morning at 10 AM accompanied by Abdullah Nasser, a Brother of Mr. Besse. We carried 16 bags of sugar for the agent and left by the same truck. No taxis were available. There were a few automobiles, owned by some of the officers, whom I used to supply with petrol, lubricating oils, tyres and tubes. Near the gate leading to the hinterland we re-fuelled, and saw an Italian plane parking for aviation supplies from the Besse store.

It was in Mid-December that the Highlands were cold and green. We found plenty of milk, boiled mutton and roast lamb, on the way, at La Farrooj (The Valley of Death). Here, in a pitched battle between the Darods and the Ishaks there was a huge number of casualties. The Darods, who had descended from the Ogaden, fighting for their freedom, secured their independence.

Encounter with a Lion

Tayebali Suehmanjee, Nagi bin Beriak and M.O. Nonoo followed us in another truck. After examining some skins at Shaikh Abdal, Tayebali called out to me. When I had gone near him he showed me a lion, lying quietly in the valley, below us. We stood on a higher level. He suddenly stoned the lion, who leapt violently to reach us.

Ran for my Life

I nearly lost my patience with my friend, but I had to run fast to save my life and his. We reached the village of Manderia and shouted. The tribesmen came out with their spears. A young Indian very nearly fell a prey to the beast, when the Somalis chased away the lion. It was my first experience of meeting a lion in the open. The area was wild, infested with ferocious animals. On a rising ground just a little distance from the motor road, I saw three young leopards standing on a rock, looking at us with avarice.

November 16, 1961

Men, Matters and Memories (51)

WE WERE CHASED BY LION 3 MILES

Green Country, Lovely Gardens

During my trip to Hargeisa, in British Somaliland, in 1930, I had an opportunity to examine the district for supplies of blackhead sheep skins and goatskins, classified as Berry and Butchery. The importation of Leopardskins was banned, in order to save the telephone wires from plunder. The midgans of the pariah Bedouins used to cut off the telephone lines to make traps out off them for the leopards, and thus disturb internal communications.

From Mandeira, the rope making locality, we proceeded towards the fast-growing town of Hargeisa. We got down into a very green valley with plenty of shrubs, BOO and GALOL, and wild yellow flowers. The day was wearing away and the breeze was cold and bracing. One of the trucks stopped to fill its radiator and Somali Wadad got down to say his ASAR (afternoon) prayers. There was very little water available for ablutions and the Shaikh dug a trough with his long dagger in the bed valley. Within a few minutes water flowed profusely through his fingers, fresh water crystal clear, and we all ran with our mugs to have a sip.

A Green Land

At dusk we reached Adadlay, a rich pastoral area. It was a broad plain, green and attractive. Millet was cultivated in one side of it. We passed by an aweinspiring building, in which, I was told, missionaries had lived for some time, all alone in that solitary place. Cattle were returning to the pens from the grazing grounds tended by young girls and little boys when suddenly a passerby asked the sheperds aloud "RERKI HAGOO OGOORAI" (Where has my village repaired to?) and a reply came resounding, in the hollowness of the evening. "IT HAS MOVE WESTWARDS".

The Home of The Lion

We had covered nearly 60 miles during the day before reaching Dobatto Village, most populous on this route. There were many huts, erected on Meethi rafters, and covered with fronds or mats. Some of the richer inhabitants had the floors of their cottages covered with coloured mats and the walls decorated with trays or hand-fans decked with coloured beads. A number of huts had compounds around them to serve as pens for the livestock and thorny fences, with a gate at the far end. We were supplied with sour milk (usually camel's milk), and roast mutton for supper. Boiled rice, dates and tea can also be had in all these stations.

A story was then related to us that three lions had attacked sheperds near Argan, not far from Dobatto and devoured one of them, but that they were able to kill one of the lions. Two of the sheperds were injured and were sent to Hargeisa for treatment the previous day.

Four years later I was with my wife, on our way to Hargeisa. She was in a family way, carrying my son Farouq we descended from a truck and went behind the tress for convenience. We saw a lion gazing at us, just a few paces away. She saw his eyes glowing but I did not give her cause for alarm. We returned to our party and related the story. “The beast was not hungry”, I was told; otherwise the story would have been related quite differently.

Intense Cold

We reached Hargeisa, well after midnight. The breeze was snow cold. We slept in a small house provided by Shaikh Badeeb. Early next morning, I heard the screams of Abdallah Nasser, saying “My fingers, my fingers”. What has happened to your fingers “I enquired. “They are gone”, he said and from under the blanket I looked at him. He had dipped his fingers in cold water to wash his face, to say his morning prayers and they were benumbed. “I cannot feel them”, he shouted. I got up, shivering like a reed in a storm. I called out for help, to get some fire, but I could not venture out lest. I in my turn should lose my whole body. A Somali boy came in a few minutes, almost, with no clothes on carrying a grateful of glowing embers. Abdallah Nasser place his fingers on the fire, for quite long time until he had felt he had recovered them.

Hargeisa Climate

The climate of Hargeisa is very pleasant in summer. It is even mild in winter but we were not used to cold climates.

Rains are not infrequent and are often torrential. The inhabitants are very friendly. It is 4000 feet above sea level.

November 23, 1961

Men, Matters and Memories (52)**THE SOMALI KINGDOM ADAL KING ADAL SAVED SOMALIS**

Once more in 1934, I traveled in British Somaliland. I stopped for a day in Hargeisa and thence drove to Daboloq a hilly countryside, with beautiful green pastures and thousands of ewes, sheep and goats. Parts of the district appeared dreary and even gloomy. Camel transport had been considerably reduced. I had arranged in Hargeisa for a long caravan to carry Kerosene Oil, Petrol, Soap and Sugar to Jig-Jiga. The truck had already captured the bulk of the transport trade, but the camel remained the mainstay of the prosperity of the village and the tribe generally.

We reached Arabsiyo, in the Gadabursi scrubland, where large tracts were cultivated, with maize and millet. Hundreds of cows with branching horns roamed about near the fields, and further west we found many perennial woody herbs and few wild flowers.

Wild Animals

In this part of the country, zebras, giraffes, and ostriches flourished in the past; even the rhino and the elephant were hunted here, and in the Ogaden country. These beasts have disappeared in recent times but the lion, the leopard, the wild boar, big turtles, and the treacherous hyena continue to infest the bushes and the forests of the Jibril Aboukar and the desert land of Dagahboor and Dagahmadow, near the borders of Ethiopia. Many unwary peasants and domestic animals are assailed by these ferocious animals. The Somali is nevertheless known for courage in fighting them and even destroying them with his spear, dagger, and arrow.

Untouchables

The Arab historian Ahmed Zaki Pacha wrote in 1923, that the best saddles were made from the hide of the Somali ass, (probably the Zebra). He related how the Somalis prepared poison from a local plant. They cooked it, until it thickened like coal-tar. Then the hunter would incise a part of his body and let it bleed. The poison is brought near the blood. If effective, the blood would recede and shrink. If it did not, then they would continue to cook it. Their arrows were then dipped in this poison, before shooting the wild animals, whose hides, horns, and tusks, they sold to European merchants at Berberah and Zeylah. I enquired about this custom and learnt that Midgans, the Ibirs and Tomals were three classes of Somalis who were untouchables.

Somali Kingdom

The Negus, King of Ethiopia, A'amdä Sion, had waged relentless war against the Somalis in 1332. A.D., but he was defeated and his armies routed by KING ADAL of Zeylah. His successors, the Kings of ADAL, fought many glorious battles against Negus Zaraq Yaqob, and his successor AMARA AMHALE. The ADAL Kings protected Somali tribesmen and Dankalis from the tyranny of the Ethiopian monarchs. In 1403 A.D., King Mohamed Bin Arwa Badlay, a grandson of Saad Addin, after whom the province of Zeylah was named, stemmed the tide of Abyssinian hordes led by Negus DAVID I.

I stayed in Jig-Jiga for six days and was able to convince the Arab population to establish "A Primary School." I had written to them before my arrival. Before my departure, to Harrar, I saw the school functioning with 40 boys attending the classes. Syed Muhsen Assakkaf a very intelligent Arab merchant contributed generously towards the project.

Mr. Asgharali, of G.M. Mohamedaly, arranged for my trip to Harrar. I left by truck. The road was difficult and in some places almost impassable. But it was safe. The landscape appeared as if it had been shaken by earthquake. In 7 hours we reached the green valleys of Harrar.

Harrar was a Moslem dependency of Imam Giran bin Ahmed bin Ibraahim, who was assisted by Sultan Selim I of Turkey when his armies stormed Yemen and he was able to fortify himself against Abyssinian attacks. Before 1882 Ismail Pasha the Khedive of Egypt conquered Harrar and Somaliland but he lost that empire subsequently when the British Government took it over from the Egyptian Governor. A Somali chieftain of the Behen diara clan, and the Tribe of Eval Ahmed swam to the British cruiser lying in the Berbera Harbour to sign a treaty with its commander in which he agreed for Somaliland to become a British protectorate.

Major Hunter, who wrote the history of Somaliland and Aden, 80 years ago, had occupied Harrar, but he handed it over to Abdillahi Abdut Shakoor a notable of Harrar. The French tried to snatch it from his hands and landed a force at Djibouti (French Somali Coast), but they were frustrated, by the difficulties and obstacles placed in their way by Captain Staice, the British Governor of Zeylah and his Somali interpreter Said Mirgan. They contented themselves with the slice known as the Cotes Francais des Somalis.

King of Shoa, Menelik Ethiopia, subsequently annexed Harrar and made it part of his empire.

Plentifulness

Jig- Jiga and Harrar form a fertile tract of land , growing millet , wheat , maize , beans , peas , vegetables , coffee and Qat, peaches . Figs , apples and mangoes grow in abundance . The exports are coffee , cereals , gums , skins and hides , Bamusaika furs , ghee , rabbit skins, rhinoceros horns , ostrich feather , and other valuable commodities The imports comprise textiles , aluminium ware , sugar . Kerosene Oil , Petrol and Luxury goods .

November 30, 1961

Men, Matters and Memories (53)**SCARF PRESENT CONSIDERED BETROTHAL****Had Run Away Avoid Marriage****Qat Addiction Clogging Progress**

Harrar is one of the principalities of the Emperor Haile Sellasi. It is hilly, colourful and full of beautiful flowers of various shades, on the plateau and in all the fertile valleys. The climate is temperate in summer but cold in winter. The landscape is graceful and reminds one of Greece, its bushes and lovely villages, with the difference that Greece is scrupulously clean, and the Abyssinian villages are marshy and untidy.

The Health Seekers Resort

Harrar, could be one of the finest hill stations in the Middle East . Sanatoriums could easily be built on the hill tops and hundreds of health seekers would flock to that resort. It is famous for its quality QAT, the narcotic shrub, with intoxicating flavour, in which the whole Moslem population indulges. The Amharic community, the sovereign rulers of the country, are especially educated to shun it. A dominant community must not be doped. But the governed may be let loose with a long rope to hang themselves; to make it easier to govern them. The Moslem QOTTO, the Somali and the Arab are addicts of the shrub. They chew it in large quantities commencing in the early hours of the day, calling the habit H'aararah (warmth); and finishing with the MARQANA in the afternoon. The latter expression means "relaxation". They drink a lot of local beer in the evening, "TALLA & T'UJ" another form of liquor made from honey. Even little boys and girls drink "talla".

I observed many lunatics, in the town, who run frantically to secure a supply of QAT, upon its arrival on the bazaar stalls. I chewed some of it and it was with some difficulty that I was able, after some time, to resist the habit.

Abyssinia, can never hope to raise her head in the committee of nations and make wide progressive strides, while qat is narcotic of her 70% Moslem population, all over the state. The Amhara, as long as they shun the habit, will remain in power, but the Kingdom will remain weak and backward. Progress can never be achieved piecemeal. The entire nation must rise at one and the same time or remain dull and dormant.

I was welcomed generously by the Arabs of Harrar, where I saw several missionary schools. There was no school for the hundreds of Arab and Harrari boys who were rotting in the streets and becoming qat addicts. I admonished friends, for this negligence. They were unresponsive, and utterly headless. A friend rehearsed in verse: "You could make the living hear, but the dead cannot respond".

With the Abyssinian Commander

I visited the GIBBI or Government house, where I had a friend, Mr. Hassanain, a Syrian engineer. He introduced me to RAS NASIBU the Commander-in-Chief of the Abyssinian armies. His mother was French and I spoke to him in French. His colour was wheatish and his face sympathetic and kind. He was laid up with fever and was in bed; yet he saw me and discussed several points of importance including

- a) supply of 2000 cases of Petrol from Berbera, from the stores of compared prices of Socony Vacuum and Standard Oil Co. and
- b) the possibilities of purchasing armaments from Germany through Doctor Zeki Kiram. He gave me a letter of introduction to the King, in Addis Ababa, but did not give me a Railway ticket to that end. I was also dissuaded by my friends since the whole country was in state of chaos.

After leaving him I met General Wahib Pacha who was arranging the defence of the Ogaden against the Italian invasion. They were mustering their forces in Somalia, near Walwal, which was the immediate excuse for their encroachment upon Ethiopia. Subsequently I returned to Harrar.

Difficulty

On our way, it rained heavily. Our old Ford slipped into a ditch and we had much difficulty in putting it on its wheels again. We enjoyed the immense variety of the scenery, which, however, in large tracts of the country seemed to change very little. There were tilled valleys and spacious and rich pastoral areas. As we drew nearer to Harrar, the skyline appeared broken by long ranges of hills, a mosaic of verdure; hills of music and anecdotes.

We stopped at the picturesque HERAMAYA Lake, with its myriads of ducks swimming on the face of the internal water shed, glowing with colour and beauty. It looked awesome in its stillness, secret in its remoteness yet attractive in its magical calmness. We found some Europeans preparing to shoot ducks and deer in the surrounding country.

Between Dire-Dawa and Harrar, no buildings crown the highlands; but conic huts, in the Abyssinian fashion appear forming villages scattered all over the place, upon coffee and Qat plantations, difficult of access. I thought those solitary hills would be suitable for saints or pious meditation if not for atomic research and stellar calculations.

I met many Moslems savants and jurists in Harrar. Some of them were capable scholars of Arabic, and were in possession of some valuable books on history, jurisprudence and philosophy.

In Harrar, I was entertained in the garden of Mohamedaly, one of the most important firms in the country in those days. They were made to leave the country, after the second World War Because they had failed to help the Emperor financially , during his refuge in Europe , after the conquest of Ethiopia by Mussolini .

THE BEAUTY AND THE SCARF

In the garden I had a surfeit of peaches and mangoes and on my return to town one afternoon I stopped in a valley to get a supply of Qat . I found a beautiful Harrari girl , about 18 years , fair and handsome , with a tattoo running from her brow down her nose and lips to the end of her chin . She looked very cheerful and was singing. I went near with my horse and she looked at me askance. I said " May I have some qat ? " She did not reply but quietly gathered a quantity of leaves without roots and came away running with her breasts heaving . I thanked her and gave her a dollar , but she declined it . drooping thought of something else and searching in my pockets I found a silk scarf , which I gave her . She received it with delight and upon riding back to town she followed me and suddenly jumped behind me on the horse . did not object .

" Flabbe - gasted "

A few hours later , her father came to me with another and said that he was pleased to accept my betrothal of his daughter .

I was " flabbergasted " " When did I do it ? " I asked . " You gave her a silk scarf and all have seen her behind you on your horse " . That was that . I was dumbfounded . My friends began congratulating me gleefully and laughing to their hearts , content . The father promised to return with the bride in a few days, but , by then ,I was a 1000 miles away .

December 7, 1961

Men, Matters and Memories (54)**SPRINGS OF EUROPEAN PROGRESS****My First Book In Arabic****“I Don’t dispraise The camel”**

During my sojourn in Berbera, I produced a book in Arabic, in 80 pages, entitled “The Springs of European Progress”. It was printed in Cairo and published by my father, who had a bookshop in Crater, after his retirement. Hundreds of copies were sold out in Aden, Yemen and Somaliland. The foreward was written by Emir Shakeeb Arslan, a great Arab Historian who was in Geneve. He said “People of Yemen are kind, intelligent and passionate. A good example of this nation is Syed Mohamed Ali Lokman, who publishes very regularly, in the newspapers, interesting articles. No wonder! Wisdom has been attributed to Lokman, whose word was gospel of truth. Now we read Lokman’s judicious maxims, humorous axioms and lofty thoughts, in a simple, yet fluent style, an indication of wide knowledge.”

I described in my book what I considered were the reasons for European progress. In the preface, I wrote: “The subject matter of this book shall be a survey of the character of the European, which has enable him to dominate the world, to succeed in life, inspite of adversities and to acquire a vast knowledge in science and arts. Today (1932), the fate of Britain, France, Italy, Russia, and Holland is in the balance. We shall soon realize whether Colonialism is or is not fit to control mankind and dominate the EAST. I shall describe the European way of life, in the light of my own experience, hoping that we, in this part of the world, might copy this civilization just as the Europeans had done, in copying Arab culture in Spain. Europe is facing a disastrous War. Let the East rise from oblivion and retrieve its lost glory.”

The European has shunned and discarded bigotry; drew a line of difference between science and religion; imbibed knowledge and worked hard in the field of industry; he learnt innumerable foreign languages and sought wisdom, disseminated erudition, loved life in all its manifestations, honoured the great (men and women), immortalized the heroes of history, respected and adopted scientific theories, threw away the mantle of inaction, and decided that he was the “chosen being” or Herrenvolk, and the centre of attraction in this world.

The European has studied oriental philosophy, mysticism , ascetiscism, architecture, poetry and adopted many of our virtues. We, in the East, have learnt many of the European vices.

Schools

Schools in Europe were described with reference to female education. They prepared boys and girls for facing life and all its difficulties. Environment was carefully studied and teachers were selected. Qualified teachers were and are preferred to laymen. I said it was useless to make students memorise subjects without proper application. They must know the world around them. I quoted the story of a convict who remained in Sing Sing gaol for 60 years. When he was released, he found a great change and simply went back to his gaolers to permit him to remain in prison. Such would be the fate of a student who would deliberately lead himself to a complicated way of life. I drew attention to the fact that in Yemen, Saudi Arabia and other parts of Arabian Peninsula, there was not a single college or even a good secondary school. "How can we ever hope to produce a Pasteur, an Einstein or Bernard Shaw?" On the other hand, Europe is producing great thinker inventors and leaders enmasse. We had once in our history done the same- Aviroes Ibn Khalladoon , Harun Arrachid, Aricenne.

Emancipation of Women

Europe has freed the woman from the shackles of ignorance, but we continue to keep her in purdah, which is a clog that tends to pull her downwards. We argue that emancipation of the woman would spread immorality. This is an exploded theory. Madame Courie who discovered Radium was pure and chaste all her life. Education and Freedom will make pure, purer still.

An ignorant wife is no inspiration to her husband and is merely an ordinary chattel. I related a story:

"Imam El Qassem of Yemen once heard of a beautiful lass, wise and well educated. He betrothed. She was carried along way to Sanaa on a camel, with several attendants forming a caravan. Near the Capital, the Imam went to meet his bride. When he saw her, he saluted her and enquired "I hope you are not tired of this long journey on the camels". She wittily replied, "I do not dispraise the camels". The Imam was enraptured and ordered consummation of the marriage at that place of meeting, the same night. Her reply was a quotation from a long poem by the famous Yemeni poet IBN ANNAHAS which runs: in rhymed verses:

Question not the longing of lovers,
Friend! It is undescribable.
When our camels bring us together,
Our craving is sustained.
"I do not dispraise the camels"
The tiresome journey is justified,
It has brought our lips together
And we embraced;
And vindicated our love.

December 15, 1961

Men, Matters and Memories (55)**MORE ABOUT “EUROPEAN PROGRESS”**

IN my book, in Arabic, “The Springs of European Progress”, I stated that one of the commendable characteristics of the European was their self-reliance. They think carefully before they make decision but once they make a decision, they do not swerve. In spite of all dissuasions, Columbus proceeded to cross the Atlantic and discovered the Americas – vacant and very rich.

The European is work conscious. He knows that nobody in Europe gives alms to a parasite or a drone. Those of them who go about lazying, starve ultimately. We the Easterners, are more charitable and we thereby, encourage work lessness and beggary.

The Arabs are superstitious. The Europeans are sophisticated and less superstitious; they love and enjoy mythology; we believe in myths; they forge out their own fate; we abandon ourselves to destiny. Our means of communication in Arabia is primitive; this means in Europe is amazing and marvelous.

The Arabs waste long hours in chewing qat, which impairs their health. The European indulges in sports, which have become part of his daily life. Sports and physical training help the Europeans build up strong bodies, generate energy and make them always cheerful. They play tennis, football, hockey, polo, golf, badminton and many other games. They swim, they ride, they walk long distances and are generally very active.

On the other hand, we, in Aden, and in Southern Arabia are very lazy indeed! We spend hours on every day and every night in chewing qat, listlessly and hopelessly.

Nationalism

The European is very patriotic and nationalistic. There is not a single know spy among them working for a Government in the Orient (1930).

In the vx century A.D. General Barraq bin Ammar, an Arab, the commander in chief of the Andalusian armies conspired with the Duke of Venice for the destruction of the Arab Empire in Spain. He suggested that the Duke should make a treaty with the Arabs of Spain, providing “mutual”

1. Freedom of Trade
2. Freedom of Learning and
3. Freedom of Worship

In this way Italy was able to send missionaries to Spain, who proselytised thousands of Arabs: the sale of alcohol and liquor was legalized; and a new culture was introduced. Spain was lost to the Arabs.

The European avail themselves of all opportunities to see new lands and peoples. They are very inquisitive and are well organized. They forget their differences and petty enmities in the face of a common enemy.

Specialization in scientific subjects has been instrumental in producing great scientists and artists of fame in European progress.

The Elite in Colonies

The elite and intellectuals in the Colonies have very little chance of personal aggrandizement and advancement unless they are faithful to their Colonial Governments and co-operative. A stupid but loyal employee is given preferential treatment.

The European thinks freely. He accepts and believes in Democracy, but not for the Colonial peoples.

People in the Colonies were generally taught to be peaceful and submissive. Agitation was conducive of trouble and punishment. Sons of the soil were employed as small clerks or menials. All heads of departments were foreigners.

The schools in Aden taught the history of India, the atrocities of Aurangzeb and Tippu Sultan, the foolishness of the Great Mogul Emperors and Sivaji, and the wisdom of the great Viceroys of the Indian Empire, instead of teaching the history of Arabia and Arabic literature.

I criticized this educational policy in the Arabic newspapers coming from Cairo and Syria to Aden (1924-1933)

December 21, 1961

Men, Matters and Memories (56)**BIN AQIL – HUSBAND OF 104
Offer of Ministerial Post in Sanaa
INGRAMS BOMBS HADHRAMAUT**

I first met Syed Mohamed bin Aqil in 1929. He was 72, a descendant of the Prophet Mohamed, a dedicated Alouite and an author of several books on Shiite Philosophy. He was, moreover, an authority on Moslem jurisprudence; pious and iron willed. He was renowned in Hadhramaut for his shrewdness and his knowledge of world affairs.

Imam Yahya Moslem Caliph

He propagated for Imam Yahya of Yemen to become the Caliph of Islam. In fact, Imams of Yemen have been calling themselves the Commanders of the Faithful. He felt that if Imam Yahya was recognized as the legitimate Caliph of Moslems, the Aden Protectorates would automatically join the Yemen, to march under its banner.

He was a Hadhrami by birth and origin. The people held him in high esteem, but he was at variance with Sultan Omer El Quaiti of Mukalla. He was very critical of the lewdness of the Sultans, and their unwarranted expenditure on personal, luxuries. "Hadhramut", he said " was groaning under a fierce tyranny." He was closely watched by the Quaiti Sultanate and escaped with his life to Aden.

He was well-meaning but a misunderstood man. The Sunnis, among the Muhammadans, disagreed with him. He openly cursed the Ummayyads and maintained that their ancestor ABOU SUFIAN, was never faithful to the prophet.

104 Wives

He was a strong character and his one weakness was – the woman. He had married 104 wives – Arabs, Chinese, Javanese, Malayan, Sumatran and Indian. The last was a young Sharifa from Aden, handsome and just 18. He argued that age did not worry a girl, as long as she finds in her husband a man to love and protect her.

He had 16 children living. He had lost many. Syed Bin Aqil spent 50 years of his life in the Far East and had amassed huge wealth, but he was left, of all that fortune, with Rs 6000/ monthly regularly sent him from his agents in Singapore.

Study of History

I spent 18 months with him, revising Arabic Literature and Moslem Law. He related stories to me of misery in his native land. The inhabitants of Hadhramaut lived in insufficiency but provided their Sultans with all means of happiness and comfort. His knowledge of history was authentic, with a bias towards Shiism. He possessed one of the finest libraries in South Arabia with many books in manuscript. The most prized of this priceless collection was "IKIL EL HAMDANI", a history of Yemen in 9 volumes which was eagerly sought after by Arab historians such as the celebrated Ahmed Zaki Pasha, (of Cairo) A. Aziz Ath-thaalibi of Tunis, Nabih El Azma (Beirut), and Shakib Arslan (Lausanne). I had access to that rich Library.

