

RAMBROOK

A HISTORY OF THE FARĀ'IDĪ MOVEMENT
IN BENGAL
(DOWN TO A. D. 1906)

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A Thesis
Submitted to the University of Dacca
for the
Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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by

Muin-ud-Din Ahmad Khan

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P R E F A C E

The thesis attempts to study a phase of the Islamic revivalist movement of the nineteenth century as it affected Bengal. Islamic revivalism in this century was a worldwide phenomenon, but it had different colours in different countries. In the sub-continent of India and Pakistan, Shāh Wali Allāh was the dominating influence as far as north India was concerned. The subsequent growth of his religious teachings spread out in Bengal, but here the founder of the Farā'idī movement, Hājī Shari'at Allāh, was directly inspired by Arab puritanism. His movement is inseparably linked up with the socio-economic life of the Muslims of Bengal who formed the large majority of the rural populace in this riverine province. This puritan movement had a double aspect: to purge the Muslim peasantry of their age-long un-Islamic beliefs and practices, and at the same time to defend their reformed religion against the vested interests of the farm and plantation landlords. The first is the religious aspect which has to be understood in the general background of religious revivalism, while the second is the socio-economic phenomenon as it affected the life of the rural Muslim populace. The spread of the Farā'idī movement along the riverine tracts of lower Bengal from its

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centr in the Faridpur district clearly brings into view the real geographical factors that underlay its general popularity among the peasant classes. This rural pattern of the Farā'idī movement is in clear contrast with the urbanism of the north Indian religious revivalism.

In the following pages, after a discussion of the original sources on which the main thesis is based, an attempt is made to give first a wider background, in which each aspect is properly defined and characterised. Then follow full details about the Farā'idī leaders, their religious doctrines, the social organisation and the geographical pattern of the spread of the movement. In one chapter the Farā'idī doctrines are contrasted with a later-day influence and opposition from other religious beliefs. Throughout, the attempt is made to study intensively the Farā'idī movement and place it in the wider context of the Islamic revivalism of the nineteenth century in general, and link it with the life of the Muslims of Bengal in particular.

University of Dacca
The 5th January, 1960.

Muin-ud-Din Ahmad Khan

NOTE ON TRANSLITERATION

The following system has been used :-

1) For Arabic, Urdu and Persian letters :-

ا = a	ص = s
ب = b	ض = d
پ = p	ط = t
ت = t	ظ = z
ث = <u>th</u>	ع = 'e
ج = j	غ = gh
چ = ch	ف = f
ح = h	ق = q
خ = <u>kh</u>	ك = k
د = d	گ = g
ذ = <u>dh</u>	ل = l
ر = r	م = m
ز = z	ن = n
ژ = <u>zh</u>	و = w
س = s	ه = h
ش = <u>sh</u>	ء = 'a
	ي = y

VOWEL DIPHTHONGS, ETC.

	<u>Arabic</u>	<u>Urdu & Persian</u>
Short vowels	a, i, u	a, i, u
Long vowels	ā, ī, ū	ā, ī, ū, ē, o
ي (if maqṣūrah)	ā	ā
Long vowels with <u>tasbeed</u>	iyah, uwah	iyah, uwah
Diphongs	aw, ay	aw, ay
ة (marbūṭah)	ah	at

1) For Bengali letters :-

অ = a
 আ = ā
 ই = i
 ঈ = ī
 উ = u
 ঊ = ū
 ঝ = ṛi
 ঞ = e
 ঞ = ai
 ও = o
 ঔ = au
 ক = k
 খ = kh
 গ = g
 ঘ = gh
 ঙ = ñ
 চ = ch
 ছ = chh
 জ = j
 ঝ = jh
 ঞ = ñ
 ট = t
 ঠ = th
 ড = d
 ঢ = dh

ঙ = ṅ
 ত = t
 থ = th
 দ = d
 ধ = dh
 ন = n
 প = p
 ফ = ph
 ব = b
 ভ = bh
 ম = m
 য = y
 র = r
 শ = ś
 ষ = v
 ঞ = ś
 ঞ = sh
 ঞ = s
 ঞ = h
 ঞ = r
 ঞ = y
 ঞ = ṅ
 ঞ = ḥ
 ঞ = n

LIST OF ABBREVIATION

- H. Beveridge: District of Bakargoni (The District of Bakargoni, its History and Statistics. London, 1876).
- James Taylor: Topography (A Sketch of the Topography and Statistics of Dacca. Calcutta, 1840).
- James Wise : Eastern Bengal (Notes on the Races, Castes and Trades of Eastern Bengal. London, 1884).
- J.A.B. = Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, Calcutta.
- J.A.P. = Journal of the Asiatic Society of Pakistan, Dacca.
- J.E. Mastrell: Jessore, Fureedpore and Backergunge (Geographical and Statistical Report of the Districts of Jessore, Fureedpore and Backergunge. Calcutta, 1868).
- J.P.H.S. = Journal of the Pakistan Historical Society, Karachi.
- Malick : Thesis (Dr. A.R.Mallick: The Development of the Muslims of Bengal and Bihar. 1813-1856, with Special Reference to their Education. Unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University

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CHAPTER - I

SOURCES

This study on the growth and development of the Farā'idī movement covers roughly the period from A.D. 1818 to 1906, i.e., from the date of inception of the movement down to the death of the last head of the Farā'idīs, Khān Bahādur Sa'īd al-Dīn Ahmad, the father of the present head, Abā Khālid Rashīd al-Dīn Ahmad alias Bādshāh Miyān*. Other religious reform movements, namely Tarīqah-i-Muhammadiyah and its different later factions¹, have been discussed only in so far as it was necessary to bring out the background and perspective of the Farā'idī movement. In collecting data for this study, the necessity of going back to the original sources was constantly kept in mind; even so, the original sources were not accepted without critical scrutiny.

The social and religious conditions of the Muslims in Bengal during the nineteenth century have so far been left in obscurity. A number of socio-economic upheavals, often under the patronage of religious reform movements including the peasant agitation led by the Farā'idī leader Dudu Miyān, created a good deal of commotion in the rural society of Bengal from A.D. 1830 to 1870, which repeatedly drew the attention of the government². A few scholars, such as

1. See infra., p. 28 ff.

2. W.W. Hunter's Our Indian Musalmans, are they bound in conscience to rebel against the Queen? (London, A.D. 1871), is an assessment of the political implications of this commotion of the Muslim society for which he was commissioned by the government.

* It is regretted that Bādshāh Miyān died on the 13th December, 1959, when this study was completed.

James Wise, W.W.Hunter and Sayyid Amīr 'Alī, also took considerable interest in the socio-religious aspects of the Muslim society of Bengal, especially during the later half of the nineteenth century. Wise made an outline of different religious and professional groups of Muslims including those who attempted to introduce religious reforms¹. Hunter made an attempt to study the political implications of the religious reform movements², and Amīr 'Alī tried to ascertain the position of the rapidly disappearing Muslim upper class³. Two modern studies, completed in recent years, have devoted considerable space to the nineteenth century Muslim socio-religious movements in Bengal though their main concern lies with different subjects. One is Dr. A.R.Mallick's study of the modern educational development of the Muslims of Bengal and Bihar⁴ and the other Dr. Muhammad Abdul Bari's study of the Wahhābī doctrines⁵. Besides, a few articles have also been published by different authors about the Farā'idī and other socio-religious movements. In these studies, the Farā'idī movement did not receive as much attention as it deserves

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1. See James Wise: Notes on the Races, Castes and Trades of Eastern Bengal. London, A.D.1884 (printed a few copies for the private use of the government).
 2. See foot note no. 2 in page 1.
 3. See Syed Ameer Ali: "A Cry for the Indian Mahomedans", Nineteenth Century. New York, vol. xii, A.D.1882, p.183 ff.
 4. See Dr.A.R.Mallick: The Development of the Muslims of Bengal and Bihar, 1813-1856, with Special Reference to their Education (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of London, 1953).
 5. See Dr. Muhammad Abdul Bari: A Comparative Study of the Early Wahhābī Doctrines and Contemporary Reform Movements in Indian Islam (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, Queen's College, Oxford University, 1953).

in its socio-religious as well as in its socio-economic aspects.

Important sources which are utilised here fall under the following heads :-

- A. Farā'idī sources.
- B. Contemporary sources throwing light on the Farā'idī movement.
- C. Sources throwing light on the contemporary socio-religious conditions of the Muslims of Bengal.
- D. Government records.

A. FARĀ'IDĪ SOURCES

We have recovered a variety of Farā'idī sources from different parts of East Pakistan, such as inscription, document, fatwā (i.e., legal decision), and puṭhī (i.e., folk literature), which, put together, give us a fair idea of the general direction of the movement. They are described below.

(1) Tomb inscription of Ḥājī Sharī'at Allāh, the founder of the Farā'idī movement. The existence of this inscription was not known to the scholars before 1957, when it was recovered by the present writer from the descendants of Ḥājī Sharī'at Allāh. It was then critically examined, edited and published in the Journal of the Asiatic Society of Pakistan¹.

1. See J.A.S.P., vol. 111, 1958, pp. 187-93.

It consists of ten lines of commentary on the life and character of Ḥājī Sharī'at Allāh in Arabic language, which enabled us for the first time to fix the chronology of his life. It was originally fixed in the surrounding wall of the Ḥājī's grave. But when the site of his grave began to be washed away by the river Arialkhan (Padma), not long after his death, the inscription was collected by Dudu Miyān (the Ḥājī's son) and preserved at his residence. In 1957, at the request of the present writer, the inscription was presented to the Asiatic Society of Pakistan (Dacca) as a gift by Mawlawī Abā Khālīd Rashīd al-Dīn Ahmad alias Bādshāh Miyān, the grandson of Dudu Miyān and the present head of the Farā'idīs, which he inherited from his father Khān Bahādur Sa'īd al-Dīn Ahmad, on Bādshāh Miyān's election to the headship in A.D.1906.

It has, however, been brought to our notice that some visitors to the Dacca Museum where the inscription is preserved, questioned its genuineness on the ground that the Farā'idīs opposed building Mausoleum and even to raising the ground on the grave; and that the stone-inscription may have been made long after the death of Ḥājī Sharī'at Allāh. It may, therefore, be pointed out, in the first place, that being a tomb inscription it must have been made after the death of the Ḥājī, and on the basis of textual evidence we observed in our article referred to above, that it was prepared long after the

death of Ḥājī Shari'at Allāh. Secondly, we have accepted the statement of Bādshāh Miyān that it was made by Dudu Miyān, the son of the Ḥājī, because it is more or less immaterial for us to dispute as to whether it was made by Dudu Miyān or by one of his sons. For the date of the Ḥājī's death as supplied by the inscription (on the basis of which we have drawn all our conclusions therefrom) is supported by evidences from contemporary writings, especially that of James Taylor. Taylor signed the preface of his book A Sketch of the Topography and Statistics of Dacca, on the 30th March, 1839, and says that during the ten years from A.D. 1828, the Farā'idī movement made rapid progress. He further adds that while he was writing this, Ḥājī Shari'at Allāh was put under the ban of the Police¹. The inscription gives the date of the Ḥājī's death as the 10th Dhī'l-Qa'dah, A.H. 1255/16th January, 1840². There, is, therefore, nothing unusual in it. Even if it was forged by the descendants of Ḥājī Shari'at Allāh, we have no reason not to accept it, for the son and grandsons of the Ḥājī are more reliable on this matter than any other person. Thirdly, it is true that the Farā'idīs oppose building mausoleum or raising ground on the grave. But they do not object to erecting surrounding walls on the

1. Cf. James Taylor: A Sketch of the Topography and Statistics of Dacca. Calcutta, A.D. 1840, p. 250.

2. See J.A.S.P., Vol. iii, 1958, p. 189.

grave as is seen in the case of Dudu Miyān's grave at the Bansal Road, Dacca¹ and in that of Munīr al-Dīn Khalīfah, the earliest and most prominent Farā'idī leader of Chandpur in Tippera district². These graves have boundary walls though the graves themselves are flat.

(ii) A handwritten document, composed on a stamp paper and signed by Dudu Miyān on the 22nd Paus, B.S.1255/4th January, 1849, giving power of legal attorney to Munshī Faiḍ al-Dīn Mukhtār, has been recovered recently by the present writer, from the descendants of Dudu Miyān. Being a legal document, it was registered in the law court on the 15th January, 1849. It is written in Bengali language and consists of over 56 lines. It is now preserved in the Asiatic Society of Pakistan.

(iii) A fatwā (i.e., legal decision) on the unlawfulness of holding congregational prayers of Friday and 'Īd in the villages of Bengal. This is an important document, composed in mixed Arabic and Urdu languages (most of the Urdu portion being the translation of Arabic passages) and printed on a big sheet of paper measuring 16½ X 26½ inches and consisting 91 lines in small script. It was sponsored by Mawlawī Abū Yahyā Muḥammad Nūr al-Dīn son of the famous Farā'idī theologian Khalīfah 'Abd al-Jabbār of Faridpur

1. See infra., Chapter iv, p. 208.

2. See infra., p. 333 Appendix "A" to Chapter ix.

district¹, and was approved and signed by twenty Farā'idī theologians of Eastern Bengal. It gives in a nutshell the views and arguments of the Farā'idīs on the subject.

The document was printed apparently during the first decade of the twentieth century (sometimes after A.D.1903) for distribution among the Farā'idī khalīfahs with a view to equip them for withstanding the criticism of their opponents. This copy of the fatwā was recovered by the present writer from a village in the Chandpur subdivision of Tippera district in 1958, and thus far it proves to be a rare document as no other copy of the same has come to light. It is now preserved in the Asiatic Society of Pakistan.

It may be observed that its preparation at a later date does not minimise its importance. In the first place, the basic points advanced by this fatwā are corroborated by the proceedings of the famous debate held in A.D.1867 between Khalīfah 'Abd al-Jabbār and Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī of Jawnpur, as recorded by the latter². Secondly, the corroboration is also found in two Farā'idī puthis, published about the same time³. The preparation of the fatwā and the publication of the puthis dealing elaborately with

1. For the identity of Khalīfah 'Abd al-Jabbār see infra., pp. 227 ff. and 353.

2. See infra., p. 279 ff.

3. See infra., p. 8 ff.

the question of holding the congregational prayer of Friday at this later date point to the growing intensity of the conflict between the Farā'idīs and their opponents on this subject. This fatwā has enabled us to make a comprehensive study of the Farā'idī views on the subject¹.

(iv) Durr-i-Muhammad: Puthi, pp. 9-138, in Bengali language, dealing with Farā'idī doctrines and the life and character of the Farā'idī leaders. The first 8 pages of the work and a few pages at the end, are missing. From the textual evidence, the completion and publication of the work can be definitely dated in between 1903 and 1906, i.e., before the death of Khān Bahādur Sa'id al-Dīn Ahmad.

The name of the author, Durr-i-Muhammad, occurs frequently in the text (i.e., in the bhanitā), which may be nom de plume of the author. But, since the title page is missing, no other name of the author or the title of the puthi could be recovered. In the first place, no other copy of the puthi has so far come to light, and secondly, though many old Farā'idīs including Bādshāh Miyān, recognise the book, are unable to say who was Durr-i-Muhammad. Hence, we have no alternative but to refer to the work as Puthi and to the author as Durr-i-Muhammad.

1. See infra., Chapter vi.

Although the puthi is written in Bengali language, the preponderance of Arabic and Persian words in the composition indicates that the writer was a skilful theologian. The mode of argument of the author is also worthy of our notice. Every new argument is begun with a tag or a passage from the Qur'ān, Prophetic tradition, fatwā or any other book of religion, which is reproduced in the original Arabic, Persian or Urdu, and the Bengali portion which follows represents an exposition of the quotation. Hence, we find about 57 quotations of this kind, which, put together even independently of the Bengali, gives us a fair idea of the Farā'idī doctrines. The content of this puthi is broadly corroborated by Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī's proceedings referred to above and by the other puthi described next.

(v) Nāzim al-Dīn: Puthi, pp. 1-120, in Bengali dealing with Farā'idī doctrines. The title page and the preface of the work and a few pages at the end of the book, are missing. The middle and the major portion of the puthi, i.e., from page 16 to page 111, is a reproduction of Durr-i-Muḥammad's Puthi from page 32 to page 138, except that the author of this work, Nāzim al-Dīn, inserted his own name in the bhanitā in place of Durr-i-Muḥammad. Moreover, as the later portion of Durr-i-Muḥammad's Puthi, i.e., following the page 138, is missing it is not

possible to ascertain whether the last portion of Nāzim al-Dīn's work, i.e., from page 111 to page 120, is also reproduction of the former or not.

The first 31 and odd pages of Nāzim al-Dīn's work gives us an idea of the Fārā'idī attitude towards the important problems of ijtihād (i.e., the principle of fresh investigation into the points of law and rules of morality) and taqlīd (i.e., imitation of the authoritative prescriptions of the schools of law). We may, therefore, regard Nāzim al-Dīn's work as the reproduction of the important portion of Durr-i-Muḥammad's Puthī with an introduction.

The above evidence at first suggested to us the possibility of the identification of Nāzim al-Dīn with Durr-i-Muḥammad. But the present head of the Fārā'idīs, namely Bādshāh Miyān, who succeeded to the headship in A.D.1906, rejects the suggestion categorically. He knew Mawlawī Nāzim al-Dīn as a learned theologian being an authority on the rules of law and morality, and as a constant companion of his father, Khān Bahādur Sa'id al-Dīn; but never assumed the pen name Durr-i-Muḥammad. From the biographical data of Khān Bahādur Sa'id al-Dīn, we know further that Mawlawī Nāzim al-Dīn accompanied the former to the health resort of Madhupur in Bihar in A.D.1906 and was present there on the occasion of the

Khān Bahādur's death. Moreover, the comparison of the language in the introductory portion of the work with that of the rest which corresponds to Durr-i-Muhammad's Puthi, shows a palpable difference between the two portions. For Durr-i-Muhammad's language is more flowing and far richer than that of Nāzim al-Dīn's. Hence, the only alternative, left at our disposal, is to regard Nāzim al-Dīn's puthi as a plagiarism. Nevertheless, knowing fully well that Nāzim al-Dīn was a Farā'idī theologian, plagiarism makes no difference for our purpose, as we are more interested in utilizing it for knowing the Farā'idī doctrines than in ascertaining the character of its author.

(vi) Wazīr 'Alī: Muslim Ratnahār, being a sketch of life and career of the Farā'idī leaders from the earliest time down to B.S.1335. It was published about 30 years back and is somewhat carelessly written. It is in the form of a puthi and consists of 55 pages. It has been utilised sparsely in the present study and that is only when corroboration was found in other sources.

(vii) Munshī 'Abd al-Halīm: Hājī Sharī'at Allāh, a manuscript biography of Hājī Sharī'at Allāh, in Bengali, 22 folios. The author died in the year 1928 or 1929, at the age of 70. The manuscript is claimed to have been written on the basis of the family tradition of his ancestors. His grand father, Mawlawī Ihsān Allāh was, according to the present head of the Farā'idīs, a

contemporary of Ḥājī Sharī‘at Allāh and both of them were colleagues at the religious seminaries of Makkah. In his later life, Mawlawī Iḥsān Allāh was made a khalīfah by the Ḥājī, and after the former's death the position of khalīfah was inherited by his son and thereafter by his grandson, Munshī ‘Abd al-Ḥalīm, the author of the manuscript. The manuscript was handed over to the present writer by Bādshāh Miyān.

The manuscript is highly informative about Haji Sharī‘at Allāh's life, and has been accepted by us as a collection of family traditions and on that account having relative value.

(viii) Mawlawī ‘Adīl al-Dīn: Hālāt-i-Kār Guzārī, a manuscript biography of Ḥājī Sharī‘at Allāh and his successors down to 1958, in Persian language, 27 folios. The author was a Farā‘īdī theologian and a disciple of Khān Bahādur Sa‘īd al-Dīn, the father of the present head of the Farā‘īdīs. He was a resident of Madaripur, and died in 1958 at the age of 97. He was educated at the Muḥsiniyah Madrasah, Dacca, and began his career as a teacher at the Chandpur Madrasah. Subsequently, he was appointed Marriage Registrar (Qādī) by the government and served in that position till A.D.1944, when he retired. He was a theologian of great renown and a poet in Persian. The present manuscript was written by him at the request of the present

Head of the Farā'idīs, as is stated in the manuscript itself and personally affirmed by Bādshāh Miyān. We have not, however, utilised it very much for the lack of corroboration of many of its views by other sources.

(ix) A handwritten sanad granted by Abā Khālid Rashīd al-Dīn Ahmad, the present Head of the Farā'idīs, confirming the hereditary right of khilāfat of Munshī 'Irfān al-Dīn of the village Bajarikhula in the interior of Tippera district, in A.D. 1936. The sanad was examined by the present writer during a tour to the Farā'idī settlement around the village in 1958, and a true copy was taken which is now in the possession of the present writer. This is an evidence of the living influence of the Farā'idī movement in an attenuated form down to the present day.

B. CONTEMPORARY SOURCES THROWING LIGHT ON THE FARĀ'IDĪ MOVEMENT

The following accounts, as will be evident from the date they cover, furnish us more or less with a continuous picture of the growth and development of the Farā'idī movement. Moreover, as these sources are supplied by the opponents of the Farā'idīs or by those who looked at their reform movement with suspicion, they provide us with a rich ground for collating and comparing the data derived from the Farā'idī sources.

(i) Bengal Criminal and Judicial Consultations, 3 April, 1832, no. 6. Roobukoree of the Magistrate of Dacca-Jalalpore, 29 April, 1831 (preserved in the India Office Library, London). It is a Ru-be-Kārī (روبری) or an official report of the District Magistrate of Dacca-Jalalpur (which consisted of the modern districts of Dacca and Faridpur) on a criminal suit instituted against Ḥājī Sharīʿat Allāh and his followers for allegedly assaulting a village of their opponents in the district of Dacca in April, 1831. The document was examined by Dr. A.R.Mallick (cf. The Development of the Muslims of Bengal and Bihar, op.cit., see list of sources) in 1953, to whom the present writer is thankful for giving further information about it.

(ii) James Taylor: A Sketch of the Topography and Statistics of Dacca. Calcutta, A.D.1840, pp. 248-50: an account of the reforms introduced by Ḥājī Sharīʿat Allāh. The author wrote a few months before the death of the Haji.

(iii) Extract from Mr. Dampier's Police report on the outrage of the Farāʿidī peasantry on a Hindu zamīndār of Faridpur in A.D.1842 in Calcutta Review, vol. 1, A.D.1844, pp. 215-16.

(iv) Dr. A.R.Mallick: The Development of the Muslims of Bengal and Bihar, op.cit., p.63: Description of Edward de Latcour's evidence before the British Parliament about the outrage of an European indigo planter on the Farāʿidī

leader, Dudu Miyān about A.D.1846 (cf. Evidences of Edward de Latcour, Parliamentary Papers, xliv, A.D.1861: Minute of Evidences, Replies to Question nos. 3917 and 3918).

(v) H. Biveridge: The District of Bakergani, its history and statistics. London, A.D.1876, pp. 339-41: Description of an outrage of the Farā'idīs on the indigo factory of Mr. Dunlop in A.D.1846, written on the basis of two letters of a Magistrate dated the 20th February, 1847 and the 20th July, 1847.

(vi) James Wise: Notes on the Races, Castes and Trades of Eastern Bengal. London, A.D.1884, pp.22-26: A Sketch of the life and career of Hājī Shari'at Allāh and Dudu Miyān.

(vii) Col. J.E.Gastrell: Geographical and Statistical Report of the Districts of Jessore, Fureedpore and Backergunge. Calcutta, A.D.1868, p.36, nos. 150-151: Description of the Farā'idī settlements.

(viii) W.W.Hunter, ed.: Imperial Gazetteer of India. London, 2nd ed., A.D.1885, vol. iv, pp. 398-400, "Faridpur": Description of the later Farā'idīs.

(ix) Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī: Tazkiyat al-'Aqā'id (Urdu). Calcutta, A.H.1344 (in the collection of Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī's works entitled Dhakhīrah-i-Karāmat, published by Muḥammad Sa'id, vol. 1, pp. 63-84): Adverse criticism of the Farā'idī doctrines.

(x) Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī: Hujjat-i-Qāṭi' (Urdu). Calcutta, A.H.1344 (in Dhakhīrah-i-Karāmat, vol.1, pp. 86-124): Description of Mawlānā's meeting with Hājī Sharī'at Allāh and Dudu Miyān and the proceedings of his debate with the Farā'idī theologian Khalīfah 'Abd al-Jabbār.

(xi) Navin Chandra Sen: Āmār Jīvan (Bengali). Calcutta, B.S. 1317, vol.111, pp.142-46 and 149-55: Description of the conflict between the Hindu zamīndārs of Madaripur and the Farā'idī peasantry.

C. SOURCES THROWING LIGHT ON THE CONTEMPORARY SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONDITIONS OF THE MUSLIMS IN BENGAL

(i) Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī: Mukāshifāt-i-Rahmat (Urdu). Calcutta, A.H.1344 (in Dhakhīrah-i-Karāmat, op.cit., vol.1, pp.1-32): Description of bid'āt or sinful innovations practised by the Muslims during the nineteenth century.

(ii) Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī: Qawl al-Thābit (Urdu). Calcutta, A.H.1348 (in Dhakhīrah-i-Karāmat, vol.11, pp. 1-107): Description of un-Islamic beliefs and practices of the Muslims in Bengal.

(iii) Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī: Maqāmi' al-Mubtadi'in (Urdu). Calcutta A.D.1348 (in Dhakhīrah-i-Karāmat, vol.11, pp. 177-200): Proceedings of the Mawlānā's debate with a supporter of local customs.

