

CLOSING ADDRESS

H.E. MR. SHAHARYAR M. KHAN

The text of the address by H.E. The Ambassador of Pakistan has been edited and annotated by Dr. Saeed Durrani from a tape-recording (transcribed by Mrs. E.A. Shinn).

Mr. Chairman Dr. Saeed Durrani, your Worship Lord Mayor of Rugby, distinguished guests, fellow guests, ladies and gentlemen. It is a very great pleasure and honour for me to be present here today in order to celebrate and share in Iqbal Academy's reverence and appreciation for the memory of Sir Thomas Arnold.^[1]

Before I say a few words on this august subject I would like to say how much I appreciate, and greatly value, the gatherings that Dr. Saeed Durrani has organized over these last two years. I remember last year the meeting was a memorable one. We had some very eminent speakers, so eminent that I had asked Saeed, my old friend, to make a pamphlet. And when he said he would, and took a little time doing it, we decided to make one ourselves and we sent out this speech. We sent it round to our community all over Britain to show the kind of work that is being done by the Iqbal Academy in appreciation of Iqbal, Iqbaliyat, and a tremendous commitment [that it has] to national unity and to an understanding of what Pakistan is: its ethos, its background, its history. So I would, really, from the bottom of my heart, like to congratulate you, Saeed, for the wonderful (clapping)... for the wonderful spirit in which you have organized these functions. May you succeed, continue to succeed, in projecting the rays of Allamah Iqbal's thoughts and ideas that have illuminated not only Pakistan, not only our neighbours, not only the Islamic world, but throughout the world, where his name lives in great eminence and great reverence (prolonged clapping).

Today we have been very honoured to have heard equally eminent speakers. The addresses have been truly outstanding, and I think I would be remiss if I weren't to mention Dr. Christian Troll and the generations of Sir Thomas's children,^[2] grandchildren and great-grandchildren who have been with us today, to give such a human touch and such a deep insight not only into the thoughts and ideas of Sir Thomas Arnold but also how it came about that he lived a life which eventually led to so much fulfillment for the

people of Pakistan and the Islamic world. We also learnt the background of how he began his youth, he matured, he went abroad, his beliefs, his thoughts, his family connections, his letters. This is an ethos which I think, is a very valuable insight into Iqbal and his early development. Dr. Saeed Durrani has, for instance, told us how greatly Sir Thomas had influenced Iqbal, his modes of thought, and his whole career.

Before I go any further, may I remark how very much I appreciate this very large turnout here today from the people around Birmingham who have continuously appreciated and supported Iqbal Academy. And also let me say how very much we appreciate it, Lord Mayor, Councillor James Shera, that you are with us here from Rugby. Let me say a few words about him. He is not only a Lord Mayor, not only a young Lord Mayor, but I think you should know that his election in Rugby was a rare one. It was rare in the sense not because he's a Pakistani, but rare in the sense that everyone, Conservatives, Liberals, Labour, when he came up for election, they all unanimously elected him - which is very rare 'and which shows... (clapping)... and which shows the high esteem in which the people of Rugby hold him.

Lastly I would like also to welcome Dr Ansari, Now Dr Ansari and I have an old and common bond; her father was my teacher, and he was one of the great Arabic scholars of undivided India, later Pakistan. Her father was someone who always told me that I have several daughters but the most brilliant of them is Atiyya^[3]... (clapping)... You will be proud to know that she is herself, in her own right, a very great scholar of Arabic. She has written a great deal on Arabic poetry; she has been a professor at Riyadh University^[4]; she is now teaching at Karachi University. She has a fluency in Arabic which is unmatched in Pakistan, I can tell you; and it really is a privilege to have her with us. She is here (in the U.K.) to give a few lectures; but her lectures are very erudite and very long. So we have asked her to limit herself to simply a poem today;^[5] but I am sure, later on, we will have the privilege and pleasure of listening to her and to her thoughts.