In those years, Mr. Ingrams was Political adviser to Hadhramaut. The tribes in the Highlands – El-Khamiaa and El-halika – and Al Houmoom, inhabiting the coastal area of Shehr upto Reidat El Maara in the uplands had become refractory. Syed Aboubekr bin Shaikh El- Kaf (Knighted in 1954), a generous man and a moderate reformist had at great expense constructed a good motor track from Tarim to the coast. He aimed at improving communications in the country, and wielded great influence among the tribes; but the Bedouins found that this Motor Road had affected adversely their camel transport business and reduced their income. They started, consequently playing havoc on the trade routes, attacking trucks, plundering travelers, and obstructing traffic. No offer of peace was accepted to restore security, whereupon Ingrams hit them hard. RAF planes bombed them, killed them, burnt their villages and destroyed their livestock. They remained adamant, till a serious famine had befallen the country. Then, El Kaf Road contributed to the alleviation of their suffering and penury. Trucks carried food from Mukalla to the highlands and the British Government gave some money to fight the famine.

I had gathered news weekly from Syed Mohamed Bin Aqil and forwarded it to different part of the World.

To Become Minister

Both Syed Mohamed Bin Aqil and Emir Shakeeb Arslan, advised IMAM Yahya to give me a ministerial post in Sanaa. I was convinced by them that I should be able to make a grand career. Imam Yahya wrote asking me to proceed to the capital of Yemen, but I was in service with Besse and I did not like to make a leap in the dark. I delayed my departure. In the meanwhile, Prince El Badr, brother of the present Imam Ahmed, sent me a letter written by Qadhi Mohamed El Hajri, the famous Arab genealogist, brother of the present Minister of Communications Qadhi Abdallah El Hajri, with a present, comprising a silver and gold bed sheet (used as a loongie in Yemen, called Shaidher) a tin of Almonds and 150 dollars. In his letter the Prince insisted on my acceptance of the offer of the Imam of Yemen.

He undertook, personally, to help me and give me all that I wanted. Shaikh Mohamed Ali El Hitari of Tawahi also came with a similar message to me.

Unfortunately, in that week, Prince Mohamed who was the Governor of Hodeidah and Tihama country was drowned, in the Hodeidah harbour while trying to rescue a young boy who was swimming at the same time.

December 28, 1961

Men, Matters and Memories (57)**Stopped SULTAN'S ASSASSINATION****Banned from Entering Lahej****Hairbreadth Escape**

Sultan Sir Abdul KARim Fadhl decided to elect a successor to the Sultanate of Lahej in the year 1928. He chose his son Prince Fadhl, who was dissolute and inefficient. The act undertaken by the Sultan was absolutely unconventional. The custom followed by the Princes and Aqils of the State was to elect a Sultan, immediately after the death of the one ruling. A college of electors convenes a meeting and declares the next ruler. There are four houses comprising the ruling family: The Ali Muhsens, the Fadhl Muhsens, the Munasser Muhsens and the Abdallah Muhsens, one from each house and one Arab chief from the principal tribes of the Abdali State – the Sallamis, the Bans and the Ozaibis.

Reign of Terror

To implement his high handed action, Sultan Sir Abdul Karim began a reign of terror, and relentlessly struck all his opponents. I was a friend of the Fadhl Muhsens, and articles appeared in the Egyptians papers denouncing the rule of fire and iron. The Sultan became doubtful about my intentions toward his son. I was no longer in his good books. Husain El Aqil of Alhamra village was the headman of El Ban tribe and was my friend. He was a henchman of Prince Fadhl bin Ahmed, one of my friends and a Fadhlmuhsens. He was badly treated at Lahej and he came to Aden with internecine plans. He wanted to assassinate the Sultan but I was able to dissuade him to leave things in the hands of God. He responded and went back to Lahej. Some months later he was attacked with pneumonia and was carried from Alhamra (Lahej), to my house in Aden. We had no Sulpha tablets and non penicillin in 1930.

He died on the ninth day. I had his body transported to Lahej by car.

Midnight Flight

Emir Ali Mohamed Saad was a young revolutionary from Lahej. His father was stabbed to death in 1916 while trying to shield Sultan Abdul Karim in Crater, from assassin. He came to Aden, I looked after him and got him a job in the Singer Co. One evening in 1930 we were together in the Lahej army barracks where we were entertained by some officers. Before midnight some one whispered to the Sultan that we were plotting and we were advised to fly away. We hired a car and left El Hauta after midnight. The car broke down at Bir Nasser, an hour later, and we walked the rest of the road to Dar Saad, which we reached at dawn. We were received there by Emir Saleh Saad, the Governor. He was the uncle of Prince Ali Mohamed Saad. He was suspicious, but we got away to Shaikh Othman.

Lost A Wife

I had a wife at Lahej. My house was searched and my wife was terrified. She never recovered from that fright.

Amir Ali Mohamed Saad, while in Aden studied a book the “TYPICAL DESPOT”, by Shaikh Abdul Rehman al-Kawakibi . He became very rebellious. After the elapse of some months, the Sultan issued a writ of amnesty to him and he went back to Lahej, but I was banned from entering the Abdali State. I was separated from my wife and two children and left for Berbera to serve in the firm of A. Besse. In 1932 I learnt that Emir Ali Mohamed Saad had shot Prince Fadhl Abdul Karim in the eye in assassination attempt and was himself torn to pieces.

My friends the Fadhl Muhsens Princes Ali bin Ahmed , Prince Fadhl bin Ahmed . Prince Mahmoud bin Ali, Prince Muhsen bin Ali, Prince Fadhl Abdul Magid and Prince Fadhl Abdul Qawi – were transported to Seychelles , where they were interned for six years .

Arrested

On my return to Aden from . Berbera in 1935 . I met Sultan Abdul Karim in the Arab Literary Club . He told me that my wife was very sick . I told him that he had stopped me from seeing her . He smiled and said that he had countermanded that order . Next day , I engaged a Ford car and accompanied my son Ali Mohamed and my brother Khaled to Lahej . We were arrested at Dar Saad , and were escorted by two armed soldiers . At the entrance to AL - Hauta we met the Sultan . I thought he meant to throw us into prison but he did not . We were set . free and I went to see my wife to find that she had died a few hours before .

Two Sultans Deposed

That story did not end there . The Princes who were deported from Lahej returned in 1939 and the Sultan continued to rule to 1947 . When his son Fadhl succeeded him , after buying off the electorale College . He ruled for five years most disgracefully . I wrote a book after he had killed his cousins , run away to Yemen . and was deposed – ed .

In the last two years of his life Sultan Sir Abdul Karim became insane . He died in Crater – Aden , in his palace QASR ASHOKR and was buried in the Aidroos cemetery . as a man of great distinction . He left a huge wealth to his sons-Fadhl and Ali . Both ruled over Lahej and both were deposed and are living in exile .

IN 1930, I convened a huge gathering of notables of Crater, Tawahi and Sheikh Othman in the house of Mehboob and Rehan Farahat, in Section D, Street No. 2. The purpose of the gathering was to place before the Government of Aden the demand of the Moslim population to:

- a) Ban the sale of alcoholic drinks to Moslims. Non-Moslims may be granted licenses.

- b) Ban the import of narcotics (opium and ganja). These narcotics like qat were sold to all and sundry addicts and would be addicts in the open market.
- c) Prohibit ZAR performances. Zar is a dance undertaken by women afflicted with hysterical maladies or wives who have not conceived. It was considered irreligious and immoral. It costs any amount of money.
- d) Prohibit Saab, a mixed Somali dance. Many Somali elders, like Haj Ibrahim Noor and Haj Merai Doalai supported the prohibition.

A committee was formed composed of:

- 1) Sheikh Abdalla, Advocate
- 2) Sheikh Mohamed Mehboob
- 3) Saeed Abdallah Khalifa
- 4) M.A. Lokman

We drafted a petition and personally submitted it to Lt. Colonel B.R. Reilly, the Governor.

After long deliberations and several meetings the government agreed:-

- a) To prohibit the sale of opium and ganja, except under license or medical recommendation.
- b) Prohibit Zar performances, which shifted from the colony to Dar Saad and Lahej.
- c) Saab was stopped
- d) Alcohol remained free

January 04, 1962

Men, Matters and Memories (58)

Purchase Of Arms For Yemen Restarted Business And Teaching DEPARTURE TO STUDY LAW

Yemen was invaded by, King ABDUL AZIZ, of Saudi Arabia, in the year 1934. Several Northern Provinces of the country surrendered to the Wahhabi armies without much resistance and it was feared that the whole country would soon fall under the sway of her Northern neighbor. If that were allowed to take place then the British Government, to the South of Yemen, and Benito Mussolini the Italian Dictator, might have shared the spoils with the Saudi Monarch, known in those days, as the Napoleon of Arabia.

The Press, in the Arab World, warned the Arab Kings and counseled wisdom. My son Ali Mohamed Luqman wrote his first political article on this subject. He was only 14. He denounced those unwarranted hostilities, between the two brother Kings. I sent regular dispatches of the war, to the Middle East newspapers.

Emir Chekib, Arslan an Arab philosopher-cum-historian, a refugee in Geneve; Syed Amin Al Husainai, the leader of the Palestinians and Hachem Al ATTASI, the Syrian leader, came down to Mecca and subsequently to Sanaa to intervene, in the cause of Arab Peace and Brotherhood, and to bring the war to an end. They succeeded. The Saudi armies withdrew, retaining some portions of the country of Asir, near the border.

Weak Yemeni Defence

The Imam Yahya of Yemen, discovered, painfully, the weakness of his defence and decided to equip his army with the most modern arms. I received letters from Qadi. Mohamed Al Hajri, the Chief Accountant in Sanaa; Syed Abdallah bin Yahia, a man of literary talent in the Far East (Singapore), Dr. Ashur from Libya and others asking me to help Yemen in her plight.

I was, then, in Berbera, where I had invited some friends to live with me. One was Shaikh Ali Ahmad Bakathir, a poet-novelist from Tarim in Hadhramoat. The second was Tewfiq-Nuri-Burqawi, a geographer and historian from Cyrrainaica. Both, also conceded that I should help in the building up of the Yemen army. I wrote a letter to Dr. Zaki Kiram, an ex-Turkish army Commandeer, who had lost his leg in the Gallipoli campaign, in the First World War, and afterwards went to live in Berlin. He offered to arrange for the purchase of rifles, machine guns, field guns, binoculars and other field equipment. I communicated the offer to Imam Yahia, who agreed to invest M.T. Thalers 3,000,000, to obtain 5000 rifles, 150 guns, a number of field guns and other military equipment. The Fuehrer Herr Hitler, sent me a letter, authorizing the export of these armaments by the manufacturer-suppliers POLTE, ALUMINIUM-WERKE and MAUSER-WERKE.

The goods were shipped to Hodeidah and I refused to receive any remuneration for rendering these services. I received many letters from other German companies offering me their sole agencies in Arabia. I accepted to represent Naumann Sewing Machines, Panther shoes and an agency for distemper and paints.

Start A Shop

I started a shop in Bohra Bazaar, and kept my brother Khaled in charge of it. I continued to work after my return from Somaliland, and finding that the Junior Cambridge had been discontinued, in the Government Vernacular School, Crater I decided to start teaching.

Open Classes

Several boys had joined. To mention only a few: Mahmoud Luqman Barrister at Law. He passed the examination at the end of the year 1935. Hon Ali Luqman, who left for Aligarh University and Hon: Hassonali Bayoomi, who joined in Government service. He is today the Minister for Labour and Local Governments.

With a Mission

After one year, I made up my mind to leave Aden for Bombay to study Law. It was difficult to make that decision. I had lost my second wife, my son Mustapha, another son Salah and a third son Luqman. I had 8 sons and daughters to care for, a mother and 3 young brothers. I had very little cash in hand. But, many friends encouraged me to go. Many of these friends requested me to carry with me their sons to the High Schools in India. I agreed and accompanied: to the Aligarh University, Mahmoud Luqman, Ali Luqman, Abdul Qader Basodan, Abdallah Ismail Khodabux, Mohamed Abdallah Bedwi, Mohamed Ahmed El Asnag and Mohamed Bin Mohamed Rajeh. Some of them benefited immensely. Some did not. But, it was the first mission I sent abroad.

More Missions

Meanwhile I had written to King Farooq of Egypt and King Faisal of Iraq in the name of the Reform Club to give scholarship to Aden boys. This was accepted. Ten boys left Aden in 1936 to Cairo and ten others to Baghdad. Many of them returned after some years as teachers, technicians, lawyers, doctors and so on and so forth.

The Aden Government realized how necessary it was that Aden boys must be taught in the Aden Schools and in U.K. institutions. A movement on a larger scale to achieve this was launched.

January 11, 1962

Men, Matters and Memories (59)**Lecturing In Aligarh University
MY FATHER DIES
COMMUNAL RIOTS IN BOMBAY**

One day in 1936, I thought I should make one last attempt to join in Government service, in Aden. I requested Mr. A. Besse to intercede for me, with the Chairman, Aden Port Trust to appoint me in the post of the Secretary of this semi-government department, which had fallen vacant. I cannot remember the name of that Chairman, probably as a result of my disappointment; because Mr. Besse, who had personally seen the high officials in that department, told me that I should have known that I was not wanted in Government service. I was on the blacklist, like all other nationalists. I apologized to my friend for the derangement. Next day I told him that I had determined to become a lawyer. Smiling he said "Are'nt you too honest to be a lawyer?" "Thank You" I said "but I see no other alternative", to avoid dereliction.

I left Aden by S/S Victoria, an Italian fast motor vessel, on 7th July 1936, leaving behind my wife, eight children, mother, granny and three adopted daughters and 3 brothers whom I was helping.

I reached Aligarh University 5 days later. The vice Chancellor Professor Zianuddin. Ahmed and the Principal, Barrister Abdul Halim, entertained me and admitted the six boys who accompanied me into the High School. I was subsequently offered lecturer of Arabic in the University, and at the same time to study for L.L.B.

Caliphate Party

I gave a lecture on the Arab Revolution of Sharif Hussain at the UNION of the University to hundreds of students, teachers, and Professors including Ustaz Abdul Aziz Memon, professor of Arabic and a great author. The audience included many members of the Khalifat party, who denounced the Arab Revolution and adhered Turkey as the only legitimate centre of Pan-Islamism and the only Power capable of defending Islam against relentless attacks, in those times Europe and Jewry, against Moslim nations. I was fired with number of irritating questions and I tried to explain that Turkey was unmindful of Arab Prosperity and ruled the Arabs most tyrannically. I said the Arabs had a right to become independent.

The enthusiasm for the Ottoman Caliphate was great in India. It was led by the brothers Mohamadali and Shokat Ali. The latter visited Aden and was given a great ovation by the Moslems here.

My Father's Last Wish.

While meditating upon the suggestion of staying in Aligarh for three years to attain the L.L.B. degree, I received the very sad news of the tragic death of my father, 10 days after my departure from Aden. He

had never recovered from the shock of electrocution of his son Abdul Manan, and had wept most bitterly at the funeral of young Mahmoud Mohamed Abdul Qader Mackawi, who died of a sudden heart attack in the prime of his years and he was the only Adeni engineer, who had reached a high position in the Colony. I just said goodbye to all my ambitions and packed to return to Aden to look after the family. I arrived in Bombay to find letters from my brother Saleh and my friend Ahmad Al Asnag that my father's last wish was that I must qualify as a lawyer before returning to Aden.

A Good Father

My father had left 10 sons and daughters and some immoveable property. He had served Government 33 years. He was a scholar of Arabic and was a man of integrity and high moral character; religious, pious and hospitable. He honoured family traditions and was kind and helpful to his sisters and their children. As a father he was rather strict. He trashed his sons mercilessly for every mistake but often lamented the pain he caused them and even sobbed and sought their pardon. He set them an excellent example by his strong character and stainless behaviour. He was an honest man, straight forward and outspoken. His humourous nature made him the idol of his numberless friends in Aden Protectorates, and Yemen. He was very humble. He loved the poor and always considered himself a poor man. To this day, people knew him remember his cheerfulness and his innocent jokes. Only one man among the Luqmans had inherited those commendable traits. It his grandson Ali Mohamed Luqman and to some extent his son Hamza, the historian.

On reading my father's last wish, I carried a letter of recommendation given to me in Aden by A.G. Taraporwala, Advocate, to a Parsce Lawyer in Bombay. He advised me to join the Bombay Law classes and sit for the Bombay High Court Advocate's Examination, conducted by the Bombay Bar Council. He said, "you can pass in one year, if you work diligently." That suited me very well.

Bombay Law Classes

I joined the classes, where I found old and young preparing for the legal profession. A man of forty had attended these classes for 18 years without success. His knowledge of law is stupendous but he could never pass the examination. His own two daughters had graduated in Law, with his help, but he remained a professional student of Law. There were others who had attended for more than six years and there were many girls. One of them was Kamla Saamant, a young Mahratta, whose hair touched her feet. She was very proud of it. She passed the Advocate's exam a year after me.

I knew the law. I had been practicing it all my life and was full of hope and confidence. My teachers and lecturers were S.C. Joshi, today Indian Labour Minister, Mr. Kirthikar, who was appointed a High Court Judge in 1954 and Mr. Talpade, a very prominent lawyer in the city of Bombay.

Return to Aden

Between July and November I prepared for the first part a very heavy course. Suddenly communal riots flared up in the city. They were violent but sporadic. Police used lathis almost indiscriminately. Strange enough I was never hit. I was recognized to be a stranger. Once I was in the midst of a very tumultous

crowd and very nearly lost my life. Afterwards I put on short, a white jacket and corked white hat with a yellow ribbon. I looked like an inspector of Police and was sometimes saluted.

But the riots became extensive and I had to remain in my room for some days. It was not safe to go each morning to GIRAUM a Hindu locality, to attend classes, which closed down early November. I was restless and lonely. My cousin Khadija was preparing my food. She lived in a neighboring apartment. One morning in the second week of November, I carried a suit case, left the rest of my kit in the room, handed over the key to my cousin and said “I shall return”. I parted to Aden . I left Bombay by the Kaiseri-Hind, one of the oldest P & O Boats. All of a sudden I was at home. Everybody was astounded but I pacified them and said I shall go back “I am just worried about my younger brothers after my father’s death”.

January 18, 1962

Men, Matters and Memories (60)**PASSED LAW EXAMINATION
SEPARATION FROM FAMILY
UNSUCCESSFUL INTRIGUES**

On my return from Bombay in November 1936 I made arrangements for the division of my father's estate among his heirs. I subsequently carried away my wife and my son Farooq, then 18 months old, to Bombay, to continue my study of Law. My brother-in-law Nasser and my friend Ahmed Ali Saad, came on board a vessel, belonging to Cory Brothers and made arrangement for our comfort.

We reached Bombay in good weather, the riots were over; peace and security prevailed; the Indian Congress, then represented the Hindu Community and the Moslem League represented the Moslems, under the leadership of Mohamedaly Jinnah, a very successful Barrister-at-law in Bombay. I met him in and listened to a speech delivered by him in Mohamedaly Road. He was a wonderful man. His faith in the cause of the Moslems was unshakeable. He gave up his lucrative legal practice, to serve his brothers-in-Islam. He was liberal - minded and believed in the freedom of worship.

Very few people place national service above self, fewer still are those who content themselves with sufficiency. Man is greedy; but socialism has taught him selflessness not much in the East but in the West. The Chinese are speedily becoming contented and altruistic.

Passing Part I

I attended the Bombay law Classes in the last week of November 1936. My wife joined a tailoring school. Farouq was looked after by the hospitable family of Haj Abdulla Kazem, in Mirzaali Street. I hired a flat at Rs 40 per month. My wife helped in keeping the house. Her school was very near.

In March 1937, I passed the first part of the Law Examination and made an attempt to complete the whole course in August but I had my thirteenth child, Shoqy who is today preparing for mechanical engineering in Kingston College (4th Year). It was on August 14. I had no other alternative but to return to Aden with an additional child. It was extremely difficult to continue studying with those growing responsibilities, and lack of sufficient funds. I was however, planning to return to India to finish the course.

A Friend Helps

A neighbour asked me, here, “Are you going to swim back to Bombay, this time? “No”, I replied, “unless it is unavoidable”. A friend, Abou Bekr Qassim Qirbi felt annoyed and left us, just to return in an hour with a passage ticket for Bombay by S/S Biancamano, one of Italy’ wonderful ocean vessels. Peace be showered upon his soul. He was imprisoned during the war. I defended him.

I thought that, in this world, there were people who were jealous, even if themselves could not compete and could not hope to achieve what they disliked others to attain; on the other side of the picture, we have those characterized by their magnanimity and generosity. They are folks who help others without expecting any rewards; but they are unfortunately few and rare.

On the ship I had friends, who had inherited fabulous sums of money. They were in the First Class de Luxe, three of them, I had been very helpful to them for a long time before they had become wealthy. Only one of them had come to see me during the voyage, for a second.

Another Year

I developed a whitlow in my right finger. I had a fever as a result and was very sick. It remained for more than 2 months, in Bombay. I had it scrapped in Hospital; but it did not deter my preparation for the final examination " .

I lived another year in India. I pined for my family. I was nostalgic. I suffered terribly but I studied very hard and wrote volumes of notes and solved numberless examination questions and in the end, I won. I passed with distinction in the Criminal law.

I went to the High Court to see my name on the Pass List. It was a great day for me and the Arab Association in Bombay gave me a grand party at which Mr. S.C. Joshi, the principal of the School of Law said “In 20 years, 2000 advocates have passed, but not one has done it within two years as Mr. Lokman has done.

Legal Practise

As soon as I arrived in Aden I started practicing, on the second day of my arrival. I appeared before Justice Cameron in a case of Restitution of conjugal rights in which the wife had pleaded cruelty. My client A.Q. Ghanem the Husband may chastise his wife for disobedience. I succeeded and Mr. V.K. Joshi came to congratulate me, in court. This was in May 1938.

Soon afterwards I was registered as a pleader and solicitor in the Supreme Court of British Somaliland.

Unexpected Success

ENAYATULLA Shah, an intelligence officer in Aden, came to tell me how surprised he was that I had passed my law examination.

“Why?”, I asked. He explained that letters were written from Aden to Bombay “to place a spoke in my wheel” because, Aden had received information that I had paid a visit to Nazi Consul there. I said I never did so; but then I remembered I had gone to see the Consul for Japan, who lived in an office adjacent to that of Nazi Germany. I sat waiting admission, on a bench between the 2 doors. I had intended to secure an agency in Japan for my brother Khaled who managed my shop in Crater.

Enayatulla apologized; but what harm he could have inflicted on me?

January 25, 1962

Men, Matters and Memories (61)

ALLOWED TO PUBLISH ADEN 'S FIRST NEWSPAPER

The British Government in Palestine had put into exile Five Arab Palestinians and sent them to Seychelles. Just, before the commencement of World War II they were released and carried to Aden on their way home. They were Ahmed Hilmi Pacha, a banker, Husain El Khalidi, a notable; Rachid El Haj Ibrahim, a merchant and freemason; Fouad Saba, a clerk and Yakoob El Ghosain an Orator whose son and daughter, later came to serve in Aden.

All the Aden Clubs (The Arab Literary Club) and the Arab Reform Clubs) combined to give them a grand reception and ovation. A group of boy scouts were organized and the whole Colony lined up the roads between Tawahi and Crater to greet them with national slogans and songs.

Major Hickingbotham, was acting First Assistant Resident and on the Prince of Wales Pier, he was pushed by one of the boy scouts, inadvertently.

After the departure of the Five Palestinians with valuable presents from the people of Aden, Hickingbotham sent for me. He was very furious and upset. He demanded an explanation why I had arranged that big honour for the Arab Leaders instead of doing it for Colonel Rielly, the Aden Governor, who had given us schools and hospitals, he said.

" The Governor has a Government to honour him. We honored those leaders because they will save our holy land from Zionism", I replied " This is impertinence " he retorted. I resented the insult. He said he would do something to teach me a lesson. He left Aden subsequently to wear silk in Bahrain. Then I learnt that Colonel Reilly had surpressed an order for my exile and said that it was unwarranted. It was when the Governor was sick in the European General Hospital.

AIR RAID WARDEN

Soon afterwards, the War clouds loomed low. People started to prepare for the approaching hostilities. Mr. J.J. Gunn was appointed Air Raid Precautions Officer. I joined as a WARDEN and later as a senior warden with Mr. Joshi as the Chief Warden in Crater. My son Ibrahim joined as a first aider, with Dr. Murphy in the Civil Hospital. We remained till the end of the WAR.

PEROWNE FRIEND OF ARABS

In 1939 I submitted an application to edit and publish an Arabic Weekly Newspaper FATAT UL-JEZIRAH. I produced License which was granted to me in 1928, which could not utilize as I left Aden for Somaliland and subsequently for India to study Law. It took some months for the Governor to decide. On 3rd September 1939 the War was declared, but Aden was in peace because Italy remained in the outskirts of the hostilities. I was called to meet Mr. Stewart Perowne, Information Officer and Director of Press Censorship, to explain why I wanted to publish a newspaper in those circumstances and peremptorily, "To place a lamp in this dark corner". I added, "Aden was urgently in need of a newspaper to guide the people and inform them politically, socially, economically and culturally. A country without a newspaper is like a church without a priest or a school without a teacher " .

We discussed the History of the World War I and world politics in general. Mr. Perowne was convinced. He was one of the kindest and most reasonable Englishman I had known. Between Major H.F. Jacob (1912) and him there were very few officers who excelled in English and Arabic Literature and History. He was a real friend of the Arabs.