(iv) Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī: Ḥaqq al-Yaqīn (Urdu). Calcutta, A.H.1348 (in Dhakhīrah-i-Karāmat, vol.ii, pp.201-224): Description of local socio-religious practices of the Muslims in Bengal.

(v) Ḥāfiz 'Abd al-Shakūr: I'lān Wālib al-Idh'ān. Milād wa Qiyām par (Urdu). Calcutta, A.H.1295: Criticism of qiyām or the practice of standing in the milād¹.

(vi) Mawlawī Wilāyat 'Alī: 'Amal bi'l-Hadīth (Persian), circa. A.D.1837 (copy in the Asiatic Society of Pakistan): Exposition of the Mawlawī's policy of encouraging the following of the Prophetic tradition in preference to the prescriptions of the schools of law or madhhab.

(vii) Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī: Quwwat al-Īmān (Urdu). Calcutta, A.H.1253. An exposition of Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī's policy of encouraging the following of the prescriptions of the schools of law in preference to following Prophetic tradition independently.

(viii) Mawlawī 'Abd al-Jabbār²: Jawāb-i-Quwwat al-Īmān (Urdu), circa. A.D.1837. A critical review of Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī's Quwwat al-Īmān.

1. See infra., Chapter ii, p.97ff.

2. This Mawlawī 'Abd al-Jabbār was a resident of Calcutta and a follower of Sayyid Ahmad Shahīd. He should not, therefore, be confused with the Farā'idī khalīfah 'Abd al-Jabbār.

(ix) Mawlawī ‘Abd al-Jabbār: Taqwiyat al-Muslimīn fī Ittibā‘-i-Sunnat-i-Sayyid al-Mursalīn (Urdu). Calcutta, A.H.1256. A justification of the principle of following Prophetic tradition in preference to the prescriptions of the schools.

(x) Mawlawī ‘Abd al-‘Alī: Ṣahīfat al-A‘māl wa Mir‘at al-Aḥwāl (Persian), circa., A.H.1302. A description of different social and religious groups in the Muslim society of Bengal with special reference to that of Chittagong during the later half of the nineteenth century.

(xi) Mawlawī Faīd Ahmad: Fatwā on the validity of Fātiḥah¹ in Persian (manuscript collected by the present writer from the interior of Chittagong).

(xii) Mawlawī Muḥammad ‘Abd al-Qādir: Fath al-Mubīn fī Radd-i-Zafar al-Mubīn (mixed Arabic and Urdu), circa. A.H.1300. A justification of the old socio-religious customs.

(xiii) Mawlawī Saif Allāh Khān: Fatwā on the validity of mīlād sharīf² in Urdu (manuscript collected by the present writer from the interior of Chittagong).

1. See infra., p. 98 ff.

2. See infra., p. 97 ff.

D. GOVERNMENT DOCUMENTS

The following documents throw considerable light on the social, religious and economic conditions of the Muslims in Bengal during the nineteenth century and furnish us with a good deal of information about the religious reform movements of the time other than the Farā'idī.

Published Records :-

(i) "A Police Report of the Zilah Dacca-Jalalpur, dealing with the manners and morals of the people, dated A.D.1799" (recovered and edited by the present writer), Journal of the Pakistan Historical Society. Karachi, vol. vii, part i, 1959, pp.24-35.

(ii) Selections from the Records of the Government of Bengal, no. xxxiii, Papers related to Indigo Cultivation in Bengal. Calcutta, A.D.1860, 1211 pages.

(iii) Pamphlet on India, the Great Wahhabi Case, being a full report of the Proceedings in the matters of Ameer Khan and Hashmadad Khan (at the High Court of Calcutta). Calcutta, A.D.1870.

(iv) Lewis A.Mendes: Report on the Proceedings in the Matters of Ameer Khan and Hashmadad Khan, Part ii (being the appeal case of no. iii/^{listed}above in the Calcutta High Court). Calcutta, A.D.1871.

(v) Hāfiz 'Abd Allāh Ghāzīpūrī: Ibrā'ī-Ahl-i-Hadīth wa'l-Or'ān mimmā fī Jāmi' al-Shawāhid min al-Tuhmat wa'l-Buhtān (Urdu). Benaras, A.H.1304: Being reproduction of the proceedings of a legal suit between the Hanafīs and the Ahl-i-Hadīth .

Unpublished Records (preserved by the Government of East Pakistan) :-

(vi) Judicial Proceedings, no. 66/68, 8 March, 1865, relating to Ambala Case of A.D.1864.

This has been published (vii) Judicial Proceedings, nos. 122-125, October, 1865, relating to the Patna Wahhābī case of A.D.1865.

(viii) Judicial Proceedings, nos. 272-273, October, 1865: Communication from the Government of the Punjab to the Government of Bengal, granting a conditional pardon to Elahee Baksh, a detenu in connection with the Ambala case of A.D.1864.

(ix) Judicial Proceedings, nos. 164-187, November, 1868: Wahhābī sect of Maldah and Rajmahal.

(x) Judicial Proceedings, nos.40-47, May,1869: Wahhābī leaders of Maldah.

(xi) Judicial Proceedings, nos. 87-99, August,1867: Police investigation by Munshi Ishwari Prasad regarding the organisation of the Wahhabīs.

(xii) Judicial Proceedings, nos. 176-177, August, 1869: relating to Ameer Khan.

(xiii) Judicial Proceedings, nos. 183-185, September, 1869: relating to the activities of Mawlawī 'Abd Allāh of Patna.

(xiv) Judicial Proceedings, nos. 51-52, March, 1870: relating to Ameer Khan.

(xv) Judicial Proceedings (loose papers), December, 1869: relating to the Wahhābīs of Maldah.

(xvi) Judicial Proceedings, nos. 668-672, June, 1908: relating to Ameer Khan.

(xvii) A Report of the Collector of Faridpur showing the items of taxes and illegal cesses, dated A.D. 1872 (see infra., Chapter viii, Appendix A).

(xviii) A Report of the Collector of Faridpur on the numerical position of the Hindu and Muslim castes of the district, dated A.D. 1872 (see infra., Chapter vi, Appendix).

(xix) A Report of the Collector of Faridpur with regard to the rate of land revenues in the district, dated A.D. 1872 (see infra., Chapter viii, Appendix B).

CHAPTER - II

THE SOCIO-RELIGIOUS BACKGROUND OF THE MUSLIMS OF
BENGAL DURING THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

The name Farā'idī is given to the socio-religious movement started by Hājī Shari'at Allāh in A.D. 1818 and continued by his followers down to the present day. The movement spread over Eastern Bengal and Assam, especially in the rural areas of East Pakistan¹.

The term "Farā'idī" is derived from the Arabic word "farā'id", plural of "farīdah", which means "an obligatory duty" enjoined by Islam. The Farā'idīs are, therefore, those who aimed at enforcing the obligatory religious duties. They, however, interpreted the term "farā'id" in a broad sense to include all the religious duties enjoined by God and the Prophet irrespective of their importance²

1. See infra., Chapter IX.

2. In strict theological sense, the term "farīdah" means "an obligatory duty" expressly enjoined by the Qur'ān, in which belief as well as practice are necessary. In general, there are four gradations of religious duties that are recognised by shari'ah, viz., (i) farīdah or obligatory duty (ii) wā'ib or near obligatory duty, i.e., the practice of which is necessary, (iii) sunnah or the Prophetic usage which "ought" to be practised, and mustahab or the practice of which is "desirable". The Farā'idīs intended to enforce not only the first category of these duties but all of them as it is evident from the formulah of Tawbah (see infra., Chapter vi).

though they laid emphasis on the observance of five fundamental institutions (biḥnā') of Islam, viz., (i) the profession of the dogma of faith (kalimah), (ii) attending daily prayers (ṣalāt or namāz), (iii) fasting during the month of Ramadān (ṣawm or rozah) (iv) paying poor-tax (zakāt), and (v) pilgrimage to Makkah (hajj)¹. The object of this emphasis on the fundamental institutions was to focus the attention of the masses to the importance of their observance, as the Muslims of Bengal, in their enthusiasm to celebrate various local cults, rites and ceremonies, had become negligent to these fundamental duties.

Thus, from historical point of view, the Farā'idī movement was born out of the necessity for "self-correction" of the Muslim society of Bengal. This movement being the foremost of all other religious reform movements in Bengal, the credit for realising the necessity of "self-correction" for the first time, goes to its founder, Hājī Sharī'at Allāh (died A.D.1840). The fact that he identified himself with the religious school of the masses of Bengal, i.e., Hanafī madhhab², is thus significant.

Secondly, from doctrinal point of view, the Farā'idīs laid utmost emphasis on the necessity of adhering strictly

1. For details, see infra., Chapter vi.

2. See "Tomb Inscription of Hājī Sharī'at Allāh" (contributed by the present writer), in J.A.S.P., vol. iii, 1958, p. 195 ff.

to the doctrine of tawhīd or monotheism. They were not, however, satisfied with the conventional interpretation of the doctrine, which required merely "belief" in the unity of God. They insisted also on putting this belief into practice. This, according to them, calls upon a Muslim to refrain from indulging in any belief or practice which has the remotest resemblance to polytheism. Hence, Ḥājī Sharīʿat Allāh disapproved of local cults, customs and ceremonies that had no basis in the Qurʾān and the Prophetic tradition, called them polytheism (shirk) and sinful innovation (bidʿah), and abolished all such deviations from the original teachings of Islam from the Farāʿidī society¹. The Farāʿidī doctrine of tawhīd, therefore, induced them, not only to go back to the simple monotheism of the Qurʾān but also to purge the Muslim society of all superstitious beliefs and practices which hedged around the original doctrines and institutions of Islam². Thus, the Farāʿidī movement can be characterised as representing a puritanic revivalism with the object of going back to the pristine Islam on the one hand, and that of purging Muslim society of all un-Islamic innovations on the other. In this context, it is worth-while to analyse how far the Farāʿidī movement resembles with other puritanic revivalism of the time, namely the Wahhābī movement of Arabia and Tarīqah-i-Muḥammadīyah movement (wrongly called "Indian Wahhabism") of Delhi.

1. For details, see infra., Chapter iii, p.156 ff.; and Chapter vi.

2. See infra., Section B.

Thirdly, Hājī Shari'at Allāh found his disciples mostly from the lower classes, such as cultivators, weavers and oil-grinder¹. The Haji being primarily a religious reformer, confined himself to a religious programme which had little to do with the political and economic conditions of the people. But, as will be seen later, the peasantry who came to the Farā'idī fold were not looked with favour by the Hindu zamīndārs (landlords). The affront that arose in consequence of the hostile policy of the zamīndārs, induced Dudu Miyān (the son and successor of Hājī Shari'at Allāh) to introduce a socio-economic programme into the Farā'idī society². He accomplished this (from A.D. 1840-1862) by uniting the Farā'idīs into a compact hierarchical organisation known as khilāfat system, which was purported to (i) safe-guarding the interests of the Farā'idīs from the oppressive hands of the zamīndārs and indigo planters on the one hand, and (ii) securing social justice amongst themselves on the other³. This socio-economic phase of the Farā'idī movement, as will be seen later on, provided a platform for the peasant agitation against the oppressive zamīndārs, indigo planters and their agents⁴. Thus, the Farā'idī movement may also be regarded as representing a

1. See infra., Chapter vi, p. 268 .

2. See infra., Chapter viii.

3. Ibid.

4. See infra., Chapters iv and viii.

socio-economic wave of the time. In this respect, it displayed close affinity with the religio-economic reform movement led by Titu Mīr (from A.D.1827 to 1831) in West Bengal¹.

It may also be noted that the Farā'idī movement apread only in Eastern Bengal and Assam, especially in the rural areas. In well-established towns and cities, such as Dacca, Comilla and Chittagong, where the Muslim upper classes had considerable influence, its appeal was practically ineffective. Furthermore, it spread most extensively in those rural areas where the Hindu zamīndārs held sway over the Muslim peasantry, i.e., in the districts of Bakarganj, Faridpur, Dacca, Mymensingh and Tippera². Even so, no man of consequence or wealth is known to have become a Farā'idī convert. It may, therefore, be stated as a rough generalisation that the appeal of the Farā'idī movement was most effective amongst the lower classes of the Muslims, and that it flourished mostly in the unenlightened rural society of the Muslims of Eastern Bengal, i.e., modern East Pakistan.

The masses of the people apparently sought relief by joining the new movement, which offered them social equality³ and safeguard from the oppression of the non-Muslim landed

1. See infra., p. 63 ff.

2. See infra., Chapter ix.

3. See infra., Chapters iv and viii.

gentry. This socio-economic bias of the Farā'idī movement increased under the dominating personality of Dudu Miyan and became instrumental to the spread of the Farā'idī influence throughout Eastern Bengal. For, he mainly asserted the rights of the peasantry against the zamīndārs and indigo planters, and it is, therefore, natural that the oppressed peasantry flocked under his banner. From this angle, there was hardly anything in this movement which could attract the attention of the townspeople. Hence, we find lukewarmness on the part of the Muslims living in the towns and cities who had their own peculiar problems to solve. As long as the Farā'idī leaders met the socio-economic needs of the people, it flourished extensively as we see in the time of Dudu Miyan and its decline can be traced to the withering out of this socio-economic bias. Today it survives mainly as a religious group.

Thus, the Farā'idī movement was a complex historical phenomenon which represented a phase of the Islamic revivalism of the time on the one hand and the socio-economic aspirations of the lower classes of the rural Bengal on the other. It is, therefore, in the fitness of things that the Farā'idī movement be examined in the context of contemporary Islamic revivalism as well as against the socio-religious conditions of Bengal, in order to bring out the real perspective in which it grew and developed.

SECTION - A

Islamic Revivalism of the Nineteenth Century

The contemporary religious movements that may claim similarity with the Farā'idī movement are (i) Tarīqah-i-Muhammadiyah of Delhi and Wahhābī movement of Arabia. In fact, these three religious reform movements represented the Islamic revivalism of the nineteenth century, and because of certain doctrinal similarities of the Farā'idī with the other two movements, it has often been confused by the scholars with them. Likewise, the term "Indian Wahhabism" is applied by the European scholars to the Tarīqah-i-Muhammadiyah movement. An examination of these points are, therefore, necessary.

The Terms "Tarīqah-i-Muhammadiyah" and "Indian Wahhabism" :-

The religious reform movement of Delhi was started by Sayyid Ahmad Shahīd (A.D.1786-1831) and Shāh Ismā'īl Shahīd (circa., A.D.1782--1831), about the same time when Hājī Sharī'at Allāh inaugurated the Farā'idī movement in Eastern Bengal, i.e., A.D.1818. The term "Indian Wahhabism" applied to this movement by European scholars as found in books, such as W.W.Hunter's Our Indian Musalmans and Encyclopaedia of Islam, is not borne out by the contemporary and later sources.

(i) Sayyid Ahmad Shahīd says, "My ṭarīqah (i.e., path) is the ṭarīqah of my grand father" the Prophet himself. Accordingly, "I take a full meal of dry bread on one day and thank God; on the other day I keep hungry and bear it with patience"¹

(ii) In A.D.1829, an opponent of this reform movement questioned the propriety of the practice of Sayyid Ahmad, who "called his own ṭarīqah as 'Ṭarīqah-i-Muḥammadiyah"². A lengthy answer to this objection was, therefore, given by Mawlāwī Irtiqā 'Alī, a follower of the Sayyid, in which he maintained that the term was used in a general sense without any intention to exclude other ṭarīqahs or paths of the sūfīs (i.e., Muslim mystics) from being Muḥammadi (i.e., the path of Muhammad)³.

(iii) In A.D.1837, Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī says that some of the followers of Sayyid Ahmad Shahīd who professed to follow the Qur'ān and Prophetic tradition by means of their own independent judgment (ijtihād), called themselves Muḥammadi (i.e., an abbreviation of Ṭarīqah-i-Muḥammadiyah)⁴.

1. Ghulām Rasūl Mehr: Jamā'at-i-Muḥāhidīn. Lahore, 1956, p.69 (quoted from MS. Maimū'ah Makātīb-i-Shāh Ismā'īl, p.282):
 "طریقہ من طریقہ جد خود سید المرسلین است - یک روز نان خشک سیر می خورم و شکر خدا بجا آرم و یک روز گرسنه می مانم و صبر می کنم -"

2. 'Abd Allāh ibn Sayyid Bahādur 'Alī, ed.: Jawāb-i-Istiftā' Mīr Muḥammad 'Alī. Maṭba'ah-i-Aḥmadī, A.H.1245/A.D.1829, p.9. The question reads:
 "مذہب نو احداث و طریقہ بعد از تحقیق مفہوم آن و تعریفش جناب رسول خدا صلعم صحیح است یا نہ؟ آری سید احمد صاحب طریقہ خود را طریقہ محمدیہ می گویند -"

3. Ibid., p.90.

4. cf. Mawlāwī Karāmat 'Alī: Quwwat al-Īmān. Calcutta, A.H.1253/A.D.1837, pp. 135 and 197.

It is further clear from the context that Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī meant the main body of the followers of Sayyid Ahmad led by Mawlawī Wilāyat 'Alī of Patna, who were opposed to his own group¹. Being a follower of the Sayyid, he, however, claims himself to be a "Muḥammadi", in a different sense. He explains that Sayyid Ahmad Shahīd did not apply the term "Muḥammadi" to his reform movement but used it just as a collective name for the Qādiriyah, Chishtiyah, Naqshbandiyah and Mujaddidiyah mystic orders as reformed and practised by him. In his opinion, the Muḥammadiyah did not represent a fifth mystic order but a higher level of mystic realisation in the orders mentioned above². Thus, Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī called himself a Muḥammadiyah in this mystic sense.

(iv) According to the family records of Mawlawī 'Ināyat 'Alī (who from A.D.1831 was the chief exponent of the Sayyid's doctrines in Bengal), his followers in Bengal were known as Muḥammadi³.

(v) The followers of one of its successor movements, Ahl-i-Hadīth⁴, call themselves Muḥammadi down to the

1. See infra., p. 50 ff.

2. cf. Mawlawī Karāmat 'Alī: Quwwat al-Imān, op.cit., P.198.

3. cf. Munshī Hāmid Husayn: al-Durar al-Manthūr fī Tarājim-i-Ahl-i-Sādiqūr. Ilāhābād, A.H.1345, p.133.

4. cf. Hāfiz 'Abd al-Shakūr: I'lān Wājib al-Idh'ān. Calcutta, A.H.1295, p.1; and Ahmad 'Alī: Akidā-i-Muḥammadi bā Maḥabbat-i-Ahl-i-Hadīth (Bengali). Khulna, B.S.1362, pp. iii-iv (The title itself is revealing).

present day; for, according to them, they do not follow any other ism but the path shown by the Prophet himself.

(vi) In the "Great Wahhābī Case" of A.D.1870 in the Calcutta High Court, the accused persons who were the followers of the Sayyid's reform movement, protested against the term "Wahhābī" applied to them and submitted that they did not regard Muḥammad ibn 'Abd al-Wahhāb as their leader. They appealed to the Judge to refer to them as sunnī, i.e., the follower of the tradition of the Prophet, as distinguished from bid'atī or the follower of sinful innovation¹.

(vii) Bevan Jones says that the orthodox Mawlawīs opposed the drastic reforms of the followers of Sayyid Aḥmad Shahīd and "nicknamed them Wahhābīs"².

(viii) It will be seen in the following pages that the reform movement of Sayyid Aḥmad Shahīd belonged to the tradition of Shāh Walī Allāh of Delhi and had no historical connection with the Wahhābī movement of Arabia, and that the basis of their doctrines were laid on different assumptions³.

1. Pamphlet on India: The Great Wahhabi Case, being a full report of the proceedings in the matters of Ameer Khan and Hashmadd Khan. Calcutta, 1870, p.1.

2. L. Bevan Jones: The People of the Mosque. London, 1932, p. 206.

3. See infra.

The above evidence goes against the term "Wahhabism" or "Indian Wahhabism" as applied to the followers of Sayyid Ahmad Shahīd. The modern Muslim scholars of Indo-Pakistan subcontinent protest against the application of the term to this movement¹. No generally acceptable name has, however, been suggested by the scholars so far.

Tasadduq Husain Khalid calls it "Targhīb-i-Muḥammadiyah"², i.e., targhīb-i-sunnat-i-Muḥammadiyah, or the movement which encouraged the following of Prophetic tradition. It will be seen in the following pages that the central point of the reform programme of Sayyid Ahmad Shahīd and his followers was to focus attention to the necessity of following strictly the tradition of the Prophet (i.e., ittibā' -i-sunnat). But the term suggested above has not been used by them.

Dr. Mahmud Husain disapproves of Hunter's theory that Sayyid Ahmad's movement was an off-shoot of the Wahhabism of Arabia. He, however, refrains from suggesting an alternative nomenclature for the movement. On the other hand, he regards Muḥammadiyah as a new mystic order or ṭarīqah, founded by Sayyid Ahmad³. We have seen above that the exclusive application of the term "Muḥammadiyah" to mystic

1. See Shaykh Muhammad Ikrām: Mawj-i-Kawthar. Lahore, circa., 1948, p.28 ff.; and History of the Freedom Movement, Karachi, 1957, p.564.

2. See Abdullah Butt, ed., : Aspects of Shāh Ismā'īl Shahīd. Lahore, 1943, p.65 ff.

3. cf. History of the Freedom movement, op.cit.pp.564 and 572.

order is supported by Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī though he contended that Sayyid Ahmad Shahīd used it in a collective sense to mean the four well-known mystic orders. The use of the term in a mystic sense is also hinted in the second item of evidence quoted above. The use of the term "ṭarīqah" by Sayyid Ahmad himself, as quoted above in the first item of our list, and a close examination of the context, does not, however, give any indication that he used it specifically for mystic order as different from the general programme of his reform. The point, therefore, demands a careful analysis.

In the first place, Sayyid Ahmad Shahīd says that his "ṭarīqah" is the ṭarīqah of the Prophet himself. He continues in the same passage, "My troops are like those Muhājirs (i.e., those who accompanied the Prophet in his flight to Madīnah), who came out to serve the interests of the religion of God and risked their lives with enthusiasm"¹. In another place of the same book, he says, "We have forsaken our family and relatives in order to carry out the injunctions of God and to revive the tradition of the Prophet"². It is, therefore, clear that in the above context he is speaking of holy war against the Sikhs of the Punjab and the revival of the tradition of the Prophet and not of his progress in the mystic path or of mystic order alone.

1. Ghulām Rasūl Mehr: Jamā'at-i-Muḥāhidīn, op.cit., p.69.

2. ibid., p.68.

Hence, the use of the term "ṭarīqah" ^{in this context} must be understood in the literal sense, which means "a path" or "a way", and not in the specific mystic sense, which means "a mystic order".

This interpretation of "ṭarīqah" is further supported by the fact that in Sirāt al-Mustaqīm (the most authentic work on the reform programme of Sayyid Ahmad Shāhid), the Sayyid divides his programme of reform into two constituent parts, which he calls rah or path (the Persian equivalent of the Arabic ṭarīqah), i.e., (i) rah-i-wilāyat or the path of mysticism and (ii) rah-i-nabūwwat or the path of prophecy, one being complementary to the other¹. In other words, in his programme of reform, he attempted a synthesis of sharī'ah (the legal system) with ṭarīqah (mysticism); and as the only gate of entrance to his reform movement was through (mystic) initiation, i.e., bay'at-i-tawbah, it is not possible to disjoint mysticism from the rest of the programme of his reform. In his explanation of bay'at-i-tawbah (i.e., the well-known procedure of initiation into the mystic orders of the sūfīs), the Sayyid says:²

"First of all, the seeker of this path (i.e., the path of prophecy) ought to attend to the prohibitions of the sharī'ah relating to faith, action,

1. Shāh Ismā'īl Shāhid: Sirāt al-Mustaqīm (copy Asiatic Society of Pakistan, Dacca), p.1 ff.

2. ibid., p.144.

morality, instinct, desire and prayer. He must seek and find out (the rules) from the Qur'ān and Prophetic tradition. If he possesses knowledge of the Qur'ān and Prophetic tradition, he must find them out himself, or else he must enlighten himself from the opinions of the learned scholars of the Prophetic tradition".

Hence it is clear that mysticism of Sayyid Ahmad Shahīd was nothing specifically separate from his programme of reviving Prophetic tradition. In our opinion, therefore, the reform movement of Sayyid Ahmad Shahīd can be fairly designated as "Ṭarīqah-i-Muḥammadiyah", the term used by him and his followers.

Ṭarīqah-i-Muḥammadiyah and Wahhabism and their

Affiliation

The term "ṭarīqah-i-Muḥammadiyah" means "the path of Muḥammad", i.e., the true path of Islam. It belonged to the reformist tradition of Shāh Walī Allāh of Delhi (A.D. 1703-1763). On the other hand, the Wahhābī movement of Arabia was started by Muḥammad ibn 'Abd al-Wahhāb of Najd (A.D.1703-1792). Recently, we have shown in an article that these two great thinkers (Shāh Walī Allāh and Ibn 'Abd al-Wahhāb) of the eighteenth century, having replenished

their spirit from the religious seminaries of Makkah and Madīnah, inaugurated an era of Islamic revivalism in the Muslim world by their emphasis on the necessity of re-asserting the principle of ijtihad (i.e., fresh inquiry into the Qur'ān and Prophetic tradition with a view to forming independent judgment on legal question)¹. From the doctrinal point of view, this implies, in the first place, rejection of the finality of the schools of law (madhhab); secondly, rejection of the principle of taqlid (i.e., adherence to the prescriptions of the schools of law considering them as authoritative and right without investigating into the correctness of the reasons on which they are based), as a sound rule of religion; and thirdly, preference of the principle of following Prophetic tradition (ittibā' -i- sunnah) to the prescriptions of the schools as embodied in the books of law (fiqh) and legal opinions (fatāwā)².