A few words, if I may now add, concerning Sir Thomas Arnold: and I will not be very long in my speech; but I will say something about the importance of today's meeting: the spirit of today's meeting. You will be able to appreciate it if I give you two, two anecdotes of my life, which you will, perhaps not early on, relate easily to Sir Thomas Arnold; but later on the link will be there.

The first one dates back, Saeed, to the time when we came down [from Cambridge], and after university you stayed on and you continued your research. I came back, after Cambridge, and came to Karachi and joined a British firm. I was waiting for my results of the examination for the Foreign Service, that I had taken, and during the interim period of six to eight months I joined a British Company. I remember one day that, soon after I had joined as an executive, I was invited by the Chief of that firm to a cocktail. In those days, British firms, with British Sahibs and Mem sahibs, gave cocktails for Pakistani executives, etc. I was invited, and in the evening we were expected to dress in dinner Jackets in those days - I am talking of 1956 or thereabouts. And I told a friend of mine; I said to him, "Look, I have been working here three months, and in the evening it is hot; they have asked for dinner jackets; I am going to go to this cocktail in my shirwani".^[6] And he looked at me and he said, "Look, you can't do that." I said, "Why?" He said, "You see, the company, the Burro Sahibs,^[7] they are the British people who own this company. They belong to the Sind Club, where no Pakistani is allowed... um... and you simply cannot go in a shirwani." I said, "Look, I work for them, I know. During the day I put on a tie; I will do all the right things; but in the evenings, I am a Pakistani. I have just come from Cambridge, where I have lived for several years; I have lots of British friends. I belong to rugby clubs and cricket clubs, where they drink beer and all sorts of things. I don't drink, but they respect me for my beliefs and for my religion. And I know the British people, they are not like that; they will not misunderstand me. I will go in my shirwani." So that night I went in my shirwani - and two or three months later I left that company, thank God... (laughter)... and I joined the Foreign Office.

Now it left a mark on me, that, because I had lived in Britain, I knew the British people. I had known that they really respect you if you do not drink beer or do not drink this or that, or you believe in your religion: if you believe in your ideas, if you believe in your background, they respect you more. And I keep saying this all the time, while I am here now as an Ambassador. And, therefore, the attitude that was being projected to me of the Burra Sahib was totally out of kilt with the attitude of the true Englishman, of the true Scott, that I knew from here, and all the more reason why it made me put on that shirwani.

Now I take you forward over a thirty year span, and here is the other extreme - here is the other extreme. Three days ago I got a letter, I got a letter in my post and it said as follows. It was from a 70 year old lady, a widow, and it said: "Dear Ambassador,

I am the widow of... so and so..." I will not give you the name, because I am sure she would want to remain anonymous. She said that, "My husband was in the British army; he served in the northern parts of what is now Pakistan. He had lived there with the Frontier Scouts for years and years, and when independence came to Pakistan he was not satisfied with the way in which he was being instructed by the British army in those days, as he was leaving; and so he decided to resign. And he resigned and he stayed on with the Scouts which were now all Pakistani, and served with them for many years: four, five or six years, after independence. Not only that; with his Pakistani friends he began campaigns which led to the full independence and full liberation of this extreme northern part of what is now Pakistan. And in the full liberation of this territory he had co-operated with the Pakistani people, with the northern Scouts."

Now this lady went on to say that, "I was very sad when I went back to Pakistan and I read the history that the regiment had written about those days, [to find] that my husband's name had not been mentioned at all. He was not there: he had been erased from the memory of the regiment as though his contribution was not there!"

Now I have given you these two anecdotes of my personal experience for the one reason which is important, I think, today.