PUBLICATION ALLOWED

I HAD TO WAIT TILL December 1939, when I was verbally informed that a Press Ordinance was being formulated and just before dawn of 1940 I was permitted to publish the FATAT-UL-JEZIRAH **without a license**, because the Ordinance was not yet ready . I came out with the first issue on 1st January 1940. I received the license a month later.

*****DEFEND ISLAM*****

Syed Jamaluddin El-Afghani, Shaikh Mohamed Abdo of Alazhar University, Shaikh Abdulrehman El-Kawakibbi, the author of "Nature of Despotism", and Syed Mohamed Rashid Reza, the editor of "Almanar" Magazine campaigned for drastic religious reforms and defended the fundamental principles and tenets of the Qoran. Shibli Shemail, an Arab philosopher, asserted that unless religion was carefully studied, the Arabs would never achieve their independence,. But Fares Nimr argued that British imperialism had been conducive of prosperity in Egypt. He upheld British occupation.

Religious teachers were condemned as stooges of tyrant rulers and imperialist, hypocritically supporting power and force, strictly adhering to reactionary ideas and bigotry. The new reformist praised the new school of thought advocated by Shaikh Mohamed Abdul Wahhab of Nejd (Saudi Arabia), which eradicated superstitions and purified the faith from any exotic and misleading stories.

People in Aden had imbibed many extraneous superstitions, believed in Saintly miracles, in the divine power of Kings and in the righteousness of priest and leaders, in predestination and in fatalism.

I read many books on Islam and met many Moslem and Arab Leaders – from many parts of the world and I wrote a book "The Beauties of Islam."

I gave brief account of the life of the Prophet Mohamed, and the concept of Brotherhood and equality in Islam, which had encouraged emancipation of women and slaves. I devoted a chapter to Polygamy and explained that man is by nature polygamous: Mohamed discouraged divorce and called upon his followers to stick to one wife.

I delivered this book in a series of lectures in the Arab Reform Club and hundreds of listeners attended them for a long time including many notables from Yemen..

February 01, 1962

Men, Matters and Memories (62)

ADVOCATED GIRLS' EDUCATION

First Girls School Opened in Aden, Girl Elopes, School Closes

Between 1936 and 1941, Zaher Hamza, an Arab educationist from Palestin was in charge of education in Aden. He had very few friends and very much lamented the Zionist ascendancy in Palestine. I soothed him very much and he used to spend hours in my shop in Bohra Bazaar discussing educational problems in Aden. Many other friends who paid me regular visits used to talk to him and offer all kinds of suggestions. He listened very carefully but made few comments.

One day I told him that nothing better can be done in the field of education that the opening of a Girls' School in this Colony. He became interested but remarked that according to all the reports of his predecessors, such as a school would be a total failure.

“While Speaking of Girls’ education, one cannot ignore the efforts of a much respected lady who worked so very hard for the same purpose. Mrs. the Honourable M.A. Maqtari, widely known as Sitt Nur Haider, started girls education in the early 1920’s and has since been engaged in this noble profession. Today she heads the largest Government Girls’ Primary School in the Colony. For her continuous efforts, Sitt Nur has merited the M.B.E. two years ago and is greatly respected by the many who appreciate and admire her work. The Aden Chronicle wishes to record a word of gratitude and appreciation for Sitt Nur, the teacher of thousands of mothers in South Arabia.”

The people of Aden would object to female education. “Nonsense”, I said and soon afterwards, I left Aden for India to study Law. Two years later I returned. It was in 1938. We met once again and I tried to impress him with the proposition of Girls’ education. It was most essential that a school for girls opened. I gave him ideas and statistics. I mentioned that there were many indigenious and Qoranic schools attended by girls. He agreed that was true, and submitted a report to Government. He told me he did and he pursued the proposal for a whole year. Government agreed in 1939 and he came to me with the good news. He then asked me to give him a list of the names of prospective students. I was stupefied, for there were none available. Parents were averse to sending their girls to a regular day school. The test had come. But I was determined to see a school of this kind found in Aden. I went around collecting names. But the response was poor indeed.

Upon returning from Bombay I wrote a book in Arabic “Every man’s Duties,” intended to guide the youth of Aden, then evolving in patriotic tendencies.

Earlier, I had established, at Sheikh Othman, in the Arab Reform Club, an institute for teaching Religious law and Literature. I had collected donations from charitable persons.

Syed Hamed El bar had given me Rs 500/ for this school. Shaikh Ahmed Mohamed Saeed El Asnag helped in running the school, which I was able to subsidise for some years and pay the salary of Sheikh Ahmed Al-Abbadi, a Moslim savant who still lives, senile and poor yet a man of knowledge and intelligence. Some of his pupils in that school were Sheikh Mohamed Salem Beihani, Ustaz Abdul Majid El Asnag, a famous Adeni poet, Fakih Mohamed Noman and many others.

TOO FEW GIRLS

I sent my daughter Khadija, my sister, my niece and two other distant relatives. The darkest part of the picture was the absence of lady teachers. Zaher Hamza managed to appoint one girl as a teacher. She had her education in Iraq. The school was started, but few months later, Government thought it was waste of public funds to continue running the school with only a handful of girls. The Director of Education was embarrassed, and he came to see me with that warning in his hands.

I was ashamed. I thought I had misled my friend. But, I was not frustrated. I went to the mosques in Aden and delivered speeches calling upon the population to teach their women folk and send their girls to schools. The religion, I said, made it incumbent upon us to do so.

I was desperate. There was an excellent and almost unexpected response. The school soon had nearly 60 girls.

SCHOOL CLOSED

Unfortunately, in 1941 one of the young school girls eloped. That was the end of the girls' education according to bigots. For next morning, not a single girl was allowed by her parents to attend the classes. Fathers thought that the fate of their girls was destined to be the same, - elopement. For some days the school was closed.

I was an A.R.P. warden and Sir Hathorn Hall was the Patron of the organization. I used to meet him very often and translate his speeches to the squad. I told him of what had happened and asked him to save the girls of Aden from perdition.

A GIRL ELOPES

Sir Hathorn Hall convened a meeting of all the parents of the school girls, at the Secondary School building, Front Bay. He spoke to them very firmly. They tried to argue with him, but he refused to listen to non-sensical gossip. At the end he said with emphasis" I am determined to teach your girls INSPITE OF YOU. The Girls' school will re-open tomorrow morning."

That was the decision of a well-meaning Governor.

SCHOOL RE-OPENS

The school re-opened once again and has never shut doors ever since. There were no more elopements although there are at least 2000 girls in the schools today; some girls are in the United Kingdom preparing for Higher Academic Studies. My grand daughter Azza Ghanem is the first girl from Aden attending the University College of St. Andrews for her B.A. (Maths)

THE QAT

I wish that Sir William Luce, the former Governor of Aden had told the people of this Colony that he would ban the QAT from Aden inspite of them. Most unfortunately, he gave way in favour of their urge for the narcotic and allowed it to be restored after it had been banned for a whole year.

February 08, 1962

Men, Matters and Memories (63)

CONTRIBUTED TO ADEN PROGRESS

Published My First Novel

WROTE HISTORY OF YEMEN

Forty two years of my life were years of struggle. I was a trader, a book-seller, a petition writer, a chemist, an exporter and importer, a commission agent, a teacher, a news-reporter, a manager in Berbera of the biggest firm in Aden and Somaliland, and an inspector of accounts. I worked in politics. I was a leader of thousands of people in Aden. I presided over several clubs and associations. I delivered speeches and sermons in mosques and congregations. I married three times. I had 16 children. But all my activities were conducted under a big strain and without much support. I had many friends and many more admirers. I had many enemies because my father had always prayed that I should have many enemies to keep me ever and anon watchful to know where to place my foot.

The study of law and legal profession gave me wisdom and gave me protection. The year 1940 was a turning point in my life. I published my first Arabic News-paper Fatat-Ul-Jezirah and poured into it all my experience, my thoughts, my ideas and my sincere feelings for my people and my kinsmen. I decided to devote all my energies for the progress of the Yemen, the Aden Protectorates and Aden, socially and constitutionally.

SAEED

I wrote a novel in 1940 printed and published in Aden, describing the life of the Adeni, his aspirations and his drawbacks. Hundreds of copies were sold. The novel was called "Saeed".

ALMA MATER

The Fatat-Ul-Jezirah has now appeared regularly weekly, at first, for 19 years and then daily for four years and has not stopped once for any reason, except when the curfew order was on in 1948, during the Jewish disturbances. It has been a torch and a guide and Aden's alma mater, in politics.

Every week for 19 years I wrote an editorial on a subject of general interest "Youth Duties", Cultural uplift, Love and Cooperation, Arabs in the Far East, East Africa, India, Red Sea, Yemen, Saudi Arabia. Persian Gulf, Brotherhood, Independence, National Aims and International Politics.

During the War years 1939-1948, this Arabic weekly was the only Arabic paper in Southern Arabia and it had contributed honestly and enthusiastically to the progress of Aden. I prognosticated the failure of Mussolini and the defeat of his armies on 26th May 1940, even before he had joined the War on the side of Hitler. I wrote about the emancipation of women and encouraged literature by publishing

poems for local bards and literary articles for writers in the Colony, and Yemen. There were very few in the Western Aden Protectorates, but many in Hadhramout.

THREAT OF IMPRISONMENT

On the 9th of June 1940, I wrote that Shaikh Obaid Saleh bin Abdat, a revolutionary in Hadhramout, had started agitating and intriguing against the local Sultans and undermining their authorities. He even went to supply the refractory Hamoum Tribes with money and arms to start a big-scale insurrection. He began a campaign of outright plunder and highwaymanship.

“Security was impaired. People had been terrified. Trade retarded. Government must do something to punish the offenders against justice and local administration.”

The Aden Government was alarmed and I was summoned by Mr. Stewart Perowne. That Goodman, Perowne who never hurts; who comes to a poor friend and sits on a Kerosene oil box very humbly. He told me that my newspaper has been suspended, and that the Government was seriously thinking of sending me to concentration camp, because of my criticism of Ibn Abdat.”

I smiled and said “but that article was passed by the Censor?” “What do you say?” he asked. “Yes Mr. Perowne! It was a letter sent to me from Mukalla in Hadhramout. The letter sent to me from there, were dispatched by a British Warship patrolling in the area. The letter was received by Major W.H. Ingrams the Administrator of Aden. He opened the letter and passed it on to me duly censored. I had even had the news confirmed on telephone by Major Ingrams ” . Mr. Perowne was still serious but there was a twinkle of amusement in his eyes. He picked up the telephone and dialed Ingrams.

The suspension was withdrawn.

HISTORY OF YEMEN

I collected and wrote the history of Yemen in a series of articles but the Imam Yahya found that the publication of that history was doing harm to the Hamidudin Dynasty, to which he belongs. A special messenger was sent to delay publication. I had to stop until, I was able to restart publication of historical articles, after some years, written by my brother Hamza Luqman.

February 15, 1962

Men, Matters and Memories (64)**Aden In World War II
COLONY AIR-RAIDED
Float Lottery To Buy Fighters**

In 40 years of my life I had learnt that lasting and useful service was rendered to the community and to one's own country and people. Individual members of the community rarely appreciate one's sacrifices and devotion. In 1940/1941 I was almost the only lawyer left in Aden, all the others having deserted the Colony to avoid the danger of the air-raids. I made a very fat income from my legal profession, and conducted hundreds of cases in the Aden Courts.

On the 10th of June 1940, Mussolini joined the WAR, on the side of Hitler, thus uniting Nazism and Facism, in their attempt at world domination.

REFUGE IN LAHEJ

A few days earlier I had sent my family and children to Lahej, where Sultan Abdul Karim had helped me to hire a mud-house surrounded by huge compound, without a gate; but security was 100% good. I remained in Aden with my son Ali, who was in charge of the daily bulletin of the information office.

On the night of the declaration of War by Mussolini, I was near the Radio, when I heard him thundering and swearing in Italian, from the Bari broadcasting station. Mr. Stewart Perowne came to ask my assistance to broadcast the news from the loudspeakers of the Crater Police Station. He warned the people to expect sufferings and tribulation and called upon them to be firm in the face of Injury. All Italian nationals were rounded up, in an hour, after the declaration of War and were interned.

I dispatched my son Abdul Rahim to Lahej to tell the family not to be alarmed and stay with them. On the next day we had the first Italian air raid, at 5 pm. The sirens went off. They were heard many times before, but it was most fearful that afternoon. Subsequent raids and bombardment of the colony wrought panic among the inhabitants. Thousands of them moved out of the towns and migrated to Lahej and its neighbouring villages, Nobat Iyadh, Al Mujhita, and Al Hamrah. Hundreds of Indians had already left Aden for their homeland some time before that many Adeni Indian Moslems took refuge in the Bombay Musafir khana.

Italian air raids in Aden were not infrequent and there were some casualties including Captain Beecher, Intelligence Office, and a driver of Captain Harley, of the P. & O. at Steamer Point.

ITALIAN AIR-RAIDS

On one occasion, the Italians claimed that they had stormed the British Airodrome, after pouring a large number of bombs on a sham airfield in Tor El Baha; where hurricane lamps were placed around, to misguide the Italian pilots. On another occasions it was claimed that the ADEN RAILWAY was wiped out. The trains had been removed from Aden 10 years before. A few 250lbs bombs hit the site at Maalla.

Dar Saad, on the border, and Shaikh Othman, had a spell of these bombs, with the result that the outflow of immigrants in Lahej and the Yemen and the Aden Protectorates was steadily heavy. Some of these refugees were in state of great fear and did not return to Aden till the end of 1941, after Italy had windled. I brought my family and children back to Aden early in 1941. My Fata-Ul-Jezirah Arabic weekly remained functioning all the time, although the Colony was more than half deserted. I printed the Information Daily Bulletin in my Printing Press and a weekly WAR COMMENTARY.

LOTTERY

I floated a lottery to contribute towards the purchase of two Hurricane Fighters, carrying the name of Aden and one of Hadhramout. The lottery tickets were printed by me in my printing press, advertised by the Fatat-Ul-Jezirah and partly sold in my office. It was a successful project. Thousand of tickets were sold. Funds were also collected from other sources, by the Government of Aden and Chief Justice Sir T. Lawrence conducted a public auction sale of valuable presents from the people of Aden for the Hurricane Fund, which included a very rare collection of archaeological slabs and statues, given by me to swell the fund. They were of Qatabanian origin and were donated by the purchaser at the auction sale to the Local Museum.

Actually hurricane fighters were built in the name of Aden and Hadhramout, and we have the Hurricane Cinema, named ever since.

Italy did not survive long. She was defeated in the World War II and she lost all her colonies.

February 22, 1962

Men, Matters and Memories (65)**Earthquake In Yemen Sends Yemenis to Aden
CULTURAL AWAKENING
British Council Inaugurated**

Early, in 1941, earthquake tremors shook several parts of Northern Yemen. Many buildings collapsed in Saada town and many lives were lost. Huge fire broke out on Jabal Haram and nearby military barracks came down causing damage and casualties. Many Jews, at prayers, in a synagogue, were killed when the roof fell down. A running river in the district just disappeared but another river made its appearance in another area. Many wild animals, lynxes, tigers, leopards, hyenas, wolves and foxes stampede in Wadi Shimr and then repaired to the surrounding hills.

Imam Yahya, King of Yemen, sent me a letter with an appeal for donations for the homeless refugees. I started collections and directed payment to a Committee appointed by Imam, comprising the Secretary of the Crown Prince (present Imam Ahmed) and the Governors of Mocha, Taz and Maqhana . Syed El Mujahid, administrator of Taz, was also member.

CHEAP HOUSES

That earthquake disclosed the poverty of the nation. Many of the Yemenis who had migrated from Aden to Yemen, in 1940/1941, to take refuge in Arabia Felix, from Italian Air-raids, had an opportunity to compare prosperity in Aden with penury in Yemen. They encouraged their kinsmen to go to Aden and live there. Many houses in Aden were vacant available for hire. Rents were very low ; the best house comprising two flats, was rented at Rs. 30/ per month , around floor houses fetched just four rupees p.m. Many Yemenis came. The influx was colossal. Their numbers here steadily increased. They became prosperous and brought news of mal administration and injustice. I started publishing “inside Yemen”, news and made criticisms. The first story I published was that of Sharaf Abdul Ghani, a tax collector at Maabag, near border. He charged illegal tolls and dues to fill his own coffers. I said that corruption was usually the result of low salaries. The Imam sent for this customs officer and warned him. The Crown Prince cancelled all taxation leviable on exports to Aden to foster trade relations.

MUKHAYYAM ABI TAYYIB

I had then founded the Mukhayyam Abi Tayyib El Mutannabi, a cultural circle, in Crater, which attracted many literary men, poets and artists from various parts of Yemen the Protectorate and the Colony. Meetings were held regularly in my office, in Esplanade Road and lectures were delivered on various topics of social and cultural importance weekly. On one occasion the Association discussed the emancipation of women and the abolition of Purdah and also discussed the necessity of encouraging music on the lute and violin.

FACING CRITICS

The Association was accused of contravening Moslems conventions. Two Pamphlets were published cursing and abusing the Mukhayyam; one by Shaikh Ali Bahamish (present Qadhi of Aden) and the other by Aswadi (present President of Yemeni Union).

Inauguration OF BR. COUNCIL

Stewart Perowne in 1940 had discussion with me about opening a branch for the British Council in Aden. I supported the proposition and offered my present office in the Esplanade Road, to start a library lecture room. I had the office repaired for the purpose, but Rev. Madsen was able to rent a building from Ali Yahia (now occupied by Metropole Hotel). It was approved by Mr. Dundas M.E. representative, which was inaugurated by Sir Hathorn Hall on 30th July 1941. I was the first member of the British Institute. Mrs Madsen started classes for purdah ladies. Films were screened and lectures were given describing the British way of life. Books were lent to the members and a tennis club was founded. I remained a member of the managing committee for several years. The principal idea of this club was to eradicate colour bar.

BESSE CENTRE

In June 1941, I went to see Mr. Besse to thank him for building the girls school at Shaikh Othman. He had preferred to make his donation anonymously. He told me he was fully prepared to contribute generously towards education in Aden, especially female education. He remarked that girls started their school life at the age of 9, and usually discontinued at 12. They did not have the opportunity to learn needle work, handicraft, hygiene, childcare, house economy and welfare, in addition to reading, writing, arithmetic, geography, history, and science.

He said it was very essential for women and girls to do physical exercises, to keep fit. He expressed his readiness to build a Centre for the Women of Aden, and asked me to convene a meeting of elders and elect a committee to organize female adult education. I appealed to the public of Aden, many of whom went personally to Mr. Besse, who subsequently donated £50,000/- for building the Besse Centre in Crater and the Technical School in Maala.

March 01, 1962

Men, Matters and Memories (66)**Saved Many Lives And Was
Saved Many Times**

Heavy rainfalls are rare in Aden, but once in the month of Ramadhan 1941 we had one of those unusual rainfalls. We do enjoy occasional showers, but very often remain for years without a drop. In that year, I left the Court, just before noon, carrying my files under my hand dressed in my black jacket, immediately after the skies had breathed in their vapors, and the Sun had peeped through the clouds. Water flowed in the Saila Valley from the Tanks and air-raid shelters were gutted.

Near an air-raid shelter, in the neighborhood of the Saila Government School, I saw Mohamed Nooh, a little Somali boy fall into the shelter, full of water struggling for his life. School boys were looking on from on the School verandah, while number of persons were watching the episode from a distance. I ran and plunged myself into the ditch, lock, stock and barrel, I was able to push the boy to the brim of the shelter and out, just at the last minute of his life. I came out wet and dripping but the boy was safe. He is a very successful man today.

I had once before saved my friend the Hon. Hasson Ismail Khan from drowning at Abul Wadi Bay, in Crater. He was caught in a whirlpool, I managed to pull him out, and help him with artificial respiration. He is today the President of the Municipal Council. I had also saved another friend Mohamed Mahboob Farahat from drowning in the swimming pool of Prince Ahmed Fadl C.M.G. at the Hussaini Gardens in Lahej. I was a member of the sea-scouts, at one time. But, I was myself saved from sure death, on many occasions. I had a serious fall from horseback in the Audhali country and was carried on a bier a distance of 10 miles to receive medical attention. I had a motor car accident in Addis Ababa, in which the car made a somersault. Recently, I was very nearly electrocuted. My house and my printing press were twice set on fire. I shall describe these events in details.

Many people lose their precious lives in a very ordinary accidents; but many more survive dire calamities. I believe that every human being has a lease of life. Some have long lease, some a very short one. Whenever that lease terminates they automatically come to an end. It may be argued that with modern medical care and careful living one might be able to extend one's lease of life. Nevertheless, it still depends on the will of the Almighty God.

I was returning from a Cinema at 9 p.m., in Bombay, in the year 1936. Suddenly communal riots broke out. I found myself in the very throes of internecine strife. Men and Women fell dead or very seriously injured around me in the tumult. Stones came flying past me with great velocity. Pieces of wood, pottery and glass bottles were hurled indiscriminately at the point where I was trying to find shelter in utter bewilderment, and from the side where I was moving. Screams were deafening. All houses were shut. Lights were put off with the exception of street lights. All doors were slammed and all hope of safety was lost. I thought the end had come. Fortunately it had not. Curfew Order was proclaimed and I felt my life was at stake . I swerved to a by- lane and soon found myself running in Mohammed Ali

road, panting and fatigued. I stopped near a house surrounded by a fence. I decided to knock at the door, although I hesitated for a while. An Indian Moslem came to the gate , and looked at me with suspicion. “ May I have shelter till day break? I am a stranger an Arab and I cannot reach my destination because of the curfew order and the riots. I am a Moslem brother.” I appealed to him beseechingly but firmly. His doubts were dispelled and he admitted me into his cottage within the compound. He was a poor tailor and was very hospitable. He lit a lamp and fire, prepared tea and sat talking. He then offered me his bed to sleep on an old easy chair. I woke up early next morning and left the place after thanking him. I can never forget that horrible night.

March 08, 1962

Men, Matters and Memories (67)**ASTROLOGICAL FORECAST
CAUSES MY ARREST**

On 23rd November 1942, the famous Yemeni astrologer Mohamed Hasson Arrifae, who lived at the port of Meedi, north of Hodeidah, prepared for me a forecast of War events. He said: The Year 1943 will be the announcer of the end of the War, and peace is due in the middle of 1944, after the defeat of Germany, Italy and Japan.

At the commencement of the year 1943 Germany will suffer a defeat in Russia. The British will occupy Tripoli. The British and Americans will occupy Tunis. Rommell will retreat to Bizerta, and to France. Subsequently the British will annex Libya, Tunis, and Morocco, to the Senegal.

He went on describing the trend of the War and fate of Hitler and Mussolini. He mentioned that the latter will be assassinated in a revolution and that the Republic will be declared in Italy.

The Astrologer foretold the surrender of the axis and Japan and the ascendancy of the allied powers.

I published these prophecies in the Fatat-Ul-Jezirah in 14th February 1943, just before the Americo-British invasion of North Africa. It was a real prophecy and Rommell was actually defeated.

Unexpectedly Major Stephenson the Information Officer came to my office on a Jeep, with two British armed military officers accosted me in a very serious tone. He said “you have impaired, the good relations between Britain and her allies,” “My God,” I said. Have I really done it? “Be serious”, he retorted and he handed over to me a translation of the astrological forecast with direction to read it .

I found the translation distorted, but he said “you say that Libya, Tunis, Algiers, Morocco and the Senegal will, become British Colonies”. “ This is only prophecy”, I replied. “I did not say it.” “Never mind who said it. You are responsible.” all the British Allies are alienated by your irresponsible publication “ he said.

“I felt amused”, and said “It appears I have become as important as Churchill.” Major Stephenson stared at me and shouted loudly . I told him “Major, don’t shout! I f you have the authority please order my arrest ” . He slackened a bit and asked me to accompany him to British Army Headquarters. I went with him: Some of my sons were alarmed. In his office, he discussed the question with the Secretariat for half an hour. Another translator was called and at 1 pm I was told to go back to my office. I was not a little shocked. My sons advised me to give up journalism, to avoid such difficulties but I said, it was war time and one must contribute one’s mite towards the War effort. Colonial Governments are always suspicious of patriotic people whatever loyalty they may show! It was an era of intrigue.

I EDUCATE MY SONS

I embarked upon a campaign to teach my sons Ali, Abdul Rahim. Ibrahim and Hamed.

Abdul Rahim was in Iraq I asked him to go to Cairo. Hamed was in Beirut. He also was asked to join Abdul Rahim. Ibrahim and Ali were in Aden. Hamed had been given scholarship by the British Council, to the Beirut University, but on reverting to the American University in Cairo he abandoned it. It was the only scholarship offered by the British Council in Aden. Government of Aden offered Ali a two year training course in U.K. He declined it, and wrote to Government that he would accept a full scholarship for an arts degree, but Mr. Shrubbs, Director of Education then, said that Ali was not eligible for a degree course. I arranged to send him with his brother Ibrahim to Cairo. All at my expense.

They studied and passed their examinations in Cairo and are today in high positions. They have subsequently had poste-graduate education in London. Exeter and other U.K. centres. They were among the earliest success. All those who had gone even earlier on free scholarship basis took a much longer time to complete their courses.