It has been further shown in the article mentioned above that from the fourth century Hijrah onwards, the principle of ijtihad was gradually superseded by the principle of taqlid among the sunnī Muslims and the four schools of law namely, Hanafī, Shāfi'ī, Mālikī, and Hanbalī, were recognised as authoritative and final; so that it was

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1. See "Shāh Walī Allāh's Conception of Ijtihad" (contributed by the present writer), J.P.H.S., vol. vii, part iii, 1959, pp. 165 ff. and 193 ff.
 2. See J.P.H.S., vol. vii, part iii, 1959, op.cit., p.165 ff.

deemed necessary for every sunnī to belong to one of the four schools¹. Thus, the emphasis on the principle of iitihād signalled a reversion of the process. Shāh Walī Allāh says that we have been invited to accept the mission of the Prophet through investigation and understanding (iitihād) and not through imitation or taglīd of others². In a statement of policy of Wahhabism, 'Abd Allāh son of Muḥammad ibn 'Abd al-Wahhāb says³:

"We do not claim to exercise our reason in all matters of religion ... save that we follow our judgment where a point is clearly demonstrated to us in either the Qur'ān or the Sunnah (i.e., Prophetic tradition) still in force".

This bold step taken by the two thinkers of the eighteenth century, prepared the ground for the subsequent trend of rethinking of the Islamic past and the revivalist movements of the nineteenth century drew their inspiration from this source.

From historical point of view, the emphasis of Shāh Walī Allāh on the principle of iitihād implied a protest against the form of orthodoxy that was prevalent in his time in Indo-Pakistan subcontinent, especially as it was

1. See J.P.H.S., vol.vii, part iii, 1959, op.cit., p.166 ff.

2. See ibid., pp.179 and 186.

3. cf. "History and Doctrines of the Wahhabis", translated into English by J.O'Kinealy, J.A.S.B., vol.xiii. Calcutta, 1874, p.68 ff.

tightened by the compilation of Fatawā-i-Ālamgīrī (a huge collection of legal opinions) under the commission of Emperor Awrangzīb. Shāh Walī Allāh complains that the religious scholars of his time neglected the study of the Qur'ān and the Prophetic tradition and cared only for the fiqh (the science of law) and other theoretical sciences, the former for securing government posts and the latter for holding verbal duels and hair-slitting controversies among themselves¹.

At a later time Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī asserted that he belonged to the old school², and, on the authority of Shāh Walī Allāh's predecessors Shaykh 'Abd al-Haq Muḥaddith Dehlawī and Shaykh Ahmad Sarhindī (Mujaddid-i-Alf-i-Thānī), stated that the school of Ahl-i-Sunnat wa'l-Jamā'at (i.e., the sunnī school) consisted of only four schools of law, namely Hanafī, Shāfi'ī, Mālikī, and Hanbalī and that these schools were fixed by the consensus of the opinion of the Muslim community (ijma'); for "whatever rules of law might have been elicited from the Qur'ān and the Prophetic tradition actually became manifest on these four paths and no fifth path came to light"³. Shāh Walī Allāh being a product of the time, believed (before his visit to Makkah in A.D. 1730-1733) that imitation or taqlīd of the prescriptions

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1. cf. Shāh Walī Allāh: Inṣāf fī Bayān-i-Sabab al-Ikhtilāf, p.86.
 2. cf. Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī: Quwwat al-Īmān. Calcutta, A.H.1253, p.292.
 3. ibid., pp. 39 and 82.

of the four schools was firmly established and the gate of itihād was closed¹. But, later on, when he embarked on the trend of Islamic revivalism (after his return from Makkah), he did not hesitate even to compare taqlīd with the habit of the ants. He says:²

"They gratified themselves with taqlīd and the practice of taqlīd set firmly in their hearts like the habit of the ants, while they were unmindful".

Likewise, Muḥammad ibn 'Abd al-Wahhāb's emphasis on the principle of itihād implied a protest against the system of law and morality that was prevalent in Arabia under the Turkish rule³. The religious reforms that he advocated were twofold, viz., (i) complete acceptance of the first principle of Islam, namely the dogma: there is no God but Allah, and (ii) purging the Muslim society of all deviation from the original teachings of Islam, which he condemned as polytheism (shirk) or sinful innovation (bid'ah). Even Greek logic was condemned and books on logic were banned⁴. These twofold measures were collectively called the doctrine of tawhīd or monotheism, and this being the central point of his reforms, Muḥammad ibn 'Abd al-Wahhāb called himself

1. Shāh Walī Allāh: Muṣaffā, p. 12.

2. Shāh Walī Allāh: Hujjat Allāh al-Bālighah. Lahore, circa., A.H. 1323, vol. 1, p. 303.

3. "History of the Doctrines of Wahhabis", op.cit., J.A.S.B., vol. xiii, p. 68 ff.

4. ibid., p. 74.

and his followers muwahhidūn or the protagonists of the doctrine of the unity of God, though the adversaries including the Europeans designated his reform movement as Wahhābiyah or Wahhabism¹, by way of reproach. Thus, Ibn 'Abd al-Wahhāb aimed at a return to the golden past of Islam, i.e., the time of the Prophet and the three succeeding generations (salaf-i-sālihīn).

Shāh Walī Allāh, on the other hand, sought for an integration or synthesis (tatbīq) of the whole structure of Islamic tradition including its historical legacy. Hence, unlike Ibn 'Abd al-Wahhāb, he accepted Greek syllogism as a legitimate heritage of historical Islam to be utilised for ijtihād². The central point of Shāh Walī Allāh's reform lay in encouraging his co-religionists to follow Prophetic tradition from the original sources, i.e., ittibā' -i-sunnah³, in preference to following blindly the prescriptions of the schools. He, therefore, concentrated all his efforts in stimulating intellectual thinking among the Muslims of Indo-Pakistan subcontinent so as to prepare them for a comprehensive reform- social, political, economic and religious⁴. In the context of this larger scheme, he was

1. cf. Encyclopaedia of Islam, vol. iv, Art. "Wahhābiyah".

2. See J.P.H.S., vol. vii, part iii, p.181.

3. See ibid., p.186 ff.

4. See ibid., pp. 165-194 (article of the present writer) for the socio-religious side of Shāh Walī Allāh's reform and K.A.Nizami, "Shah Waliullah II", History of the Freedom Movement, Karachi, 1957, pp. 512-541, for the economic and political side of his reform.

also desirous of purging the Muslim society of polytheistic accretions and wrote an epistle entitled Tuhfat al-Muwahhidin (gift of the protagonists of the doctrine of the unity of God). Like Ibn 'Abd al-Wahhāb's Kitāb al-Tawhīd (book on the doctrine of the unity of God), this work seeks to establish pure monotheism of Islam and to purge the society of all polytheism (shirk) and sinful innovation (bid'ah). These works, therefore, provide a meeting ground between the two reformers, and it is interesting to note that Tarīqah-i-Muhammadiyah movement, which was a revolutionary outcome of the spirit of reformation bequeathed by Shāh Walī Allāh, took special cognisance of Tuhfat al-Muwahhidin. In fact, Taqwiyat al-Īmān of Shāh Ismā'īl Shāhid, one of the most important pamphlets of the movement, has been regarded by modern scholars as an elaboration of Tuhfat al-Muwahhidin¹.

Naturally, therefore, a remarkable similarity is observed between Tarīqah-i-Muhammadiyah and Wahhābī movement, especially in so far as their reform measures concern with the doctrine of monotheism and purging of un-Islamic innovations, which led the European writers to identify the two reform movements and even to apply the term "Indian Wahhabism" to Tarīqah-i-Muhammadiyah though there is no historical evidence of any contact of Tarīqah-i-Muhammadiyah with Wahhabism of Arabia in its formative stage.

1. See History of the Freedom Movement, op.cit., p.540 and 'Abd al-Rahīm, tr. Hujjat Allāh al-Bālighah (Urdu translation), Lahore, 1953, vol. 1, p. 81.

In the first place, one of the enunciators of Tarīqah-i-Muhammadiyah, Shāh Ismā‘īl Shahīd was a grandson of Shāh Walī Allāh¹, and the other, Sayyid Ahmad Shahīd, was a student and disciple of Shāh ‘Abd al-‘Azīz² son of Shāh Walī Allāh. Both of them received their education and training under Shāh ‘Abd al-‘Azīz at Delhi, and did not visit Arabia till A.D.1822, when their reform movement was in the full swing. Secondly, Taqwiyat al-Īmān of Ismā‘īl Shahīd the subject-matter of which has the greatest affinity with the Wahhābī doctrine of Tawhīd or monotheism, was written before his visit to Makkah³. Thirdly, when Sayyid Ahmad Shahīd and Ismā‘īl Shahīd visited Makkah and Madīnah in A.D.1822-1823, Wahhābī movement was at a very low ebb in Arabia. Fourthly, Muḥammad ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhāb rejected mysticism as an un-Islamic innovation, Shāh Walī Allāh regarded sufism as a basic psychological need for the spiritual development of man, and the Tarīqah-i-Muhammadiyah assigned to mystic path (rah-i-wilāyat) as much importance as it attached to the path of prophecy (rah-i-nabūwwat). Fifthly, we have seen earlier that the central objective of Tarīqah-i-Muhammadiyah was the revivification of the Prophetic tradition, which was also aimed at by Shāh Walī

1. See Abū Yahyā Imām Khān Nawshahrawī: Tarājim-i-Ulamā’ Hadīth-i-Hind. Delhi, A.H.1356, p.69 ff.

2. See History of the Freedom Movement, Karachi, 1957, p. 559 ff.

3. See ibid., p.564.

Allāh; whereas Wahhabism revolved around the new interpretation of the doctrine of tawhīd or monotheism. Thus, the identification of the two movements or to regard Tarīqah-i-Muhammadiyah as an off-shoot of Wahhabism has no historical or doctrinal basis. The agreement of the two in so far as the doctrine of tawhīd is concerned, therefore, may have been due to similar influences exerted by Shāh Walī Allāh on Tarīqah-i-Muhammadiyah and Muhammad ibn 'Abd al-Wahhāb on Wahhabism, as has been explained above.

The Similarities and Differences in the Farā'idī Movement, Tarīqah-i-Muhammadiyah and Wahhabism

The Farā'idī doctrine of tawhīd or monotheism consisted of two parts, (i) enforcement of the doctrine of the unity of God, and (ii) purging the society of all polytheistic and sinful accretions. This corresponds exactly with the Wahhābī position on the same doctrine¹. In the preface of Taqwiyat al-Īmān, Shāh Ismā'īl Shahīd says that the work would consist of two parts, the first part dealing with "the doctrine of tawhīd" or the unity of God, and the evil consequence of shirk or polytheism. The second part would deal with the virtues of following Prophetic tradition and the vices of following bid'at or sinful innovation². Although the second part was not

1. See supra. p. 23 ff.

2. See Mawlawī Muhammad Ismā'īl Shahīd: Taqwiyat al-Īmān. Bangalore, A.H.1371, preface by the author.

completed by the author, the subjects that were earmarked for the part have been elaborately dealt with in the next publication of the movement Sirāt al-Mustaqīm. Thus, it is evident that on the doctrine of tawhīd the Farā'idī, Tarīqah-i-Muhammadiyah and the Wahhābī stood on the same ground.

This initial agreement between the Farā'idī and the two other movements, however, must not be pressed too far; for the Farā'idī also had fundamental doctrinal differences with both of them. We have seen earlier that Tarīqah-i-Muhammadiyah and Wahhābī movements laid emphasis on the necessity of following Prophetic tradition in preference to the prescriptions of the schools. But the Farā'idī stood just the other way around.

In the first place, Hājī Sharī'at Allāh has been described in his tomb inscription as a follower of the Hanafī school of law¹. Secondly, in a Farā'idī fatwā on the question of holding congregational prayers of Jum'ah and 'Īd, the authors pleaded for the superiority of the Hanafī school of law to all other schools². Thirdly, in a Farā'idī Puthi, Nāzīm al-Dīn says:

1. See J.A.S.P., vol. iii, 1958, pp. 197-98.

2. Farā'idī Fatwā, recovered by the present writer and preserved in the Asiatic Society of Pakistan, Dacca.

"Now let me ask you an important question,
Have you been able to recognise the Imām (i.e.,
Abū Ḥanīfah) or not?
I mean, do you follow his prescriptions?"¹

"Imām A'zam (i.e., Abū Ḥanīfah) is so great
and so renowned that no other (Imām) can
stand his example in the world.
If you learn from him,
All doubts would be gone from your mind"²

"Imām Abū Yūsuf and Imām Muḥammad
The two students (of Imām Abū Ḥanīfah) worked in
co-operation,
And made fresh deliberation (iṭihād) on religious
laws as well as on the worldly affairs,
And wrote down the books of laws (fiqh).
If those books were not present in the world,
None could understand aught of religion"³

Fourthly, from the earliest time down to the present day,
the Farā'idīs profess to be strict followers of the Hanafī
school of law⁴.

1. Nāzim al-Dīn: Puthi (in the possession of the present
writer), p.5:

এখন আসল কথা জিজ্ঞাসি তোমাদের ॥
চিনিছ কি না চিনিছ সেই এমামের +
কথা তাকলিদ তার কর কি তোমরা ॥

2. ibid.:

এত বড় এমাম আজম নামদার ॥
দুনিয়াতে নাহি হয় মেছাল যাহার +
সেই এমামের আলে লেহনা চিনিয়া ॥
তবে ত মানব সন্দেহ যাইবে দুচিয়া +

3. ibid., p.11:

এমাম আর ইউছুক ছাহেব কেবার ॥ এমাম মহম্মদ রহমতুল্লা নামদার +
এই দুই শাহেদান সঙ্ঘেতে মিলিয়া । একতাহাদ করিলেন দীনের লাগিয়া +
দীন আর দুনিয়ার ভালাই বুঝিয়া ॥ কেবার কতক কেতার আদি গেলেন লিখিয়া +

কেবার কেতার না থাকিলে দুনিয়াতে ॥ কোন কথা কেহ নাহি পারিত বুঝিতে +

4. Information collected by the present writer from different
Farā'idī settlements.

Thus the Farā'idīs are not only the followers of the Hanafī school of law but also the supporters of the finality of the school and the principle of taqlīd. Fundamentally, therefore, the Farā'idīs followed the prescriptions of the schools in preference to the following of Prophetic tradition as the latter was not understandable to them without the deliberations and interpretations of the imāms or jurists of the Hanafī school. The position of Tarīqah-i-Muhammadiyah and the Wahhābī, as we have seen, was just the opposite.

Many of the followers of Tarīqah-i-Muhammadiyah, however, claimed themselves to be Hanafī; even Sayyid Ahmad Shahīd is said to have followed the prescriptions of the Hanafī school in most practical matters¹. Likewise, the Wahhābīs affiliated themselves to the Hanbalī school of law². But their insistence on the necessity of following only those prescriptions of the school which conformed to the Prophetic tradition, and on the principle of following Prophetic tradition in preference to the prescriptions of the schools wherever a point is demonstrated by a sound narration from the Prophet³, distinguished them from the

1. See History of the Freedom Movement, Karachi, 1957, p.570.

2. See J.A.S.B., vol. xiii, p.68 ff.

3. See Mawlawī Wilāyat 'Alī: 'Amal bi'l-Hadīth, circa. A.D.1837, pp.2,4,12 & 16, for the standpoint of Tarīqah-i-Muhammadiyah and J.A.S.B., vol. xiii, p.68 ff. for the standpoint of the Wahhābī.

blind imitators of the schools. Hence, on this important point, Farā'idīs stood on the opposite pole of the two other movements.

From historical point of view, there is no evidence to connect the Farā'idī movement with the tradition of Shāh Walī Allāh or with Tarīqah-i-Muhammadiyah movement. Hājī Sharī'at Allāh was educated at the religious seminaries of Arabia from about A.D. 1799 to 1818¹, and a close examination of their doctrines show that the Farā'idī and Tarīqah-i-Muhammadiyah belonged to two separate traditions.

In the first place, the Farā'idīs suspended the prayers of Jum'ah and 'Īd in Bengal under the British rule, which according to them were not lawful under the circumstances². The followers of Tarīqah-i-Muhammadiyah, on the other hand, continued to hold those prayers though they regarded India under the British rule as Dār al-Harb or abode of war³. Secondly, the Farā'idīs objected to initiating the ignorant masses ('awām) into mystic orders, and to the practice of initiating disciple by clasping hand (dastī bay'ah)⁴. These were, on the other hand, widely practised by Sayyid Ahmad Shahīd and his followers.

1. See infra., Chapter iii.

2. See infra., Chapter vi.

3. See History of the Freedom Movement, op.cit., p.576.

4. See infra., Chapters vi and vii.

The biographical data of Ḥājī Sharī'at Allāh suggest that he drew inspiration for his reform movement from Arabia, where he stayed for about 20 years and received his education and training¹. This period being the most turbulent years of Wahhābī revolution in the process of which the Wahhābīs occupied Makkah and Madīnah in A.D.1803², Ḥājī Sharī'at Allāh had the unique opportunity to watch the progress of Wahhabism from close quarters. As the Farā'idī doctrine of tawhīd or monotheism corresponds entirely to the same doctrine of Wahhabism, we have historical evidence to assume that it was influenced by Wahhabism. This point is further corroborated by the fact that like the Wahhābī, Ḥājī Sharī'at Allāh laid utmost emphasis on the doctrine of tawhīd³. Nevertheless, the Farā'idīs, as we have just seen, were the supporters of the principle of taqlīd whereas the Wahhābīs supported ijtihād. Secondly, the Farā'idīs accepted mysticism or sufism, as an Islamic institution and utilised it for the attainment of divine consciousness⁴, which was on the other hand, rejected by the Wahhābīs who regarded it as an un-Islamic innovation. Thirdly, the Wahhābīs affiliated themselves to the Hanbalī school and the Farā'idīs to the Hanafī school, and the

1. See infra., Chapter iii.

2. cf. J.A.S.B., vol. xiii, p.68 ff.

3. See infra., Chapter vi.

4. See infra., Chapters vi and vii.

latter referred all important questions of law to the authority of Ṭāhir Sombal Ḥanafī, the teacher and mystic guide of Ḥājī Sharī‘at Allāh¹. Thus, although the influence of Wahhabism on the Farā‘idī cannot be gainsaid, yet we do not have sufficient ground to identify the one with the other or even to regard the Farā‘idī movement as an offshoot of the Wahhābī movement.

The Successor Movements of Ṭarīqah-i-Muhammadiyah
And Their Relations with the Farā‘idī Movement

Although Ṭarīqah-i-Muhammadiyah movement was started as a religious reform movement about A.D.1818, it took a political turn within a few years and spread throughout Indo-Pakistan subcontinent with extraordinary rapidity. In course of time, it also split up into three distinct groups, namely the Patna school, Ta‘aiyuni and Ahl-i-Hadīth. The history of the growth and development of Ṭarīqah-i-Muhammadiyah falls outside the scope of the present study. But an examination of the role played by it and its successor movements in Bengal and the nature of their contact with the Farā‘idīs, is relevant to our purpose. Moreover, the intensification of religious propaganda by these successor movements in rural Bengal, their mutual antagonism and their rivalry with the Farā‘idī movement have deeply affected

1. See infra., Chapter iii.

the outlook of the Muslims of Bengal. In order to understand the attitude of the Farā' idī to these rival groups and vice versa, an analysis of the historical and doctrinal grounds of the split of Tarīqah-i-Muhammadiyah is necessary.

The Split Among the Followers of Tarīqah-i-Muhammadiyah.

The principle of preferential treatment of the Prophetic tradition (ittibā'-i-sunnah) to the prescription of the schools of law (taqlīd), formed the central point in the reform programme of Tarīqah-i-Muhammadiyah. Differences of opinion, however, appears to have arisen amongst the leaders of the movement, especially after the death of Sayyid Ahmad Shahīd and Shāh Ismā'īl Shahīd at the battle of Balakot in A.D.1831. From about A.D.1837 to 1840, three leading disciples of Sayyid Ahmad Shahīd came out with three somewhat distinct views relating to the point mentioned above. The first was advanced by Mawlawī Wilāyat 'Alī, the chief successor of Sayyid Ahmad Shahīd¹, who reiterated the

1. Mawlawī Wilāyat 'Alī (A.D.1790-1852) was a theologian of Patna who met Sayyid Ahmad Shahīd in A.D.1820 and became his disciple. Thereupon he was invested by the Sayyid with khilāfat and given the charge of the Patna disciples. In A.D.1831, when he was touring South India the news of the Balakot disaster was communicated to him. He at once hurried to Patna where he was elected the chief successor of the Sayyid. (cf. Munshī Hāmid Ḥusaynī al-Durar al-Manthūr fī Tarā'īm-i-Ahl-i-Sādīqūr, Ilahabad, A.H.1345, pp.114-16; and W.W.Hunter: Our Indian Musalmans, London, 1871, p.49 ff.).

policy of Tarīqah-i-Muhammadiyah giving preference to the Prophetic tradition. The second view was advanced by Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī of Jawnpur, a leading disciple of Sayyid Ahmad Shahīd¹, who asserted the claim of the finality of the schools and maintained that complete adherence to the prescriptions of the school was necessary on the part of every Muslim of "our age". The third view was expressed by Mawlāwī 'Abd al-Jabbār, another disciple of Sayyid Ahmad Shahīd², who professed himself to be a follower of the

1. Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī was born at Mullatola of Jawnpur in U.P., in A.H.1215/A.D.1800 (cf. Mawlānā 'Abd al-Bātin: Sīrat-i-Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī Jawnpūrī, Ilāhābād, A.H.1368, p.9; and Intāj al-Dīn Ahmad: Nasab Nāmā-i-Karāmatiyā (Bengali), B.S.1356, p.1). James Wise says, "excited by the preachings of Sayyid Ahmad, he followed that remarkable man to Calcutta, (circa. A.D.1820), became his disciple and accompanied him to Maccah. On return he proved himself one of the most valuable deputies of Sayyid Ahmad" (cf. James Wise: Eastern Bengal, p.27). In A.H.1250/A.D.1835, he came to Calcutta, a second time, with the intention of devoting the rest of his life in preaching pure doctrines of Islam to the Muslims of Eastern India. This visit to Bengal continued for 18 years without break (cf. Mawlānā 'Abd al-Bātin: Sīrat-i-Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī Jawnpūrī, op.cit., pp.44-45 and 88). In course of this visit, he toured almost all the districts of Bengal including Dacca, Faridpur, Bakarganj and Mymensingh, the zone of Farā'idī influence. In A.D.1853, he paid a short visit to Jawnpūr but soon came back to Bengal. He took a second wife at Noakhali district and died at Rangpur on the 2nd Rabī' II, 1290/A.D.1873 (cf. ibid., pp.97-98).
2. This Mawlāwī 'Abd al-Jabbār was a resident of Calcutta. He was the son of Jamāl Allāh son of Muḥammad Ashraf (cf. Mawlāwī 'Abd al-Jabbār: Jawāb-i-Ouwwat al-Imān, circa. A.D.1837, p.2). He is to be identified with one referred to by Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī as belonging to navā madhhab or the new school (cf. Mawlāwī Karāmat 'Alī: Ouwwat al-Imān, op.cit., section "Ruqqa'āt-i-'Abd al-Jabbār", p.323 ff.). He must not, therefore, be confused with the Farā'idī Khalīfah of the same name.

Hanafi school of law but still adhered to the principle of giving preference to the Prophetic tradition. These views were brought out in three publications by the three persons concerned, which are briefly examined below.

(1) Mawlawī Wilāyat 'Alī called his work 'Amal bi'l-Hadīth, i.e., following Prophetic tradition or ittibā'-i-sunnah. It is a small but important pamphlet, written in chaste Persian and published sometimes before A.D.1837¹. In the opening section the author says that so many questions were put to him regarding the propriety of "following Prophetic tradition" (ittibā'-i-ahādīth) in preference to "following the prescriptions of the school" (ittibā'-i-fiqh) and vice versa, that he decided to publish this pamphlet for general information².

In this work the author says that the main purpose of Islam is to make the people to follow the injunctions of the Qur'ān and the Prophetic tradition. Hence, if a prescription of the school is found to contradict any of the injunctions contained in these two sources, the prescription must be given up, and the injunction be followed. For, in this context there is no scope for taglīd or imitation of the school³. He further opines that if in such a case a Hanafi (i.e., a follower of school) gives up the prescription

1. The textual evidence indicates that this work was published earlier than Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī's Quwwat al-Imān (see infra).

2. Mawlawī Wilāyat 'Alī: 'Amal bi'l-Hadīth, p.1.

3. ibid., pp. 3 ff., 12, 15 and 16.

of his school in order to follow the Prophetic tradition, he proves himself to be a good Hanafī. For, the main object in following the prescriptions of the school is to follow the Qur'ān and the Prophetic tradition¹. In any case, the main object is to follow the truth and not the opinions of a person. In his opinion taqlīd or imitation of a school is permissible only for those who are unable to decide the right course of action by means of their own knowledge². But it is not permissible for a person who can decide for himself by his knowledge of the Qur'ān and Prophetic tradition³.

(11) Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī called his work Quwwat al-Īmān, i.e., the strength of the faith. It is a book of 344 pages written in Urdu and published in A.H.1253/A.D.1837. Its main theme being the vindication of the finality of the school, it proved to be a refutation of Mawlawī Wilāyat 'Alī's 'Amal bi'l-Hadīth.