And that is that Pakistan and Pakistanis have a very important relationship with this country. Pakistan and Pakistanis is people who must recognize, in a mature way, those who have contributed to Pakistan. Those people who have, over the years, been true friends of Pakistan, and there are many of them. And let us not put a veil over the memory of these great people: it does not behave an independent and mature nation to do this. Let us not erase the memory of that man who helped us on the northern frontier. Let us not put a veil over his exploits; let us be big enough to understand that there were many people, then, as today, who are genuinely and sincerely friends of the Pakistani People Friends of Islam. Let there not be this thought that a country as young as Pakistan, having wrested

independence in such a dramatic manner as we did through the thoughts of Allamah Iqbal, through the courageous fights of Quaid-i-Azam, Muhammad Ali Jinnah [would forget those who helped it]. We achieved independence. Many people doubted that we'd be able to preserve this independence; many people felt in our neighbourhood, and even here, that this was a flash in the pan, and that it would soon be over. But a nation which has established itself has the right to feel proud, has the right to be a little headstrong, has the right to say that we have arrived on our own. We had nothing then, not tanks, no desks, no telephones, no engineers, no doctors, no bankers, no infrastructure, nothing: we had less than scratch. And yet we've made it; we've made it in spite of Bangladesh. Such a nation is there in truth: a nation that is now fully mature, that believes in itself; but, in believing in ourselves, let us not forget those who have genuinely helped us.

...(prolonged clapping)...

Sir Thomas Arnold was one such person. There are others, I mean, think about them: this is an exercise that we can all indulge in. Sir Mortimer Wheeler^[8] what a great man! Look [also] at the number of headmasters that we've had: British headmasters, who stayed on, who won't come back here. They want to teach at Lawrence College, Ghora Gali; Abbotabad; Aitchison College. [These were the] people who would not go back, just because they wanted to teach where they had dedicated their lives. I don't know if many of you know Mr. Catchpole. Mr. Catchpole, he used to teach me in Dehra Doon. Thirty years later I find him, at the age of 75, still teaching in Abbotabad. He's not a headmaster now, he says, "No, no, I'm too old to be headmaster; but I continue to go on teaching."

There are lots of people, Catchpoles - people like that. There is Auchinleck^[9], who did so much for our army. Professor Arberry^[10], Dr Schimmel^[11], great thinkers, great friends of Pakistan. It is these people whom we must raise above that morass of people that I saw at that Sind Club, who wanted to invite me. They are not representative. Although the memories always give you images of colonial types, yet the truth is that you have to look beyond that: if you are a mature people, you have to look beyond that. And what we have done today is to celebrate the memory of a man who was a true friend of Islam, a true friend of Allamah Iqbal, and really, therefore, a true friend of Pakistan. Because of his influence on Allamah Iqbal not only intellectually, but in the manner, in his demeanour -

in his personal demeanour -, in his personal contacts, in his day-to-day dealings with Allamah Iqbal, he was someone who really helped formulate Allamah Iqbal's thoughts and ideas, and I think it is very important therefore that we should, as we have done today, revere his memory, think of what he did, think of the bridge that he built.

For instance, it came to me during Dr. Troll's brilliant speech today, it came to me that he is the bridge really between Allamah Iqbal and Sir Syed Ahmad Khan. These are points in our national history, but the linkages sometimes are rather shaky and grey. And here, for the first time, I was able to find a true linkage between great men who have given us the concept of what is today Pakistan: the Pakistan I described to you a few minutes ago, which has gone through great vicissitudes, great doubts, and yet has come, as a young nation, to play its full part not only in the region, not only in the Islamic world, but, insha Allah, in the entire world.

It is this maturity which is vitally important. It is this maturity that has given us only a few days ago an election¹²² free of any incidents, an election in which [there was] not one complaint of rigging, an election which has taken place after many many years, when people wondered what kind of violence might engulf Pakistan. And yet, not only on Election Day, but for weeks, if not months before, there have been processions up and down the towns and villages without a single shot, without any violence. Now this... (clapping)... it is this maturity that is important for us, for us as a young nation. We are headstrong, we are in a hurry, we want to make up a lot of leeway. But unless we stop, and think, and ponder, and meditate, this maturity' will not come to us easily. It is functions like today's when we can stop and think of our friends, those who have influenced us, those who have been sincere to us, those who have helped us along, that we can begin to think of those, even today, now, who are doing a similar task. I have mentioned Dr. Schimmel; there are so many in the academic world here in London, in America; in Western Germany, in Australia. There are so many who are helping [us]; let us hold their hand and work with them, because there is nothing wrong, there is no shame in learning from people who are not entirely of your own ilk. So if that regiment has written that little piece of history without, to that man, I think it's a shame: he should be acknowledged. And let us not feel ashamed to acknowledge the greatness amongst us. And Sir Thomas Arnold was a great man. We have revered him today: he was a great eminence, he

was a man who gave light, who was a man of great humanity, whose work and whose personal conduct is such that we need to have Days in which, like today, the Iqbal Academy should dedicate itself to the memory of Sir Thomas Arnold.