March 15, 1962

Men, Matters and Memories (68)

Not Available

March 22, 1962

Men, Matters and Memories (69)**“THE FRIEND OF THE ANT”
Interview With Sir Cosmo Parkinson
LEGCO FOR ADEN**

In 1943, I started writing a series of weekly socio-political-cultural articles, pseudonymously, under the pen name of “The Friend of the Ant”. Readers all over Southern Arabia and other neighbouring countries got interested, because people are usually inquisitive. They attempt to discover the writer, by comparing ideas and literary styles. Socialist ideas, ideologies, and philosophical principles may not appeal to a primitive and religious or proletarian group of men and women, but repetition inculcated upon them by a mysterious writer has its effect on their minds especially when practical examples are adduced with a comparison between their undeveloped life and that of a progressive creature like ant. They read me as matter of inquisitiveness rather than appreciation.

Sir Walter Scott wrote under a penname for a long time before he became a well-known author.

Big writers, however, attract readers, like big musicians, forceful philosophers or political thinkers. Admirers flock to their folds to identify themselves with their theories and art, aiming at immortality.

I criticized our way of life, waste of time and income on qat leaves, (a narcotic drug), our social connections, by restricting our daily relationship to a set of qat addicts who never change. I encouraged literary pursuits, education, freedom of action, better living conditions, emancipation of women, freedom of thought, brotherhood, study of arts and sciences, I condemn the mediaeval system of administration in Yemen and the Aden Protectorates. I propounded a constitutional system instead, freedom of speech, justice, high moral behavior, scientific approach of topics, study of Islamic culture, and European Civilization, without just aping the Europeans. I wrote history of current affairs.

The readers of the Fataat-ul-Jezirah weekly commented very enthusiastically on the various topics and the volumes of this newspaper are extant to testify the zeal with which its readers received the contributions of the “Friend of the Ant”. They were regularly translated at the Secretariat. Many people tried hard to know the writer who remained incognito to this day.

WAR & DESTRUCTION

The war was gone. destruction was everywhere. The future of mankind was in the hand of destiny. In an editorial, I wrote “It is impossible for mankind, after this war is over and after all these sacrifices, to submit to injustice. We expect the world to live in prosperity, for, upon the bodies of the martyrs of today, the nation will raise the pillars of freedom for humanity at large, tomorrow ” . I then quoted a couplet from the great Arab poet. It was on Xmas eve.

“Oh Jesus Christ, your message was Peace and Love. It was Protection; it was peace ”.

COSMO PARKINSON

On 16th December 1943 Sir Cosmo Parkinson the Colonial Under-Secretary visited Aden.

I asked him : " You have seen Aden? Do you expect great change in 10 years time? Is Government prepared to inaugurate a Legislative Council in Aden, preparatory to granting it Self-Government? "

Answer : " I feel that much is already being done even in war time. Sir Hathorn Hall is introducing a lot of reform. After the War I am hopeful that Aden would recover its position as an emporium of trade. It is most probable that Aden will have Legislative Council. This will be done very soon. The Legco members will be nominated first but later elected.

2nd Question:

" Is there any proposal to improve the present relations between Aden and the Protectorates (East and West)? "I do not know" he said" Will Government send Aden boys to study in United Kingdom on a scholar basis?

Answer: "This is an excellent suggestion," he said "Similar suggestions were submitted to me in other Colonies. I think this British Government will accept it; but not during the War " .

"What do you think of Aden panoramically?" "I like this seascape overlooking Little . Aden and Ghadir. I shall never forget it and I think it would be good to white wash all the buildings in Ras Boradly and other parts of Steamer Point " .

"Today we are making wide strides towards independence and a National Government. We have 60 boys and girls in the U.K. for their higher studies and Aden and the Protectorates are coming closer together " .

March 29, 1962

Men, Matters and Memories (70)

The Spark That Started A Rebellion

YEMENI ELITE IN ADEN

Imam Yahya Leaves Behind 200,000,000 Thalers

In 1943 and in 1944 I wrote regular critical articles on Yemen calling upon the Crown Prince (Present King of Yemen), and his father the late Imam Yahya to introduce drastic constitutional changes in the country. I received many contributions from literary and educated Yemenis, supporting my demands for constitutional reform, a modern system of taxation, abolition of "Letters de cahets," tax-collectors, warrants, imprisonment without trial, billeting of soldiers on unwary and peaceful inhabitants and torture in jails.

In the month of May 1944, a large number of emigrants from Yemen sought political asylum in Aden. Among them were Prince Mohamed bin Ali El Wazir, (the principal assassin of Imam Yahya in 1948), Ustaz Aqil Uthman, Naqib Mutee Dammaj, Abdul Baqi, Ismail a chieftain from Lower Yemen, and many others.

YEMENIS PLIGHT

Mutee Dammaj wrote in Fatat-Ul-Jazirah on 7.5.44 his first article, illustrating the plight of the Yemenis, the backwardness of the country and the mediaevalism of the administrative set up, in the Arabia Felix. He wrote "we, the Yemenis are intelligent and are versed in Arabic literature but we cannot come out in the open with our knowledge. We are afraid. It is a crime to know or to speak. Visit Yemen and you will find the elite hiding themselves " .

"The schools are few and fewer still are the pupils in them, who are not taught in anything except a few chapters of the Qoran. Slave labour is rampant and government forces people to work for her, without any remuneration and the labour have to pay the wages of the soldiers who guard them! People are rendered no justice.

Their complaints are hoodwinked and neglected. There is no finality to litigation. The prisons are very populous, the taxes are exorbitant and corruption is the order of the day. Intrigues, false information and calumny cause untold misery."

This letter sent to me by this Yemeni immigrant under his own name, and for the first time in many years, was a bombshell which caused a great deal of embarrassment to the Yemeni Crown Prince at Taz, who at once appointed a correspondent to send to Aden weekly despatches about reforms and improvements.

REFUTATION

Letters came from Mohamed Salem Dhobhani refuting the accusations of Dammaj. People in Yemen were not used to read such reverberative condemnations against their government by a member of their own community. It was too much for them.

Dhobhani wrote about schools, everywhere, in the villages and towns! He argued that the people did not take any interest in the education of their children. Soon afterwards Sheikh Ahmed Mohamed Noman, who led the coup d'état, Shaikh Mohamed Azzobairi, the Poet of Yemen; sayed Mohamed Ahmed Ashami, (Yemeni Minister of State at present) Syed Zaid El Moshki (a jurist and a literate young man) all took refuge in Aden. I invited them to participate in the social and cultural activities of the Mukhayyam Abi Tyeb El Mutannabi. It was the spark of the devastating revolution that overtook Yemen in 1948.

MORE ARTICLES

Mutee Dammaj followed up his critical articles in the Fatat-UI-Jezirah, demanding wholesale reform of the Government machinery. He wrote that people were suffering destruction, death, and poverty, as if they were in state of war. They find no food and eat trees and wild plants to keep alive. Sickness is prevalent, malaria is decimating them and medical treatment is unknown. The government is recovering taxes, in the form of cereals and her granaries are full of wheat and millet belonging to the poor who die like flies, without any consideration or sympathy by their administrators.

Dammaj wrote that the system of Zakat (taxation) in Yemen was against the tenets of Islam. The poor pay it. The rich enjoy it. Emigration is resorted to, to avoid the ferocity of the tax collector and mal administration. When they repair to foreign countries to secure a means of livelihood, they also suffer because Yemen has no diplomatic relations with the outside world, and no consuls to protect the Yemeni emigrants. The Government of Yemen argues that diplomatic relations entail reciprocity and foreign consuls in Yemen would come as spies and spoil people.

ANOTHER WRITER

Another writer Aquil Uthman started writing in the local press. He said that the Turks recovered 80,000 thalers as taxes from the principality of Ebb, alone which they called "Biringee Qadha". The present Imam Yehia has multiplied this taxation 12 times. Other principalities contribute huge sums of money in taxes but the Imam Yahia is hoarding all this wealth and refuses to spend it on improvements. Anybody who demands justice is simply excommunicated and sent to jail.

When Imam Yahia died in 1948 it was stated he had left 200,000,000 thalers cash in his palaces. Qasr Assada and Qasr Ghamdan.

April 5, 1962

Men, Matters and Memories (71)**Interrogated by Government
BUT SAVED By SUPERINTENDENT**

One afternoon, in June 1944, I was invited to grace the inauguration of the Free Yemeni party, Tawahi . Some of the chieftains were Mutee Dammaj and Abou Ras both from Southern Yemen. It was intended to be secret and underground, but I observed one or two men whom I suspected, I knew they were from pro-government and had infiltrated into the organization to acquaint themselves with its aims and objects. I conveyed my doubts to my friends but I was assured that they were loyal members of the secret association.

The constitution of the party was discussed in that meeting and the object of the organization was stated to be the “liberation of Yemen from the fangs of tyranny.”

FREE YEMENIS CONSTITUTION

Two weeks later I was given the party’s Constitution to print H.E. Sir Hathorn Hall, then the Governor was not in Aden and Mr. Reginald Champion (before Knighthood) was Acting Chief Secretary.

The news was transmitted to the Imam of Yemen, who was Imam Yahya, and who wrote to Aden protesting, subsequently.

CALLED BY GOVERNOR

On the return of Sir Hathorn Hall to Aden he sent for me. He had received the protestations of the Imam of Yemen. I went to see him at the Secretariat, where I found him sitting in full military regalia with his sword dangling on one side. I sat down facing him. He suddenly stood up, with his hand on his sword and looked sternly at me. I was in new China silk suit and looked quite cheerful. He then spoke, in a precipitous voice and said: “In the name of the King I say to you, you have impaired the Anglo-Yemeni relations by printing the Free Yemeni Party’s Constitution.” I remained sitting and calm, during the conversation, rather bewildered and uneasy. I looked at the Governor’s eyes and said: “Before printing this Constitution, in my printing press, I had gone to the Acting Chief Secretary, Mr. Joy, and showed it to him, with a translation, whereupon he directed me to give it to Mr. Saldhana, the Superintendent of the office. I left the brochure with him and returned after two days to hear the final decision. Mr. Joy told me, there was no objection, in the presence of the Superintendent.

UTTER DISMAY

The Governor, at once called Mr. Joy from an adjoining room. To my utter dismay, amazement and fright, that high official denied having “okayed” the printing of the Constitution. Sir Harthorn Hall was further upset. He thought I had told a lie. Fortunately, I had preserved my equanimity and asked him to call Mr. Saldhana. The Governor looked at me, rather suspiciously and then summoned Mr. Saldhana, who very courageously admitted that Mr. Joy had permitted me to print the Constitution, after going through it. He subsequently left the room. The Governor relaxed and sat down.

“May I say a word, Your Excellency,” I asked him. “Say it,” came the reply. I said, “After having sought and obtained the permission of the Chief of Secretary I approached Mr. Reginald Champion and place Constitution before him . He was the Acting Governor and he made no objection to printing .

RESPONSIBILITY

Sir Harthorn Hall said. “Mr. Lokman you know as much law and politics as Mr. Reginald Champion and Mr. Joy They are as responsible as you are in such matter I cannot absolved you any responsibility.

“Never mind this time although damage was done,” he said.

I thanked him and went away. I carefully thought of the reasons which led Mr Joy to deny the permission he granted me , I never expected him to try to do so much harm . Colonial policy very seldom encouraged local talent . How much change in there now after all these yeas ? If I had gone to serve the Quaiti Sultan , the story of my life would have been quite different .

Hadhramout had a political adviser and he was the master of the country . Any body who disobeyed him or refused to abide by his good advice was soon discarded .

A Tussle

Earlier that year , I had a tussle with him over the internment of my brother Saleh at Tawahi for political reasons . I had argued that Saleh was a wise man and the he was a victim of intrigues .

In 1938 , I was in Bombay where I had passed my examinations in two years . The news was pulished by the Bombay Sentinel and the Bombay Chronicle as an precedented event with a photograph . Sultan Sir Saleh el Quaiti of Mukalla read the news and sent his Bombay agent Sheikh Baokza to offer me the post of a minister of state at Mukalla . We agreed to discuss the terms on the return of the Sultan to Aden . Some days before his arrival here , he sent me a telegram to meet him . I went in the same launch in which the Chief Secretary had gone to the P&O boat . He met him before I had done with the result that I was never been able to see the Sultan afterwards . Baokza however , told me that the Sultan was advised to appoint a minister from Zanzibar . Sheikh Saif became a minister .

April 12, 1962

Men, Matters and Memories (72)

Fadhli Sultan's Ancestor – A Turk I WIN SHOOTING CONTEST Western Aden Protectorates Administered By Nayebs

In 1945 after 8 years of hard work as a pleader and solicitor in Aden and Somaliland Courts and as editor of Fatat-UI-Jezirah, I had (also edited and printed the American Call, a weekly magazine published by the American Consulate in Aden), I thought I had deserved a rest. My four sons were in Cairo for higher studies. I was on the job, with some assistants.

I chose two friends, my brother Hamza and Fadhl Abbas and drove on a jeep to Shuqra in the Fadhli Protectorate. I had a tide chart and although we had no accidents, we were stuck for more than an hour on the beach, 18 miles away from Aden.

We crossed safely through the Dofas Valley, where the Sultan of Shuqra used to quarry Potassium Carbonate and sell it for export. He then made a monthly income of Rs. 5000/-from this source alone.

The land between the beach and Zingibar were small unimportant villages. The scenery was monotonously dull.

We put up at the Guest House, in Shuqra, a one room house covered with old carpets, rugs and pillows. We cooked our food with the help of a stove in the courtyard; water was brought by a woman water-carrier in a skin bag. Women looked handsome in short dresses with long tails.

Next morning we went swimming in the neighbouring shores, and before lunch we were entertained by Sultan Abdullah bin Uthman. He told me that his ancestors were Turks. Long ago, a sailing craft landed a Turk of the Ottoman dynasty on the shores of Fadhli country. He was entertained by Shuqairah village. When the inhabitants came to know of his noble birth they elected him to be their Sultan. He had a son born to him from a Fadhli wife. He called him Fadhl, from whom the State derived its name.

GENEALOGY

Fadhli had a son Ahmed and Ahmed had a son Abdullah, who had a son Hussain, Hussain had six sons Abdulla, Ahmed, Uthman, Saleh, Nasser and Fadhl. Abdulla bin Hussain ruled the State after Sultan Abdul Qader bin Ahmed bin Hussain. Sultan Ahmed bin Hussain was one of the illustrious chiefs of the Western Aden Protectorates. After Abdullah bin Hussain, who was a very simple chief, his son Saleh succeeded him but was deposed and deported to East Africa. Upon his departure, Abdullah bin Othman was elected ruler of Ahl Fadhl.

I spent a week meeting people, seeing places, swimming, fishing, sun-bathing, and collecting folklore.

I discovered that Sheikh Saleh Balaxa, a wealthy man from Aden, had started salt industries in Shuqra to imitate the Italian Salt works at Sheikh Othman. All that he achieved was that he buried in the sands of that beach a huge sum of money and died a poor man.

NOT EDUCATED BUT PEACEFUL

He is very humble, generous, pious and helpful. He knows much about the Fadhli Tribes. He is not educated but is not aggressive. He accepted a second place and gave the first place in the State to his Nayab, upon the good advice of the British Agent in Aden. Nayeb Hussain bin Abdulla ruled the country for some years and on his death, was succeeded by his brother the present Nayeb Ahmed bin Abdulla. Some of the Western Aden Protectorates are ruled by Nayeb, but the Sultans are gradually coming into the limelight, except Lower Aulaqi. Lower Yaffa and the Fadhli state. In the first two, regents hold the helm.

Sultan Abdulla is an expert fisherman, a wonderful horseman, excellent shot, a daring hunter, a narrator of Bedouin folklore and poetry. He took us on his sailing boats on a fishing expedition. We caught nearly 25 large King fish, which he ordered to be salted. We carried some on our return to Aden.

A SHOOTING CONTEST

In a contest I was able to hit the target. He refused to accept my success for a technical reason. He said I had aimed with the right eye and hit the target on the left. There were three stones placed at a distance. We baked bread in the sands, on the beach, with fire wood collected from the hills near El Kharbaqa loch.

One dhow brought us one bag of flour, two fat lambs, some butter and dates. We spent a whole night enjoying his hospitality and rehearsing poetry.

ABOU HAYDERA

Another branch of Fadhli dynasty is the Faraan family (Abou Hydera), who inhabit Alkod, where the cotton ginning factory is pitched today. It is a fertile area and there are many green fields. Tribes of the Protectorate are: Marqashis and Billailis, with several branches being, Jadaani, Maswadi, Hanashi, Mahtthoothi, Marmi and Nakkai. I met some of their leaders: Ali Muhsen bin Lahman and Abdulla bin Ahmed Garada.

DEFORESTATION

WE wandered among the tribes who were very hospitable. They provided us with milk. They had no water, but grazing grounds were rich. They possess large numbers of goats, tended by the women. The men go a-fishing. They gather Aidafish, get it sun-dried or salted for food and export to Aden. Big sharks are caught, sliced and dried. The fins provide excellent food.

The Fadhli fisheries are very rich. Many of the Bedouin cut trees to make charcoal. This and the goats are responsible for the deafforestation of the country.

Although the Bedouins made no profit from charcoal they continued to indulge in this destructive trade. They had no guidance.

In that year small-pox broke out. I visited many huts to see the sick and offer an advice. I said keep patients segregated and clean. Wash the eyes with boric lotion of which I had some from Aden.

April 19, 1962

Men, Matters and Memories (73)

PLEASURE SHORT – LIVED FREE

Tree In Fetters Beca

During my visit to the Fadhli State, I found that the only building of monumental importance was the palace erected by Sultan Ahmed bin Hussain, who was the ruler of Shuqrah in 1910 onwards . Water canals, inundated by the sea, constructed by Shaikh Saleh Balaxa of Aden early in this century, with the object of raising Saltworks, to compete with the Italian Saltworks in Aden, were extant to testify to the world, the extent of loss, one may incur by starting in a project without proper planning and perspective.

PALACE RUINS

In the outskirts I saw the ruins of what was once the “PALACE OF PLEASURE”, accommodating the libidinous Sultan Abdul Qader, a poet-king, a lutist and a lover of beauty and pleasure. This palace was devastated by bomb, of British origin, when one of the ruling chiefs had disobeyed orders. On one of the parapets, in the ground floor of this edifice, in a dark room, which remained unharmed, fragrant odour of oily scents spread round the room, inspite of years having gone by, relating the story of luxury and love of concubines. Pleasure was short-lived, but remorse and sorrow lasted much longer.

The Fadhli state inhabitants appeared to me to be more liberal-minded than many more civilized countries. A mother is respected and tolerated. A son is never asked about his father if he has none.

ROMANCE AND POETRY

In the Fadhli country love stories are narrated and lyric poetry is recited. Mixed dances are staged during marriage ceremonies, and songs are sung in a chorus. I was told the story of a poet who had extolled the beauty of his sweetheart. The publicity of his infatuation displeased the relatives of his beloved and they carried her away to a distant land, known as the Jahafil country. One evening, he saw lightening glistening from that end, and later it rained. His heart throbbed with longing and love and he said:

“Oh lightening over the Jahafil
“Thou showerest rain
“How much I desire to be carried by thee,
“To thy celestial domain
“To alleviate my pain,
“And fall back over Jahafil
“In drops of rain

Travellers memorized the sonnet and carried it round the country. The girl fell ill, on hearing it, and ultimately the relation agreed to marry her to her wooer.

The elders of the country are very philosophical. I asked one of them what he thought of the people in general. He smiled and then replied in verse:

“Among people I have found men.

“Many more imitations of men.

“Some men are sterling worth;

“Others are copper worth.

“It is for the sake of sterling.

“We accept coppers.

In 1945, the Sultan had no idea of the shape of things to come. The country was wasteland

There were few agricultural lands in the valleys of Hatib, Hassan and Bana, with its many tributaries. The floods very often destroyed the mud dams and carried their heavy loads of manure to the sea, leaving the lands dry and dreary. In less than 2 years afterwards, the Abyan Board Scheme was launched, and many monied people in Aden were offered lands to cultivate in Abyan. Abyan is today the richest cotton producing area in the whole of the Arabian Peninsula. With more care and bigger investments the produce might easily double the income of the state.

IN MUKEIRAS

In September, 1945, I thought of holiday in the Western Aden Protectorate. The only safe place then, was Mukeiras in Audhali Country .

I accompanied Ustaz Noor, a Sudani , to Lodar , on a huge military truck which Ustaz Noor had arranged . We reached the town , just before noon and were entertained by the son of Gharama , whose father was assassinated in Aden a few days earlier . He was very hospitable and we spent a happy day enjoying his generosity . I was visited by an Audhali gentleman , who told me he had come from a distance of ten miles , over rugged track and difficult terrain . I was grateful , but I asked him why he had taken so much trouble ? He explained that he was a friend of Major Tom Hicking- botham who had told him that the Government of Aden watched every move of Lokman in Aden because he said , Lokman was the only man who knew the secret of the Government policy in Aden and the Aden Protectorates . The visitor , by name el . Hamati . then said , " I wanted to see you for these reasons " and he enquired whether I would agree to be his guest . I thanked him and said , " I shall soon be on the move to visit Mukeiras " That after noon I engaged two donkeys and a camel . The latter beast carried our bags and beddings . Noor and I mounted the donkeys after breakfast , comprising chapatis fried in ghee , eggs (Omelette) and honey . Coffee mixed with white ginger and milked tea was supplied and we left the house of our host to find Mr . Davey , the Political Officer , waiting to entertain us . I said we shall not tarry longer in Lodar but shall go to Zara to see Sultan Saleh bin Hussein el-Audhali . Mr . Davey , whom I knew , as an Assistant manager of Arabian Trading Co . Ltd . , in Aden , offered me his overcoat of leopard skin to carry with me to the hill station over 7000 feet high . I accepted it and promised to return it , which I did .

With The Sultan

The camel carrying our baggage jogged on towards , the 7000 feet Thera Pass . We Left our donkeys in the scorched Valley grazing on dry shrub and climbed a steep ramp to reach the high towering palace of Sultan Saleh on the Western summit of Zara , the mountainous village . He received us very kindly and offered fruit and coffee . He said his government had engaged Qadhi Omer Mohammed Bohormuz to administer law and order in the state instead of applying just pure customary tribal law . The Sultan had given orders for the uplift of education and had already started a number of primary schools to eradicate illiteracy . Religious teachers were promulgating rules of life through sermons and preaching . He mentioned Syed el-Awami , Ahmed el- Musaibilli , Syed Hassan and Mohammed Omer el.Jifri .

On Reforms

Sultan Saleh told me he intended to propagate fruit cultivation in his state and that a garden carrying out experiments was already doing successful work in Ardh – Ad – Dhaer (Mukeiras) in producing grapes , peaches , guavas , pomegranates , cherries , pears , pulms and so on . He said , once the war was over a good deal of reform will be introduced .

The Audhali Sultanas had no resources with the exception of customs duties and land tolls on produce . He said the Audbali State maintained primary schools and a guest house . General security was excellent and there were no frontier clashes . Audhali – Yemeni relations were peaceful .

Up to Mukeiras

At about 10 a . m . we reached the foot of the hill , on our donkeys . The camel was delayed in a village , where its master stopped to pay a visit to relatives .

I got down from my donkey and started climbing up , up , up , already 5000 feet above sea-level . Higher and higher we climbed , The climate was bracing , It was cool and pleasant . At 6,400 feet , it rained and water filled in the cavities . We drank and tens of travelers did the same . The slope became steeper every 15 minutes to regain our breath . We covered the whole route in three hours and reached the peak at 1 p . m .

I mounted the donkey . I wore shorts and did not realize the dark tan my knees and thighs had developed as a result of the rarified air till it was too late . The tan lasted a long time . We bivouacked , two hours later , at a village called Ballas . Here I was warned not to go to the nearby well because vultures plucked the eyes of unwary travelers .

Chained tree .

The town of Zingibar was founded by Sultan Ahmed bin Hussain who had visited the green islands of Zanzibar and on his return from the Indian Ocean raised this town on the banks of wadi Bana , forecasting that it would one day be an important city . Near Shuqrah , I saw a tree tied with an Iron chain . I was told a killer had once disappeared leaving his victim near that tree . Sultan Ahmed bin Hussain ordered the tree to be tied with that chain . For ten years the killer remained unknown but after the elapse of all those years , he returned and saw the tree chained . He laughed and told the tale . The Sultan had him arrested and hanged .

April 26, 1962

Men, Matters and Memories (74)

Constitution for Yemen planned. Fight for freedom of press . Gratification refused

In 1945/46 Yemenies in Aden became conscious of the backwardness of their country. More immigrants settled in the Colony and were prosperous. The Fatat-Ul-Jezirah was very popular among them. They wrote regularly bitter criticisms against their Government and the Imam of Yemen sent strong objections to the Government of Aden to muzzle the Aden Press. Fatat-Ul-Jezirah was the only newspaper in circulation; after the Aden Observer, both published by Aden Government, had closed down.

THREATENING

Major Erskine, Information Officer then, sent me and said he would give me ready material to print and publish in a weekly newspaper.

“Do you want to advertise something and pay for it?” I asked. “No” he replied with a grim face. “You have to publish what I give you”.

I just smiled and retorted that the paper was mine and I was free to publish anything given to me. He was rather rude and threatened me, but I told him he was not behaving like a responsible officer, who knew his duties. He became fierce and started thundering. I then said, “I am not prepared to receive orders from you”. “I will cancel your license”, he intimidated and I left the office.