In this work, the author maintains that among the two great division of the Muslims the Shī'ah school has gone astray and the Sunnī school is on the right path. The Sunnī school, however, consists of only four recognised schools, namely, Hanafī, Shāfi'ī, Mālikī and Hanbalī. The finality

1. Mawlawī Wilāyat 'Alī: 'Amal bi'l-Hadīth, pp. 3-11.

2. ibid., p.10.

3. ibid.

of these four schools has been decided by the consensus of the opinion of the Muslim community. It is, therefore, necessary that every Muslim follows the prescriptions of one of them¹.

Ijtihād or fresh inquiry, according to Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī, is theoretically possible². The establishment of the four schools, however, has rendered fresh investigation unnecessary; for, there is no need of a fifth school³. Even if any jurist invents a fifth school, it will conform to one of these four⁴. Hence, such an attempt would be superfluous.

It is necessary to follow one of the Imāms, i.e., enunciators of the four schools; for, their paths are, in reality, the paths of the companions of the Prophet. In fact, they elicited the prescriptions from the Qur'ān and the Prophetic tradition and did not invent anything of their own⁵. Even if the prescriptions of the school appear to contradict any injunction of the Prophetic tradition, the prescriptions must be followed; for, the necessity of the imitation (taqlīd) of the imāms, has been established

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1. Mawlawī Karāmat 'Alī: Quwwat al-Īmān. Calcutta, A.H.1253, p.28.
 2. Mawlawī Karāmat 'Alī: Quwwat al-Īmān, p.192 ff.
 3. ibid., pp.39 and 82.
 4. ibid., p.82.
 5. cf. ibid., p.62.

by the consensus of the opinion of the Muslim community (ijmā'). Hence, "giving up the taqlīd of the imām would amount to going out of the fold of Muslim community (sawād al-a'zam)¹.

In one place, he declares that he still adhered to the old school of law (madhhab) to which he previously belonged, i.e., Hanafī school of law. "I remained firm", he says, "on my old school and did not give up taqlīd on account of the propaganda of the ignorant"².

(iii) Mawlawī 'Abd al-Jabbār calls his work Taqwiyat al-Muslimīn fī Ittibā'-i-Sunnat-i-Sayyid al-Mursalin, i.e., strengthening the Muslims in following the tradition of the Prophet. It is written in Urdu and was published in A.H.1256/A.D.1840. This work, as the title itself suggests, is a re-assertion of the necessity of giving preference to the Prophetic tradition. Hence, it is a refutation of Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī's Quwwat al-Īmān.

It may be noted that earlier to this publication Mawlawī 'Abd al-Jabbar published a pamphlet entitled Jawāb-i-Quwwat al-Īmān, i.e., a reply to Quwwat al-Īmān, in which he considered several important points advanced by Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī, and refuted them one by one³.

1. cf. Mawlawī Karāmat 'Alī: Quwwat al-Īmān, pp.154 and 166.

2. cf. ibid., p.292.

3. Copy preserved in the Asiatic Society of Pakistan, Dacca.

The subject of the Taqwiyat al-Muslimin is more or less the same as that of Mawlawī Wilāyat 'Alī's 'Amal bi'l-Hadīth. Mawlawī Wilāyat 'Alī's work was a statement of policy, in which the leader of the Tarīqah-i-Muhammadiyah movement reiterated that he would pursue the same policy which was bequeathed by the founders of the movement. Mawlawī 'Abd al-Jabbār's work was a justification of that policy, in which he attempted to show that the policy so bequeathed was no other than the policy of Shāh Walī Allāh and Shāh 'Abd al-'Azīz¹. Thus, Mawlawī 'Abd al-Jabbār's work proved to be complementary to Mawlawī Wilāyat 'Alī's 'Amal bi'l-Hadīth.

In Taqwiyat al-Muslimin, 'Abd al-Jabbār says that it is clear from the evidence of the Qur'ān² that "our salvation lies in following the Prophetic tradition to the fullest extent, even if it goes against the customs and usages". Hence, if a follower of the school leaves away the prescription of the imām in order to follow the tradition of the Prophet, he earns the pleasure of the Prophet as well as that of the imām; for, the imāms themselves were of the opinion that if any of their views contradicts Prophetic tradition, the latter must be followed³.

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1. Mawlawī 'Abd al-Jabbār: Taqwiyat al-Muslimin fī Ittibā' i-Sunnat-i-Sayyid al-Mursalin. Calcutta, A.H. 1256, p.26 ff.
 2. He cites the following verse of the Qur'ān: (Say O Muhammad) "If you really love Allāh, follow me, Allāh will love you", Qur'ān, 3:31.
 3. Taqwiyat al-Muslimin, op.cit., p.23.

Taqlīd or imitation of the schools, in his opinion, cannot be a general rule. It may only be allowed as a matter of necessity for the ignorant. He further says that Shāh 'Abd al-'Azīz and Shah Ismā'īl Shahīd regarded taqlīd as useless and akin to polytheism. It is, therefore, necessary to ascertain that the prescriptions of the school are in conformity with the Qur'ān and the Prophetic tradition¹.

Mawlawī 'Abd al-Jabbār claims himself to be a Hanafī. He, however, believes that the truth is not a monopoly of any one school but pervades the schools of all religious scholars (mutahīds). Hence, he regards all religious scholars as his leaders. He, therefore, claims himself to be completely impartial in his judgment of their opinions². In spite of this independence of thought, he thinks, he is a rightly guided Hanafī.

Split Between Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī and Mawlawī

Wilāyat 'Alī

The above analysis shows that from A.D.1831 onwards, Mawlawī Wilāyat 'Alī, the leader of Tarīqah-i-Muhammadiyah, pursued the policy of giving preference to Prophetic tradition, and even encouraged the followers of the Hanafī school,

1. cf. Taqwiyat al-Muslimīn, op.cit., p.29.

2. cf. Mawlawī 'Abd al-Jabbār: Jawāb-i-Quwwat al-Īmān, circa., A.D.1837, p.2.

who formed the bulk of the Muslim population of Indo-Pakistan subcontinent, to pay increasing attention to the tradition of the Prophet. Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī on the other hand attached greater importance to the prescriptions of the school. As corollaries of these to standpoints, Mawlawī Wilāyat 'Alī supported the principle of i'tihād or fresh inquiry and Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī supported the principle of taqlīd. Thus the publication of 'Amal bi'l-Hadīth and Quwwat al-Imān about the year A.D.1837, brought the two opposing tendencies represented by these two leading followers of Sayyid Ahmad Shahīd, to a head, and the split between them became complete.

Thereafter, Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī called himself Hanafī and campaigned for the Hanafī school of law. Later on he came to be known as "Ta'aisyuni" and the reform movement led by him as "Ta'aisyunī movement", especially in Eastern Bengal¹.

Mawlawī Wilāyat 'Alī maintained a neutral position, and is not known to have identified himself with any particular school of law. After his death (A.D.1852), his followers came to be known as "Wahhābīs" or "Indian Wahhābīs", especially in the government circle, because of their involvement in a series of State Trials, officially known as

1. cf. James Wise: Eastern Bengal, pp.6-7.

Wahhābī Trials, from A.D.1864 to 1870¹. They, however, called themselves "Muḥammadi"² an abbreviation of Tarīqah-i-Muḥammadiyah. But in order to distinguish them from the Ahl-i-Hadīth, who came out of the main body of the movement at a later date and who also called themselves "Muḥammadi", the followers of Mawlawī Wilāyat 'Alī have been referred throughout this study as the Patna school, as Patna was the centre of their activity.

Although Mawlawī 'Abd al-Jabbār identified himself with the Hanafī school of law, yet his approach to the Prophetic tradition was, as we have seen above, fundamentally the same as that of Mawlawī Wilāyat 'Alī. Naturally, therefore, he remained within the main body of the movement, i.e., the Patna school.

Split Between Patna School and Ahl-i-Hadīth

In the foregoing analysis of Mawlawī Wilāyat 'Alī's 'Amal bi'l-Hadīth and Mawlawī 'Abd al-Jabbār's Taqwiyat al-Muslimīn, we have noticed that two distinct tendencies were gradually gaining ground among the promoters of the Prophetic tradition, one inclining to the schools of law and the other betraying reluctance to affiliate itself to any school of law.

1. cf. W.W.Hunter: Our Indian Musalmans. London, A.D.1871, p.84.

2. cf. Mawlawi Karāmat 'Alī: Quwwat al-Īmān, op.cit., p.135 ff.

But, although Mawlawī Wilāyat 'Alī did not identify himself to any school of law, yet he recognised the validity of the schools. Likewise, Mawlawī 'Abd al-Jabbār firmly attached himself to Prophetic tradition though he also affiliated himself to the Hanafī school. So long as Mawlawī Wilāyat 'Alī was alive (d.1852), this accommodative spirit saved the two trends from a collision.

In course of time the two trends assumed extreme position as one group inclined more and more to Hanafī school of law and the other repudiated the propriety of imitation or taqlīd of the school of law. Hence, no longer the split between the two groups could be avoided.

Materials at our disposal do not permit us to fix an exact date to this split. The first important pamphlet namely Thabūt-i-Haqq al-Haqīq (i.e., establishment of the truth), which indicated a complete breach between the two groups, was published in A.H.1281/A.D.1864. This work was written by Sayyid Nadhīr Husayn¹, who led the repudiators of the schools of law.

This new school/^{which} ~~was~~ came out of the Patna school, called itself "Muḥammadi" and "Ahl-i-Hadīth" (i.e., the

1. Sayyid Nadhīr Husayn was born at Balthawa in the Munghyr district of Bihar, in A.D.1805. About A.D.1842, he established a religious seminary at Delhi and taught Prophetic tradition there till his death in A.D.1902 (cf. Muhammad Ishaque: India's Contribution to the Study of Hadīth Literature (being a doctorate thesis approved by the University of Dacca in 1947). Dacca University Publication, 1955, pp.184-85.

partisans of the tradition of the Prophet). Later on they came to be widely known as Ahl-i-Hadīth and Rāfi' Yadayn, the last name because of their practice of frequently raising hands in course of prayer. Their opponents often called them lā madhhabī (i.e., one who does not belong to any of the recognised sunnī schools of law). Although the term "lā madhhab" reflected their actual position, it was applied to them by way of reproach. In the present study they are referred to as Ahl-i-Hadīth.

Relations of the Farā'idī with Tarīqah-i-Muhammadiyah and its Successor Movements

The influence of Tarīqah-i-Muhammadiyah affected Bengal in four phases. The first phase began with the visit of Sayyid Ahmad Shahīd and Shāh Ismā'il Shahīd to Calcutta in A.D. 1820, and lasted till 1831. The second phase was through Patna school, the third phase through Ta'aiyuni and the fourth phase through Ahl-i-Hadīth. The protagonists of the above phases of Tarīqah-i-Muhammadiyah, in course of propagation of their doctrines in Eastern Bengal, came into contact with the Farā'idīs and developed friendly or hostile relations with them. As the Farā'idīs had a different type of relation with them, it is desirable that their relations with each of these groups be considered separately.

(i) Relations of the Farā'idīs with Tarīqah-i-Muhammadiyah

(A.D.1820 to 1831)

The Tarīqah-i-Muhammadiyah movement was started at Delhi about A.D.1818. In A.D.1820, the founders of the movement paid a visit to Calcutta, where, according to Hunter, "the masses flocked around" Sayyid Ahmad Shahīd in such numbers that he was unable even to go through the formal ceremony of initiation i.e., by separately clasping the hand of every person desirous of becoming his disciple. "Unfolding his turban, therefore, he declared that all who touched any part of its ample length became his disciple"¹. Next year, on his way to Makkah he visited Calcutta again and stayed there for a period of three months². According to tradition current in East Pakistan, many people came thither to meet him from different districts of Bengal.

It may be noted that while coming to Calcutta for the first time in A.D.1820, Sayyid Ahmad Shahīd halted at Patna, where, according to Hunter, the number of his disciples had "so swelled" as to "require a regular system of government". Hence, he appointed Mawlawī Wilāyat 'Alī of Patna his deputy or khalīfah and left the charge of the Patna disciples to his care³ before he left for Calcutta. Evidently, the Tarīqah-i-Muhammadiyah evolved a definite policy with regard

1. W.W.Hunter: Our Indian Musalmans, op.cit., p.13.

2. cf. History of the Freedom Movement, Karachi, 1957, p.563.

3. cf. W.W.Hunter: Our Indian Musalmans, op.cit., p.13.

to the organisation of the Patna disciples. Materials at our disposal, however, do not suggest that a similar Bengal policy was evolved at this early stage either by Sayyid Ahmad Shahid or by his Bengali followers¹.

The amazing success and popularity gained by Tariqah-i-Muhammadiyah at the cosmopolitan city of Calcutta, however, was bound to overflow in course of time. Little wonder, therefore, that about A.D.1827, it took the shape of a mass movement in the rural society of West Bengal at the hands of Titu Mir. This first upsurge of Tariqah-i-Muhammadiyah movement in Bengal was short-lived and remained confined to the districts of 24 Parganahs and Nadiya. As such it formed somewhat a counter-part of the Fara'idī movement in West Bengal.

Titu Mir's Programme of Religious Reform

It is generally agreed that Titu Mir preached reformed doctrines of Sayyid Ahmad Shahid. It is, however, not known for certain whether the Sayyid invested him with khilāfat or commissioned him to propagate the reforms of Tariqah-i-Muhammadiyah though the local tradition of a legendary nature would have us believe that he was appointed a khalīfah by the Sayyid². All we know is that Titu Mir became a disciple

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1. It may be noted that some writers believe that during his stay in Bengal Sayyid Ahmad Shahid established a well-knit organisation there; but source of information has not been mentioned by any one of them (see Māsik Muḥammadī, Bengali monthly, Dacca, Māgh, B.S.1360, p.260).
 2. See 'Abd al-Ghafūr Siddiqī, "Titu Mir" in Māsik Muḥammadī, op.cit., B.S.1360, p.260 ff.

of Sayyid Ahmad Shahīd at Makkah about A.D.1822, and on his return to his native district 24 Parganahs about A.D.1827, began to preach pure doctrines of Islam. For this commendable work, he received a stipend from a member of the Royal Family of Delhi, who had become his patron since A.D.1821¹.

Biharilal Sarkar, the Bengali biographer of Titu Mīr, says that one Mawlawī Muḥammad Ḥusayn of the district of Pabna was appointed a khalīfah by Sayyid Ahmad Shahīd. In the sanad of the khilāfat, ^{which} / wasⁿ deciphered by Biharilal Sarkar, the Sayyid impressed upon Muḥammad Ḥusayn the necessity of enforcing two fundamental items of programme, viz., (i) the attributes of God must not be applied to human beings and (ii) no rite or ceremony (excepting those which are approved by the Qur'ān and Prophetic tradition) be observed². According to Biharilal Sarkar, Titu Mīr enforced above pattern of reforms in West Bengal³.

According to the same authority, the above-mentioned principles were further elaborated in the sanad. In the first place, it was pointed out that the angel, spirit,

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1. cf. Bengal Criminal Judicial Consultations, 3 April, 1832: quoted by Dr. A.R.Mallick in his unpublished Ph.D. thesis, "The Development of the Muslims of Bengal and Bihar, 1813-1856, with special reference to their Education", University of London, 1953 (hereafter mentioned as Dr. Mallick's Thesis), pp.88-89.
 2. Biharilal Sarkar: Titu Mīr (Bengali). Calcutta, B.S.1304, p.11; see also W.W.Hunter: Our Indian Musalmans. London, 1871, p.54 ff.
 3. Biharilal Sarkar: Titu Mīr, op.cit., p.11.

demon, Pīr, teacher, saint or prophet has no power of their own to bestow benefit or to inflict injury on anybody; none of them, therefore, be propitiated or worshipped. Secondly, no (un-Islamic) rite or ceremony be observed on the occasions of marriage and death; hence, decoration of tomb, raising of mausoleum, preparation of ta'ziah (i.e., the effigy of Imām Ḥusayn's tomb) on the occasion of Muharram, and various fātiḥahs (i.e., rites for the remembrance of dead relatives), be purged¹. According to Biharilal Sarkar, the above programme was also the characteristic of Titu Mīr's movement².

In addition to the above mentioned items, Titu Mīr directed his followers to grow beards and to wear dhuti (the national dress of the Hindus which was commonly used by the Muslims of Bengal until recently) without passing one end between the legs³. Furthermore, he is said to have asked his followers to keep away from the unreformed Muslims and permitted interdining only amongst his followers themselves⁴.

1. Biharilal Sarkar: Titu Mīr, op.cit., p.11.

2. ibid.

3. This practice was also characteristic of the Fara'idis (see infra., Chapter vi).

4. cf. Colvin to Barwell, 8 March, 1832 (Board of Directors' Collection no.54222), p.43: quoted in Dr.Mallick's Thesis, op.cit., p.90.

If this last characteristic of Titu Mīr's programme of reform, namely imposition of restriction on interdining, as reported by Colvin, is true, it must have led his followers to form into a distinct and exclusive social group resembling the Hindu caste, and as a consequence, it may have restricted the number of his followers. Being the promoter of an Islamic revivalism, Titu Mīr is not, however, expected to follow such a course. There have been many sūfīs and puritan 'ulamā' (theologians) who would not accept food or present, offered by a person who earned his livelihood by foul means, such as through cheating, usury or bribery. But such people were not restrained from dining with them or even from becoming their guests. Even now-a-days instances of this nature are not lacking in the Muslim society of Bengal. This kind of practice is also found amongst the Farā'idī khalīfahs. Being a stranger to the institutions of Islam, Colvin was probably unable to differentiate between a fanatic restriction to interdining and a pious attachment to "lawful food and earnings" (ḥalāl rūzī).

It will be seen later on that the reform programme enforced by Hājī Shari'at Allāh was almost similar to the one described above¹. This similarity of programme led Ravenshaw, the Wahhābī prosecutor (circa. A.D.1864-1870), to identify the Farā'idī movement with that of Titu Mīr, and

1. See infra., Chapter iii.

to call both the movements as Farā'idī¹. Materials at our disposal, however, suggest that this notion of the Wahhābī prosecutor is wrong.

In the first place, we have just seen that Titu Mīr's programme of religious reform was an extension of Tarīqah-i-Muhammadiyah to rural Bengal. Hence, it was in the tradition of Sayyid Ahmad Shahīd and Shāh Walī Allāh. The inspiration of Hājī Sharī'at Allāh, on the other hand, was drawn from Arabia² and had no connection with the religious development in Delhi.

Secondly, there is no evidence of any contact between Hājī Sharī'at Allāh and Titu Mīr or between the movements led by them. Tradition current in the family of Hājī Sharī'at Allāh, as will be seen later on, indicates that each of them entertained friendly attitude to the other, and that, Dudu Miyān (son of Hājī Sharī'at Allāh) paid a visit to Titu Mīr while on his way to Makkah, when the former was only 12 years old (circa., A.D.1830-1831)³. There is a likelihood that Dudu Miyān was influenced by the socio-economic aspect of Titu Mīr's movement⁴. But, when that influence began to exert on the Farā'idī movement (circa. A.D.1840), Titu Mīr's movement had already died out.

1. cf. Dr. Mallick's Thesis, op.cit., p.105.

2. See infra., Chapter iii.

3. See infra., Chapter iv.

4. idem.

Thirdly, it has been pointed out by Revenshaw that Titu Mīr and Hājī Shari'at Allāh were the followers of the Hanafi school of law¹. This is quite natural; for, in the first place, almost all Muslims of Rural Bengal have always been Hanafi; secondly, it will be seen that the Hājī's teacher and guide Tāhir Sombal was a Hanafi², and thirdly, many of the leading disciples of Sayyid Ahmad Shahīd, such as Mawlawī 'Abd al-Hayy and Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī were Hanafis. Even the Sayyid himself had good deal of inclination towards the Hanafi school of law³. This similarity, therefore, does not prove their identity.

Fourthly, we have seen earlier that one of the real criterion of difference between the Farā'idī and Tarīqah-i-Muhammadiyah lay in their attitude to the legality of holding congregational prayers of Jum'ah and 'Īd in Bengal under the British rule⁴. As Titu Mīr and his followers - unlike the Farā'idīs - held fast to these prayers, we find the real criterion of their difference on this doctrinal point. It will also be seen later on that this particular point proved to be the distinguishing mark between the Farā'idīs and the followers of Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī⁵.

1. cf. Dr. Mallick's Thesis, op.cit., p.105.

2. See infra., Chapter iii.

3. See History of the Freedom Movement, Karachi, 1957, pp.569-70.

4. See supra., p.47.

5. See infra., Chapter vii.

A concrete example of their difference is found in the life and career of Munshī Faiḍ al-Dīn Mukhtār, originally a resident of the district of Jessore, who became a follower of Titu Mīr at Calcutta. In his later life he immigrated to Faridpur district and married in an eminent Farā'idī family. During the life time of Dudu Miyān, he acted as the former's legal attorney, and after Dudu Miyān's death, he was appointed one of the guardians of Dudu Miyān's sons. He, however, did not become a convert to the Farā'idī doctrines but remained a faithful follower of Titu Mīr till his death¹.

Nevertheless, there were certain striking similarities between the life and career of Titu Mīr and Hājī Shari'at Allāh, which may not be overlooked. In the first place, Titu Mīr was born of an obscure family² as was the case of Hājī Shari'at Allāh³. Both of them, therefore, came from the lower strata of the Muslim society of Bengal. Secondly, almost all their supporters came from the masses of the people. Thirdly, both the movements spread most extensively in those places where the Hindu zamīndārs held sway over the Muslim peasantry.

1. See infra., Appendix "C" to Chapter ix, p.343 ff.

2. cf. W.W.Hunter: Our Indian Musalmans, op.cit., p.45.

3. See infra., Chapter iii.

Moreover, in course of his propagation of the puritan doctrines of Sayyid Ahmad Shahīd, Titu Mīr came into conflict with the Hindu zamīndārs and European indigo planters of 24 Parganahs in A.D.1830. For, the growing sense of equality and unity of his followers, alarmed the Hindu zamīndārs, especially as his movement showed every symptom of going against their vested interest on account of its popularity among the Muslim peasantry. On the other hand, a section of the conservative Muslims detested his puritanism which assailed their time-honoured customs and prejudices; but they themselves being unable to check the growth of the new movement lodged complaints to the Hindu zamīndārs against Titu Mīr and his followers. This gave the zamīndārs the opportunity they sought, and Ram Narayan (zamīndār of Taragonia), Gaur Prasad Chowdhury (zamīndār of Nagarpur), and Krishna Dev Ray (zamīndār of Purwa or Punrah) took concerted step to crush the movement in the bud. They imposed a "beard-tax" at the rate of Rs.2½ per head on the followers of Titu Mīr. This heavy tax was actually realised at Purwa, but the agents of the zamīndārs met with resistance at Safdarpur, where the peasantry challenged the right of the zamīndārs to levy such illegal cesses which went against the teachings of Islam. In retaliation, Krishna Dev Ray attacked the Muslim settlement of Safdarpur in A.D.1830, with a large band of clubmen (lāthiyāl), looted the village and burned down several houses including a

mosque. The peasantry tried their best to secure justice against these oppressions and extortions from the Police and the legal courts, but all in vain. At last, in A.D. 1831, the peasantry rose in a body, entered the market-place of Purwa, i.e., in the village of Krishna Dev Ray, slaughtered a cow, and with its blood and carcasses defiled a Hindu temple. In this, process, Titu Mīr's movement turned itself into a socio-economic struggle of the Muslim peasantry against the Hindu zamīndārs, in which the the European indigo planters combined their forces with their natural allies, the zamīndārs. The struggle that followed soon flared up into large scale affrays, in which Titu Mīr won a clear victory over both the zamīndārs and indigo planters. But his enemies being in close touch with the English officers succeeded in convincing them that Titu Mīr was a rebel against the British government. Thereupon two Police expeditions were sent to apprehend Titu Mīr and his party, which were beaten back. Finally Titu Mīr and his followers were crushed by a military expedition from Calcutta on the 19th November, 1831¹.

1. Titu Mīr's reform movement has been carefully examined by the present writer in a recent paper "The Struggle of Titu Mīr: a re-examination" (to be published in the J.A.S.P., vol. iv, 1959, now in the press), on the basis of all available sources.

It will be seen later on that the Farā'idī movement also followed a similar pattern. In A.D.1831, it came in conflict with the conservative Muslim society and through it with the Hindu zamīndārs of Dacca and from A.D.1838 onwards it came into violent conflict with the Hindu zamīndārs and European indigo planters on account of its policy of upholding the rights of the Muslim peasantry. This eventually gave it a socio-economic bias, and it became most popular in this socio-economic phase¹.

This similarity in the growth and development of the two movements indicates that the reform movements of Hājī Shari'at Allāh and Titu Mīr were called into being by similar social, economic and religious crises, which the Muslims of Bengal, especially the lower classes, were facing as a result of political and administrative changes wrought by the British during their rule of over half a century. Thus, it may be fairly concluded that the identification of the Farā'idī movement with that of Titu Mīr is not justified.

(ii) Relations Between the Farā'idī and the Patna School.

The annihilation of Titu Mīr and his followers in A.D.1831, did not, however, remove the cause of discontent

1. See infra., Chapters iii and iv.

among the peasantry. The spirit of reformation and of revolt against oppression, which he stood for, undoubtedly survived. In his violent death, he became even more known than in his life time, and his martyrdom became symbolic of his ideals and a lasting source of inspiration to the down-trodden peasantry of Bengal in their subsequent struggle against the zamīndārs and indigo planters. The thread of Sayyid Ahmad Shahīd's influence in Rural Bengal, which was cut off by Titu Mīr's tragic death, was soon taken up by an infinitely superior successor of him, Mawlawī 'Ināyat 'Alī of Patna.