I would like to thank you for listening to me. These thoughts have come out of my heart. I share them with you. And I would like to say how very much I look forward to the transcripts of today's deliberations and speeches. The transcripts, alas, will not have the beautiful portrait that has been given to us^[13], and we would like very much to have perhaps photographs of it's so that we are reminded. The transcripts will also not have the beauty of the voice of those who have come and spoken to you here, and particularly, if I may say so, of Dr Christopher Lamb, whose English translations of Iqbal's poetry^[14] have been really moving; and alas this will not come out in the transcript, but I think we can pay tribute to the brilliant manner in which these were rendered today.

With these words, once again, may I say, thank you for having this Thomas Arnold Day on Iqbal Day; thank you for inviting me, thank you for listening patiently; and thank you above all for the manner in which you have started a tradition, which I hope you will continue year after year.

Thank you very much indeed. (prolonged clapping)

NOTES AND REFERENCES

^[1]The Proceedings of the 'Iqbal and Mysticism' Seminar, referred to by His Excellency, have, since, come out as the winter 1988 issue of the Iqbal Review, Pakistan (29, No. 3, pp. 1-26, 1988). -Ed

^[2]No Children were, in fact, present. However, a two-year old maternal grandson of Arnold Barfield (Sir Thomas's eldest grandson), who was present at the meeting with his mother, did represent the fifth generation of Sir T. Arnold. -Ed.

^[3]Dr. Mrs. Atiyya Ansari -Ed.

^[4]In the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia -Ed.

^[5]Dr. Ansari had, earlier in the proceedings, recited the poem entitled: 'In memory of Arnold' (نالہٴ فراق (آرنلڈ کی یاد میں), written by Iqbal in 1904 to

commemorate Arnold's departure from India to England. - Ed.

^[6]High-necked tunic, with a column of front buttons; a formal Pakistani dress. -Ed.

^[7]The 'white chiefs' or big bosses. - Ed.

^[8]The great British archaeologist who is famous, among other things, for his work on the ancient megapolis, Mohenjo Daro, in southern Pakistan -Ed.

^[9]Field Marshal Sir Claude Auchinleck, the first Commander -in Chief of the armies of independent Pakistan -Ed.

^[10]Professor Arthur J. Arberry, Sir Thomas Adams' Professor of Arabic at the university of Cambridge, who has extensively translated oriental poetry and prose, including several Persian works of Iqbal -Ed.

^[11]Professor Annemarie Schimmel, one of the foremost western scholars of Islamic Sufi and metaphysical literature living today. She has extensively translated into German (and written books in German and English on) the poetical works of, amongst others, the great 13th century mystic, Jalal-ed-Dine Rumi, and Iqbal. - Ed.

^[12]The Ambassador was referring to the first free national elections held in Pakistan on 17th November 1988. -Ed.

^[13]The special portrait of Sir Thomas Arnold, commissioned by the Academy from the distinguished Pakistani artist, Shaikh M. Saeed, and inaugurated by H.E. The Ambassador at the beginning of the day's proceedings. This, together with another portrait of Professor Arnold in the robes of an Islamic scholar at Aligarh University, has been donated by the artist to the Iqbal Academy (UK). - Ed.

^[14]The translation, from both Persian and Urdu poetry of Iqbal, had been made by Dr. S.A. Durrani, and recited by Dr C. Lamb in his inimitable style. It may be worth recording here that a complete video film of the Arnold Day Proceedings was made, to professional standards, and has been preserved in the Academy's archives. -Ed.