Next day he stopped printing the daily Bulletin in my Printing Press and cancelled a few subscriptions to the weekly Arabic Fatat-Ul-Jezirah which I supplied to the Information Office at a reduction of 50% because the Information Office wanted it like that.

Major Erskine left Aden. His predecessor Captain Bow was a very polite and respectable officer, who knew eight languages and was a man of letters. There could be no comparison between the two men in understanding and reasonableness. I started to place before the Government of Yemen a constitutional programme for reforms in the country, under the pen-name “Homeless Yemeni”.

1. Justice to be rendered to the Yemeni peasant: The mainstay of prosperity in Yemen rests on the peasant folks, who were in state of despondency.
2. Model farms and villages-school libraries hygienic surroundings, light, water and a housing scheme.
3. Electricity – Yemen is engrossed in darkness. Dispel this darkness and let the people live in bright light.

4. Secondary Schools – Ignorance is everywhere in Yemen. Compare this mediieval country with Sweden, England, Germany, USA, Belgium, Denmark. The poorest porter there, has attained a secondary education and holds a matriculation certificate.
5. A University: Modern Turkey is the gift of the University founded by Mustapha Kemal Ata Turk, who had imported its teachers from the plains of Europe. The Arab World would be too glad to supply tutors to Yemen.
6. Health: Yemenies dies like flies in epidemics. Build a healthy nation. Healthy minds in healthy bodies.
7. Ban Qat: Fifty years ago Japan rose from oblivion. The first thing she did to stand on her legs was to extirpate Opium and prohibit addiction to it, but to subdue China, she employed this narcotics as a powerful weapon and transported huge quantities to dope the Chinese. Qat is narcotizing Yemenies and is stupefying them. Therefore stop its cultivation in Yemen.
8. Female Education: Female education is the first step towards the emancipation of women and therefore towards national glory.
9. See the World: The Imam must send all his sons abroad to learn from other people's culture and civilization in order to be able to imitate them in their progress.

10. Communications

Well founded communication systems, roads, telephones , telegraphs, postal connections, newspapers and so on and so forth help in disseminating knowledge . We cannot afford to stick to the camel and the ass .

11. The homeless

Thousands of immigrants in Aden are homeless men , women and children . They tell sad tales of poverty , sickness , ignorance and injustice . They are a blemish in the face of the Arabia Felix .

12 . National Wealth .

Open canals , bore artesian wells , build dams and reservoirs . Follow the footsteps of Progressive nations . You can then boast of a national economy .

13 . National Companies

Encourage local companies to export local produce and import necessities . A good irrigation system should help to double agricultural produce .

14 . Emigraation .

Stop Yemenis from leaving the country by providing work at home for them . Punish beggars .

15 . The Army .

The Army is the pride of the nation but not the army billeted on the people . Let Government pay the soldier not the poor peasant .

16 . Hospitals .

All Yemenis Flock to Aden for medical attention and medicine . Is not this a shame ?

17. Appoiniments and Reforms .

- a) A minister for social affairs is essential .
- b) Consuls abroad to protect the interests of Yemeni nationals .
- c) Officer in charge of Infectious diseases .
- d) A House of Parliament With representatives from all sections of the population .
- e) A financial minister .
- f) National Holidays to be fixed .
- g) Well organized roads and streets .
- i) Scholarships for 100 at the onset to go to the Middle East U.K France , U.S.A .
- j) Establishment of the Rule of Law .
- k) Fighting of corruption .
- l) Establishment of political Parties .

In a series of articles I chalked out this constitution for the government and people of Yemen under the pseudonymous name of " Homeless Yemeni " . Imam Ahmed was then the Crown Prince of Yemen . He read those articles week after week and on one occasion sent a messenger with two thousand thalers to pay me . His messenger offered to double the amount and said " Please take back this money to the Crown Prince and tell him to pay it to the poor and needy in Taz . " I did not need any pecuniary assistance to stop writing freely , and I continued to write .

May 03, 1962

Men, Matters and Memories (75)

Seif-UI-Islam Ahmed (Present Imam) Visit To Aden

Are you the “Homeless Yemeni?” asked Crown Prince Ahmed of Yemen, when I met him in April 1946 in the Sultan’s Rodha palace at Lahej. His father Imam Yahya, was the King.

“Maybe, Your Excellency”. I replied, with a slight quiver. I had been told the Crown Prince was upset on reading my constitutional propositions to him in my newspaper, and may do harm to me if I met him.

Seif-UI-Islam Shamsuddin Ahmed Crown Prince of Yemen looked podgy with protruding fiery eyes. He was a lineal descendant of Imam El Qaseem bin Hamid-ed-Din and a son of Imam Yahya, the hero of the Freedom, of Yemen, from Turkish imperialism.

PROFILE

Born at Jabal “El-Ahnoon”, in the Northern highlands on 12th Jumad El Akher 1313 A.H. 1893 A.D., he had his pupilage, under his father’s care, at the fortress of Shahara, with the Turks, ravaging country, favouring a select few of Yemeni sychopants and keeping the rest of the population in utter poverty and ignorance.

At an early age, Prince Ahmed showed signs of intelligence and courage. He rode the most difficult steeds in the country and, discussed most difficult juridical problems with Ulemas, who attended the Imam’s regular conventions. His generosity and conviviality became proverbial.

At the age of 23, Prince Ahmed was delegated by his father to quell the revolt of Hashed, Bakheel and El Usaimat. He chose Shaikh Nasser Mabkhoot to lead his army and conducted the campaign with tact and preciseness that made his father, later appoint him to become the Governor of Hajja, a very fertile, though mountainous district. He made of it a stronghold, which has remained faithful to him ever since. He suppressed many upheavals, fanned by Turkish intrigue in the Hajja Province and his hands were full for nearly 11 years, till he was able to make peace prevail in 1347 A.H. 1928 A.D. In this year the notorious Zarnookis, dreadful pirates, in the Red Sea, for a long time, resorted to high way manship and pugnacity. They comprised more than 50,000 tribesmen-bellicose, nomadic, firebrand, poor and restless, occupying the marine ridge and the adjoining eastern escarpment of the Tihama, with some prosperous towns and villages – Tayef, Ghuleifica and Beitufaqih. Prince Ahmed gave a very meritorious account of himself, in the War against the Zarnookis. He marched against them with big army, which surrounded them, by sea and made their escape by that route impossible. The other Path of the invading army blocked their way to the uplands of Yemen, and left them between “the jaws of the lion”, without food supplies,

ammunition or water. They resisted for two years and surrendered finally, to the Prince, who was not kind to them: but in recent years selected his body-guard from their ranks.

He was the first Yemeni Prince who realized the strategic importance of Sheikh Saeed on the straits of Bab El Mandab. He ordered several forts to be constructed, overlooking the straits.

A POET

He is a poet and has a collection of beautiful poems. Once , his army, in a military error, lost a gun which was directed by the enemy against him. He realized the danger, braved the storm, by jumping to his horse and with his scimitar in the right hand and a heavy revolver in the left bounce upon the enemy, alone, followed by his faithful soldiers, and recaptured the gun. He then extemporized the following poem.

AND POEM...

*Watching the plight of my army, in their retreat.
And hearing them call my name for help for their defeat
Having lost their guns in a behavior indiscreet,
I dashed faster than a vulture
On a sled of noble culture
I smote the enemy hard, and repulsed their horde
Which surrounded me like a ford.
I drove them away,
And recovered the cannon from their sway
It was their greatest prize,
They were brave in full arms and size.
They contested my attack,
But the gun was in my strong hand back.
They directed death to me;
I sent it reeling back destroying three.
With my sword I cut the fingers holding the gun,
And the enemy was done.
Seeing courage dashing forward,
They retreated far backward.*

TRIUMPHANT

Prince Ahmed fought many pitched battles and was triumphant. He made peace with the recalcitrant tribes of Dho Mohamed Dho Husain, El Jafain, Bani Nooq, and the Najran tribesmen in Saada Province. He subsequently opened a library, a school and built a Government House. He presided over the Council of elders in Sanaa, and became the Governor of Taez.

He was given a great ovation on his arrival at Aden. A thousand cars dashed from Lahej following his car. I was in the one which carried his brother Yahia, after him.

May 10, 1962

Men, Matters and Memories (76)

GENEROUS DONATIONS BY YEMENI PRINCE

Indian Community Express Loyalty

THREATENED TO BE KILLED BY PRINCE

Upon his arrival at Aden, in April 1946, Prince Seif-Ul-Islam Ahmed, the Crown Prince of Yemen then now present Imam, was very generously entertained by Sultan Abdul Karim of Lahej in his “Qasr Ashukr” Palace of Gratitude” in Crater. I was invited several times to dinner and lunch with the Prince and the Sultan. I was a personal friend of Prince Seif-Ul-Islam el-Hussain, brother of Prince Ahmed. El-Hussain had visited Aden in 1940, on his return from Tokyo and London. I was held in high esteem by the minister (of H.M. Imam Yahya), who accompanied Prince Ahmed to Aden. They were Qadhi Ali Al-Amri. Qadhi Hussain Alhalali and Syed Hussain el-Waisi, and others.

The Crown Prince willingly answered many of my questions. His replies were well thoughtout and intelligent. He said he liked Aden but did not like the continuance of the control of Civil Supplies and rationing since the war was over. He spoke of the possible success of Arab unity, if kings, leaders and princes put their heads together to solve current problems.

MINERAL WEALTH

He mentioned the tragedy of Palestine with a long sigh and affirmed that the only possible solution then was to restore the land of the Palestinians to them and establish a Moslim State, responsible for the rights and security of the minorities (Jews and Christians).

He assured me that his father Imam Yahya had plans for the exploitation of Mineral Wealth in Yemen and the inauguration of the banking system which would resolve the corny problems of interest.

ANSWERING LETTERS

Hundreds of letters came to his hands and as many complaints from his subjects in this colony. He replied and gave orders on the reverse of those numberless chits. I sat by him humouring him. Once he stared at me as if soliciting my admiration of his relentless toil in replying incessantly to all those letters and complaints. I said he was no doubt a marvel, but he could easily hand over this responsibility to some of his ministers and concentrate time and energy on planning major state affairs. He disapproved of this comment and said in poetry:

*The camel go happily gazing
Though heavily laden;
He cannot have a rest,
Who work for others' happiness.*

GENEROSITY

He proved his reputed generosity in Aden by giving charities to all the local institutions he had visited. He gave Rs. 5000/- to the Civil Hospital where most of the indoor patients were Yemenis, RS 3000/- to Jerbai Charitable School, RS 3000/- to the Aden Protectorate Levies, Rs 1000/- to Bazara Charitable School , Rs 500/- to the Mukhayyam Abi Tayyeb, (a cultural club) and to many other social and educational institutions in the Colony.

He saw an Indian film in the Regal Cinema and was entertained at the Hindu Temple by Vassanji lalji, Rajibhoy Purshotamdas, Dayabhoy Ashubboy, Gokuldas, Kalianji and the Indian Association at Khusaf Valley.

I entertained him in my office, at Esplanade Road on behalf of the Mukhayyam Abi Tayyib. Many disguised guests were present. The leading Yemeni merchants organized sumptuous luncheons in his honour, in the Parsee Garden at Crater and at the Sheikh Othman gardens. No other ruler, before or after him, was ever entertained with so much pomp and expense.

INDIAN EXPRESS LOYALTY

He called upon me to translate a letter addressed by him to the Hindu merchants of Aden, in reply to a letter from them. They had written that they were in Aden for many years and were happy and thankful. They expressed their friendship and loyalty to the Prince and hoped that his visit would further cement Indo-Yemeni relationship. He wrote back saying that he hoped that India would achieved her national aspirations and that the Indians in Aden would work for Hindu-Moslim brotherhood and understanding.

I accompanied him in a car to Steamer Point. He praised the starigh-forwardness of Fatat-Ul-Jezirah and the courage of its editors. He said he admired the sincerity and openness with which Aden Government was approached in this paper.

BILLETING TROOPS

It happened, however, that some Yemeni nationals approached me to request the Prince to abolish the system of billeting troops on the poor villagers and farmers in Yemen, forcing the women grind millet, carry water and firewood to the camps and cook bread for the fierce soldiers. They also demanded that the system of serving court warrants on the peasants through the soldiers should be repealed since the servers imposed leavy fines on the parties concerned and caused untold misery.

THREATS

I published these demands hoping the cheerful prince would take it easy but it gave him unexpected cause of anger and recrimination. He accused me of intentional insult but simultaneously ordered a mill to be purchased for grinding millet. I , unwittingly, published the news saying that this machine will

save women-folk from toil and forced labor for the troops. The Prince was so highly irritated that he threatened to send his commandos to kill me. I stopped visiting him.

May 17, 1962

Men, Matters and Memories (77)

NOT AVAILABLE

May 24, 1962

Men, Matters and Memories (78)

YEMENI CROWN PRINCE INTRIGUES Later Stipulates My Presence At Luncheon Prisons in Yemen,

When the Crown Prince (Imam Ahmed today), threatened to kill me, I stopped visiting him. It was in May, 1946, when amoebic dysentery became an epidemic in the Colony. I fell a victim to the disease, and went for a change to the Sheikh Othman garden in the week-end.

SERIOUS ACCUSATION

The Prince was seething and boiling with rage against me. When he came to know that I was not in Crater, one of the Courtiers contacted the Secretariat to say that I had gone to Sheikh Othman to agitate against the Jews who were collecting at Hashed Camp (Sheikh Othman) on their way from Yemen to Israel, as immigrants. It was a very serious accusation coming against a poor journalist, from a man in power a king. Saleh Jaffer, Frontier Officer, was in the Palace where the Prince was accommodated. He heard the report, sent by telephone and quietly afterwards informed the Secretariat that the report, was false and malicious.

POLICE ALERTED

The Police at Sheikh Othman had been warned and alerted. It was Friday and I had left the garden for prayers. A police officer, an old pupil of mine rubbed his shoulder against mine in the mosque and hinted that I was under careful observation. When the prayers were over I was requested to deliver a sermon as usual, but I said I was not well. I returned to the garden and two days later I was told by Saleh Jaffer (may God bless his soul) of what had transpired.

A week later, Prince Seif-Ul-Islam felt remorseful. He sent for me ; I refused to go.

A few days afterwards, a grand luncheon was given to honour the Prince by Sheikh Mohammad Salem Baobeid of Crater, Aden.

It was on Friday May 24, 1946. The host went on to carry the guest of honour to his house but the Prince made it a condition precedent that I should be among the invitees, and be present. Baobeid sent one of his sons to request me to go. I refused but he pleaded that he had incurred a huge expense to entertain the Prince who stipulated, at the last minute that I should be present. I went. The Prince came after me and when he saw me he walked about ten steps to embrace me so hard that I was nearly strangled. I shouted and he let me go jubilantly. He is very spiteful and I thought I had made a mistake in agreeing to go. I felt the head of his dagger touching my ribs, when he embraced me. He said he would talk to me after lunch, but before it was finished I was out, in the street, going home, and never saw him afterwards.

UNTENABLE AUTOCRACY

I subsequently wrote an open letter addressed to the Crown Prince and said that it was heartending to find incorrigible tyranny in him. I said I did not mind his insults and threats and that I shall continue to demand constitutional reform in Yemen. I said I ought to be frank to tell the Prince that autocratic hierarchy was untenable.

Yemen must change. I said the atom bomb was already in use, how can we afford to remain under a despotic set of rulers , a king and his sons? They are interested only in the collection of taxes, in an unbearable manner.

The thousands of Yemeni immigrants in Aden refuse to return to their country to find poverty and need. *Patria Potestas in pietato debet, non-atrocitate consistere.*

In August, 1946, Crowne Prince Ahmed of Yemen had failed in winning over to his side the two Free Yemeni leaders-Sheikh Ahmed Mohamed Noman, Qadhi Mahmood Azzobairi, the former a jurist, the latter a poet-both bent upon introducing a constitutional government in the Arabia Felix. He had returned to Taz and they had succeeded in obtaining a license to edit, print, and publish in Aden a weekly Arabic newspaper Saut-Al-Yemen (the Voice of Yemen) and in founding al-Jamiyah el-Yamaniyah el-Kubra (the Greater Yemeni Association). I was the adviser of the two leaders. I had prepared the necessary applications for obtaining the licenses and recommended the association to the Bank.

Saut-el-Yemen published regular demands of drastic reforms in the country. They disclosed widespread corruption, mal-administration, injustice, gross backwardness, illiteracy, poverty, arbitrary taxation, billeting of soldiers on poor farmers, letters de cachet, unwarranted warrants on members of the public, imprisonment without trial, espionage, universal ill-health, smuggling, favouritism, royal family vested interests and many other complaints.

GREATER YEMENI ASSOCIATION

The Yemenis in Aden, and abroad in Ethiopia, Sudan, East Africa, Saudi Arabia, and Europe contributed generously to the cause of the freedom of Yemen from Tyranny and violent autocracy. Money poured in regularly but the members of the association wanted a militant leader to march into the country in force.

The Imam Yahya felt something unusual in the air. All newspapers coming from Aden (there were just two) Fatat-Ul-Jezirah and Saut-ul-Yemen were proscribed in Yemen, but the Imam asked for copies of the former. On 1st September 1946, a special messenger was sent to Aden to buy copies of the Fatat-Ul-Jezirah Arabic weekly for the previous eight months.

YEMEN PRISON

Imam Yahya read with interest an editorial I had written on “Prisons in Yemen” in 1946. There was a prison in each town of the kingdom. There were actually several prisons in Sanaa , Taz and Ebb. AL-Shabaka was H.M. Prison in Taz which had several others called “Cairo Prison” on the Saber hill, overlooking the town. It used to be a palace of the King of Beni Rasul. Besides, there were and still are Mimtar Jail the Court jail, al Urdhi detention barracks the Army gaol, Ahmed Shamsan prison, the Women’s jail, the Palace jail, the “bewailers dungeon” or Al-Misrah” and the prisons of Yufus (the birth place of the famous Saint Ibn Alwan), the Corrective, the Shaarab, the Maqbana, Rahida, Mawia, El-Husha Khadir, Heyfan, Mafalis and many other dreadful prisons. There are more prisons in Taz, alone than schools in several big towns.

Shabaka, (the fence or net) in Taz, is a typical dungeon, 90 feet square, 12 feet high, dark, damp, unventilated, windowless, with conveniences in the centre, swampy and guarded by heartless warders. I visited this hell in 1948 and was terrified. The prisoners, who spend years, without trial, in such shocking conditions develop insanity.

May 31, 1962

Men, Matters and Memories (79)

THE MARCH TO MUKEIRAS Benumbed In Snowstorm

After taking some oven bread cooked in the Bedouin , fashion and boiled egg we proceeded to Iryab, an important town , on the Mukeiras 7000 foot plateau surrounded by lovely greenery. The Bedouin in the Aden Protectorates lives a very simple life (1945). Today (1962) there is very appreciable change in his way of living and thinking. He did not know cooking, sewing or building. He baked or boiled his food. His dress was very simple unsewn loin cloth, and his dwelling was a hut, a cottage or a small mud-house. He was primitive, illiterate, poor and untidy, but hospitable and helpful notwithstanding.

ARAB GENEROSITY

Sultan Abdalla bin Ahmed of Iryab entertained us in his 3 storied house, and offered to keep us for the night, but I preferred to continue the journey to Mukeiras to be able to change and relax. After dinner (bread and ghee)and coffee, we proceeded to the guest house at Mukeiras. We arrived at 9:30 p.m. to find that the camel carrying our baggage had not arrived. It was very cold outside (65 degrees Fahrenheit). The place was pitch dark. My companion spoke about the Sudan and the courage of the Sudanese. He thought they were the most intelligent people. I was uneasy and when I heard wolves howling in the vicinity, I felt even uneasier.

We sat on the terrace of the guest-house when the watchman suddenly made his appearance and said it was not safe to sit there smoking. We may become a target to snipers and offered to accommodate us in his house, a furlong away. We walked on a narrow wall to reach the mud-house. We slept on the floor. I woke up early next morning to see the camel which had arrived after 8 a.m. I t had fallen, on its knees, and broken our trunks, cooking utensils and soiled our bedding. But we were very much relieved, upon its arrival.

ENJOYABLE COUNTRY SIDE

I had an Aulaqi cook who at once prepared breakfast. The watchman also returned from the bazaar with milk, bread, ghee and onions. He advanced the money, which we paid him back, with a little present.

For two days, we were very happy, enjoying the wonderful climate, the fowl, large eggs, delicious honey and thick milk.

SNOW

On the third day, we had a hailstorm. For the first time I had that experience and stood out on an open verandah looking at nature snowing. I stood in the rain. I did not realized the danger of bathing in the snow-storm, till I had started shivering head over foot. I was helped to reach my bed and was covered with thick rug, a blanket and the leopard skin coat lent me by Mr. Davey. The cook brought some glowing embers but I remained shaking all over for nearly 90 minutes, before I warmed up again.

TRAVEL ON DONKEYS

Heavy floods came down from the highlands and we found ourselves next morning locked up in a deep mud pool. It took three days to dry up and on the fourth day we left Mukeiras for Baidha in Yemen, on donkeys. In four hours we reached the Yemeni frontier-post. The town is very well fortified, strongly garrisoned, and lies behind hills at a level slightly lower than Mukeiras.

The whole region is known as “Ardh Adhaher” (The land of the visible) and when I returned from this country I wrote a small book under the name “Ardh Adhaher”. In my next dispatch I shall write from that little book.

How I had escaped from Baidha (Yemen) and how I had fallen from horseback and was carried like a deadman for more than 5 miles on an improvised stretcher is the next topic.

June 01, 1962

Men, Matters and Memories (80)

REMINISCENCES OF ARABIAN NIGHTS

Timely Escape from Baidha

I arrived at Baidha, the Yemeni frontier post in September 1945, in the month of Ramadhan after 2 p.m. I was fasting and the whole town was dormant. It awakes after sunset. I was received by a henchman of Shaikh Hussain Ali Ramah, the chieftain of the Baidha tribes – the Shaikh of Shaikhs. He was a friend and a relative of my first wife. I had saved him in 1918 in a case of forgery, in which he is involved with two others. At 3:30 p.m. I went to the mosque, attended by two other friends from the town. I saw some gorgeous edifices, but a small market place. The inhabitants of Baidha are fair, many have blue eyes and the women are very attractive, although they keep the veil on. I observed some beautiful jeweses in the Jewish section. There were many Jews working as wine brewers, goldsmiths, bakers, mattress-makers and shop-keepers, and very few farmers. I saw a wide swamp outside the town at the foot of a large mound.

Most of the people of Baidha work abroad in Somalia, Sudan, Aden and East Africa. They are very successful merchants and are very respectable. Thousands of them work as porters.

THE RAMAH AND I

At sunset, I was invited to break fast in the palace of Shaikh Hussain Ali Ramah. I found him sitting upon a high sofa covered with valuable Persian carpets and velvet pillows, with his hukkah standing majestically upon a brass plate, with its coils, covered in crochet lace, winding on the richly carpeted floor, reaching him, on his high sofa, through a waiter, dressed in Gold lametta. He was very hospitable and I though he looked like the magnates of the Arabian Nights.

I knew Shaikh Ramah. I knew him very well , XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX pomp and splendor. The big train of servants, the rich food served in silver dishes, the golden spoons, the scented water, the perfumed hall and rooms, the finely decorated walls and ceilings were proof of enormous wealth.

ALARMED

In 20 years, Shaikh Ramah changed from an ordinary merchant in Aden to a pontifical position. We had a long discourse. I was rather garrulous but he was reserved and reticent. Two hours later, he decided to go to the mosque for the long evening prayers and his son Shaikh Salem Ramah took care of me. We left the palatial dwelling of his father and after prayers I was invited by the headmaster of the newly inaugurated primary school to behold the working of his institution. I went. Most of the pupils were sons of officials. On recalling the attendance roll, the son of the Governor, Ben Ishaq, was absent. The headmaster, who was admirer of my literary work, told me in confidence that my arrival at Baidha had greatly embarrassed the Governor, and he was, therefore seeking immediate instructions from the Yemeni Crown Prince at Taez. I was alarmed. I discovered I had made a grave error in coming to Yemeni

soil. I was not in the good books of the Government. They may take arbitrary steps to arrest me. I had a letter from Sultan Saleh Al-Audhali to Shaikh Hussain Ramah, who would certainly try to defend me against arrest, but that would cause embarrassment to him. I started thinking a way out. One of the guests, and many of them are distant relatives of mine : the Al-Ashaibha, the Qirbis, the Ramahs asked me "How long do you intend to stay in town?" I said loud, "One Week " I observed, shortly afterwards, an armed soldier moving out. I realized that he had gone to give that information to the Governor.

PRAISING POEM

At 11 p.m. I was entertained to a musical party hand drums and a flute at Sheikh Salem Ramah's versed a poem in my praised.

After the midnight supper (Ramadhan) I whispered to Sheikh Salem Ramah that I would like to quit before dawn. He welcomed the proposition, which confirmed my doubts. He ordered transport and I was given his own donkey which ran faster than cultured horse. I was accompanied by an armed soldier, on horse back, and he gave me two donkeys loads of beautiful rugs as a present from his father, which were to follow me.

Before morning call to prayers, I was traversing the zigzag, rugged terrain leading to Mukeiras.