Considering the death of Sayyid Ahmad Shahīd at Balakot and of Titu Mīr at Narkelbaria in A.D.1831, Hunter observes that the end of the reformers appeared to have come. "On the Punjab frontier their forces had been scattered and their leader slain. The insurrection in Lower Bengal had met with a similar fate". But the khalīfahs whom the Sayyid appointed at Patna (i.e., Mawlawī Wilāyat 'Alī and Mawlawī 'Ināyat 'Alī) "came to the rescue"¹. Their "missionary zeal" and "immense pecuniary resource" raised the sacred banner again and again from the dust². When the news of Balakot disaster reached Mawlawī Wilāyat 'Alī (while he was in South India), he hurried to Fatna where he was

1. W.W.Hunter: Our Indian Musalmans. London, 1871, p.47.

2. ibid., pp.49-50.

elected the chief leader of Tarīqah-i-Muhammadiyah. On his own part, he chose a few picked persons, made them his khalifah and sent them to different directions. It was in this process that Mawlawī 'Ināyat 'Alī came to Bengal¹.

The exact date of Mawlawī 'Ināyat 'Alī's arrival in Bengal is not known. According to his family records, it took place in A.D.1831 or 1832². On his arrival, he made a survey of the whole field in consultation with the Bengali followers of Sayyid Ahmad Shahīd and soon realised that the Muslims of Rural Bengal, who were plunged in ignorance and superstition, needed his greater attention than those of the towns and cities. He, therefore, made for the interior of the province and toured one village after another, preaching without rest the pure doctrines of Islam³. About A.D.1840, he even took the bold step of removing his headquarters to Hakimpur, a village in the district of Jessore, where he lived with his family for 3 or 4 years⁴.

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1. cf. Munshī Hāmid Husayn: al-Durar al-Manthūr fī Tarājim-i-Ahl-i-Šādiqūr. Ilāhābād, A.D.1345, pp.133-34. It may be noted that the author of the above work belongs to the family of Mawlawī Wilāyat 'Alī and Mawlawī 'Ināyat 'Alī, which is popularly known as the "Šādiqūr Family". The author claims that he has compiled this work on the basis of family records. We accept this source in so far as corroboration is found in other sources.
 2. ibid. The author categorically says that Mawlawī 'Ināyat 'Alī stayed for 7 years in Bengal during this first visit and thereafter proceeded to the principality of Kaghan where we find him in A.D.1838. Thus, we may calculate that he came to Bengal in A.D.1831 or in the beginning of 1832.
 3. cf. Munshī Hāmid Husayn: al-Durar al-Manthūr fī Tarājim-i-Ahl-i-Šādiqūr, op.cit., p.133.
 4. ibid. Also, this is widely known in East Pakistan.

It is also evident from the government Records relating to five State Trials, viz., (a) Ambala Trial of 1864¹ (b) Patna Trial of 1865² (c) Maldah Trial of 1870³ (d) Rajmahal Trial of 1870⁴ and (e) The Great Wahhābī Trials of 1870-1871⁵, that the endeavours of Mawlawī 'Ināyat 'Alī and his agents, from A.D.1830 to 1870, had far-reaching effects on the Muslims of Bengal. The mode of the Sayyid's preachings through passionate appeal to the mass of the people, not only to reform their religious life but also for active participation in a political venture, had introduced a new dynamic force in Muslim society, namely a religio-political consciousness of the masses. Mawlawī 'Ināyat 'Alī's strategy in Bengal was no exception. By uniting the masses into a well-knit organisation and by preaching the doctrine of jihād or holy war against the usurpers of Muslim dominion, he and his followers succeeded in bringing about a religious

1. See W.W.Hunter: Our Indian Musalmans, op.cit., p.84 ff.

2. cf. Bengal Government Records (unpublished), preserved in the East Pakistan Secretariat, Judicial Proceedings, nos. 122-25, dated October, 1865; and nos. 87-99, dated August, 1867.

3. cf. ibid., nos. 164-87 dated November, 1868 and nos. 40-47 dated May, 1869.

4. cf. ibid., nos. 164-87 dated November, 1868.

5. These were appeal cases of the Patna Trial in the High Court of Calcutta, see Pamphlet on India, the Great Wahhābī Case, being a full report of the proceedings in the matters of Ameer Khan and Hashmadad Khan. Calcutta, 1870; and Lewis A.Mendes: Report of the Proceedings in the Matters of Ameer Khan and Hashmadad Khan. Calcutta, 1871.

revolution in the Muslim society of Rural Bengal¹. Thus, Mawlawī 'Ināyat 'Alī's arrival in Bengal about A.D.1830, not only revitalised Titu Mir's effort but also brought the central wave of Tarīqah-i-Muhammadiyah into the remotest villages of the province.

The Zone of its Influence and Contact with
the Farā'idī.

The establishment of the headquarters of Mawlawī 'Ināyat 'Alī at Jessore, bordering on the Farā'idī district of Faridpur, must have brought the followers of the Patna school and the Farā'idīs into close contact. Hunter says that Mawlawī Yahyā 'Alī, an eminent leader of the Patna school, had "amalgamated the Farā'idīs of Lower Bengal with the Wahhābīs of Northern India" about A.D.1843. He further states that the Farā'idīs and the followers of the Patna school (i.e., the so-called Wahhābīs) were "found side by side alike among the dead on the field of battle and in the dock of the Courts of Justice" from about A.D.1858 to 1871². We have, however, seen that the Farā'idīs and the Tarīqah-i-Muhammadiyah had doctrinal differences, and Patna school being a continuation of the latter, amalgamation of the two movements is beside the question, nor has it any historical basis as will be seen in the following chapters.

1. See Bengal Government Records (unpublished), relating to Maldah Trial of 1870, referred to above.

2. W.W.Hunter: Our Indian Musalmans, op.cit., p.100.

Circumstantial evidences, however, suggest that their common disapproval of the British occupation of this subcontinent, had fostered cordial relations amongst the followers of the two movements.

In the first place tradition current among the Farā'idīs claims that the followers of Dudu Miyān contributed generously to the jihād fund opened by him for the help of the fighters of the Patna school at the North-West Frontier Camp. Secondly, in one document relating to the Maldah Trial of A.D.1870, mention has been made of two Farā'idī leaders visiting the town of Maldah which was undoubtedly a settlement of the followers of the Patna school. They stayed there for a few days and preached their doctrines in large gatherings without any let or hindrance¹. If they visited a Ta'aiyuni settlement, such peaceful propagation of Farā'idī doctrines would not have been possible². Thirdly, although the Farā'idīs dominated the eastern portion of the district of Jessore, and the followers of the Patna school in the western portion, there is no evidence of their ever coming into conflict; rather, this direct contact between the two movements appears to have checked the progress of the Farā'idī movement to the west and that of the Patna school to the east.

1. cf. Bengal Government Records (unpublished), op.cit., November, 1868, nos. 164-187.

2. See infra., Chapter vii.

On the whole, evidences gathered from government documents suggest that the northern and western districts of Bengal, namely Dinajpur, Maldah, Rajshahi, Murshidabad, Nadiya, Burdwan, Jessore, Calcutta and 24 Parganahs, had come under the strong influence of the Patna school. The movement was apparently strongest in those tracts which were traversed by the rivers Ganges and Bhagirathi¹. Three doctrinal works, dealing with the life and character of Sayyid Ahmad Shahid and Shah Isma'il Shahid in Bengali and Urdu, published from Dacca about A.D. 1863², strongly suggest that the doctrine of jihād or holy war, preached by them, had tremendous appeal in Eastern Bengal, and that the influence of Tarīqah-i-Muhammediyah had swept over this region. But curiously enough the influence of Patna school made no noticeable headway there.

A close examination of the abstract of these works (supplied by the Bengal Government Records³), reveals that

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1. cf. Bengal Government Records (unpublished), op.cit., nos. 122-25, (October, 1865), 87-99 (August, 1867), 164-87 (November, 1868), and 40-47 (May, 1869).
 - ✓ 2. These works are (i) Tusseer Moradiya (probably taysir or tafsir al-murādiyah, i.e., an exposition of the ideals), published in Urdu language; (ii) a collection of Fatawa or legal decisions on the necessity of waging jihād or holy war, compiled and published by Hāji Badr al-Dīn in Bengali verse; and (iii) Tutwa (probably tatva i.e., subtle principles), jointly composed by Hāji Jān Rahmān and Hāji Badr al-Dīn in Bengali verse (cf. Bengal Government Records, unpublished, op.cit., November, 1868, nos. 164-187).
 3. ibid.

there existed a nascent conflict between the beliefs of the credulous masses and that of the elite with regard to the character of leadership provided by the Sayyid. Being prone to believe in miracles, the masses regarded the Sayyid as the Mahdī (i.e., the last spiritual guide much awaited for, especially by the Shī'ahs), who had miraculously disappeared rather than died (at the battle of Balakot in A.D.1831), but only to reappear on a more opportune time in order to rescue the Muslims from the humiliation of the English rule through jihād¹. On the other hand, special care has been taken in the works referred to above, to counteract this superstition. They describe graphically the circumstances under which Sayyid Ahmad Shahīd and Shāh Ismā'īl Shahīd were killed by the Sikhs, bewail the then sorrowful plight of the Muslims and express the hope that their condition would improve by the grace of God. Jihād was deemed obligatory on every Muslim, and besides jihād (i.e., holy war) and hijrat (i.e., emigration from a country ruled by the infidels to the countries ruled by the Muslims), no other alternative was recognised. Even they assert that whosoever rejects jihād and hijrat was an enemy of God.²

1. See foot note no. 2 in page 78.

2. ibid.

The boldness of the elite in accepting the fact of the Sayyid's death, may have been the result of the discovery of a Bengali disciple of the Sayyid, who, according to Hunter, travelled 1800 miles with one thousand colleagues to inquire about the Sayyid's death on the spot. They found three "goal-skins stuffed with grass", which were made to resemble the appearance of human beings with the help of some pieces of wood and hair. These stuffed figures, preserved by one Mullah Qādir in a mountain cave, were represented as the Sayyid and his companions. This was, it is said, made the ground for many miraculous stories around the Balakot disaster by the followers of the Patna school¹. The reluctance of the elite of Eastern Bengal to accept the miraculous stories in this respect, may, therefore, have been one of the main reasons for the retarded progress of the influence of Patna school in that region.

A second reason for the retardation of its influence in Eastern Bengal may be found in the reluctance of the Patna school to come into conflict with Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī of Jawnpur, who had concentrated his efforts for reform largely in Eastern Bengal². A third reason may also have lain in the good relations which existed between the Patna

1. cf. W.W.Hunter: Our Indian Musalmans, op.cit., pp.48-49.

2. See infra., p. 81 ff., and p. 275 ff.

school and the Farā'idīs. Besides, extensive Farā'idī influence in the area lying north to south from Mymensingh to Bakarganj, may have blocked the expansion of the Patna school to Eastern Bengal and Assam¹, as the progress of the Farā'idī movement to the Western Jessore was checked by the powerful influence of the Patna school there .

Relations between the Farā'idī and the Ta'aiyuni

The Ta'aiyuni movement was an off-shoot of the Tarīqah-i-Muhammadiyah, which was led by Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī. The term "ta'aiyuni" is derived from the Arabic word "ta'aiyun", which means "to identify". Hence, the term "ta'aiyuni" implies a person who identifies himself with a particular trend. We have seen earlier that the split between Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī and the main body of the Tarīqah-i-Muhammadiyah led by Mawlawī Wilāyat 'Alī, was effected by the former's insistence on the principle of taqlīd or imitation of the schools of law (madhhab); in this context, the term "ta'aiyuni", therefore, implied a person who definitely identified himself with a particular school of law or madhhab. The fact that Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī rebuked the followers of Mawlawī Wilāyat 'Alī and the later Ahl-i-Hadīth as lā-madhhabī² (i.e., one who does not belong

1. See infra., Chapter ix.

2. cf. Mawlawī Karāmat 'Alī: Quwwat al-Imān, op.cit., pp.197, 203 and 208 and Hujjat-i-Qāṭi, Calcutta, A.H.1344, pp. 94-97.

to any school or madhhab), corroborates the above interpretation. Hence, James Wise's contention that the term "ta'aiyuni" means "establishing or manifesting"¹, does not fit with the context.

The Ta'aiyuni movement was also known as Rāhī, a term derived from the Persian "rāh" which means "a path". The term, as we have seen above, was used by Sayyid Ahmad Shahīd to mean ṭarīqah (which is its Arabic equivalent) in Sirāt al-Mustaqīm. Probably, Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī indicated by the term "Rāhī", the two paths, i.e., rāh-i-nabuwwat and rāh-i-wilāyat, described by the Sayyid².

Like other reformists, Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī also opposed superstitious beliefs and un-Islamic innovations. In one of his pamphlets, he states that he found the Muslims of Eastern India plunged so much in superstitious beliefs, customs and ceremonies that he became apprehensive of Divine retribution. According to him, this was one of the reasons why he dedicated his life to the propagation of true doctrines of Islam amongst the Muslims of Bengal³. He mentions numerous un-Islamic innovations which were practised in different parts of Bengal. He especially condemned

1. James Wise: Eastern Bengal, p.7.

2. See supra., p. 34.

3. Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī: Mukāshifāt-i-Rahmat. Calcutta, A.H.1344, p.12 ff.

music, dance, raising of ta'ziah (i.e., the effigy of Husayn's tomb) on the occasion of Muharram, the rite of 'urs (i.e., death anniversary of the Pīrs) and various types of fātihah in remembrance of the dead relatives. He, however, approved fātihah provided it was observed in a modified form¹.

Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī came to Bengal in A.D.1835 and spent the rest of his life (till A.D.1873) mostly in Bengal. We have seen earlier that the Patna school was co-existing peacefully with the Farā'idīs of Bengal, and by his acceptance of the taqlīd or imitation of the Hanafī school of law, Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī might have come even nearer to the Farā'idī point of view. But, contrary to this expectation, he denounced the Farā'idīs for having suspended the congregational prayers of Jum'ah and 'Īd, and the followers of the Patna school for their hesitation to identify with one of the four recognised sunnī schools of law. He called the former as the khāriīs of Bengal² and the latter as lā-madhhab³, and identified both of them with the Wahhābīs of Arabia⁴.

1. Mawlawī Karāmat 'Alī: Mukāshifāt-i-Rahmat. Calcutta, A.H.1344, p.12 ff.

2. of. Mawlawī Karāmat 'Alī: Hujjat-i-Qāti', op.cit., pp. 94-97.

3. ibid.

4. of. Mawlawī Karāmat 'Alī: Qawī-al-Thābit. Calcutta, A.H.1344, p.4.

The vehement attack of Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī on the followers of Patna school and the Farā'idīs, however, far from uniting them into a common front against him, set them even further apart from one another. For, Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī inaugurated an era of debate amongst the Muslims of Bengal in the field of religion, and succeeded in organising an intense type of propaganda which laid more emphasis on religious differences among different groups rather than on the similarities and agreement.

The Farā'idīs, being followers of the Hanafī school of law, believed in the finality of the schools and the propriety of Taqlīd¹. On these points, they had, therefore, fundamental differences with the Patna school, which on principle rejected Taqlīd and campaigned for the revivification of Iitihād, and called upon the people to follow Prophetic tradition in preference to the prescription of the schools of law². Moreover, the followers of the Patna school differed with the Farā'idīs in holding congregational prayers of Jum'ah and 'Īd, which in the opinion of the latter were not permissible in Bengal under the British regime³.

Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī stream-lined his attack on the Farā'idīs by denouncing their practice of suspending the

1. See supra., p. 44 ff.

2. See supra., p. 50 ff.

3. See supra., p. 47 ff.

prayers of Jum'ah and 'Īd¹. In this the Patna school agreed with him. But he hit the followers of Patna school mainly for their deviation from the Taqlīd of one of the four recognised schools of law². On this latter point, the Farā'idīs approved of his arguments. Thus, there ensued a triangular fight in the field of Islamic revivalism of Bengal, which to some of the followers of the traditional customs, appeared like breaking of woeful time rather than reformation³.

The rigidity with which all parties argued their case, soon gave rise to intense bitterness. When the Ahl-i-Hadīth severed its connection with the Patna school about the middle of the nineteenth century and extended their movement to Bengal, they also posed themselves to be a rival group against the rest. The natural result was the increase of tension. Thus, as Dr. Abdul Bari says, "the controversy did not remain confined to a few controversialists or to their polemics", but debate (Munāzirah) led to altercation (Munāqasha) and altercation led to mutual friction (Mujādilah) and so on and so forth⁴.

1. See infra., Chapter vii.

2. cf. Mawlawī Karāmat 'Alī: Quwwat al-Īmān, op.cit., pp. 135 ff., 145 ff., 149 ff., 154 and 166.

3. cf. Mawlawī 'Abd al-'Alī: Sahīfat al-A'māl wa Mir'at al-Ahwāl (written circa., A.D.1885), p.40 ff.

4. cf. Fadl Husayn: al-Hayāt Ba'd al-Mamāt, p.308: quoted by Dr. Muhammad Abdul Bari in his unpublished Ph.D. thesis, "A comparative study of the Early Wahhābī Doctrines and Contemporary Reform Movements in Indian Islam" (Oxford University, 1953), p.158.

Little wonder, therefore, that during the later half of the nineteenth century the religious scene of Bengal was dominated by a type of public debate between rival groups, popularly known as bahath. Such bahath were held several times between the Farā'idīs and the Ta'āyunīs, which will be considered in a separate chapter¹.

Relations between the Farā'idīs and Ahl-i-Hadīth

The Ahl-i-Hadīth or partisans of Prophetic tradition, were those who repudiated the propriety of taqlīd or imitation of any particular school exclusively. They assert the need for following the traditions of the Prophet from original sources through ijtihād or fresh investigation regarding the rules provided by them. In government records and gazetteers, they are generally called Rāfi' Yadayn because of their peculiarity of frequently raising hands to the ears in course of changing posture in prayer. They are found scattered all over Indo-Pakistan subcontinent.

During the later half of the nineteenth century their traces are found even in the Farā'idī districts of Faridpur and Bakarganj. But, probably, due to the intellectual character of its doctrines, the Ahl-i-Hadīth never succeeded in assuming the form of a mass movement in Rural Bengal. Moreover, although the Farā'idīs are followers of the Hanafī school of law, they do not oppose the idea of following Prophetic tradition. Hence, the Ahl-i-Hadīth

1. See infra., Chapter vii.

does not appear to have come into direct conflict with the Farā'idīs. Only in one Farā'idī fatwā or legal decision, we come across a reference to the Ahl-i-Hadīth, in which the Farā'idī theologians detested their practice of holding the congregational prayers of Jum'ah and 'Īd in the villages of Bengal¹. On the whole, the Farā'idīs and Ahl-i-Hadīth appear to have been largely indifferent to each other.

1. See infra., Chapter vi.

SECTION - B

LOCAL SOCIAL PRACTICES

In the late nineteenth century James Wise classifies the Muslims of Bengal into four religious groups, viz., Sābiqī, Farā'idī, Ta'aivunī and Ahl-i-Hadīth (or Rāfi' Yadayn), and states that the traits of the old society survived in the practices of the Sābiqī alone¹. The term "sābiqī" is derived from the Arabic word "sābiq", the nominative case of sabaqa, which means "gone before". A Sābiqī is, therefore, one who follows the customs of the ancestors or those who have gone before. According to Wise, the Sābiqī group consisted of the majority of the landlords and "with few exceptions, the descendants of the old sunnī families"². He characterises them as "the conservatives" representing "the debased Hinduised religion peculiar to Muhammadan India". He further says that the Sābiqī social order was "the oldest" and "the most corrupt" which "until late" represented "the dominant State religion". "By a study of (its ?) heresies and superstitions", he says, "we acquire a truer estimate" of the Muhammadan faith in Bengal, when the revival first dawned upon the people³. In A.D.1818,

1. cf. James Wise: Eastern Bengal, pp. 6-7.

2. ibid.; it may also be noted that the bulk of the Muslim population of Eastern Bengal were sunnī as Wise himself says, "the Muhammadan population of Eastern Bengal has always been Sunnī" (ibid., p.21).

3. cf. James Wise: Eastern Bengal, p.7.

Hājī Sharī‘at Allāh considered the Muslim society of Bengal so corrupt and un-Islamic that he made tawbah or penitence, the first principle of his reform programme¹. About A.D. 1835, Mawlānā Karāmat ‘Alī of Jawnpur, found the Muslim masses of Eastern India so much plunged in superstitious beliefs and practices that he became apprehensive of Divine retribution². Even as late as A.H.1289/A.D.1872, he witnessed much more "pauperism, lethargy and negligence" in the religious behaviour of the Muslims of Southern Bengal, than in any other Muslim land³.

The Farā‘idī, Patna school, Ta‘aiyuni and Ahl-i-Hadīth movements, which represent the Islamic revivalism of the nineteenth century in this subcontinent, aimed at reforming the old socio-religious order by purging it of un-Islamic elements. It is, therefore, worthwhile to examine those popular institutions which were attached to the old order, and which the revivalists desired to abolish. The Sābiqī or the old order, however, represented a composite culture in which various strains of local and foreign traditions were fused. The foreign traditions were brought to Bengal by Muslim immigrants from the west (i.e., Central Asia, Arabia, Persia and northern India), or

1. See infra., Chapter vi.

2. cf. Mawlawī Karāmat ‘Alī: Mukāshifāt-i-Rahmat, p.3.

3. ibid.

developed locally by them. The local customs consisted of various mystic cults, customs and ceremonies which apparently represented a survival of pre-Islamic practices or blending of Muslim influence with that of the Hindu and Buddhist neighbours'. The former were imported through Northern India and both in form and procedure of observation conformed to the North-Indian pattern. But the latter, as can be well imagined, were peculiar to Bengal or Eastern India. The main features of this "popular religion" may be considered under following heads :-

- (i) Pirism.
- (ii) Mystic Cults, Peculiar to Bengal.
- (iii) Cults, Rites and Ceremonies Introduced by the Immigrants.
- (iv) Shī'ah Influence on the Sunnī Society of Bengal.
- (v) Survival of Local Customs.

(i) Pirism

The persian word "pīr" means "old", and as such the phrase "pīr mard" is understood in Persian and Urdu languages to mean "an old man". The term "pīr" is, however, especially used in Indo-Pakistan subcontinent to denote "a mystic guide", i.e., a sūfī (or mystic) who initiates disciple in mystic orders. Hence, it is generally understood in contradistinction to the term "murīd", which means "a desirous

person", i.e., a disciple. In Bengali language, the term "pīr" is exclusively used in this mystic sense and has no other meaning than "the mystic guide". The term "pīr" as used in Bengal, is, therefore, equivalent to the mystic terms "Shaykh", and "Ustādh" used in different parts of the Muslim world¹.

In the above sense, pirism can be equated with sufism. A distinction has to be made, however, between the connotation of the terms "pīr" and "sūfī", especially as they are used in Bengal. For, a Sūfī is a person who practices the science of mysticism (‘ilm-i-tasawwuf); but a Pīr is a person who, besides being a Sūfī, initiates disciple into mystic orders. In popular conversation, this distinction is almost exclusively maintained in Bengal. All pīrs are, therefore, sūfīs, but all sūfīs may not be pīrs. The significance of this distinction lies in the emphasis on the science of mysticism or tasawwuf in sufism and on the person of the Pīr in Pirism. Hence, in the early tradition of sufism, we observe that successors of a mystic are chosen on the basis of merit alone²; whereas, pirism in Bengal and elsewhere in this subcontinent tends to be hereditary.

1. M. Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics, vol. x, p.40.

2. See numerous cases in Farīd al-Dīn 'Attār's Tadhkirat al-Awliyā'.

According to the analysis of K.M.Ashraf, a class of Muslims in the pre-Mughal society of Northern India adhered to the original ideals of Islam and took also to asceticism and "other-worldly" activities; and while they "persisted in living according to their ideals, they created a peculiar awe and solemn reverence for themselves among the followers of Islam, for whom amidst their materialistic surroundings, this lure for the primitive had a special fascination". He further adds that India was already familiar with the Hindu ideal of guru, which found an "appropriate expression in corresponding belief in a Pir or a Shaykh in Muslim society. As a matter of fact, "if an ascetic had managed to scorn the world during his life time, his sons and successors were reaping a fruitful crop of worldly gains after his death"¹. Likewise, in his recent study of the pre-Mughal Muslim society of Bengal, Dr. Abdul Karim observes, "Pirism did not originate in Bengal, but the long settlement of the Muslims in this land side by side with the local people, many of whom were converted and taken to the fold of Islam made the conception deeply rooted in the society. The converts found in the Pir a resemblance of the Tantric gurus and in the tombs and dargāhs (shrines) that of Chaitya or Stupa" (worshipped by the Buddhists)². A mass of biographical data of the Muslim

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1. Kunwar Muhammad Ashraf: Life and Conditions of the People of Hindustan (1200-1550 A.D.). Calcutta, (J.A.S.B. Letters, vol. 1, 1935, no.2), 1935, p.187.
 2. Dr. Abdul Karim: Social History of the Muslims in Bengal down to A.D.1538 (Ph.D. thesis, Dacca University, 1958 now in the Press), p.270.

mystics of Bengal collected by Dr. Karim, suggest that the earliest sūfīs were known as Shāh¹ or Shaykh². This usage of the mystics appears to have gradually changed into later-day pirism³.

Dr. Karim considers pirism as the most important element of the popular force of Islam in Bengal⁴. A close examination of the available sources, such as inscriptions hagiological literature, puthis etc., shows that superhuman powers were ascribed to the sūfīs and pirs, such as "giving relief to the poor, destitutes and patients, being present at several places at a time, giving life to the dead, killing any body at their will, and foretelling the future"⁵. The people considered "the dargāh (tomb or shrine) of the Pir as a place of pilgrimage. They made offerings to the Pirs or to their departed soul, built tombs and illuminated them. The rulers made shrines and other establishments attached to them"⁶.