Just after sunrise, I reached a point of safety and I came to know two days later that the Crown Prince expressed his delight that I was in Yemen and the Governor of Baidha had arranged to give a party in my honour but that during my sojourn in the Arabia Felix , I should pay a visit to the Crown Prince at Taz, the out come of which was doubtful.

June 14, 1962

Men, Matters and Memories (81)

FALL ON DANGEROUS PRECIPICE CARRIED LIKE DEAD MAN

On my return from Baidha Sheikh Ahmed Hussain Am Saadi of Balad Am Shuhoor, (at present a very successful trader in Aden) sent me an invitation to go and stay with him, at his castle, situated upon a high mountain, not far from Am-Aadia, of Archaeological fame, on the Mukeiras 7800 foot plateau. Am Saadi was educated in the United States of America and had an American wife. He had a daughter from her, but she died in the States. He is wireless mechanic, shrewd, generous and polite. He had collected substantial wealth, built a beautiful house at Am Shuhoor village, and lived peacefully in the hilly Audhali country, a friend of its Sultan and the other princes.

Am Shuhoor lies six miles to the East of Mukeiras, in a very precipitous country sparsely inhabited yet picturesque, and green. Sultan Saleh bin Ahmed of Iryab sent his brother Sultan Hussain bin Ahmed with the horse of Sultan Saleh bin Hussain, the ruler of the Audhali country, to carry me to Am Shuhoor. The animal was known to be "Ash-Shaalan", (the firebrand).

IRRESISTABLE TEMPTATION

It was a bay horse vigorous, noble-looking, ferocious and rather fidgety; of great renown and fame, all over the Western Aden Protectorates. It was a race-horse, with a resilient back and a long span. When it galloped it raised its head and short tail, very proudly.

I saw it and my temptation to ride it became irresistible.

It was the eighth day of Ramadhan and it was a Thursday. My friend Ahmed Noor; the Sudanese, and my cook Omer Aulaqi followed me at a slow pace. The groom went ahead of me. We travelled over hill and dale, high mountains, deep gorges, rugged tracks, difficult terrain, narrow passages, loose pebbles, huge rocks, running streams, green shrubs, wild flowers, red, yellow and blue, waving unnoticed, in the cool breeze, while the sun hid behind the gathering clouds. Some of the rocks offered excellent shelter from rain and heat even from air-raids.

We crossed long distances, while I described to my friends the beauty of different kinds of rocks and plants. Rock pigeons, wild fowl, swallows and sparrows perched upon the rocks. Some flew away upon our advent. I had a gun, which was carried by my cook, but it was not safe to shoot at random, for people tended their flocks of sheep in shady places in those hilly areas.

I offered the horse to my friend Noor, but he said he was happy jumping from rock to rock, until we reached a plain more than 1 mile in length. I saw Am-Shuhoor high up on the opposite mountain, when the groom inadvertently slipped away from the face of the horse, who took it to be the order for it to fly and it flew, while I was unprepared for the gallop.

A COMPASIONATE HORSE and HELPLESS FRIEND

It galloped at forty miles an hour, biting the bridle hard and putting its head low to make it impossible for me to pull it back. I remembered for a second the flying horse of the Arabian nights and for at least two minutes I lost control of the beast. At the last minute, we reached the slippery rocks reaching the high towering home of Shaikh Am-Saadi. The horse was running fast, faster than horse in a hot race and on the rocks it slipped, its front legs stretching far beyond its hind legs and I suddenly jumped to reduce its load. I hit my chin against a sharp stone and bumped my left foot against the very smoothed rock below. I had a deep cut, which separated the flesh of my lower jaw from that of my upper throat and looking below me, I saw a huge precipice more than a hundred feet deep. I was profusely bleeding I swooned, but recovered my equanimity and squatted on the rocks. The horse dashed but felt my absence from its back. It returned and came near me looking at me with compassion and remorse. It took some time before people came down from the castle and my friends reached me shouting for help.

When help was at hand, I discovered that all my friends are helpless. They could do nothing to save me. I was carried up to the house. I asked for a roll of plaster which I observed on a table and a bottle of iodine. I disinfected the wound and put the plaster on it and tied it with a piece of cloth, which I had in my baggage.

NIGHT JOURNEY and RATTLE –SNAKE

Suddenly we had a hail storm. I looked at it in pain. I intended to enjoy the good climate. The pain of my foot which was cracked became intense and soon I had a high temperature.

At 5 p.m. I said I should be carried to Lodar's military hospital. Sultan Hussain bin Ahmed called about forty strong men and I was carried on a bier, on their shoulders with petromax lamps to light the way. I was almost unconscious but I woke up when shouts reached my ears that a rattlesnake had nearly stung one of the men.

We reached Iryab just before midnight and early next morning I was carried down the 7800 foot Thira pass to Zara Town as guest of Sultan Saleh.

On the fateful morning the atom bomb was dropped on Hiroshima.

The story of my travels in Audhali Country was related in a little book "Aidh-Audhaheer," written by me after reaching Aden safely.

June 21, 1962

Men, Matters and Memories (82)

END OF COLOUR BAR IN HOSPITAL Britain To Give Self-Govt. to Colonies

Amoebic dysentery in Aden spread in the form of an epidemic in 1946, and I was one of the victims of the disease. I was advised to go to Hospital as an indoor patient, but all the private wards were occupied and I had to agree to accept bed in the general WARD. Dr. Ghulamhusain Keshani, however, managed to get me a bed in the verandah of the private wards. I was given penicillin every three hours for three days; subsequently emetine and other capsules. I was told, then, that there was plenty of room in the New Block, where Europeans only were admitted, not natives.

Dr. Cochrane, the Director of Medical Services then, came to see me. I told him about the story of the New Block. He promised to change the rule and a day later, I shifted to the New Block.

With the exception of High ranking Protectorate Chiefs, no non-European was admitted in the New Block. But after I have been allowed to occupy a bed there, many Arabs and Indians were admitted, at Rs 10/- per day, for lodging and boarding.

T.B. ASSOCIATION

I remained for 15 days in Hospital during which Dr. Cochrane and Dr. Keshani told me of the plight of the helpless families of patients suffering from consumption. They suggested starting an association to fight tuberculosis in Aden. I was to carry out the publicity and call upon the Aden people to contribute generously to the project. I started campaigning in Fatat-ul-Jezirah, then an Arabic Weekly and the idea fructified. Shaikh Ali Turki contributed generously. An association was formed. I was elected a member of the Managing Committee. Many other Arab dignitaries joined. This association is, today, doing very useful work in helping patients and their helpless families. But the disease is no longer as virulent as it used to be in the past. Dr. Keshani has been responsible for the alleviation of the distress of thousands of patients during the last 15 years.

LOCAL POLITICS

Till 1946, Adenese concentrated on constitutional reforms in the Yemen. They had hoped that a good government there would eke out prosperity, bring justice, advancement and end imperialism in Southern Arabia. The political future of Aden was not very clear. The second World War was just over and the Adenese did not know what Britain meant to do to them. Rt. Hon. George Hall Colonial Secretary, in 1946, made a statement:

“THE IDEA THAT ONE NATION SHOULD DOMINATE AND EXPLOIT ANOTHER IS MOST DETESTABLE AMONG SOCIALISTS. THE LABOUR GOV'T. IS A SOCIALIST STATE AND AIMS AT IMPROVING LIVING CONDITIONS IN THE COLONIES.

He also said.”THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT WAS PREPARED TO GIVE SELF-GOVERNMENT TO COLONIES, Provided, however, he said” THEY WERE READY TO SHOULDER RESPONSIBILITIES.”

I published this important statement in my Arabic Fatat-UI-Jezirah and from that day started planning to send a delegation to London to see the Colonial Secretary and demand Self-Government for Aden.

But, we remained concentrating our energies on the social and political uplift of Yemen and we contributed everything in our power to establish a constitutional Government in Sanaa. The Revolution came in 1948. We hoped that a Constitutional Monarch would bring about a change in the life of the People . Syed Abdulaziz Athualibi , a Tunisian Leader who visited Aden in 1930 said, then only a Benevolent Dictator would be able to rule in South Arabia. He should be strong but just,” I cannot say if that theory is good today! 1962!

INDIANS IN ADEN

This community remained politically inert. But immigrants from India came to Aden in large numbers, after the exodus to India in 1940 subsequent to the declaration of World War II. They have always concentrated on the Trade. The wise among them counseled non interference in local politics.

LEGCO

Sir Reginald Champion inaugurated the Legislative Council in 1947 with 8 nominated members. He was kind and friendly till then. He sent for me and said “I have not nominated you to Legco, because I have your opinion in your Newspaper Fatat-UI-Jezirah.” “Thank you, Your Excellency,” I said “I am waiting for the election of members to this Council” “Don’t be in a hurry,” he replied.

The Legislative Council has remained advisory all these years although superficially it is in a majority by one vote.

1947 NOMINEES

The Nominees in 1947 were:

Sir. M.A.K. Mackawee

Shaikh Mohamed Abdullah

Seth Dinshaw Cowasjee

Syed Abdo Ghanem

K.B. Mohamed Salem Ali

Menahem Yahooda

Dr. Cochrane

Tom Hickinbotham, of Port Trust.

Sir Mackwee ridiculed the idea of Self-Government for Aden. Shaikh Abdullah thought that all Moslems of all nationalities should be allowed to find a home in Aden.

Seth Dinshaw was interested in Shipping . Syed Abdo Ghanem was known for his national aspirations but was careful not to antagonize the government . K . B . Mohamed Salem Ali was a government pensioner used for 30 years to obey orders . Menahem Yahooda , a Jew , rarely made comments . The last two supported Government Plans .

June 28, 1962

Men Matters and Memories (83)

KAMLA DEVI-VENTURE INTO THE NOVEL

Kamla Devi is the name of a novel that I published in May 1947. My friend Prince Fadhl Abdul Qawl, of Lahej, came one evening to me and related heart-rending atrocities committed around us. I was inspired to write this 67 page little novel, that very evening. Next morning I took it to the press. The Prince read it and undertook to pay the printing costs. He took away 1200 copies for distribution and I sold 1800 copies more. It sold like hot cakes. Kamla Devi, means the flower of the Gods. It is an Indian expression . The story is an analogy between an autocratic system of administration in an Indian independent state and the oligarchy in our lands.

I related that in 1923 I had paid a visit to Paulapur state (a fictitious name) in India. Most of the people lived as beggars and mendicants. They were emaciated, sick pale, dressed in rags, bare-footed and listless. Women carried babies on their arms, in a state of starvation. Almost all lived on footpaths or under the trees. Many were blind or crippled. They were beggars and were chased by policemen who shared their collections, or asked for gratification for keeping them away. Poor people and yet a rich country, full of fruit, vegetables, flowers, cereals, milk, butter and honey. A large population hacked by heavy taxes.

A TYRANT

I stopped at a hotel where I found a Yemeni to be the owner. He had been there forty years. He explained to me that the ruler of Paulapur was a tyrant, who ruled his people brutally, forcing them to give everything to him to keep concubines and spend on his own luxuries and liquor. I visited the Palace of the Raja. It was modern in architecture grandeur and splendor. There was no single school or social institution in the state.

PROGRESS

I passed by Paulapur thirteen years later to see my friend the Yemeni hotel-keeper. I found a great change. There was culture and industry. There was justice and prosperity. There were no beggars.

There were newspapers. I found that my Yemeni friend was gone but his son who had become a lawyer met me very cordially and told me that all that progress was brought by the great sacrifices of "Queen Kamla Devi". "How did the miracle happen?" I enquired and he said: "This is her life story and handed me a book-bearing the name "Paulapur's Bible ".

A QUEEN AND STORY

In brief, the story of the great queen relates that after Raja Devi the despot had become intolerable and the people were decimated by poverty and disease, a young girl came to the town and opened a school. She was very beautiful and very kind. She found people addicted to alcohol and narcotics and few responded to her call to send their girls to the school. Instead they informed the Raja, who sent for her and in his insane lewdness he wanted to force her to join his brothel. But she denounced him and his men. He was drunk, dead drunk! He flogged her relentlessly. She tolerated patiently. Next morning he recovered from intoxication and remembered how beautiful Kamla was. He ordered her to be brought before him, but she was nearly dying. When he was told this fact he raved and ran to her death bed. She was delirious. He, at once imported some doctors to treat her. She recovered. He went to see her and said she should now be grateful and love him. She told him: "I hate you. You are a butcher of human beings. You are a cannibal. Get out." "Have you forgotten the whip " ? He asked?

" You are flogging a million people everyday. Your executioners are less, brutal than you are. Go out. Let me not see your ugly face," she replied.

"My ugly face," he asked, and looked into a mirror, on a nearby wall. He did not know that he had destroyed a nation. He held the whip ready to destroy that angel, but he saw tears in her eyes and found her even more beautiful. He went to wipe her tears but she said: "Go and wipe the bleeding wounds of your unhappy people." He held her in his arms and she said, "My frail body will not satiate your lust. You hundreds of girls forced into whoredom by you. " "Beware! History is recording a curse on you.

ALARMED

He was alarmed. "Why?" he asked. " Beware of the verdict of history. History is the divine record of the Gods. You have slaughtered your hopeless people," she affirmed. "I" he enquired. "Yes, you have raped many a virgin and destroyed all her relations," she retorted. "Who are you?" " I am your savior if you listen to my advice! "she said.

He ran out of her room like a mad dog. His concubines, intriguers, sycophants, spies and cuckolds ran to his help. He looked at them and saw a host, of benefit worshippers and knights of fortune, destroyers of freedom and wicked gang. He realized how much all the girls hated him for outraging their chastity. "Beware of the verdict of history?" was ringing in his ears. "Oh God ! he exclaimed for the first time. "I am tortured," he said. He laughed aloud. His prime minister came in but he told him to go away. He was his partner in his crimes.

INTERVENTION

“Kill her,” the minister advised! But the conscience of the king had already awakened. The minister gave him a glass of wine but the Raja vomited it, and fainted, whereupon the minister took a knife and attempted to assassinate him. At that fatal moment Kamla entered the room and intervened with a revolver in her hand. The minister escaped. The King was saved. He ran to kiss her feet. “Don’t do it. It does not behoove a king” she told him. He then said, “You have saved my body, Save my soul.”

She said, “follow me”. She took him around the streets of Paulapur. He found people sick and dying of starvation. He saw woman in the last moments of her life with her children crying around her. He tried to save her from death. He called his soldiers to take her to a doctor but there was no doctor in town.

Kamla said, “She will die. Ask her forgiveness”

He asked her to forgive him but she was dead . He carried her to a pyre and she was burnt in the midst of thousands of tortured people . The king was sobbing and looking at Kamla . he said " What must I do to make my people retrieve happiness " .

" Give them freedom " . Kamala dictated " What is Freedom ? " he asked . " Freedom is education , knowledge of human rights , security , safety , equatily , eman cipation of women , acknowledgement of human rights , freedom of expression and criticism and observance of the Rule of Law " . The King cried ' Azad Zindabed " (Long Live Freedom " .

July 05, 1962

Men, Matters and Memories (84)

**IN 1947, with opening of the first Legislative Council the search began and continues till today for:
“THE ADENESE”**

As soon as it was in the air that Aden will have a Legislative Council, in 1947, and that it was possible to achieve self-government, Adenese began to discuss the question, “Who is Adenese, who has the right to the benefits of this Colony, in the first place? Who has the right to govern Aden upon attaining a self-governing status? ”

The question was put to me on several occasions by different classes of people.

I wrote on 27.10.46 saying: Aden Colony comprises Crater, Tawahi, Maalla, Shaikh Othman and other villages: Little Aden, Fuqum, Hiswa and Imad. It also embraces Perim Island and Maqatin Guano Islands.

Aristotle, in ancient times, stated in his book “Politics”, that the son of the soil was the man entitled to participate in the legislation, for his country and in its administration. Such a man had definite rights. People in ancient Rome, were of two classes. The majority of the original people had acquired special rights by intermarriage, marital relationship and trade relations with the allies and friends of Rome. They had also the extraordinary rights of election, in the tribe, and appointment to the high posts in the state as long as the citizen was a son of the soil born on it, by Roman parents.

In France every Frenchman born in France acquired full rights of liberty, fraternity and equality advocated by the French Revolution Napoleon brought some changes.

In Britain, every Briton has all citizenship rights whether he has the right to vote or not.

The definition I placed before my readers was as follows:

The Adenese is the person born in Aden, whose parents were born in Aden and lived in Aden without abandoning it. Also a person born in Aden to be his permanent domicile.

Aden is Arab and the Arabs have prior rights and privileges in it and are entitled before all others to enjoy its benefits and manage its high posts and administer the land.

SEEKING LEADER

In November, 1946 the Aden Government planned to spend Rs. 20 million for development but decided to open the gates of Aden for immigrants from abroad. Dwellings were to be raised for people coming to live in Aden.

I protested against the “open door” policy of immigration.

I suggested that the Aden Government must, instead, make education free for all Adenese, inaugurate kindergartens and improve the trade and economy of the land, before the neighbouring countries make progress and capture the transit trade of Aden. I said that an expert in trade must be imported to survey the commercial potentialities of the colony and make useful report.

Local correspondents wrote that an Adeni leader must be chosen to guide the unguided public. But who, who was to be the leader? The Legislative Council was to be opened soon and Aden had no party of any importance to be able to conduct the affairs of the people in the economic, social and political fields.

On 17.11.1946, a local writer ably wrote:

Aden is a Colony with 80,000 inhabitants, many of whom are immigrants, who have very weak ties with the people of Aden. But Aden and the Aden Protectorates form one compact Arab group who must unite and be free to arrange closer ties between them.

July 12, 1962

Men, Matters and Memories (85)

ADEN PROTECTORATES – DEAD WOOD UNTIL FEDERATION WAS CONSIDERED

The Aden Protectorates remained free and dignified till 1927. But, their chiefs and rulers had by that time neglected the happiness of their states, the ways and means of progress and given way to luxurious living, depending on presents and stipends given them by the Government of India, on which Aden was a dependency.

There was little agriculture, farming or industry, with the result that tribal feuds became common, and highwaymanship a profession. Consequently the rulers lost their grip over their people and followers, which impelled them to seek British help and protection. Aden Government rallied to their side by giving money, arms, ammunition, advice and threats to all warmongers and peace disturbers, but the generous distribution of arms among tribesmen reduce them to dust. All became weak as a result of internal feuds, disturbances and violence. The land remained uncultivated, the caravan routes unsafe, the chiefs and their sons hiding in their castles, unable to come out in public (one prince remained in hiding for seven years). Illiteracy, ignorance generally, poverty, and illness were almost ubiquitous. This degeneracy embraced both the Eastern and the Western Protectorates, and their rulers had become functi officio.

SUBVERSION FORTIFIES PRINCELY RULE

Some tribesmen became subversive and resorted to looting and plundering trucks and cars carrying goods to Hadhramaut, since that had interfered with their source of income from camel transport (The first motor road had then been built from Tarim to Mukalla.) The RAF carried out air raids on the refractory tribes and the Qua'ti Sultan of Mukalla accepted to sign an advisory treaty with British Agent.

Harold Ingrams was directing operations in Hadhramaut. El-Khamea, Al-Halika and Al-Homoum tribes resisted for a long time, but they had to contend against odds and ultimately drew in the horns.

They lacked leadership. Public opinion was unheard of because there was no newspaper to voice public discontent, with the exception of Ashoura Arabic weekly published in Cairo, to which I was a regular contributor. There was no patriotic feeling, no nationalism but there was a feeling of injustice, inequality and the desire of the British Government to subdue the people for the benefit of puppet princes and chiefs and once subversion was suppressed the flow of stipendiary grants and presents came to an end.

No reforms were undertaken for a long time, until the idea of the Federation of the Protectorates materialized.

MASEER STIRS PROTECTORATE SULTANS

On 2nd March, 1947, I wrote a letter to this effect. I called upon the people to work together to raise the status of the country. This I did in an article “Maseer”, (or destiny) which had unusual repercussions in the Aden Protectorates. Sultan Saleh el-Audhali and Sir Sultan Abdul Karim Fadhl of Lahej responded favourably. After 1930 peace and security prevailed in the Aden Protectorates as a result of British intervention. The Government of Aden subsidized by London had founded the Hadhrami Legion in the Eastern Aden Protectorates and tribal guards in the Western. The Government Guards were stationed in Aden and in key positions in the States.

Sultan Saleh el-Audhali wrote to me that he had established several primary schools at Lodar and Zara, and had organized a financial department under a special finance officer.

Princes were paid monthly salaries and the rest of the revenue was dedicated to development funds.

Sultan Sir Abdul Karim Fadhl wrote me a letter praising my straight forward talk under the headline “Maseer” (Destiny) He wrote, “The Aden Protectorates chiefs could not enlighten their followers and people in their countries, because they (the chiefs) had not acquired any knowledge or education he said, “he who lacks a thing cannot offer it to others.”

July 19, 1962

Men, Matters and Memories (86)

THE JEWISH ARABS RIOTS Slightly Missed by Revolver Bullet

In the early thirties, communal disturbances took place between the Jews and the Arabs, in Aden. An Arab Collie was said to have been assaulted. There was severe indignation among Arabs and Moslem population. It was Saturday afternoon. Many Jews were returning home from Holkat Bay, where a Jew had given the alarm. The Jews were attacked that very evening. Some had simple injuries. A few shops were looted. Violence continued till the next day. The Jews barricaded their streets in "Section A" and hurled bottles filled with sand into the streets against Arabs passing by or attacking.

Mr. Haslam was the Commissioner of Police. He worked very hard to suppress the riots. Three days later Colonel Rielly, First Assistant Resident, came down to inspect a Jewish section and the damage done.

Rioting ended, and peace prevailed. There was not a single case of grievous nature, but on 2nd December 1947 similar disturbances took place on a much bigger scale and it was much more serious. Hundreds of Jews and Arabs lost their lives.

Houses and shops were destroyed by fire. The Police authorities asked local dignitaries to come out in spite of the curfew order, to tell the people to observe law and order. There was firing on the first day but it was not directed against the people. It was intended to disperse them. A house at Esplanade Road next to my Printing Press was set on fire. My office and press did not catch fire simply because there was no breeze. A revolver was directed at me while I was standing near the garden opposite my office. The shot just missed me.

On 18th December 1947 the Aden Chamber of Commerce sent a resolution to the Governor, Sir Reginald Champion. They resolved that the violence had an adverse effect on trade in Aden, and had affected the morale of all minorities who sought government protection.

They demanded that Commissioners be appointed to investigate the causes of the disturbances and to make recommendations for peace and security in Aden.

The Chamber of Commerce disclosed the fear felt by its members as a result of the increase in indigent population.

The Chamber stated that this class of the inhabitants were responsible for the loss of property during the riots. The Chamber demanded that the British Army garrison in Aden must be reinforced, and that the Police force be strengthened in the Colony.

The Chmaber resolved that the disturbances were a result of the clash between Arabs all over the world and Zionism. The attacks were not directed against foreigners at all.

I protested in my Arabic Weekly Fata-UI-Jezirah against the proposal that a British Army be stationed in Aden, since that would have involved a very heavy expenditure and turned Aden into a fortress.

Aden Government appointed Sir Harry Trusted to investigate the 1947 riots in Aden.

July 26, 1962

Men, Matters and Memories (87)

1947 – AN INTERESTING YEAR

When in 1947 received my four sons who graduated from Cairo, I was told by many of my good friends to retire and sleep the rest of my days. Little did they know then that my worries had only begun for I still had seven children for whom I wanted to do the same or even more.

My first four sons graduated in 1947 and it became necessary for me to buy for them a large house to live in comfortably. I proposed to Sheikh Abdalla, Advocate, to sell me his house No. 304, situated in Seera Bay, Crater, 30,000 square feet in area. He accepted a price for Rs. 95,000/-. The bargain was struck. Almost all the people of Aden thought it was madness to go and live in a deserted area near the beach and that it was a lot of money wasted on this house.

It was an old dwelling and was occupied by an English officer but I had information that the house was to be vacated by the officer who was in Audit Department during the week, as he was going on leave. As soon as he removed his baggage and vacated the house I just stepped in and occupied the building. Mr. Goepel, the chairman of the Township Authority contacted Sheikh Abdalla for extension of the lease but he was informed that the house was sold to me and that I was given vacant possession.

THE HOUSE COLLAPSES

Now, I had a big tenement, enough to accommodate all my family. Unfortunately, on 27th May, 1947, while carrying out repairs the house collapsed and I just had time to send my wife and children to the compound. They had a very narrow escaped from the burial under the debris.

Next day, I sold three houses in Section “C”, for £2,000 and I reconstructed the house.

I was poorer for that, but I was safer, now, that the house had been rebuilt.

My sons returned from Cairo, Ali and Hamed with a B.A. in Journalism, Abdul Rahim with a B.A. (Classics), B.T. (Education) and Ibrahim B.Sc. Maths.

They gave me cause to be proud of them. Mr. Newland, an Assistant Secretary, visited my house and thought it was quite nice. A business house in Aden offered to buy it for a big sum and the people of Aden realized the wisdom in buying it. Many buildings have since come up in this area and prices have soared sky high.

ADVISING SULTAN OF LAHEJ

In that year Sultan Sir Abdul Karim Fadhl sent for me and consulted me about a Bill intended to empower the Governor of Aden to arrest any person in the Aden Protectorates and place him under detention. I advised him to oppose that Bill. He did and the Bill was abandoned. The Sultan was very grateful and he offered to give some money, I refused.

The Sultan also consulted me about the introduction of an arms ordinance in his state – the Abdali State of Lahej. I told him that if the ordinance were put into force it might cause unrest and discontent.

Sultan Abdul Karim subsequently left Aden for Cairo for medical attention. On his return he died and was buried near the Aidaroos Mosque. People of Aden attended his funeral in large numbers. They had remembered how kind he was to them in 1939/1940 when they had taken refuge in Lahej from the Italian air raids.

SOCIAL SERVICE

During 1947 I took an active part in the formation of the Association of the Motor Car owners and drivers. The first meeting was held at the Bazaraah Charitable School.

I also took an active part in Association organized by the leading Arab Merchants of Aden to “Call for Moral and Shun the Abominable”.

Among the committee members were Sheikh Omer Basaleh, Sharif Hasson Rifaee, Sheikh Ali Bazaraah, Abdul Rahman Bazaraah, Sheikh Salem Barahim and Sheikh Kamel A. Salah.

I was elected Hon. Secretary. I assisted almost every club, society and association. I wanted people to learn to do useful social service and at many of the meetings and the parties I delivered speeches, gave lectures and talks. In several instances I was badly repaid but I did not mind.

I continued my adventures in social service to this day.

August 2, 1962

Men, Matters and Memories (88)

YEMEN'S FIRST REVOLUTION

On February 18, 1948, I received a telegram that Imam Yahya 81-year-old King of Yemen, had been assassinated in Sanaa. I telegraphed the news to the Arabs News Agency in Cairo, whose correspondent I was in Aden. It was a first class scoop.

The Yemeni delegation in Cairo published a refutation but in 24 hours Sanaa Radio was completely under the new government of constitutional monarch Syed Abdalla bin Ahmed el-Wazir. Syed Hussain el-Kibsi, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, sent the following telegram on 18th February, 1948 to H.E. The Governor Sir Reginald Champion.

"I convey to you the death of H.M. Imam Yahya bin Mohamed and that the oath of allegiance has been made in favour of H.M. Imam Abdalla bin Ahmed El-Wazir, who has formed a legal, constitutional government, responsible to the people and a parliament representing them.

My Government is pleased to depend on the friendship of the British Government, and my Government shall turn a new leaf based on friendship and good neighbourliness. I believe in dealing with Britain in preference to other Western Powers. Free Yemen will esteem your good intentions."

The new government in Yemen decided:

1. Publish and adapt a parliamentary constitution.
2. Raise the salaries of the army.
3. Abolish billeting and warrants.
4. Stop labour and public servants from making trade.
5. Safeguard freedom of speech and action.
6. Raise the status of public servants
7. Confirm learned men in their posts.

I had known the Free Yemeni delegates in Aden. I stood surety for their leaders, with the Chief Secretary, Aden. I allowed Sheikh Ahmed Nauman to work in my office and trained him in matters of journalism. I helped in drafting the new constitution for the new government in Sanaa, and I translated it. I was in trouble for that, with Sir Hawthorn Hall the Governor of Aden.

The Imam was assassinated on February 17, 1948 and Seif-Ul-Haq Ibrahim, ninth son of the deceased Imam Yahya, left Aden for Taez. He was elected Prime Minister by the new king. He accompanied, with him, his new Cabinet:

Sheikh Ahmed M. Nauman
Qadhi M. M. Zobairi
Syed Hussain El-Waisi
Maitre el Barraq
Maitre Mohiyoodin Ansi
Maiter Hawrash
Maitre Syed M. Shami

He asked me to go with him. I agreed. There was a number of Yemeni elite and dignitaries on the same Ethiopian Airlines plane. Forty vehicles left Aden for Taz with 200 armed soldiers, accompanying the Prince. We were all given a big reception at the stations of Ashurajja, Raheda and Dimnat Khadir, between Lahej and Taz.

People were armed and were prepared to receive instructions. Sheikh Ahmed Nauman and I were in the same car with Prince Ibrahim. The people were told by the Prince: "I assure you, your misery has ended. No more injustice, poverty, fear or starvation. Obey Imam Abdalla el-Wazir. He will bring you prosperity and happiness."

At Dimnat Khadir I was given a great ovation. Sheikh Saleh Horab, a notable merchant of Taz, slugged:

"Welcome Lokman, Father of our Constitution." I was gratified but I felt that there was not enough military spirit in the 5000 men who lined up the road to the palace to welcome Seif-UI-Haq Ibrahim. Instead of staging a military parade they were dancing and singing.

At Taz, the party was received by Syed Mohamed Ahmed Pacha: who was a very crafty Governor; Syed Hussain el-Hoothi, a brave soldier, Syed Mohamed Zobara, a Muslim savant, and Prince Seif-UI-Islam Mohamed el-Badr, present Crown Prince of Yemen.

El-Badr joined the rebels at Khadir post, went with his uncle Ibrahim to Taz and subsequently to Aden and Sanaa.

Crown Prince Ahmed (present King of Yemen) left Taz for Hodeidah with 100,000 thalers, a bagful of Gold sovereigns and bank-notes. He was determined to flee the country but Qadhi Hussain el-Halali, Governor of Hodeidah who was incensed at the murder of his father-in-law Qadhi el-Amri, assassinated with Imam Yahya, turned the tables on the Free Yemenis. He was with them and signed the charter. He advised Prince Ahmed to take refuge at Hajja bastions. The whole history of Yemen had been changed by this manoeuvre .

Prince Ahmed had 300 soldiers (his bodyguard), with him and some machine guns. The Prince did not enter Hodeidah but marched towards Hajja. Many of the Free Yemenis, including el-Khadem Ghaleb, were at the Yemeni port (Hodeidah) but they miscalculated the force that would rally to the side of Prince Ahmed. That misjudgement cost them their heads.

Another retarding action was the order received from Cairo that nothing must be done by the new Constitutional King Ibn El Wazir before the arrival of Sheikh A.R. Azzam, the Secretary General of the Arab League.

The new King and his Cabinet waited for the Arab League to arrive at Sanaa and gave time to Prince Seif-UI-Islam Ahmed to rally support.

This is the first of a series of articles on the historic coup d'etat that rocked placid Yemen from generations of political and social stagnation.

The revolutionary government, formed four years before that of Egypt , wiped out monarchy and promised to establish an ideal state of affairs , political , social and economic .

August 9, 1962

Men, Matters and Memories (89)**CONTINUING THE STORY OF THE FIRST REVOLUTION IN YEMEN**

WAITING FOR ARAB LEAGUE EMISSARIES DOOMS THE INFANT REBEL GOVT.

YEMEN the hermit-kingdom in S.W. was in ferment in 1948. The Imam, Yahya bin Mohamed Hamiduddin, the King who ruled for thirty years, in the most autocratic fashion, exalted and venerated by the Zaidi clans and Shafieis, a holy figure, was mercilessly murdered in the month of February, 1948. Assassinations were not unknown in Arabia. Many of the Abbaside Caliphs, the Ottomans and the Zaidi Imams were killed by nihilists and rebels.

Among the rebels, against Imam Yehia, was his ninth son Ibrahim, one of the youngest of the 16 children the king had. Ibrahim Seif-UI-Haq (the Sword of Right) was the leader of the Free Yemen Party, who had clubbed in Aden, and were clamouring for constitutional reforms in Yemen.

I stayed in Taz for two days listening to discordant jangle and mutual disparagement by the two factions. Zaidis and Safieis – hoping to rule the country. An Egyptian plane hovered over Taz but could not land, the runway having been inundated by floods Prince Ibrahim had to leave Taz, for Aden, to catch the plane of the Ethiopian Airlines chartered by the Free Yemenis to carry him to Sanaa.

During the short absence of Seif-UI-Haq demonstration was staged, at Crater, by elements, opposed to the Free Yemenis. They marched in a riotous procession upon the house of Prince Ibrahim and tried to put his family on fire. A bullet came flying from one of the windows, killing one of the demonstrators and there was an end to demonstrations of the kind. The procession was broken up but Khaled Salem, the slave of the Prince was arrested by Major Swayne, Police Officer, and a revolver was removed from the house, which smelled of fresh gun powder. (Three months later I defended Khaled Salem in Court before Justice Rudd, the Judge of the Court of Sessions. There was no proof that he had fired and the judge passed an order of “Nolles Prosquie”. The accused was discharged. Even if he had done it “it would have been in self-defence,” the judge remarked.)

During the early days of the Yemeni coup d’etat, armed Free Yemeni youth, occupied several towns, within the Province of Taz –Mafalis, Raheda and Taz, itself in the name of the new Imam – Syed Abdulla el-Wazir. From Taz Prince Ibrahim despatched four armies with seven truck - loads of ammunition and supplies to intercept Crown Prince Ahmed before reaching his Hajja stronghold.

The generals selected for this campaign were Syed Hussain el-Hoothi, an experienced and brave warrior, whom I interviewed at Taz before his departure. He was sure of capturing Prince Ahmed. The other was General Mohamed Ahmed el-Wazir a brother of the new King. The third was Shaikh Abdulla Abou Mounasser but the fourth was Syed Hadi Haig, the uncrowned King of the Tihama, a warrior,

wealthy and well supported but clandestinely pro Crown Prince Ahmed. Syed El-Hoothi alone had an army of 700 strong.

The campaign failed shamelessly, because Prince Ahmed had forestalled el-Hoothi, declared all the huge wealth and property of el-Hoothi at Medinat el-Abid public property which his tenants may plunder and own. They did so and turned the tables for him.

The Free Yemeni Party was composed of Zaidis and Shaffiis. They collaborated carefully, to bring about the downfall of Imam Yahya, but the Zaidis were the sovereign race while the Sahffiis were governed, who for a very long time had hoped that the new monarchy would do them justice if it adhered to the constitution.

There were few Shaffiis representatives in the new regime. One of them was Sheikh Ahmed Mohammed Noman, the editor of Saut el-Yemen, an intelligent, honest, pious and faithful adherent of constitutional principles. Another was Abdul Wahhab Noman, an elderly gentleman from Hojjariya in Lower Yemen, who had spent twenty years of his life in prison for his political activities. He was well over sixty when I met him in Sanaa. He was of the few people I respected for their frankness and honesty. He was the man who told me to quit Sanaa immediately, for he thought the revolution was doomed. If I had successfully escaped danger it was due to his timely warning. He said he would stay, although he knew his doom was sealed .

Sheikh Ahmed Noman tried to reach Sanaa via Dhamar, a flourishing city in the midlands of Yemen " in order to propagate the new el-Wazir dynasty. He was arrested before reaching the capital.

Syed Zaid el-Moshki, a young jurist-cum poet, enthusiastic and optimistic, proceeded from Taz to Hodeidah to await Abdul Rehman Azzam, then Secretary General of the Arab League, who never came.

August 16, 1962

Men, Matters and Memories (90)

KILLING the AILING IMAM PROVED the COUP'S UNDOING Continuing the Story of Yemen's First Revolution

Imam Yehia was dead and so were his two sons Prince el-Hussaini and Prince Abdul Rehman and his Prime Minister Qadhi el-Amri. They were ambushed outside Sanaa and machine gunned.

Prince Ibrahim was appointed Chief-Minister for the new government.

We were all introduced to the King who addressed me as “Fata-ul-Jezirah” (the man of the Arabian Peninsula). He was noble-looking, cheerful, tall, slightly dark with a round beard and wrinkles covering a high brow. He looked depressed but his voice was sonorous. He said, “you are a descendant of the noble clan of Hamdan, in Yemen, and the lands of your ancestors are available at “Qaa Luqman” (the lands of Luqman), to which you can lay a claim by right of inheritance.” I thanked him.

OATH OF ALLEGIANCE

He was very kind to Prince Mohamed el-Badr, who gave him his oath of allegiance with all the other members of the Cabinet.

They were:

Prince Seif-ul-Haq Ibrahim, Chief Minister, Syed Hussain el-Kibsi, Foreign Minister, Syed Hussain bin A. Qader, Defence, Prince Ali Abdullah el-Wazir (Ex Governor of Taz), Qadi Mohammed Abdulla el-Amri, Syed Hussain el-Waisi, Qadhi Mohamed Mahmud Azzobairi, Maitre el-masmari, Qadhi Mohiyoodin el-Ansi, Maitre Ahmed el-Barraq, Professor Fudhail el-Wortalani, Sheikh Abdul Wahhab Noman, Qadhi Hussain Muttaher (Carrier of the Royal Seal and supporter of Crown Prince Ahmed).

WARNED NOT TO LINGER

Muttaher was another old and faithful friend who warned me not to linger about Sanaa.

Syed Muhamed Ahmed el-Wazir (King's brother) and Syed Abdulla Ali el-Wazir (suspected of assassinating the deceased Imam Yahya)

In the ground floor of the Palace I saw Princes Ali Yahya, Muttaher and el-Qassem behind iron bars guarded by one of the slaves of their father.

DELAY

The coup was well organized but decisions to execute the plans were unnecessarily delayed. Energy was diffused and the Regular Army refused to cooperate with the new king before he had the oath of allegiance from the whole country. The delaying action of the Arab League served to smash the whole structure and the petty differences among the Cabinet ministers cost them their heads. This is what Jameel Jamal, Iraqi Army commander in Sanaa, told me on the second day of my arrival at Sanaa.

GOVERNORS COOPERATE

Those who had contrived the revolution had made sure of the cooperation of all the Governors of the provinces, by obtaining their signatures on the new constitution and general charter. Some of the signatories were Qadhi Mohamed Shami and Qadhi Hussain el Halali but both dropped out at the eleventh hour. They had never agreed to assassinate the Imam since that was sacrilege.

August 23, 1962

Men, Matters and Memories (91)

NOT AVAILABLE

August 30, 1962

Men, Matters and Memories (92)

NEW REGIME RELAXES AS HOSTILE FORCES BRACE FOR BATTLE

I spent a week in Sanaa, in the month of February and early March, 1948 I was given a room at Bir-ul-Azab guest house. It was comfortable and clean, though not scrupulously tidy. The food supplied, three times daily, was excellent. Plenty of oranges was served. The orange juice was crimson red, and the flesh was sweet. In the afternoon, lovely branches of Qat were brought to the guest house. I had in the same flat Prince al-Badr, who was about 28, tender and rather scared. I encouraged him and said King Abdulla el-Wazir would be kind to him but he was not sure. He remained in the guest-house all the time, but when I went from place to place with the adventurous spirit of a newspaperman.

I paid a visit to the orphanage, where 400 young males orphans lived and received primary education. I thought some of the boys were very aggressive and mischievous. There was a number of hostages in this institution, whose parents were dead and who had none to look after them.

I had no money on me and, therefore, requested Qadhi Ahmed Assonaidar, whose office was a few paces from the orphanage, to give fifty M.T. thalers from me, which I paid to him.

In the afternoon, I saw King Abdulla el-Wazir, squatting on the floor of the palace, chewing the immortal Qat leaf, with loads of thalers in piles of twenties before him which he distributed among the new recruits of the irregular army. They were all young men 17/20 years of age. Most of them came from the military school of the College of Science, (not a real scientific centre.) He gave each one 25 thalers and a rifle (from the 5000 rifles that I had purchased for Imam Yahya in 1934 through Dr. Zeki Kiram from Mauserwerke in Berlin.) Those rifles were stored for 14 years and some had gone rusty.

They were untrained youth and inexperienced but they declared their allegiance and went away. I told one of the ministers that this work ought to be delegated to one of the officers. Qadhi el-Muttaher (Royal Seal) said; "the King has no confidence in any one yet and he likes to hear these young men assure him of their loyalty" "Yes," I retorted, "but the king has many more important things to do." I was overheard by the King who asked what it was all about. I said I pitied the King for doing all that wearisome job himself. I said that he could plan an airlift of all young Yemenis from Aden to help the revolution. He admired the idea and told me to go to Broadcasting Station at Sanaa and call upon enthusiastic youth to join the colours of the new king. I was very enthusiastic myself and for three nights I broadcast and even called upon Crown Prince Ahmed (present Imam) to draw in the horns and abide by the new set-up in the country.

But, on the fourth day I was looking out of the window of my room in the guest house. It was after sunset. The evening was romantic and the air was cold and bracing. Suddenly it became pitch dark. It was the end of the lunar month, and unexpectedly a bullet struck the wall above my window and chunam and mud fell on my head. I was alarmed. There was more firing and I went out of the lounge where I

asked Qadhi Azzobairi about what was happening. He told me “The cadets are training.” “Not on residential buildings,” I said. He was cared.

Next morning, I saw the King and asked whether I could pay a visit to Arrodha, the vineyard of Yemen, eight miles east of Sanaa. The King ordered a car to take me there but whisperingly Qadhi el-Muttaher told me that Prince el-Abbas, brother of Crown Prince Ahmed, was already there with his tribesmen and that his own house (el-Muttaher) was completely sacked. He advised me to pack up. I left the place and went to see Jamal Jameel, the Commander-in-Chief. He rose for me and made me sit on his own chair, in his headquarters. He kissed my hand. I kissed his hand.

He had been in Aden for nine years before and was well entertained with the other officers who came to Aden with him, a military mission to Yemen.

He told me, “There is no hope. The King and his ministers are taking things easy. “He said “El Abbas is at Rodha. Snipping is practiced. The regular army was non-aligned. The small army dispatched under Syed Ali Abdulla el-Wazir to Amran, west of Sanaa to stem any attack on the capital was outflanked by Prince el-Abbas. The King was living in a fool’s paradise.

He said “Your life is too precious to waste here.” I asked permission to pay visit to the Palace of Happiness (Qasr-Assa-Aada) of the late Imam Yahya. He gave me an escort.

September 13, 1962

Men, Matters and Memories (93)

EVEN IN REBELLION SANAA WAS STILL A LOVELY CITY TO VISIT

I stayed in Sanaa, the capital of Yemen, for a week amid insurrectionists, recruiting of troops processions, demonstrations gatherings and school boys carrying banners and running about, like hares, from one quarter of the city to another, sloganning and shouting noisily; planes landing on the airfield daily bringing free Yemenis from Aden with crockery, cooking utensils serviettes, tinned food and juices in expectation of the arrival of the Arab League delegation from Cairo. I was flitting from place to place, interviewing leaders of the revolution, the King, and cabinet.

The weather is lovely. The people, generally of the merchant class, were peaceful but bewildered. They cut jokes and made puns. They are of a humorous nature and there were very few women about, because they kept out of the way, by habit and tradition. The few ladies I saw were fair and charming.

Sanaa abounds in delicious fruits, grapes, oranges, almonds, pears, apples, plums, walnuts and a score of cheap vegetables.

Qat, is most delightful and affords exquisite pleasure. Some addicts add ganja to the tobacco of the hukkah to feel happy , soaring towards celestial ease, and enjoying thereby a double dope.

Fresh water is drawn from deep wells, by camels with pulleys which produce a boisterous sound.

The building of Sanaa are high and very attractive with glass windows of variated colours.

The orchards are very neatly planted and are full of flowers white and red roses, narcissus, oleanders, and the “Lion’s mouth” (“Fum-al-Asad”) a rare flower of two colours-white and red, and “Full”, a white little rose with intoxicating fragrance.

CRITICAL and RESERVED

The Sanaanese are sarcastic and critical but they seldom speak their minds aloud. They were very rich before their city was stormed and sacked by order of Imam Ahmed in 1948.

Sanaa is a commercial city. It has many markets-the copper market, the goldsmiths’ circle, (here very delicate and artistic ornaments are made), the raisins mart, the cattle market, and the Samsara, in which merchants store their cash and valuables.

It resembles a banking corporation. Eighty percent of the treasure of Sanaa was stored in this Samsara, and all that wealth was made public and an easy prey to marauders, who were ordered by Imam Ahmed to storm, plunder Sanaa, and reduce her people to utter penury. The richest men of Yemen

were stripped naked of all they had owned and went begging. They have not recovered from that disaster to this day. At least most of them have not.

Sanaa is famous for classical music and I met many talented musicians, singers, and poets. The lute was prohibited but it was played in closed rooms where girls also danced to its tunes. The harp and the flute were permitted and so was the hand-drum (merwas), even in the presence of the Imam, who enjoyed Yemeni songs and classical poetry.

Major General Jamal Jameel gave me an escort to visit “the Palace of Happiness.” There, Imam Yahya the late monarch lived. At the gate I was shown the blood of his sons Al Hussain and Abdu Rehman who were shot on the day of the assassination of their father when they tried to resist arrest.

I went in, when no other man dared go in after assassination, since the Royal harem alone were in palace. I saw eyes looking at me from behind shutters. I felt a shudder running down from my spine, when I saw before me a ferocious lynx and remembered that Imam Yahya used to destroy his enemies, by this murderous beast. There was also a spotted tiger in another corner sneering horribly.

DEFENCE MEASURES

I did not linger any longer and went about before 5 p.m. to visit Qadhi Mohamed el-Hajri, a genealogist and historian. He was an old friend and spoke to me about my ancestors. He was th Chief Accountant in Sanaa.

I arrived at the Guest House, just before sun-set and found all the members of the new cabinet in a heated discussion over defence measures. They were in a dilemma. All the soldiers they had were new to the ranks, young boys who needed long training. There was a clash of opinions and I could hear screams in the close parlour. I said to myself, “It is an ill wind that blows no body good.”

October 4, 1962

Men, Matters and Memories (94)

THE COLLAPSE OF YEMENS FIRST REVOLUTION

On the fifth day of my sojourn in Sanaa, I interviewed Syed Hussain El-Kibsi, the Minister for External Affairs. He was the most brilliant adviser to the King Abdulla Ahmed El-Wazir. He belonged to a family of elite-historians, jurists and statemen. He was podgy, humorous and, like all his creed, satirical.

I said, "Have you got enough money to run the new government?" "Yes we have" came the reply. "Imam Yahya has left us a huge estate estimated at 200 million thalers in cash," he said, with a big smile.

"Where is it all stored?" I inquired. "In cellars, well guarded", he affirmed; " some of it is in Jabal Nuqum, the mountain overlooking Sanaa " .

"What about the people? Are they faithful and cooperative"? I asked "Sure, sure they ought to be", **he said. "He who marries my mother, is my father in law**, goes a Sanaani adage," he said. He told me then, that Prince Seif-ul-Islam El Hasoon, brother of Imam Ahmed, had declared his allegiance to King Ibn El Wazir but did not come to Sanaa personally and took refuge in the hinterland, in Alqaflah district.

Major General Jamal Jameel, the Iraqi Commander-In-Chief, in Yemeni Army, said to me , Yemen is now enjoying a constitutional Government. The era of oligarchy is gone and there is bound to be prosperity and common weal, if the revolution lasts " .

WITH A VICTIM OF INTRIGUE

I then met Shaikh Abdul Wahhab Noman, Minister of Health, who had been in jail for years on end. I asked why he was imprisoned.

He replied "I was a victim of intrigue. I remained for 4 years in the Hajja rock dungeon, after which I was appointed a Governor of one of the provinces. When the Saudi-Yemeni hostilities broke out I was reported having criticized "our defence measures", and I was thrown into prison for 7 years. I appealed frequently to Imam Yahya who subsequently called me and said, "I have pained you. I know your innocence but I am afraid of you". I said "Be kind to me and shall forget past ill-treatment." No, the Imam replied "I cannot set you at large, after having ill-treated you so long. I have no confidence in you " .

Shaikh Noman then heaved a sigh and said "so I remained in fetters, till King Ibn el-Wazir set me free " .

AND A CHIEF OF JUDICIARY

I then met and spoke to Qadhi Mohamed Ahmed Jirrafi, Judge of the Court of appeal, Chief of the Judiciary in Sanaa. He said “all cases decided by Courts-Civil or Criminal may be heard by the Court of appeal whose judgements are final. There is no authority above this court, except that of the Imam himself. He can revoke appellate judgements on a point of law, and send back the cases, for re-trial, by the court of appeal or for execution of his own decisions.

“Is the Judiciary independent in Yemen?” I asked.

He replied “The highest authority is the Imam. He may revoke judgements but he does not do so except in a legal way.” “Is there a special class of people from which appeals lie,” I inquired.

“No” he said. “If this were arranged it would minimize the responsibilities and work of the court of appeal.”

On the last day of my stay, I went to see H.M. King Abdulla El Wazir, I craved permission to leave for Aden as I had received a letter from my son Ali Mohamed Luqman that I was wanted in the Court of Aden by my clients to conduct their cases. He told me he was preparing to confer on me a ministerial portfolio. I said that I shall return after arranging my affairs in Aden.

PACK UP

I returned to the guest house. I packed up my baggage including one bag of raisins, and waited for the E.A.L. plane that afternoon. The plane arrived at 3 p.m. I ran to the guest-house to pick up my things but found them missing. Qadhi Mohamed El Masmari had hidden them to retard my departure. I was wanted to meet the members of the Arab League. I jumped into a car and off to the airfield. I found the plane ready to fly. It was already started. I ran all the way waving goodbye to all the friends. Syed Hussain El-Waisi followed me with his two sons and Qadhi El Masmari sent my baggage to the airport. The bag of raisins was torn and the contents were strewn on the field. We were pulled up into the plane and away to Aden.

Three days later, Sanaa was stormed by tribesmen and King Abdulla bin El Wazir and all his followers were arrested, later beheaded, with the exception of Qadhi Alzubairi and El Fadhal El Wortalani, who flew to King Abdul Aziz bin Saud at Riyadh in Saudi Arabia.