In nineteenth century Bengal James Wise for the first time noted two types of mystics, namely bā-shara' (i.e., those whose practices conform to sharī'ah or the Islamic system of law and morality) and be-shara' (i.e., those whose practices do not conform to the sharī'ah)⁷. The former type of mystics were also called sālik and the latter maizūb.⁸

1. Dr. Abdul Karim: Social History of the Muslims in Bengal, op.cit., p.111 ff.

2. Ibid., p.116 ff.

3. Ibid., p.145 ff.

4. Ibid., p.270.

5. Ibid., p.209.

6. Ibid., p.270.

7. cf. James Wise: Eastern Bengal, p.53.

8. Ibid.

The Arabic term sālik literally means a traveller, and in the mystic terminology, "a traveller in the path of mysticism who conscientiously observes the religious duties prescribed by Islamic law as well". The term majzūb means "one who has lost consciousness"; hence in mystic terminology, it indicates a person who, being overcome by his passion of love for God, has become unmindful to the worldly etiquette¹. It is generally believed that the desires of a majzūb are, in reality, the desires of God expressed through him. In this sense, he is compared with a corpse, resigned completely to the will of God. James Wise says that they "follow their own appetites and passions, eating and drinking whatever they fancy and leading disreputable and scandalous lives". They wander about naked or nearly naked and live on begging or charity and "are universally credited with supernatural powers". On the other hand, the sāliks are, according to Wise, "usually married men of settled habit", who initiate disciples into their orders. Consequently, the sāliks were "by far the most respected" in Bengal².

The popular type of pirism, especially the miraculous concept of the Pīrs, and the unusual reverence attached to their persons, came under sharp criticism of Sayyid Ahmad Shahīd³. Hājī Shari'at Allāh even advocated the abolition

1. cf. James Wise: Eastern Bengal, pp. 53-54.

2. ibid., p.53.

3. See MURRA, p. 64.

of the terms "pīr" and "murīd" because of this un-Islamic bias. Instead, he introduced the terms "ustād" (i.e., ustādh), which means "teacher" and "shagird" (i.e., student).¹ He also opposed the general practice of initiating the ignorant masses into mystic order². Likewise, Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī made scathing criticism of various un-Islamic practices of the Pīrzādahs (hereditary successors of the pīrs) and fake Pīrs (ja'ālī pīrs)³.

(ii) Mystic Cults (Peculiar to Bengal)

The Buddhist population of Bengal practised worshipping of Chaityas or the Stupas and adored them with flowers and burning incense. The Hindus believed in Avatār or incarnation of the deity in human body. These ideas found a suitable parallel in the pīrs in the eyes of the local converts⁴. The result was the rise of various local cults around pīrism, such as the cults of Pānch Pīr, Mānik Pīr, Ghorā Pīr, Kumbhira Pīr, and Madāri Pīr⁵. Besides, in the cult of Satya Pīr of the Muslims and Satya Nārāyan of the Hindus⁶, the two communities even stood shoulder to shoulder. As a matter of fact, Muslim relics have been found on excavation

1. See infra., Chapter iii.

2. See infra., Chapters iii and vii.

3. cf. Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī: Mukāshifāt-i-Rahmat, op.cit., p.13 ff.

4. cf. Dr. Abdul Karim: Social History of the Muslims in Bengal, op.cit., pp.210-11.

5. ibid., pp. 215-18.

6. ibid., p. 211 ff.

of Satva Bhitā, which stands on the famous Buddhist monastery at Paharpur in the district of Rajshahi¹. It is interesting to note that these local cults were propagated exclusively through Bengali literature, pointing unmistakably to their local origin.

(iii) Other Cults, Rites and Ceremonies

A number of mystic cults, such as Khawāi Khizr, Zindah Ghāzī, Pīr Badar and Shaykh Sādhu became very popular among the Muslims of Bengal². The following example will illustrate the point. The festival of Berā, dedicated to Khawāi Khizr was widely observed in the eighteenth and the nineteenth century by high and low "on the last Thursday of the Bengali month Bhādra". According to James Wise, it coincided "with the breaking of the rains" and was celebrated by the Muslims as well as ^{by} the Hindu boatmen and fishermen. The Berā was "made of paper and ornamented with tinsel"; it had a prow "resembling a female face with the crest and breast of a peacock, in imitation of the figure-head on the bow of the Mor-Pankhi (Mayur-Pankhi) pleasure boat". "The effigy", Wise further adds, "placed on a raft of plantain stem, is set afloat at sunset, and with its flickering light gives

1. cf. K.N.Dikshit: Memoirs of the Archaeological Survey of India, no. 55, Delhi, 1938, p.80.

2. cf. James Wise: Eastern Bengal, pp. 12-20.

a picturesque aspect to the dart and flooded stream"¹. Ghulām Husayn informs us that Nawāb Sirāj al-Dawlah celebrated it at Murshidabad². In A.D. 1821, it was gorgeously celebrated by the Nawāb of Murshidabad³.

The Muslim immigrants introduced a type of birth day celebration of the Prophet called variously as Mawlūd Sharīf, Mīlād Sharīf or Mīlād al-Nabī. The procedure of its observation consists of three parts, viz., (a) the narration of events immediately preceding the birth of the Prophet, (b) the description of the occasion of his birth, called tawallud sharīf, and (c) exposition of his teachings. The second part or the tawallud sharīf, is accompanied by a chorus in Arabic, Persian or Urdu. Recently, Bengali chorus has also been introduced. In accordance with traditional procedure, it is necessary to stand up when the occasion of the Prophet's birth is described, and sing the chorus loudly while standing. For, it is generally believed that the soul of the Prophet visits the function at this stage⁴.

1. cf. James Wise: Eastern Bengal, p.12.

2. cf. Siyar al-Muta'akhkherīn (English translation by M. Raymond, edited by John Briggs), vol.11, p.533.

3. Brajendranath Bandopadhyay, ed.: Sambād Patra Sekāler Kathā, Calcutta, B.S.1339, vol. 1, p.172.

4. Mīlād in this form is still practised widely in Bengal; for further description see infra.

Likewise, the rites of fātiḥah and 'urs for the remembrance of the dead, were introduced by the immigrants. According to the supporters of these rites, the term "fātiḥah" is derived from the title of the first chapter of the Qur'ān, i.e., sūrah fātiḥah. This is because the recitation or repetition of sūrah fātiḥah forms the most prominent part in the procedure of its observation¹. The general procedure of its observation also consists of three parts, viz., (a) recitation or repetition of the first chapter of the Qur'ān followed by recitation or repetition of some other portions of the Qur'ān, called suwar, (b) entertainment of the guests generally by a square meal, for which one or more fowls or even a goat is slaughtered, and (c) prayer to God for bestowing the rewards of the recitation and of the feast to the soul of the person or persons in whose remembrance the fātiḥah is held, which is called īsāl-i-thawāb².

It may be noted that the rite of fātiḥah is observed in remembrance of dead relatives, whereas the rite of 'urs is observed as the death anniversary of the pīrs. In every detail, it is a fātiḥah, but it generally attracts a large gathering. In its popular form, fātiḥah used to be observed

1. cf. MS. Fatwā on the legality of fātiḥah written in Persian by Mawlawī Faiḍ Ahmad, of the village Chunati, district Chittagong (collected by the present writer from his descendants).

2. ibid.

on the third, fourth, tenth, twentieth and fortieth days following the death of a person, and thereafter observed annually. Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī mentions six types of fātiḥah including the one just mentioned¹. The 'urs, on the other hand, is observed only once a year. On this occasion, the disciples of the deceased Pīr congregate at the dargāh, khānqah or at the residence of his successors and pass a few days in mystic exercise and pious contemplation. They usually bring their provisions with them including animals for sacrifice and cash presents for sons and successors of the Pīr. The fact that the proceedings of mīlād, fātiḥah, and 'urs are conducted mainly in Arabic, Persian and Urdu languages down to the present day points to their non-Bengali origin. Although these customs are not met with in the tradition of the Prophet or that of his immediate successors, they were given a peculiarly Islamic orientation by their enunciators, and became universally popular in the Muslim world during the medieval times.

(iv) The Shī'ah Influence on the Sunnī Society

The Shī'ah influence was introduced into the Muslim society of Bengal about the sixteenth century A.D., by the Mughal rulers of Delhi, who had imported it from Persia.

1. Mawlawī Karāmat 'Alī: Ḥaqq al-Yaqīn. Calcutta, A.H. 1344, p.39.

From that time many high officials were drawn from the Shī'ah sect, especially from Murshid Qulī Khān's time all the Nawābs of Bengal were Shī'ah, who patronised Shī'ah customs and ceremonies¹. Although the religious doctrines of Shī'ah sect did not make noticeable headway among the Muslims of Bengal, the emotional contents of the kārbāla legend succeeded in exerting great influence on the life and thought of the Sunnī masses. This is demonstrated in the production of many fine pieces of puṭhi literature commemorating the martyrdom of the Prophet's grandson, Ḥusayn, at Kārbāla, growth of a separate branch of Bengali song bewailing the death of Ḥusayn, called zārī gān, and a pompous observance of Muharram being carried on throughout the country, especially in the towns and cities and in their neighbourhood.

The observance of Muharram may be characterised as a street drama in which the sad incident of Kārbāla is reproduced. It is held on the tenth day of Muharram, the first month of the Arabian calendar, to commemorate the martyrdom of Ḥusayn. The process begins a few days earlier, with intricate rehearsal and preparation of a ta'zieh or the model of bier on which an effigy of Ḥusayn's dead body is placed. On the night of the tenth day, or the manzil k̄ā din, "the oldest and the most venerable man sleeps in

1. See James Wise: Eastern Bengal, p.6.

the building" where the ta'ziah is kept, and "a pari (i.e., a fairy) reveals to him the exact hour that the Tazia should be removed, and as that hour approaches it is placed on a platform or Gaddi Nil Bahr and crowds of Muhammadans assemble and struggle for the honourable post of carrier". It is then carried on in a dramatic procession to a distance of about four miles (in the case of Dacca city) and cast away in a tank¹.

James Wise says that the preparation of ta'ziah was, "until late years", carried on "in every Muhammadan village, and each strove to make a more laudý model than its neighbours". Garcin de Tassy and Wise considered it as closely resembling the Durgā Pujā and Ratha Yātrā of the Hindus². "In former days", Wise further adds, "one Nil Bahr built on a cenotaph in honour of Bibi Fatimah (the daughter of the Prophet), and for many generations a paper Tazia, called Turbat Haidari, has been deposited in it during Muharram"³. But today, in the villages the ta'ziahs are not taken out in procession.

(v) Survival of Local Customs

A conspicuous example of the survival of local custom is found in the utmost veneration shown to the legendary

1. cf. James Wise: Eastern Bengal, p. 9.

2. ibid.

3. ibid.

foot-mark of the Prophet (qadam rasūl) preserved on stones, which are apparently peculiar to Eastern India. The qadam rasūl is found in the Qadam Rasūl Building, erected by Sultān Nāsir al-Dīn Nuṣrat Shāh at Gaur, in which a foot-mark of the Prophet is preserved. It is said to have been brought by a celebrated Sūfī, Makhdūm Jahāniyah Jahāngasht¹. In the Chittagong town, there is a Qadam Rasūl Mosque in which such a foot-mark is preserved. Another building that preserves a foot-print of the Prophet is found at Nabiganj (near Narayanganj town of Dacca district)².

It is well-known that many Muslim villagers, especially the women, made offerings to Sitalā Devi, the goddess of small-pox, down to the early decades of the present century³. Another spirit, which was feared by Hindus as well as the Muslims, was Mātrī or Umm-i-Sibyān. It was believed to cause convulsion to a child up to the age of 18 months, after which it was powerless to inflict any injury. For the cure of such convulsions an Oihā or wizard was summoned, and should recovery ensue, he was credited with effecting it⁴.

1. cf. Dr. Abdul Karim: Social History of the Muslims in Bengal, op.cit., pp. 223-25.

2. These are still extant.

3. Compare with Shāh Ismā'īl Shahīd's criticism of the practice of worshipping the goddess of small-pox in Taqwiyat al-Imān, translated into English: Support of the Faith (by Mir Hashmat Ali), Lahore, not dated, p.50.

4. cf. James Wise: Eastern Bengal, p. 50 ff.

James Wise says that after the birth of a child "many strange rites were performed". "A bonfire (alawa) is kept smouldering at the door of chhatti-ghar (which he also calls asauchi ghar or polluted room), for six days in the hot, for twenty-one in the cold season, and an oil lamp, placed within the room, must never be permitted to go out, an attendant being always on the watch to trim it, as darkness favoured the entrance of evil spirit". Wise further adds that the Hindu mother was confined to this room for six days, and the Muslim mother generally for ten¹. Many such other customs were observed on the occasions of marriage, circumcision, menstruation, and death, especially by the women, as will be seen later on, which were abolished by Hājī Shari'at Allāh from the Farā'idī society².

The Reaction of the Sābiqī to Revivalism

It may be noted that the Taqwiyat al-Īmān of Shāh Ismā'īl Shahīd was the first attempt of the revivalists to enumerate the un-Islamic beliefs and practices which were in vogue in this subcontinent. It was published about A.D.1820. In A.D.1829, one Mawlawī Muḥammad 'Alī of Madras questioned the propriety of the reform doctrines of Shāh Ismā'īl Shahīd and Sayyid Aḥmad Shahīd and advanced 18

1. cf. James Wise: Eastern Bengal, p. 50 ff.

2. See infra., C-chapters iii and vi.

questions against the Tarīqah-i-Muhammadiyah movement¹.

A similar refutation was published by a learned theologian of Chittagong (at a later date) entitled Sharḥ al-Sudūr fī Daf'ī al-Shurūr az Radd-i-Taqwiyat al-Īmān,² which means "a clearance of doubts from the hearts (of men) in defence against evils and in refutation of Taqwiyat al-Īmān". Thus, the old society of Indo-Pakistan subcontinent reacted sharply to the puritan revivalism of the nineteenth century and in this respect Bengal was not lagging behind.

But the theologians who supported the customs of the Sabiqi society were in a disadvantageous position. For, it was hardly possible to vindicate many of the old cults, customs and ceremonies on the basis of the Qur'ān and the tradition of the Prophet and of his immediate successors. Besides, most of them contradicted the strict monotheism of Islam. The skilful preachings of the reformists to the masses were also creating doubts in their minds regarding the validity of many old institutions. For instance, in an istiftā (a formal way of seeking legal opinion from the

1. Copy preserved in the Asiatic Society of Pakistan, which also includes answers given by Mawlawī Irtidā 'Alī (a follower of Tarīqah-i-Muhammadiyah) to those questions. See also J.A.S.B., vol. 1, A.D. 1832, pp. 479-99; and M. Garcin de Tassy: Histoire de la Littérature Hindouie et Hindoustanie, Paris, 1870-71, vol. 111, p. 115.

2. The MS. of the work consisting of about 200 folios in Persian is preserved by Mawlawī Faiyad al-Raḥmān Khān, village Chunati, district Chittagong.

jurists) of the late nineteenth century, it was asked whether the fātihah as practised by the Muslims in general was to be regarded lawful or not, on account of its certain resemblances with the Hindu pūjā. The theologians (who supported the old custom) wrote a fatwā (i.e., legal opinion) to allay the fears¹. Gradually, however, the supporters of the old customs took their stand on four important points, viz., (i) finality of the schools of law and taqlīd, (ii) fātihah, (iii) ʿurs and (iv) mīlād, which occupied most important place in the sābiqī social system.

The reformists themselves were divided on the question of taqlīd, and the argument of Mawlānā Karāmat ʿAlī in favour of taqlīd and the finality of the schools created a good deal of enthusiasm among the theologians.² The Sābiqī theologians generally argued on the same line though some of them took the extreme view that the sharīʿah (the legal system of Islam) is a technical term which means "these four schools", i.e., Hanafī, Shāfiʿī, Mālikī and Hanballī³. Hence those who do not follow the prescriptions of one of the four schools, are not following the sharīʿah in the proper sense. Moreover, Mawlānā Karāmat ʿAlī argued that it was

1. MS. Fatwā of Mawlāwī Faīd Ahmad, op.cit., (in the possession of the present writer.

2. See supra., p.53 ff.

3. cf. Mawlāwī Muḥammad ʿAbd al-Qādir: Fath al-Mubīn fī Radd-i-Zafar al-Mubīn. Calcutta, circa., A.H.1300, pp.1 and 90. The main theme of the book, as the author puts it, Haṣr-i-Madḥhab-i-Arbaʿ i.e., inclusiveness of the four schools.

necessary i.e., lāzim, to follow the prescriptions of the schools, whereas the supporters of the old society even did not hesitate to apply the term obligatory, i.e. farīdah, as being the nature of this duty¹. Addressing the reformists, Mawlawī 'Abd al-Qādir says, "Oh the followers of lā madhhab ! may you die of your anger ! Do not throw slender on others. You are, in fact, corrupters of the world and not reformers"².

With regard to fātihah, 'urs and mīlād, the Sābiqī theologians generally admitted that these institutions were not in practice during the time of the Prophet and that of his immediate successors. They were, therefore, innovations. But they argued that all innovations were not necessarily evil; for, there can be two kinds of innovations, e.g., good innovations (bid'at-i-hasnah) and sinful innovations (bid'at-i-saiyi'ah), and they regarded the above institutions as "good innovations".

We have seen above that both in form and procedure of observation, fātihah and 'urs were the same. In his Fatwā

1. cf. Mawlawī Muḥammad 'Abd al-Qādir: Fath al-Mubīn fī Radd-i-Zafar al-Mubīn, op.cit., pp.2-3 and 195-96. It may be noted that the word "lāzim" connotes the meaning of "being necessary" in a general sense, and the term "farīdah" connotes an "obligatory duty" expressly enjoined by the Qur'ān, the rejection of which will turn a Muslim into an infidel.

2. ibid., pp.1 and 194.

on fātihah, Mawlawī Faīd Ahmad states that although in the composite form it has not been found in the tradition of the Prophet and that of his immediate successors, yet the parts thereof were practised separately in their times. He, therefore, justifies the propriety of the rite of fātihah on this basis¹.

Milād as a birth anniversary of the Prophet is regarded as a commendable function by all. It provides a good avenue for the propagation of the teachings of Islam, and can be held on any day of the year. It is, in fact, observed by the reformists as well as ^{by} the Sābiqī with an equal zeal. The controversy, however, arises on the question of "standing up" or qiyām, at the second part of its procedure when the occasion of the Prophet's birth or tawallud sharīf is described. The Sābiqī theologians hold that considering the visit of the Prophet's soul, qiyām is not only desirable (mustahab) but near obligatory (wālib)². The reformists, on the other hand, maintain that qiyām is superstitious and polytheistic accretion; for, according to them "reverence to the unseen" of the type which qiyām involves is due to God alone. They, therefore, regard the practice of qiyām as unlawful³.

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1. MS. Fatwā, in the possession of the present writer.
 2. MS. Fatwā on mīlād sharīf of Mawlawī Sayf Allāh Khān of the village Chunati, district Chittagong (collected by the present writer).
 3. cf. Hāfiẓ 'Abd al-Shakūr: I'lān Wālib al-Idh'ān, Milād wa Qiyām par. Calcutta, 2nd. ed., A.H.1295, pp. 5-6.

From amongst the reformists, the Ta'āyuni leader Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī advocated moderation on the question of fātiḥah and mīlād. In Ḥaqq al-Yaqīn, he maintained that in so far as fātiḥah represents recitation from the Qur'ān, entertainment of the guests and prayer to God for the weal of the dead, it is lawful¹. Although he does not appear to have expressed his opinions clearly on the point of qiyām, yet there is unmistakable evidence that he approved of it. For, in a book on mīlād, which contains the procedure of qiyām, we find Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī associating himself as the reviser and approver of the work². Nevertheless, he strongly detested 'urs in his Mukāshifāt-i-Rahmat and says, "the rite of 'urs was found neither in the tradition of the Prophet nor in that of the two generations that followed him nor even is there any basis for it in the writings of the four imām" (i.e., the founders of the four sunnī schools of law). It is, therefore, decidedly a sinful innovation. He, however, admits that some of the ancestors practised it. But it was "by way of error or negligence", which should not be a reason for its continuation³.

As pointed out earlier, fātiḥah, 'urs and mīlād were imported by the immigrants from the west and occupied

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1. cf. Mawlāwī Karāmat 'Alī: Ḥaqq al-Yaqīn, Calcutta, circa., A.H. 1344, p.39.
 2. Ihyā' al-qulūb fī Mawlūd al-Mahbūb (preserved in the Asiatic Society of Pakistan, Dacca).
 3. cf. Mawlāwī Karāmat 'Alī: Mukāshifāt-i-Rahmat. Calcutta, circa. A.H.1344, p.12.

important places in the old socio-religious system. Although the history of their origin is obscure and their procedure is not found in the tradition of the early Muslims, yet in course of time they received a peculiar Islamic orientation and their celebration was permeated by pious motive. Moreover, through long practice they also came to be regarded as prototypes of Islamic festivity. The Sābiqī 'ulamā', therefore, succeeded considerably in justifying them simply by exhortation and by exploiting the people's sentiment¹. The case of the local traditions, such as Muharram, Bherā (or Berā), the mystic cults etc., on the other hand, was on a different footing. For, their proximity and resemblance to local pujās (worship of gods and goddesses), customs and ceremonies, rendered their defence on Islamic grounds almost impossible. Moreover, in them, there were many details which pointed to the survival of pre-Islamic practices. The obscurity of the origin of fātihah, 'urs and mīlād, thus, provided even a greater opportunity for their defence. This is, therefore, the main reason why these customs survived a hard struggle of more than one century and the Muharram, Bherā and mystic cults have mostly died out.

1. A comparison of the arguments advanced by the supporters of the new doctrines and old customs, clearly shows that the latter were setting assertion against the solid reasons of the former. An illustration of these tendencies will be found in Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī's argument in favour of taqlīd as against the arguments advanced by Mawlawī Wilāyat 'Alī and Mawlawī 'Abd al-Jabbār in favour of ijtihād (see supra., pp.50 ff.)

SECTION - C.

SOCIO-ECONOMIC BACKGROUND

To the originally religious reform movement of Hājī Sharī'at Allāh, Dudu Miyān added a s strong socio-economic bias; and in this socio-economic field, the Farā'idī movement attained the zenith of its popularity by providing a platform for the peasant agitation against the oppressive Hindu zamīndārs and European indigo planters¹. This new development of the movement was a natural growth compelled by a combination of circumstances. It may be recalled that the doctrine of tawhīd or monotheism, as propounded by Hājī Sharī'at Allāh, consisted of two parts, viz., (i) acceptance of the doctrine of the unity of God and (ii) rejection of all polytheistic accretions and sinful innovations². In accordance with this doctrine, the Hājī directed his followers to refrain from any such activity which might directly or indirectly militates against the ideal of monotheism. In this context, the Farā'idīs came in conflict with the zamīndārs for the following reasons :-

In the first place, following the Permanent Settlement of A.D.1793, the big zamīndārīs of Eastern Bengal were mostly owned by the Hindu zamīndārs. The abwābs or

1. See infra., Chapters iv and viii.

2. See supra., p. 24.

illegal cesses which were levied by them on the peasantry included several items of idolatrous cesses, such as śrudh or śrāddha kharchā, paitā kharchā, Rath kharchā¹, and Durgā vritti². Hājī Sharī'at Allāh being the exponent of pure monotheism, objected to the payment of these illegal cesses on the part of the Farā'idīs, for he viewed them as encouraging polytheism. He, therefore, directed his followers to abstain from paying them. This went against the economic interest of the zamīndārs, who, being enraged by this daring action of the Farā'idī leader, imposed in addition a beard-tax on the Farā'idīs in accordance with the precedence set by the zamīndār of the 24 Parganahs on the followers of Titu Mīr³. This further aggravated the conflict between the Farā'idī peasantry and the Hindu zamīndārs.

Secondly, taking advantage of the weakness of the Muslim masses as a result of the overthrow of the Muslim official class and the impoverishment of the Muslim gentry still living in the rural areas, the powerful Hindu zamīndārs prohibited the slaughter of cows within their estates. This restriction was also opposed by the Farā'idī leader; for, he deemed it not only unjust but also encouraging idolatry as it was imposed solely on account of the Hindu conception of the divinity of cows.

1. See infra., Appendix to Chapter viii.

2. cf. James Wise: Eastern Bengal, p.24; see also infra., Chapter iv.

3. See supra., p.70.

Thirdly, even earlier in A.D.1831, the Hindu zamīndārs apprehended danger at the emphasis laid by Ḥājī Shari'at Allāh on the unity and brotherhood of his followers who were drawn from the peasantry. For the idea of unifying the Muslim peasantry who formed the majority of the population of Dacca-Jalalpur district (i.e., modern Dacca and Faridpur), conveyed a potential threat to the interest of the Hindu zamīndārs. Hence, they took steps to nip the new movement in the bud¹.

Ḥājī Shari'at Allāh was, however, primarily a religious reformer and scrupulously avoided anything which might implicate him into politics. Hence, in spite of strained relations between the two parties, no serious conflagration took place between the Farā'idī and the Hindu zamīndārs during his life time. On the other hand, Dudu Miyān being a man of bold nature, viewed the situation from a different angle and began to adopt a stronger policy even before he was elected to the leadership of the movement².

The coercive measures of the zamīndārs did little to check the growth of the Farā'idī movement³. The championing of the cause of the peasantry by Dudu Miyān made it even

1. See infra., Chapter iii.

2. See infra., Chapter iv.

3. cf. James Wise: Eastern Bengal, p.22 ff.

more popular than before and helped its rapid spread throughout Eastern Bengal¹. Backed by popular support, Dudu Miyān felt strong enough on the second year of his leadership (A.D.1841) to challenge the right of the zamīndārs to levy illegal cesses and determined to resist the realisation of such cesses by force. This new policy of the movement resulted in a series of violent conflicts, large-scale affrays and accusations and counter-accusations in the law courts from A.D.1841 to 1846. The continuous victory of Dudu Miyān in almost all of these conflicts, gave him an invincible superiority over the zamīndārs².

From A.D.1795 onwards, the Englishmen had made enormous investment of capital in the indigo industry of rural Bengal. During the first half of the nineteenth century, indigo came to be regarded as the most important export goods of Bengal³. In the districts of Dacca, Faridpur and the Madaripur subdivision of Bakarganj, where the Farā'idīs were most influential, numerous indigo factories were set up by European planters. Indigo was grown by contracts with the peasantry and the mode in which this contract system was developed, proved to be a forced cultivation⁴. For, the lands of the raiyats in which indigo was

1. See infra., Chapter iv.

2. ibid.

3. See infra.

4. See infra.

to be sown was marked out by the planter irrespective of the wishes of the raiyats and the latter had no choice but to sow indigo in them. Moreover, in the process of the payment of remuneration various complications cropped up to the utter disadvantage of the raiyats. Naturally the raiyats became averse to indigo cultivation from about A.D.1822.¹

About A.D.1841, the Farā'idīs came in conflict with Mr. Dunlop, an indigo planter of Madaripur, and complained that his manager of Panch Char factory, namely Kali Prasad Kanjhi Lal oppressed them like the Hindu zamīndārs. In the process of defending the rights of the Farā'idī peasantry, Dudu Miyañ naturally came in conflict with Mr. Dunlop and his manager. About A.D.1846, violent affays occurred between the two parties².

Thus, the development of the Farā'idī movement from a purely religious programme to an economic struggle was because of its upholding the cause of the peasantry against the oppression of the zamīndārs and indigo planters. The great popularity of the Farā'idī movement on this account points to Dudu Miyan's successful utilisation of the antagonism of the peasantry to the zamīndārs and planters for

1. cf. Samāchār Chandrikā (Bengali newspaper), dated the 18th May, 1822, quoted in Brajenāranath Bandopadhyay, ed.: Sambād Patre Sekāler Kathā, Calcutta, B.S. 1339, vol. 1, pp. 108-109.

2. See infra., Chapter iv.

the enhancement of the movement. The resentment against the oppression of the zamīndārs and planters was already widespread among the peasantry and Dudu Miyañ lost no time to exploit it in his favour. Moreover, the widespread resentment among the peasantry and a general tendency for agitation against the zamīndārs and planters appear to have arisen from their mutual relationship. Hence, in order to bring out the real import of the socio-economic programme of the Farā'idī movement, an examination of the landlord-peasant and planter-raiyat relationship as it existed during the time of Dudu Miyañ (i.e., A.D.1840-1862), is necessary.

The Position of the Zamīndār in Rural Bengal
Before and After British Ascendancy

During the Muslim rule, the zamīndārs occupied most important position in the rural society of Bengal. Besides being holders of zamīndārī estates (which accounted for about 10% of the total arable lands), the zamīndārs were also regarded as the fiscal officers of the government in whom the task of collecting revenues from the neighbouring landholders and raiyats and a civil and a criminal jurisdiction to try minor cases, were vested. For the execution of sentence, they were, however, required to obtain approval of the higher authorities¹. They were also assigned the Police

1. cf. Calcutta Review, vol. xii, A.D.1849, p. 517 ff.

duty of their areas and in order to prosecute this duty satisfactorily, an establishment of rural Police was attached to their zamīndārī¹. Moreover, by the terms of the zamīndārī grant (sanad), they were bound to produce the robber and the plundered goods in case of any robbery being committed within their areas². They were also bound to co-operate with the authorities of the civil and criminal courts in apprehending criminals and anti-social elements³. Thus, in the rural society, they represented not only the higher class but also the interest of the government.

It may, however, be noted that the assignment of the zamīndārī was theoretically made on a temporary basis for a term of years or for the lifetime of a zamīndār. But in practice, the successors of the zamīndār were generally allowed to inherit the estate provided the stipulated revenues were regularly paid. The zamīndārs of Bengal were often considered to be short-sighted and selfish, and hence prone to be oppressive to the raiyats and to be refractory to the government. The whole country was, therefore, divided into a number of districts or fawzdārī and a fawidār with the rank of 1,000 to 4,000 horses, was appointed to each. The most important duty of the fawidār was to keep the

1. cf. Calcutta Review, vol. xii, A.D.1849, p.528.

2. ibid., pp. 522-28.

3. ibid.

zamīndārs under constant vigilance and, whenever necessary, to "administer correction to them"¹. Being the administrative head of the district, the fawidār was also responsible for the maintenance of peace and tranquillity by suppressing all sorts of lawlessness, apprehending criminals, guarding the high ways, protecting the tax-payers and checking all excesses and oppressions, especially on the multitude².

In all events, whether for faithlessness to the government or oppression on the people, the zamīndārī was liable to be snatched away as a measure of punishment. The temporary nature of the zamīndārī tenure and the vigilance exercised by the fawidār, therefore, operated as checks to the excesses of the zamīndār.

Under the British rule, the position of the zamīndār appears to have undergone a substantial change. In the first place, his jurisdiction to try minor civil and criminal cases was withdrawn and vested in the law courts. Secondly, in A.D.1793, the zamīndārī Police was abolished and replaced by government Police³. Thirdly, in A.D.1892, the zamīndārs were relieved of the responsibility of producing the robbers and plundered goods in the event of any robbery being committed within their estates and declared responsible only in

1. cf. Siyar al-Muta'akhkherīn (English translation by M. Raymond), Calcutta, 1902, vol. iii, pp.178 ff. and 204-205.

2. ibid., p.204.

3. cf. Calcutta Review, vol. xii, A.D.1849, p.528.

cases of "their connivance with the robbers should be fully proved"¹.

Hastings's policy of lease-farming revenues to the highest bidders (A.D.1772-1793) and Lord Cornwallis's Permanent Settlement (A.D.1793), had drastically affected the old landed gentry of Bengal. In the first place, the lease-farming system stipulated cash security which the old zamīndārs were unable to pay² and the policy of leasing the zamīndārīs to the highest bidders attracted a class of speculators from among the bāniyāns (brokers of trade), gomashtas (agents and managers of trading concerns) mahājans (money lenders) and bankers, all Hindu, who had ready money to undertake such enterprises³. Secondly, it is estimated that one-third to one-half of the zamīndārīs belonging to the old gentry was sold by the rigours of the laws provided by the Permanent Settlement, which were mostly bought by the rich parvenus of Calcutta⁴. Thirdly, the general tendency of the Permanent Settlement was to recognise the Hindu Nāibs and Shiqdārs (i.e., managers and tax-collectors of the zamīndārī estates) who were in the employ of the old Muslim

1. cf. Calcutta Review, vol. xii, A.D.1849, p.528 and vol.iii, A.D.1847, pp. 150-51.

2. cf. Dr. A.R.Mallick: The Development of the Muslims of Bengal and Bihar (Ph.D. thesis, London University, 1953, unpublished), p.40.

3. ibid.

4. cf. N.K.Sinha: Economic History of Bengal, from Plassey to Permanent Settlement. Calcutta, 1956, vol. i, p.4.

and Hindu zamīndārs, as landlords¹. An English document recovered by an English officer in A.D.1842, states that in one district of Bengal "may now be seen about a dozen of landlords among whom the whole of the soil, with the exception of a few rent-free tenures, is parcelled out. All save two are men whose fathers were menials (i.e., of the old zamīndārs) and adventurers of the lowest extraction"². James O'Kineally observes that the above policy elevated the Hindu tax-collectors, who up to that time had held but unimportant position, to the status of landlords³.

The revenue policy of the British government, thus, effected a change, not only in the tenure of the zamīndārī but in the process of that change, the old landed gentry was also replaced by a commercial class of Hindus and by the managers and tax-collectors of the old gentry. This change of hands appears to have brought about a corresponding change in the character of landlord-peasant relationship.

According to an experienced English officer (who wrote in A.D.1842), the old landed gentry, in spite of their many faults, developed a filial affection for the mass of the people through long and hereditary association

1. cf. W.W.Hunter: Our Indian Musalmans. London, 1871, p.159.

2. cf. Calcutta Review, vol. 1, A.D.1844, p.193.

3. cf. W.W.Hunter: Our Indian Musalmans, op.cit., p.160.

with them. Being men of honour, they were actuated in their dealings with the masses by the sentiments of "pride and love" in return of the humble devotion of the peasantry and on account of "terror and shame" at their curses. These sentiments filled their hearts and disposed them to "cherish and protect" the flock of brethren committed to their charge¹. In their different capacity as zamīndārs, representative of the government and protector and patron of the people, they "held sway over the hearts as well as on the life and fortune" of the mass of the people, who on their part looked towards them for leadership and guidance from the depth of the village life².

The modern zamīndārs who succeeded them were, on the other hand, a class of businessmen and adventurers, who invested their capital or grasped landed property solely for reaping rich profits out of it. In A.D.1842, the head of the Bengal Police reported that the zamīndārs of Faridpur did not care for anything beyond extorting all they could from their tenants by any means³. Another document published in A.D.1844, says that the first care of some of these new zamīndārs after gaining possession of landed property, was to "harbour colonies of roving banditti and share their plunder"⁴. It further accuses them of employing banditti

1. cf. Calcutta Review, vol. 1, A.D. 1844, p. 189 ff.

2. ibid.

3. ibid., pp. 215-16.

4. ibid., p.193.

as a fixed source of income¹. This is corroborated by the report of the Magistrate of Dacca-Jalalpur (i.e., modern Dacca and Faridpur), dated A.D.1799, which also complains that the zamīndārs protected the robbers and criminals and shared their plunder². Moreover, being relieved of the responsibility of "producing robbers and plundered goods" from A.D.1792, no effective check existed to stop the excesses of the zamīndārs. The English Judges and magistrates (surrounded by a host of native law-officers, Police and clerks who were bribed by the zamīndārs), were helpless to right the wrongs: rather, by the cunning manipulation of the zamīndārs, they often proved instrumental to add to the power and influence of the former³. In A.D. 1842, the head of the Bengal Police stated that the Hindu zamīndārs of Faridpur appeared to have done every thing which could degrade the Muslim peasants, their religion and even their females⁴.

An English officer characterised the change by which the old landed gentry was replaced by the new class of

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1. cf. Calcutta Review, vol. 1, A.D.1844, p.194.
 2. cf. "A Police Report of the Zilah Dacca-Jalalpur dealing with the manners and morals of the people" (edited by the present writer), J.P.H.S., vol. vii, part 1, 1959, pp.29 and 33.
 3. cf. Calcutta Review, vol. 1, A.D.1844, p.189 ff. and 194 ff.; see also quotation from Hastings to this effect by R.Richards in Report of the Select Committee before the House of Lords, 1830, p.334, cited by Dr. A.R.Mallick in The Development of the Muslims of Bengal and Bihar, op.cit.,p.60.
 4. See infra., Chapter iv.

zamīndārs as a "loathsome revolution" which elevated a class of "miscreant adventurers" to the position of landholders whose oppressive hands "penetrate into and devour the most secret fibres, not of political but of social and domestic existence" and to whom the old spirit of patriarchal and feudal tenderness which protected the masses from destruction, was not known¹. The head of the Bengal Police observed in A.D.1842, that numerous instances show that the bad passion of the zamīndārs, "strengthened by a sense of immunity from all control by the Police, nay, of their protection by that body at the time of actual commission of crimes", often lead to daring crimes and licentious tyranny². Another English officer says that the "absolute impunity" enjoyed by the zamīndārs, not only screens them from the vengeance of law but arms them with an irresistible power to multiply and direct every element of crime to their own profit and the gratification of the desire for rapacity inherent in adventurers divorced from every human tie that can inflict remorse³. No wonder, therefore, that the socio-economic conditions of Rural Bengal during the first half of the nineteenth century reminded this Englishman the Robespierian regime of the Revolutionary France. He says:⁴

"It will be found that the landlords in every district of Bengal have established a reign of terror

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1. cf. Calcutta Review, vol. 1, A.D.1844, p.196.
 2. ibid., pp. 215-16.
 3. ibid., p.196.
 4. ibid.

not very remotely analogous to that of the Robespierian era of the French Revolution. Its foundations are the same, viz., an unlimited command on false witnesses and a tribunal from which is practically banished every check which can distinguish a court from a butcher's shamble".

Evidences at our disposal show that the raiyats were affected in many ways by the Permanent Settlement. In the first place, it not only handed over the lands to the new class of zamindars in perpetuity but the power of fixing up the rent was also confided to them, which permitted reck-renting¹. Moreover, the zamindars usually farmed out their estates to such contractors or patnidars who offered them the largest profit vis-a-vis the government dues. The patnidars again farmed them to sub-patnidars on the same conditions "till farm within farm became the order of the day, each resembling a screw over a screw, the last coming down to the tenants with the pressure of all"². In A.D. 1832, Hugh Stock, the chief of the Revenue Board, mentioned a case in which the raiyat was four degrees removed from the actual zamindar by patnidars and sub-patnidars, each of whom received a profit, which was undoubtedly squeezed

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1. cf. Minute of Evidences, Select Committee, House of Commons, 1832, vol. iii, p.23, in Reply to Questions 220 and 221, quoted by Dr. A.R.Mallick in The Development of the Muslims of Bengal and Bihar, op.cit., p.60.
 2. cf. Minute of Evidences, Select Committee, House of Commons, 1832, vol. iii, p.23, quoted by Dr.A.R.Mallick: The Development of the Muslims of Bengal and Bihar, op.cit.,p.60.

out of the income of the raiyat¹. Buchanan found that exactions by confinement or blows was most common and the grant of false receipts by taking advantage of the illiteracy of the raiyat, was commonly resorted to by the agents of the zamindars and patnidars². The contention of Hugh Stock is corroborated by a local newspaper, which deplored in A.D. 1833, the existence of four to five degrees of patnidars in almost all zamindari estates³.

Secondly, Metcalfe characterised the Permanent Settlement as the most sweeping act of oppression by which the landed property of the country was transferred from the class of people entitled to it to a set of Baboos or Hindu gentlemen "who made their wealth by bribery and corruption". He regarded Lord Cornwallis as the creator of private property for the zamindars by destroying hundreds or thousands of proprietors for every one of them⁴. In this process, many raiyats and sub-tenure holders were dispossessed of their land-rights. This was rendered possible especially because the settlements were usually made without survey,

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1. cf. Minute of Evidences, Select Committee, House of Commons, 1832, vol. iii, p.23, quoted by Dr.A.R.Mallick: The Development of the Muslims of Bengal and Bihar, op.cit.,p.60.
 2. cf. M. Martin: The History, Antiquities, Topography and Statistics of Eastern India, London, A.D.1838, vol.ii, p.909.
 3. cf. Brajendranath Bandopadhyay, ed.: Sambād Patre Sekāler Kathā, Calcutta, B.S.1342, vol. iii, p.298.
 4. cf. J.W.Kaye: Selections from the Papers of Lord Metcalfe, London, 1855, p.254.

without records of landed rights and even without ascertaining the boundaries of estates¹. Thus, an English officer found the multitude of Rural Bengal in A.D.1842, "lie trembling on the remotest verge of human misery and brutalisation" and says that no honest and thoughtful person would deny that a peculiar combination of desolating causes was at the root of their misery and which was also responsible for the destruction of their happiness. The main cause, in his opinion, was the overthrow of the old landed gentry by a class of adventurers².

Thirdly, in the normal process of justice, redress against the oppression of the zamīndārs was almost unattainable to the ignorant masses because of the complicated system of civil procedure introduced by the British, the huge expenditure it incurred on the parties to a suit, and the corruption and bribery in which the zamīndārs and their agents were adept³. At one time, complaints are said to have crowded upon Hastings whereupon he only had the mortification on finding that the existing system of law left him "without the means of pointing out to the complainants any mode" for getting redress. In A.D.1782, Sayyid

1. cf. Dr. A.R. Mallick: The Development of the Muslims of Bengal and Bihar, op.cit., p.40.

2. cf. Calcutta Review, vol. 1, A.D.1844, p.189 ff.

3. cf. Dr. A.R. Mallick: The Development of the Muslims of Bengal and Bihar, op.cit., p.61.

Ghulām Husayn Khān reported that the zamīndārs succeeded in getting their servants, favourites, dependents, spies and emissaries into the service of the government; and in collusion with these hosts of government servants, they "commit upon the inhabitants a variety of oppressions" with utmost safety¹. In A.D.1799, the Magistrate of Dacca-Jalalpur (i.e., modern Dacca and Faridpur) complained that the zamīndārs concealed and secretly protected the decoys (i.e., robbers) and the agents of the zamīndārs attending the law courts "often act as their spies and give them secret information of any measure taken by the Magistrate against them"². In A.D.1842, the head of the Bengal Police accused the Police of being in collusion with the oppressive zamīndārs³. The above evidences, which can be enormously multiplied, show that the chances for the raiyats' getting redress of their grievances against the zamīndārs were bleak.

1. cf. Siyar al-Muta'akhkherīn (English Translation by M. Raymond), op.cit., vol. iii, p.175.

2. cf. J.P.H.S., vol. vii, part 1, p. 33.

3. See infra., Chapter iv.

INDIGO INDUSTRY IN BENGAL

Indigo was cultivated in Bengal from early times. As an export goods, indigo of Bengal found its way to European market in the middle of the seventeenth century¹. It began to attract European capitalists from the close of the eighteenth century. In A.D.1795, Mr. Bond, a "free merchant", erected an indigo factory at Rupdiya, in the district of Jessore². Next year Mr. Tuft obtained permission from the government to start an indigo factory at Mahmudshahi, in the same district, and about A.D.1800, Mr. Taylor is reported to own several indigo works. In A.D. 1801, Dr. Anderson, the Civil Surgeon, erected two big factories, one at Nilganj and the other at Berandi, in the district of Jessore³.

According to government sources, indigo was an indigenous industry in Nadiya, and the big European concerns sprang from "very small native factories" that were bought up by the Europeans⁴. In A.D.1805, the produce of indigo

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1. cf. Dr. A.R.Mallick: The Development of the Muslims of Bengal and Bihar, op.cit., p.62, quoted from Watt's Dictionary of the Economic Products of India, vol.iv, pp. 391-93; Calcutta Review, vol. xxx, no.lix, A.D.1858, pp.189-91 and Parliamentary Papers, Report of the Indigo Commission, vol. xlv, 1861, pp. 75-92.
 2. cf. L.S.S.O'Malley: Bengal District Gazetteers, Jessore. Calcutta, 1912, p.40.
 3. ibid.
 4. J.H.E.Garrett: Bengal District Gazetteers, Nadia. Calcutta, 1910, p. 32.

in Bengal and Bihar amounted to 64,000 maunds, which sufficiently indicates its extensive cultivation and importance as an export goods¹. In A.D. 1811, the district of Jessore is described as being "crowded with indigo factories"². Gradually, the whole of Bengal, especially the "indigo districts", namely Faridpur, Dacca, Jessore, Rajshahi, Nadiya and Murshidabad³, became "dotted with indigo concerns" owned by English capitalists⁴.

Prompted by the rush of English capital to Rural Bengal, the indigo industry flourished by leaps and bounds. In A.D. 1843, the annual output of Indigo in Bengal and Bihar had "doubled" the figure of 1805⁵, i.e., amounted to about 1,29,610 maunds. Naturally, indigo manufacture was regarded as the "most important industry" of Rural Bengal during the first half of the nineteenth century⁶.

Thus, as the policy of revenue farming and Permanent Settlement attracted the parvenus of Calcutta for capital

1. cf. Dr.A.R.Mallick: The Development of the Muslims of Bengal and Bihar, op.cit., p.62, quoted from Watt's Dictionary, op.cit., pp.391-93.
2. cf. L.S.S.O'Malley: Bengal District Gazetteers, Jessore, op.cit., p.40.
3. cf. Dr.A.R.Mallick: The Development of the Muslims of Bengal and Bihar, p. 62.
4. cf. J.H.E.Garrett: Bengal District Gazetteers, Nadia, op.cit., p.32; L.S.S.O'Malley: Bengal District Gazetteers, Jessore, op.cit., p. 40.
5. cf. Dr. A.R.Mallick: The Development of the Muslims of Bengal and Bihar, op.cit., p.62.
6. cf. J.H.E.Garrett: Bengal District Gazetteers, Nadia, op.cit., p.32; L.S.S.O'Malley: Bengal District Gazetteers, Faridpur, Calcutta, 1925, p.34; and Brajendranath Bando-padhay, ed. : Sambād Patre Sekāler Kathā, Calcutta, B.S.1339 (extract from contemporary Bengali newspaper), vol.1, p.198.

investment, so also the indigo industry attracted the English capitalists to invest enormous sum in the rural economy of Bengal. The former, however, came as zamīndārs and as such represented only a change of hands; but the latter being industrialists, opened up a new and profitable avenue in the rural economy of Bengal. How far the indigo planters were profited by their capital investment, does not concern us here. Our interest lies in forming an opinion about the influence that was exerted by them on the rural populace and on rural life. Hence, the present study will be confined to three important points, viz., (i) the status of the planters in the socio-economic organisation of the rural society, (ii) the mode of indigo cultivation and (iii) whether indigo industry was profitable to the peasantry or not.

(i) The Status of the Planter

In setting up a factory, two things are generally noticeable: an application to the government for licence and another for the allotment of land¹. It does not, however, appear that at the early stage the planters acquired more quantity of lands than what was barely necessary for the

1. cf. L.S.S.O'Malley: Bengal District Gazetteers, Jessore, op.cit., p.40.

erection of the factories. But, soon the European planters gained an important position in the rural society and their growing influence alarmed the zamīndārs and sub-tenure holders, who, finding their influence being interfered with by the planters endeavoured to stir up a feeling against indigo cultivation. This clash of interests led to quarrels and disputes and eventually, to violent fighting. For, the planters took a serious view of the situation and according to government sources, had recourse to "fighting the native zamīndārs with bands of clubmen"¹. Garrett says that the planters were driven to this extreme measure by their failure "to get redress from the Courts"². The fact that in spite of being Englishmen, they could not get redress from the English Courts, indicates that the planters were on the wrong side.

This conflict is said to have induced the planters to buy "real property" even at "fancy prices" in order to be able to provide lands to the cultivators to grow indigo and thereby to get rid of the annoyance and hostility of the native proprietors of land. The planters thus "surmounted the difficulty" arising from their clash of interests with the zamīndārs "by themselves becoming proprietors and sub-tenure holders of the lands" that surrounded their

1. cf. J.H.E. Garrett: Bengal District Gazetteers, Nadia,
op.cit., p.32.

2. ibid., p.32.

factories¹. Hence, O'Malley could state without hesitation that an indigo concern represented by its manager in the district, "was to all intents and purposes a zamīndārī of the lands belonging to the concern"². The planters themselves appear to have behaved like the zamīndārs. They are accused by the Judge of Nadiya in A.D.1854, of levying illegal cesses on the tenants with which they "inadequately requited the services of labourers, boatmen, and hackney drivers"³. Thus, although the planter was primarily an industrialist, his position in the rural society was analogous to that of a zamīndār.

(11) The Mode of Indigo Cultivation

At the early stage of the industry, the European concerns did not hold lands for the purpose of growing indigo plants. Hence, the planters usually entered into an agreement with the cultivators through the headman of the village to the effect that a certain portion of land of the village be set apart for the cultivation of indigo. At the beginning of the season (i.e., in October), the planter ear-marked the requisite lands for indigo cultivation and made over the necessary quantity of indigo seeds to those raiyats whose lands were thus chosen⁴.

1. cf. J.H.E. Garrett: Bengal District Gazetteers, Nadia, op.cit., pp.32-33.

2. cf. L.S.S.O'Malley: Bengal District Gazetteers, Jessore, op.cit., p.103.

3. cf. Selections From the Records of the Government of Bengal, no.xxxiii, part 1, Papers Related to Indigo Cultivation in Bengal, Calcutta, 1860, p.4.

4. cf. L.S.S.O'Malley: Bengal District Gazetteers, Jessore, op.cit., p.104.

O'Malley holds that lands "suitable for indigo were not generally very suitable for paddy". It will be seen later on that this opinion is not borne out by facts though it may be admitted that rotation of indigo and paddy cultivation, as he says, benefited the two crops¹. At any rate, the cultivation of indigo was simple and less laborious than that of other crops; for, it required no care in between sowing of the seed and cutting of the plants. When the plants were ready for sickle, they were cut, collected in "bundles" and presented to the factory by the raiyat. In an average good field of one bighā (or 1/3 of an acre) six bundles of plants were expected and for each bundle the raiyat received six annas (3/8 Rupee). Hence, in a good season the raiyat received an amount of Rs. 2½ as the hire and wage-labour for a bighā of land².

O'Malley says that this was "probably a fair price for the production of one bighā of land during the first half of the nineteenth century" though at the "close" of that period it was "rediculously low", as the same average good field would bring a profit of Rs. 16 to Rs. 20, if paddy is sown in it instead of indigo³. On the basis of above calculation, the English writers generally agree that the

1. cf. L.S.S.O'Malley: Bengal District Gazetteers, Jessore, Op.cit., p.104.

2. ibid.

3. ibid.