November 01, 1962

Men, Matters and Memories (95)

PLANS PARTLY REALIZED

On 19th December, 1948, I chalked out a programme for the attention of members of the Legislative Council and published in the Fatat-ul-Jezirah Arabic newspaper.

1. The Honorable members must move the House to repeal the ordinance banning political assemblies and processions.
2. A motion must be placed before government to elect Legco members and achieve an elected majority, instead of an official one.

ELECTIONS

3. To introduce elections in the townships of Aden and extend the franchise to all Aden born subjects.
4. To accelerate the project of building the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, for which Government had agreed to spend Rs. 5,000,000 (£375,000)
5. To accelerate the construction of the Aden College as the scheme was hanging fire.
6. To raise the standard of living of labour, since that would automatically raise their purchasing power.
7. To examine the recurring expenditure on public service and to double the number of Adeni employees, with a view to dispensing with superfluous expatriates.
8. To increase expenditure on education and medical services.
9. To study and execute the development plans for expansion in the Colony.
10. To demand detailed information to be made public about:

PLANS

- a. Five year's educational plan
- b. Building of a new girls' school
- c. Introducing a drainage system in Aden

These demands were translated and submitted to the Legco members by:

Hasson Ali Bayoomi
Saleh Hajib Ali
Mohamed Hassan Khalifa
Syed Ahmed Mohamed Hamood
Saleh Ali Luqman
Hasson bin Hasson Ghabari
Abdo Hussain el-Adhal

Omer Aboubaker
Mohamed Awadh Ahmed Rashed
Uthman Hussain el-Adhal
Ali Abdulla Boodeji

REFORMS

All these gentlemen became active members of the Aden Association in 1949, and many of them served on the managing committee of the Association and participated in all its political activities.

Today, the Police Ordinance remains in force. Elected Legco members have a majority of one. Municipality has also an elected majority. Queen Elizabeth Hospital is doing excellent service.

Aden College is producing useful citizens.

The standard of living of labour is much improved.

The Adenisation Scheme has been adopted.

Expenditure on educational and medical services doubled.

We have a better system of education and several girls' schools.

The drainage system is already developed in Maalla and will soon be introduced in Crater.

In the same issue, I suggested that ABA be inaugurated. These three letters stand for Aden Born Association. In fact the idea, was initiated by enthusiastic youths of Sheikh Othman. I had interviewed many intelligent men, old and young in Crater, Maalla and Tawahi. Ali Muhammad Luqman played an active part in meeting people. All showed willingness and readiness to establish a political association, especially after I had published a report showing 3705 Adeni families in the colony living in deplorable conditions and almost all homeless. It was based on the 1946 census report.

November 15, 1962

Men, Matters and Memories (96)**CROWN PRINCE AHMED VISITS ADEN**

Upon his arrival at Aden, on April 1946, Prince Seif ul-Islam Ahmed, the Crown Prince of Yemen, then, was very generously entertained by Sultan Abdul Karim of Lahej in his “Qasr Ashukr” “Palace of Gratitude” in Crater. I was invited several times to dinner and lunch with the Prince and the Sultan. I had known Prince Seif-ul-Islam el Hussain brother of Prince Ahmed. El Hussain had visited Aden in 1940, on his return From Tokyo and London. I was held in high esteem by the ministers of H.M. Imam Yahya, who accompanied Prince Ahmed to Aden. They were Qadhi Ali al Amri, Qadhi Hussain Alhalali and Syed Hussain el-Waisi.

The Crown Prince willingly answered many of my questions. His replies were well thought out and intelligent. He said he liked Aden but did not like the continuance of the control of Civil Supplies and rationing since the war was over. He spoke of the possible success of Arab unity, if kings, leaders and princes put their heads together to solve current problems.

He mentioned the tragedy of Palestine with a long sigh and affirmed that the only possible solution then was to restore the land of the Palestinians to them and established a Moslim State, responsible for the rights and security of the minorities (Jews and Christians).

EXPLOITATIONS PLANS

He assured me that his father Imam Yahya had plans for the exploitation of mineral wealth in Yemen, the inauguration of a banking system which would have resolved the Corny problems of interest.

Hundreds of letters came to his hands and as many complaints from his subjects in this colony. He replied and gave orders on the reverse of those numberless chits. I sat by him humouring him. Once he stared at me as if soliciting my admiration of his relentless toil in replying incessantly to all those letters and complaints. I said he was no doubt a marvel, but he could easily handover this responsibility to some of his ministers and concentrate time and energy on planning major state affairs.

He disapproved of this comment and said in poetry,

*The camels go happily grazing
Though heavily laden,
He cannot have a rest,
Who works for other's happiness?*

GENEROSITY

He proved his reputed generosity in Aden by giving charities to all the local institutions he had visited. He gave Rs. 5000/- to the Civil Hospital where most of the indoor patients were Yemenis, RS 3000/- to Jerbai Charitable School, RS 3000/- to the Aden Protectorate Levies, Rs 1000/- to Bazara Charitable Schools, Rs 500/- to the Mukhayyam Abi Tayyeb, (a cultural club) and to many other social and educational institutions in the Colony.

He saw an Indian film in the Regal Cinema and was entertained at the Hindu Temple by Vassanji Lalji, Rajibhoy Purshotamdas, Dayabhoy Ashubboy, Gokuldas, Kallianji and the Indian Association at Khusaf Valley.

I entertained him in my office, at Esplanade Road on behalf of the Mukhayyam Abi Tayyib. Many disguised guests were present. The leading Yemeni merchants organized sumptuous luncheons in his honour, in the Parsee Garden at Crater and at the Sheikh Othman gardens. No other ruler, before or after him, was ever entertained with so much pomp and expense.

INDO-YEMENI RELATIONS

He called upon me to translate a letter addressed by him to the Hindu merchants of Aden, in reply to a letter from them. They had written that they were in Aden for many years and were happy and thankful. They expressed their friendship and loyalty to the Prince and hoped that his visit would further cement Indo-Yemeni relationship. He wrote back saying that he hoped that India would achieve her national aspirations and that the Indians in Aden would work for Hindu-Moslim brotherhood and understanding.

I accompanied him in a car to Steamer Point. He praised the straightforwardness of Fatat-ul-Jezirah and the courage of its editors. He said he admired the sincerity and openness with which Aden Government was approached in this paper.

BILLETING TROOPS

It happened, however, that some Yemeni nationals approached me to request the Prince to abolish the system of billeting troops on the poor villagers and farmers in Yemen, forcing the women grind millet, carry water and firewood to the camps and cook bread for the fierce soldiers. They also demanded that the system of serving court warrants on the peasants through the soldiers should be repealed since the soldiers imposed heavy fines on the parties concerned and caused untold misery.

I published these demands hoping the cheerful prince would take it easy but it gave him unexpected cause of anger and recrimination. He accused me of intentional insult but simultaneously ordered a mill to be purchased for grinding millet. I, unwittingly, published the news saying that this machine will save women-folk from toil and forced labor for the troops. The Prince was so highly irritated that he threatened to send his "commandos to kill me. I stopped visiting him.

November 22, 1962

Men, Matters and Memories (97)**STEMMING THE TIDE OF TYRANNY IN LAHEJ**

THOUSAND SHEEP SLAIN FOR PRINCE'S WEDDING FEAST

As soon as it was evident that Sultan Sir Abdul Karim Fadhl of Lahej was on his death-bed in 1947, the Princes and tribal chiefs, of the Abdali Sultanate made a concerted attempt to divert the throne of this state from the path of Prince Fadhl A. Karim, the eldest son of the dying potentate. But this unscrupulous, yet very shrewd prince knew the weaknesses of his people. He was very rich. He had inherited his uncle Prince Ahmed Fadhl, C.M.G., the poet-cum-farmer and army commandant and inherited his own father who had left an estate worth Rs. 15,000,000 in cash. All the other claimants were suffering from penury and helplessness.

Although Fadhl Abdul Karim called me to meet him at Qasr Ashokr, in Crater and made me overtures of friendship, I preferred to remain faithful to my weaker friends AL- Fadhl Mohsens, who collapsed at the last minute and accepted him as their ruler, after I had prepared a memento to the Aden Government and a telegram to the UNO.

For five years, (1947-1952), he ruled Lahej like a Nero. I shall describe that in detail, when I review my book "The Lahej Constituion," written after he had shot his two cousins-Ahmed Mehdi and Hasson bin Ali and defected to Yemen.

LAHEJ FESTIVAL

Before this final mess, his brother Ali Abdul Karim married a cousin princess and organized a festival in Lahej unprecedented in its splendor and richness. Hundreds of ladies and gentlemen from Aden were invited to participate in those grand celebrations. A thousand sheep were slaughtered, and thousands of chickens and turkeys for the sumptuous lunch on 4th January, 1951.

Fadhl Abdul Karim was warned that during the procession next morning he was to die and Ali Abdul Karim was to be declared Sultan of Lahej. Fadhl was full of suspicions and hated his half brother. He believed the story and at midnight ordered the electricity supply to be cut off. The alarm was distressing, and everybody ran for his life, in an entire blackout and panic. By next morning Lahej was deserted and evacuated by all the princely population, their guests and henchmen. They took refuge in Aden. I was invited but I did not go. I felt there would be a trap.

STEM AUTOCRACY

I entertained Prince Ali Abdul Karim in Aden and offered him my own house to live in and offered to arrange for his marriage ceremony to be organized in my house and compound, and offered him the jewellery of my family. He was grateful and said he will live in Qasr Ashokr (Palace of Gratitude) and that Aden Government had to hold Sultan Fadhl not to come to Aden “for his own safety”.

Prince Ali Abdul Karim and his uncle Prince Fadhl bin Ahmed (my friend) came to my house. I brought them to come to an understanding to work on common ground to stem the tide of tyranny of the Sultan of Lahej by demanding that the Sultan should be bound by six conditions the puport of which was that he should become a constitutional ruler and not an autocrat.

STATUS QUO TREATY

Ali Abdul Karim soon, however, turned the tables for me and started intriguing against my clamour for self-government in Aden.

On 4th February, 1951, I was able to secure a copy of the Anglo-Yemeni status quo treaty of 1934. It was given to me by my friend Prince Fadhl bin Ahmed, upon his flight to Aden, Paragraph (1) H.M King of Great Britain, Ireland and the British Commonwealth and Emperor of India recognize the full independence of H.M. the Imam of Yemen in all matters of whatever nature.

Para (II) Peace and friendship between the two parties shall prevail and they under take to preserve good relations between them in every respect. Para . (111) The question of the frontier along the Southern Yemen shall be adjourned until negotiations have been started before the end off this treaty as will be agreed upon between the parties in a friendly way and full accord without causing dispute or disagreement and until then parties agree to leave things as they are in respect of the frontier as on this date. The parties undertake with all their might to stop their forces on the frontier mentioned without interference by their followers or from their part in any matters concerning the residents on eitherside of the frontier.

BASIS FOR FUTURE

Para (IV) – After this treaty both parties will enter into treaties of commerce and economy on international lines after due understanding.

Para (V) – The subjects of the parties who visit the countries of each other for trade shall be subject to local law and enjoy the treatment afforded to the subjects of the state which has more subjects and so that ships of either state. State here means Great Britain and subjects. Ships means any ship from the British Commonwealth.

This treaty shall be the basis of future treaties.

November 29, 1962

Men, Matters and Memories (98)

OUR FIRST ELECTION BOYCOTT

In 1948/49 political consciousness in Aden mounted to a high political pitch. The people had sorely felt the restrictions imposed on them by the Processions Ordinance. They attempted to repeal it but Aden Government was adamant. Sir Harry Trusted had recommended it.

Subsequently, the Township Authority elections were sanctioned but the limitations attached to the franchise of Adenese property qualifications and domicile impelled the local inhabitants to demand an amendment, which was not acceded to.

PROPOSED AMENDMENT

I proposed a boycott of the elections and forty Adanese responded. They all signed a cable addressed to the Colonial Secretary, stating that their rights were suppressed and that foreigners were allowed to enjoy those rights instead of them, since foreigners were in a position of their wealth. The majority of the Adanese were poor and had no property qualifications to offer, which deprived them of the right of voting.

The telegram ran as follows:

“We the undersigned have resolved to telegraph to you, in connection with the elections for membership to the Township Council stop . We aggrieved since we the Arabs born in Aden have just two percent of the total votes stop. We are 22,000 Arabs in Crater (Aden), and have 621 votes stop. Please postpone elections and order an amendment of the ordinance making birth in Aden, social position, and education suitable qualifications.”

MUNICIPALITY OBTAINED

The Tawahi ward boycotted the elections. Khan Saheb Sorabji Patel was returned unopposed.

In Crater Shaikh Mohammad Abdulla (Indian) and Sheikh Ali Bazarah succeeded.

The result was that the Arabs of Aden were represented by an Indian in Crater and Parsee at Tawahi. One Arab came up, but in some years there was great change.

We succeeded in acquiring a Municipal Council with 14 elected members after some years.

The success of the boycott of the Township elections encouraged the Adanese to establish the Aden Association with the following aims on 27.04.1949 at my office in Esplanade Road, Crater:

- 1) To raise the status of the Adanese by cooperation with the Government of Aden

- 2) To work for the protection of the Adanese for their progress.
- 3) To organize good relations of Adanese with:
 - a. Aden Government,
 - b. Employers and Employees,
 - c. The Adanese themselves, encourage culture-arts and science and political thought.

I contributed a life subscription to the Association and became a permanent member and legal adviser to the organization.

Sheikh Mansoor Daood, a fisherman, 80 years old, Aden born, was elected president. It was an expression of recognition of the right of the original settler to rise to the top in his own country.

December 6, 1962

Men, Matters and Memories (99)

UNESCO REVIEWS FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION IN ADEN

Monsieur Paul Soupault, a representative of the UNESCO, visited Aden in the month of February, 1950. He was the guest of honour at a dinner party given by J.J. Goepel, District Commissioner and Information Officer and his wife. I was one of the guests, and so was Mr. Earle Director of the British Council in Aden.

TECHNICAL FACILITIES

Mons. Soupault was French, but spoke English fluently. He had visited many parts of the Middle East. He told me that he would write a report about the technical facilities available in Aden for dissemination of culture through the Press and the Radio. He had managed the Radio Station in Tunis and was for sometime in charge of the foreign broadcast in Paris.

He said that freedom of information, for all, was proclaimed by the United Nations when its General Assembly met in Paris, and adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, on 10th December, 1948. This declaration affirmed, among other things, the right of everyone to seek, receive, and import information and ideas through any media, regardless of frontiers.

FREEDOM BARRIERS

He admitted that there were many political barriers to freedom of information, censorship or the control of news, the suppression or suspension of newspapers, the banning of foreign publications or films, the expulsion of foreign correspondents.

I told him that in Aden we enjoy a measure of freedom, but this freedom is denied to people of the Aden Protectorates and Yemen. Actually, a young journalist, Omer Salem Tarmoom, who had written critical articles in a local magazine "Al-Moustaqbal" was put in prison in Lahej. The editor of Saut-ul-Yemen, a Yemeni organ, was then suffering in Hajja, rock-dungeon, in Yemen. He was Sheikh Ahmed Mohamed Noman. My correspondent Mohammed Ahmed Barakat in Mukalla was finding difficulties. (He was later deported from Mukalla).

Mons. Soupault was interested and said that nearly 70percent of the world population living in under developed areas in Asia, Africa and Latin America lacked modern communications in ideas, information and entertainment, which cannot be tapped through a free press, or by a switch of the radio, or a visit to the local cinema.

Television had just been introduced as a means of communication.

PRESS, RADIO and TV

On a global basis, the press, the radio and the television, have since made giant strides. There are nearly 370 million wireless sets in the world today.

Many countries, in all continents, are operating regular services and there are nearly 8000 daily newspapers with a circulation of nearly 300,000,000.

Between 1940 and 1948 Aden had several newspapers : The Aden Focus, the Observer (both government papers) the Gazette, the Fatat-ul-Jezirah, Arabic weekly at the time, with a circulation which reached 2600 per week. Al-Afkar (monthly magazine), Al-Moustaqbal(Monthly Arabic), Al-Mizan, a weekly review, Ashabab (weekly), Adhikra (a religious weekly Arabic), and Annahda (Arabic weekly).

All these papers, with the exception of Fatat-ul-Jezirah newspaper, have had to close down for economic or political reasons.

I invited the UNESCO representative to a tea party in my house. I called many of the leaders of the place: Syed Ghanim, Kynaston-Snell, Syed Yusuf Mahyoob (editor of Ashabab), Ali Luqman (Journalist), Mr. Jackson (Correspondent of the Illustrated,) Mr and Mrs. Earle(British Council) Mr. and Mrs Goepel (Information).

December 20, 1962

Men, Matters and Memories (100)

ANCIENT PARADISE FIVE MILES EAST OF Khormaksar

In ancient times, long before the Paleolithic age there was a live volcano in Aden. The mouth of this fire hill was Crater, the thriving town of the Colony. Seera Island formed part of the Crater but was pushed back by earth movements and the volcano became consequently extinct.

An Arab historian relates that a sailor had passed by Aden 4000 years ago and observed Djinn spitting fire into the sea. Four or forty thousand years ago, there was volcanic eruption in the region.

IMAD PARADISE

The tribe of A'ad is belived to have lived in the Rubaa' El Khali (Empty Quarter) and Ahqaf (Hadhramout). Shahadad the son of the illustrious King Aad built the Paradise of "Iram, Dhat El Imad" or "Iram supported by Pillars." Its floor was covered with crocus; its buildings raised with layers of silver and gold blocks and its ceilings and columns decorated with genuine pearls, rubies and diamond. God caused the earth to sink under Shahadad and his people, who had developed vanity and arrogance. This Paradise is situated somewhere at Imdad Village, 5 miles to the east of Khormaskar.

In more recent times the Maenite Kings, the Sabaean, the Himyarites and the Qatabanians founded glorious dynasties in South Arabia. Some of their monarchs are very familiar and are very popular, even to this day. Queen Bilqis alias Queen of Sheba ruled in Mareb 1000 B.C. Archaeological remains were uncovered by the American Foundation for the Study of Man, in Yemen, and the temple of Bilqis near Mareb, is a living testimony of the greatness of Queen Bilqis and her Architectural taste; just as the town of Timna capital of Qataban, with its tiled temple, well-planned palace, castle, customs Tariff engraved upon an obelisk outside the town, its cubicle stones hinged together by steel joints, are proof of the true greatness of King Shahr Yagil Yehergeb, the last monarch who ruled Qataban, a quarter of the mile from the Castle of Hagar Kahlan, built by Sharif Awadth El Habili, of Beiha, otherwise known in Southern Arabia, as the King of the Desert . Timna was destroyed by fire by the Kings of Hadhramout.

At Mareb, the Sabaean had built the famous "dam of Mareb" (3000 years ago) the wonder of many travellers. They minted gold coins and the Qatabanians had forged a wonderful irrigation system, which has not been improved upon to this day. They domesticated the camel.

The world owes to the Arabs, its numbers 1 to 9 and even the 0; although this last figure remains a point of controversy.

CIVILIZATION

Dr. Albright an expert in oriental Archaeology, told me, he thought very highly of the civilization of South Arabia.

Am Adia, archaeological remains, in the Audhali country, offer food for thought-temples, edifices water tanks and Castles. Some historians think that this part of the world carried its culture to Egypt, Palmyra and Ophir (in Mesopotamia). A trade route branched out from Aden Northwards to Sanaa and Mecca; another via Qataban, to Palestine and Heera and a third from Dhofar on the Arabian sea via Hadharamout and Shabwa to Mecca, which was an emporium of trade. I had travelled in several of these historical places.

Ships carrying silk, spices, gold ivory, jewellery and slaves regularly called at Aden from the Far East and East Africa, intransit for Mediterranean Ports. From South Arabia frankincense was exported to the temples of the Pharaohs, Palestine, Constantinople, Venice and Rome.

THE MONSOONS

A Greek Mariner however discovered the secret of the dread of seaman to cross the Indian Ocean during the South West Monsoons. He found this ocean safe for navigation during the N.E. Monsoons. This discovery known as the Periplus reduced the importance of Aden as a place of refuge and a supply station for all the sailors coming from Europe along East Africa and from Cathay, (China) along the Indian coastline.

But South Arabian history in general, upto 150 A.D. discloses a progressive civilization. Some historians bravely tell us that the Arabs of this part, were the teachers of the Phoenicians and even the Pharaohs.

An anthropologist holds a strange theory that there is an affinity between Yemenis and Ceylonese; Hadhramis and Chinese and that Ethiopians migrated from the rich plains and plateaus of Yemen.

Arabs of Himyaritic stock are the fore fathers of Somalis. The Hexos in Egypt were originally Yemenis.

ABYSSINIAN IN YEMEN

The Arabs were idol worshippers and did worship the sun and the moon, before Dhu Nawas embraced Judaism and persecuted the Christians in Najran, which event led to the conquest of Yemen by the Abyssinians led by General Aryat and Abraha El Ashram, and the suicidal leap of Dhu Nawas into the sea. Aryat built Leglise (a church) in Sanaa and attempted to storm Mecca, which was in the VI Century a place of pilgrimage for all the Arabs before the worship was finally abolished by Islam. The Abyssinians hoarders were destroyed by an epidemic. They were finally ousted from Yemen by Maadi Kerib. Son of Dhu Yazan the Yemeni King assisted by the Azadians (the Persian army of Liberation).

For thirteen centuries now Yemen has been in the throes of tribal wars. There has been very little change and no social or cultural progress; but the Republic, declared on September 26 this year may

work wonders if left in peace. It has already begun several projects under its wise president Marshall Abudulla Sallal.

December 27, 1962

Men, Matters and Memories (101)

EXPLORATION OF OUR BURIED GLORY

In March, 1951, I was invited by Sharif Hussain bin Ahmed El-Habili of Beihan to accompany him to hagar Kahlan, the centre of archaeological excavations, in his state, subsidized by the Foundation for the Study of Man and carried out by Windel Phillips and a team of archaeologists of great reputation.

The plane took about forty minutes from Khormaksar, over hill and dale, before it descended on the golden sands of the Rubaa'-al-Khali (the huge and endless South Arabian Desert) . Those attractive sands had the colour of the morning twilight on the distant horizon, piling up layer upon layer and rising high above the ground submerging underneath, towns , cities , gardens, hills, and mountain chains.

What great secrets lie in the bosom of this sandy desert? How many kingdoms have been buried below it, how many cities, dynasties and civilizations?

This land, absolutely unexplored, with its dunes and barkhaus projecting like the hard breasts of a virgin, looked awe - inspiring!

WINDELL PHILLIPS

How many explorers have passed this way? How many lost their lives in their adventures? It was a virgin land and it wanted to retain its virginity for centuries.

I landed from the plane at Jow-el-Mallah in Beihan and suddenly saw Windell Phillips, who looked glance at me and enquired, "What has brought you so far?" I said I had come to see the remains of Qataban.

"But you should know," he said in a rude tone" that we have not come here for petrol exploration, gold, uranium or Israeli designs." "I know that," I replied, "You may know it but the Aden newspaper have been writing a lot of nonsense", he said "The Fatat-ul-Jezirah has written facts only" I said with confirmation. He agreed but turned round and said: "Don't take any photographs and don't discuss anything with the members of this mission during my absence in Aden. When I return next week I shall give you a story," he promised. "Very well," Mr. Phillips I said.

DR. ALBRIGHT

Then I saw a beautiful French girl who had an Egyptian mother. Eileen Salama, was her name. She was a secretary of Mr. Phillips I was introduced to her. We spoke in Arabic. She did not know Aden and said I shall give her a letter to my son Ali to show her round. Mr. Phillips came running like a worm shouting “Hey! What is going on there? Have I not told you to avoid talking to my people?” “Oh! How fortunate you must be to have such a beauty among your people? ” “Stop sneering,” he retorted; and Shariff Hussain came running, on the landing ground. He told Windell Phillips: “This is Mr. Lokman and this is his country. He may see anything and say anything ” I thanked Sharif Hussain and told him I would wish to make friends with the mission in order to learn all I can from about the finds, the excavations and the inscriptions. They alone can help me. We then parted.

At the instant, Dr. Albright came to enquire about the ingenious poet of Aden “Ali Luqman,” who had published a great poem, entitled “The Genius South”.

Dr. Albright is an orientalist of vast knowledge and understanding. He knows Arabic, Hebrew, Himyarite, Latin, Greek and many other languages besides English, French and Italian.

ANCIENT MONUMENTS

I spent ten days in Beihan, and many interesting hours with Dr. Albright during the absence of Mr. Phillips in Aden.

Michaels, a German historian, who visited this part of the world in the VX111 th century, was sent by the King Frederick V of Denmark with the famous scientist K. Niebuhr, who tried hard to pay a visit to Mareb, the capital of Saba, but failed. Sharif Abdul Rehman El Muhsen, the Governor of Mareb in 1762, had refused permission to the mission. He returned to Europe with some antiquities which he carried away from Dhofar, in South Arabia.

Again in 1810 Retson, a German explorer, visited Yemen without any success. He found five monuments at Mocha, but in 1838 Wallstead, a British traveler, reached Mareb and brought a few ancient monuments.

The Sabaeans, it has now been established, conquered Yemen in 100 B.C. to 500 A.D. Mareb was their capital in the East and Sanaa in the North. Mareb with its wonderful dam was, for a long time the object and aim of all explorers of ancient times.

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Prepared by: Professor Dr. Ahmed Ali Al-Hamdani

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