O'Malley holds that lands "suitable for indigo were not generally very suitable for paddy". It will be seen later on that this opinion is not borne out by facts though it may be admitted that rotation of indigo and paddy cultivation, as he says, benefited the two crops¹. At any rate, the cultivation of indigo was simple and less laborious than that of other crops; for, it required no care in between sowing of the seed and cutting of the plants. When the plants were ready for sickle, they were cut, collected in "bundles" and presented to the factory by the raiyat. In an average good field of one bighā (or 1/3 of an acre) six bundles of plants were expected and for each bundle the raiyat received six annas (3/8 Rupee). Hence, in a good season the raiyat received an amount of Rs. 2½ as the hire and wage-labour for a bighā of land².

O'Malley says that this was "probably a fair price for the production of one bighā of land during the first half of the nineteenth century" though at the "close" of that period it was "rediculously low", as the same average good field would bring a profit of Rs. 16 to Rs. 20, if paddy is sown in it instead of indigo³. On the basis of above calculation, the English writers generally agree that the

1. cf. L.S.S.O'Malley: Bengal District Gazetteers, Jessore, op.cit., p.104.

2. ibid.

3. ibid.

raiyats were not averse to indigo cultivation at the beginning but became so later on when the price of other crops, especially of paddy, "had been doubled" and when the wage of "agricultural labour also went up". For, the price of indigo paid by the planters remained "stationary" though the raiyats were "still required to cultivate indigo to the same extent as before"¹. The above evidence shows that about A.D.1850, the raiyat was normally 5 to 7 times loser for cultivating indigo instead of paddy.

(iii) The Indigo Industry and the Peasantry

Gastrell, the Director of Survey (A.D.1855-1862), noted that the numerous indigo and sugar factories in the districts of Jessore and Faridpur, imparted an air of civilisation². According to O'Malley and Garrett, the districts of Jessore and Nadiya became "dotted with indigo concerns"³ as early as A.D.1811. The introduction of a large-scale industry in Rural Bengal and the establishment of innumerable factories in the country-side opened up many new opportunities. In the first place, it

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1. cf. L.S.S.O'Malley: Bengal District Gazetteers, Faridpur, op.cit., p.30; J.H.E.Garrett: Bengal District Gazetteers, Nadiya, op.cit., p.32, and L.S.S.O'Malley: Bengal District Gazetteers, Jessore, op.cit., pp.103-104.
 2. J.E.Gastrell: Geographical and Statistical Report of the Districts of Jessore, Furraddpore and Backergunge, Calcutta, A.D.1858, p.7.
 3. See Bengal District Gazetteers, op.cit., Jessore, p.40, and Nadiya, p.32.

offered a good deal of employment to the villagers; secondly, as the managers and the employees of the factories lived in the villages, they enriched the coffers of the village shop-keepers and of the producers of foodstuffs; and thirdly, the presence of many educated persons, such as the managers, sub-managers, and clerks of the factories, in the rural society was likely to shed the light of civilisation. Thus, the indigo industry could have been a channel, not only for raising the living standard in Rural Bengal but also for moral and intellectual upliftment of the mass of the people.

But the findings of the Inquiry Commission of A.D. 1860, pointed to the contrary that the mode of indigo cultivation was ruinous to the peasantry. The Judge of Bakarganj says that in spite of all general advantages, "I have not the slightest doubt that the indigo has been obtained on a system ruinous to the Planters' tenants; then however valuable indigo may be as an article of commerce, it would be better for the sake of the Ryots if there was not a stick of Indigo in the land"¹. The Judge of Nadiya says, "my own idea, however, is that it is no longer enough to measure the advantages of European capital and energy by the value of our exports of Indigo:

1. Selections From the Records of the Government of Bengal, no. xxxiii, part 1, Papers Related to Indigo Cultivation in Bengal. Calcutta, 1860, pp. 68-69.

the effect of the system upon the people should also be considered"¹. The point, therefore, calls for a close examination.

In the first place, it has been noted above that for setting up a factory the planters applied to the government for "licence" and "allotment of land". It is not known whether any specific jurisdiction was also given to each factory at this early stage. Disputes, however, soon arose among the planters themselves as to the right of the owner of a factory "to sow in different villages"², especially in the neighbourhood of another factory. Even as late as A.D.1839, "bloody conflicts" are reported to have occurred among them on this issue³. Consequently the government laid down the boundaries of different indigo factories beyond which no party could extend its indigo cultivation "except under a penalty"⁴. Thus, in course of time, each indigo factory acquired a specific jurisdiction within which it had the exclusive right to grow indigo.

Secondly, taking the advantage of their superior position as Englishmen and of their monopolistic jurisdiction,

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1. Selections From the Records of the Government of Bengal, no. xxxiii, part i, Papers Related to Indigo Cultivation in Bengal. Calcutta, 1860, p. 1.
 2. cf. J.H.E.Garrett: Bengal District Gazetteers, Nadia, op.cit., p.32.
 3. cf. Brajendranath Bandopadhyay, ed.: Sambād Patre Sekāler Kathā, op.cit., vol. iii, p.294.
 4. cf. J.H.E.Garrett: Bengal District Gazetteers, Nadia, op.cit., p.32.

the planters compelled the raiyats to sow indigo under duress even when the latter were unable or unwilling to do so. According to a contemporary local newspaper the raiyats became generally averse to indigo cultivation in eighteen-twenties, owing to the mode of contract in which they were forced to enter¹. This information is significant because it contradicts the opinion of the English writers that the aversion of the raiyats was due to the rise of the price of paddy². It may be recalled that the mode of indigo cultivation at the beginning was simple: the seed was given free of cost, the raiyat sowed it in his land, cut the plants when ready for the sickle and collected them into bundles, then on presenting the bundles to the factory, he received his due³. The land was, however, marked out by the planter⁴ irrespective of the wishes of the raiyat who owned the land⁵, and the raiyat had no alternative but to sow indigo in it. Nevertheless, as paddy was selling at a very low price, indigo cultivation was profitable. In eighteen-twenties, the mode of transaction between the planter and the raiyat appears to have changed. For, in this period and afterwards the practice

1. cf. Samāchār Chandrikā, dated the 18th May, 1822, quoted in Brajendranath Bandopadhyay, ed.: Sambād Patre Sekāler Kathā, Calcutta, B.S.1339, vol. i, pp.108-109.

2. See supra., p.132 ff.

3. See supra., p.132.

4. cf. L.S.S.O'Malley: Bengal District Gazetteers, Jessore, op.cit., p.104.

6. ibid.

of taking advance-money (dādnī) by the raiyat is almost universally noticeable, and the new mode of contract stood as follows: the raiyat received the seed as before and an advance of two rupees per bighā and received the rest of the amount, i.e., $\frac{1}{2}$ Rupee, on delivery of the bundles¹. ~~The shows contemporary source points out that the~~ Samāchār Chandrikā, a Bengali newspaper (18 May, 1822) states that the raiyats would neither take advance nor sow indigo willingly because of the mode of contract in which he was forced to take dādnī or advance money². As, down to A.D. 1836, paddy was selling at the rate of 4 maunds per rupee³, the wage for growing indigo at the rate of $2\frac{1}{2}$ rupees, was a considerable sum. Hence the argument of the English writers that the reluctance of the raiyat was due to the rise of the price of rice proves untenable.

Thirdly, from the legal point of view, a contract implies free choice of the parties concerned. But, as the raiyat had no choice either in the allotment of land or in the matter of sowing, the indigo cultivation was always a forced cultivation. A. Sconce, Judge of Nadiya, says (A.D. 1854) that the raiyats "are working cattle merely, not men

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1. cf. Selections From the Records of the Government of Bengal, no. xxxiii, part 1, Papers Related to Indigo Cultivation in Bengal. Calcutta, 1880, pp. 110-111.
 2. cf. Brajendranath Bandopadhyay, ed.: Sambād Patre Sekāler Kathā. Calcutta, B.S. 1342, vol. 1, pp. 108-109.
 3. ibid., vol. iii, p. 297.

reconciled to labour by their gains"¹. A. Grote, Officiating Commissioner of Nadiya Division, says (A.D.1856) that "disputes" between the planter and the raiyat "regarding the forcible sowing of Indigo must, to a certain extent, always exist: for it must be clear to everyone that the cultivation of Indigo is for the most part distasteful to the Ryots, who would much prefer cultivating rice and other crops of grain, and seldom, if ever, voluntarily take advances for Indigo"².

Fourthly, according to J. Dunbar, District Magistrate of Jessore (A.D.1854), the planters "always insisted" on having the "best lands" of the raiyats for the cultivation of indigo, and at the same time paid "less than a fairly remunerative price" for the bundles of indigo plants when brought to the factory³.

Fifthly, A. Sconce says that the planters of Nadiya are generally accused of measuring "two-and-a-half beegah" of the raiyat's land for one bighā, and counted two bundles of indigo plants for one bundle⁴. Gopal Lall Mitter, Deputy Magistrate of Natore (in Rajshahi) states from his personal experience (A.D.1856) that the agents of the

1. Selections From the Records of the Government of Bengal, no. xxxiii, part 1, Papers Related to Indigo Cultivation in Bengal, op.cit., p.4.

2. ibid., p.93.

3. ibid., p.15.

4. ibid., p.3.

planters measured one-and-a-half bighā of land for one bighā, and six bundles of indigo plants for two factory bundles¹.

Sixthly, Gopal Lall Mitter further states (A.D.1856) that the raiyats were "very unwilling to cultivate indigo on the existing system of advances". For, they get an advance of two rupees per bighā, and "had to pay out of these two rupees to the gomashtahs, amins and tagādgīrs, who are notoriously known to be an extortionate and oppressive class of people and who never scruple to benefit themselves at the expense of the Ryots"². Judge A.Sconce says, "it is universally assumed "that the raiyats do not" retain more than a half or a third or less than a third of the advances ostensibly paid to them"³. "I do not know" he further adds, "to what extent the advance consists partly of cash and partly of unliquidated balances of past years". He saw one case in which the raiyat received $\frac{1}{2}$ Rupee in cash and $6\frac{1}{4}$ Rupees were adjusted against old balances, for the cultivation of $3\frac{1}{4}$ bighā of land⁴. Judge C.Steer says, "every honest Planter will admit that no Ryot will take advance unless he is in the last extremity", and none ever gets out of "the Planter's book" who is "once" in it. For,

1. Selections From the Records of the Government of Bengal, no. xxxiii, part 1, Papers Related to Indigo Cultivation in Bengal, op.cit., pp.110-111.

2. ibid.

3. ibid., p.51.

4. ibid., p.52.

"both Planter and Mahajan (money-lender) act in the same way - both take advantage of the Ryot's necessities and both derive a usurious profit from their dealings"¹. Moreover, as the debt roll was taken over from father to son in case of former's death or absconding, "the chronic state of indebtedness" of the raiyats became a source of "hereditary irritation against the Planters"².

Seventhly, as early as A.D.1822, the indigo planters are accused by Samachar Chandrika, a local newspaper, of committing "heartless oppression" on the raiyats and forcing them to take advance-money (dadan or dadni). It deplores the fact that a raiyat who takes advance, never gets out of the book till his death. Moreover, his obligations to the planter makes it impossible for him to sow other crops, which often results in his flying away from the village³. In A.D.1854, the Magistrate of Jessore reported that the oppression of Mr. Rainy, an indigo planter of Khulna, "compelled the ryots to abandon the village" in which his factory was situated⁴. In A.D.1822, the above

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1. Selections From the Records of the Government of Bengal, no. xxxiii, part 1, Papers Related to Indigo Cultivation in Bengal, op.cit., p.68.
 2. J.H.E. Garrett: Bengal District Gazetteers, Nadia, op.cit., p. 33 ff.
 3. cf. Samachar Chandrika, dated the 18th May, 1822, quoted in Brajendranath Bandopadhyay, ed.: Sambad Patre Sekaler Katha, Calcutta, B.S.1339, vol. 1, pp.108-109.
 4. Selections From the Records of the Government of Bengal, no. xxxiii, part 1, Papers Related to Indigo Cultivation in Bengal, op.cit., p.15.

local newspaper arraigned that if a raiyat did not agree to take advance, his cattle was usually caught hold of by the planter and interned in the factory without supplying it with "grass and water"; and as the cattle becomes lean and thin day by day, the raiyat loses his patience and agrees to take advance-money in order to rescue his most valuable asset¹. In A.D.1854, the raiyats complained that they were "driven by force or fear to undertake the cultivation of Indigo", and that, they were not "allowed to cultivate other crops till they have sown Indigo, first it may be on the Planters' nijote (own land), next on the Ryots' own lands". The raiyats' "labour and cattle being limited", it was usually "too late" for them to attend to the cultivation of other crops after having satisfied the demands of the planters².

Thus, it has been rightly pointed out that none but a planter would deny that the cultivation of indigo was unprofitable to the raiyats³. They had really nothing to gain under a system which was so corrupt and oppressive to them.

1. cf. Samāchār Chandrikā, quoted in Sambād Patre Sekāler Kathā, op.cit., vol. 1, pp.108-109.

2. Selections From the Records of the Government of Bengal, no. xxxiii, part 1, Papers Related to Indigo Cultivation in Bengal, op.cit., p.3.

3. ibid., p.68.

It is, therefore, clear that as Englishmen, the planters had many advantages over the raiyats. In the first place, the Indigo Commission of 1861, says that "the bias of the English Magistrate" has always been "unconsciously towards his countrymen"¹. Secondly, Ashley Eden testifies that the higher Police officers were very often bribed by the planters². Thirdly, Dr. A.R.Mallick points out that the village watchmen before whom the crimes were committed by the planters, were always silenced by violence and confinement. One Gunni (Ghanī ?) Dafadar, was attacked, injured and confined for four months in a dark room for raising an outcry when one whole village was set on fire by a planter³. Fourthly, the planter being a British born subject was under the jurisdiction of the Supreme Court of Calcutta, which was scarcely accessible to an illiterate raiyat living in a remote village amid miserable poverty. Hence, the planter was practically beyond the reach of the law⁴. Even as late as A.D.1877, James White, a planter of

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1. cf. Dr. A.R.Mallick: The Development of the Muslims of Bengal and Bihar, op.cit., p.65, quoted from the Report of the Indigo Commission, Parliamentary Papers, vol.xliv, 1861, Minute of Evidences, para 1191.
 2. cf. Dr. A.R.Mallick, idem., pp.64-65, quoted from the Report of Indigo Commission, op.cit., reply to Question no. 3615.
 3. ibid., p.64, quoted from the Report of Indigo Commission, op.cit., Reply to Question nos. 1048 and 1062.
 4. cf. Dr.A.R.Mallick: The Development of the Muslims of Bengal and Bihar, op.cit., p.64.

Nadiya, having murdered Shaykh Munşif, a raiyat, by physical assault, could go scot-free on account of the partiality of the Magistrates and Justice Pontifex and the Jury of the High Court of Calcutta¹.

There is, therefore, little cause to wonder that the socio-economic conditions of Bengal during the first half of the 19th century recalled to a thoughtful English Officer, the Robespierian regime of the Revolutionary France, both characterised by a reign of terror, unlimited command of the higher class on false witnesses and a tribunal that cannot be distinguished from the butcher's shamble on the one hand, and the mass of the people lying on the verge of human misery and brutalisation on the other².

CONCLUSION

The above evidence shows that the land revenue policy of the British from A.D.1772 onwards and the introduction of large-scale indigo industry in Rural Bengal from A.D. 1795, had attracted enormous capital investment from Calcutta. But contrary to all expectation, the capitalists were not only reluctant to share a portion of their profit with the peasantry who laboured for them, but adopted

1. See Appendix. "F" to Chapter ix, p. 357 ff.

2. See supra., p. 122 ff.

various extortionate and oppressive measures which made the economic condition of the peasantry worse than before. Oppressed by the zamīndārs on the one side and by the indigo planters on the other, the peasantry were reduced to last extremities and the government administration practically did little to redress their grievances against the oppressors. The chronic and widespread resentment which gradually accumulated among the peasantry naturally sought outlet in occasional outbursts. The real import of the affrays and riots, which not infrequently took place between the raiyats on the one hand and the zamīndārs and indigo planters on the other, can, therefore, be properly understood only in this context.

Titu Mīr's amazing success within a very short time (from A.D. 1827 to 1831) in organising the peasantry of 24 Parganahs into a formidable block against the Hindu zamīndārs and the European indigo planters, demonstrated for the first time the intensity of resentment against these two classes of exploiters as well as the general demand for efficient leadership. In other words, it showed the fundamental symptoms of a mass agitation; and it may be said that from his time the peasant agitation of Bengal had come into being, which was to dominate the life and thought of the masses for nearly half-a-century. The

struggle of the Farā'idī peasantry against the zamīndārs and indigo planters from A.D.1838 to 1856, led by Dudu Miyān and the peasant agitation against the indigo planters from A.D.1854 to 1860 represent new outlets through which this sentiment found expression.

In the contest of physical power with the zamīndārs and indigo planters, Titu Mīr came out victorious. But if the physical power of his enemies failed, their diplomacy won for them not only the sympathy and active support of the government but also the total annihilation of Titu Mīr and his party. For, they succeeded to allure him into a political trap by inciting him to hold his weapons against the government¹. Dudu Miyān's success in overpowering the zamīndārs and the indigo planters and in keeping his legal and political position unimpaired, rather by means of strategy², points undoubtedly to the fact that Dudu Miyān succeeded where Titu Mīr failed.

In the broader context of the peasant agitation of Bengal, the socio-economic aspect of the Farā'idī movement represented an organised attempt of tens of thousands of peasantry, brought to a common platform by religious and

1. See our article "The Struggle of Titu Mīr: a re-examination" (to be published in J.A.S.P., vol. iv, 1959).

2. See infra., Chapters iv and viii.

doctrinal ties, to get rid of the oppressions and extortions, to which they were subjected by the new class of gentry, i.e., the Hindu zamīndārs and European planters. The great popularity gained by Titu Mīr and Dudu Miyān in this field, indicates that the type of leadership provided by them, answered to the demand of the time. Moreover, as the followers of Titu Mīr and Dudu Miyān came exclusively from the lower strata of the people to which they themselves belonged, the socio-economic aspect of their movements also indicates the growth of leadership from among the mass of the people themselves, as the requisite leadership was not forthcoming from the upper class. Hence, as the Farā'idī religious programme grew out of the necessity of self-correction of the Muslim society, so also, the Farā'idī socio-economic programme developed out of the need for leadership in the lower strata of the Muslim society of Bengal.

CHAPTER - III

HĀJĪ SHARĪ'AT ALLĀH : THE FOUNDER OF THE
FARĀ'IDĪ MOVEMENT

(A.D. 1781 - 1840)

Early Life

Hājī Shari'at Allāh came to prominence only after he started the Farā'idī movement about the age of 38¹. He was born in a petty Tālukdār family² and hence did not claim a high or aristocratic birth. It is, therefore, not expected that his early life should have been recorded in a horoscope or family geneology. Naturally, therefore, the chronology of his life has been a subject of endless controversy among the scholars³. Nevertheless, the tomb inscription of the Hājī, two manuscript biographies - one in Persian and the other in Bengali, - and a few printed Farā'idī Puthis⁴ (recovered recently by the present writer), have put us on an advantageous footing to attempt an account of his early life.

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1. Hājī Shari'at Allāh was born in A.D.1781 (cf. "Tomb inscription of Hājī Shari'at Allāh", J.A.S.P., vol. iii, p. 195) and started the Farā'idī movement on his return from Makkah in A.D.1818 (see infra).
 2. cf. J.A.S.P., vol. iii, p.187, foot note 4; and J.E. Gastrell: Jessore, Fureshpore and Backergunge. Calcutta, 1868, p.36, no. 151.
 3. cf. J.A.S.P., vol. iii, p. 189 ff.
 4. See Chapter i, p. 8 ff.

Hājī Shari'at Allāh was born in A.D.1781 at Shamaill¹, a village in the Madaripur sub-division. It may be noted that Madaripur, at that time, formed a part of Bakarganj district which was transferred to the district of Faridpur in A.D.1873². His father 'Abd al-Jalīl Tālukdār, a man of not very large means, died when he was hardly eight years old³. Thereafter, he was brought up in the family of his paternal uncle 'Azīm al-Dīn. Naturally, therefore, he could not receive proper education at his early age though his uncle and aunt - who had no male issue - treated him with tenderness. As a result, he passed his boyhood as a gay and carefree child having little to do with strict discipline⁴.

On a certain occasion, being reprimanded by his uncle, Shari'at Allāh left home and ran away to Calcutta, when he was about twelve years old. There he got an opportunity to present himself to a teacher of the Holy Qur'ān, namely Mawlānā Basharat 'Alī, who, taking pity on the boy, enrolled him in his Qur'ān classes⁵. Having completed the

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1. cf. J.A.S.P., vol. iii, p.187, foot note 4. In the opinion of some local people, he was born in the neighbouring village, Hajipur.
 2. cf. H.Beveridge: District of Bakarganj, its History and Statistics, London, 1876, p.249.
 3. According to tradition current in the family of the Hājī, his father died when he was about 8 years old and his mother died earlier. This is supported by Munshī 'Abd al-Halīm and Wazīr 'Alī Tālukdār the Bengali biographers of the Hājī, who maintain that he lost his parents in his childhood (cf. Munshī 'Abd al-Halīm: MS. Hājī Shari'at Allāh, fol. 1; and Wazīr 'Alī: Muslim Bahār, p.2).
 4. Tradition current in the family of the Hājī, supported by Munshī 'Abd al-Halīm: MS. Hājī Shari'at Allāh, fol.1.
 5. ibid., fol. 2 ff.

reading of the Qur'ān, he proceeded to Phurphura, in the district of Hughly, to take lessons in Arabic and Persian languages - on the advice of his teacher¹. Within two years he attained considerable proficiency in these languages, and thence proceeded to Murshidabad to meet his another uncle, 'Āshiq Miyān, who was attached to the Murshidabad Court². There he continued to read Arabic and Persian under his uncle, and passed about a year in his company before 'Āshiq Miyān decided to visit their native village Shamail. Then taking his wife and the boy Shari'at Allāh with him, 'Āshiq Miyān set out for the district of Bakarganj in a small sail boat³. On the way they met a boat disaster in which both his uncle and aunt were drowned, and Shari'at Allāh escaped death by dint of good luck⁴.

This sudden calamity struck so deep in his mind that he gave up all intention to go home: rather he proceeded to Calcutta and presented himself before his old teacher Mawlānā Basharat 'Alī⁵. The Mawlānā at that time got

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1. 'Abd al-Halīm: MS. Hāfi Shari'at Allāh, fol. 4 ff.
 2. ibid., fol. 4; and Wazir 'Alī: Muslim Ratnahār, p.2.
 3. 'Abd al-Halīm: MS. Hāfi Shari'at Allāh, fol. 5 ff.
 4. ibid., foll. 5-6.
 5. ibid., foll. 6-7.

disgusted with the British regime and decided to emigrate to the holy city of Makkah¹. The boy Sharī'at Allah also wished to accompany him. They, accordingly, set out for Arabia about A.D.1799². Thus, the boy, who was later to be the founder of revivalist movement in Bengal, got an opportunity to visit Makkah, the international centre of Islamic culture. It may also be noted that his visit to Makkah was, therefore, not the result of a premeditated plan.

His Education at Makkah

Sharī'at Allah's elementary education at Calcutta and Hughly served the basis for his higher education at Makkah, which eventually prepared him for the great role he was destined to play in his later life. Scholars differ widely in calculating the chronology of his life though all contemporary and later writers agree that he undertook the journey to Makkah at the age of 18 and returned to Bengal after an absence of 20 years³. On the basis of his tomb inscription (which was not available to earlier writers) we have fixed the chronology of his

1. 'Abd al-Halīm: MS. Hāīī Sharī'at Allah, foll. 7-8.

2. See infra.

3. cf. J.A.S.P., vol. 111, p. 191 ff.

life as follows:¹

Birth	....	....	A.D.1781
Pilgrimage to Makkah	....	....	A.D.1799
Return to Bengal	....	....	A.D.1818
Death	....	....	A.D.1840.

Hājī Shari'at Allāh's stay in Arabia ranged from A.D.1799 to A.D.1818; and if his later life, i.e., his role as a preacher, is any guide to his learning, it may be concluded that he took the best advantage of his stay in Makkah. James Wise and Hidayet Hosain testify that he came back from Arabia as a good Arabic scholar and a skilful disputer². His tomb inscription eulogises him as "the learned of all learned, the exponent of Divine Law in eloquent and elegant tongue, the source of all guidance in the lands of Hind and Bengal, defender of religion against the menaces of the Shi'ahs and the disbelievers and against all misguidance, valiant fighter for righteousness against all falsehood and vanity, deliverer of Islam (which) was covered by darkness like the sun enveloped in clouds, whose words in truthfulness were like mountains in the open field , , ..."³. His stay in Arabia can be divided into the following three phases :-

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1. cf. J.A.S.P., vol.iii, p.195.
 2. Cf. James Wise: Eastern Bengal, London, 1884, p.22; and M.Hidayet Husain: "Farā'idī", Encyclopaedia of Islam, vol.ii, p.57.
 3. cf. J.A.S.P., vol. iii, p.198.

(i) In the first phase, he spent the initial two years in the residence of one Mawlānā Murād, a Bengali domicile at Makkah, and studied Arabic literature and Islamic jurisprudence under the Mawlānā¹. This prepared him for the regular courses in the religious seminaries of Makkah.

(ii) The second phase which is the most important, lasted for 14 years. During this period he received guidance from Tāhir Sombal, a Hanafī jurist, who, according to the Farā'idīs, was reputed for his scholasticism as Abū Hanīfah the Junior (Chhota Abu Hānifā)². Under this learned scholar he studied almost all branches of religious sciences including the mysteries of sufism. Hājī Sharī'at Allāh was also formally initiated into the Qādiriyah order of sufism, to which the Farā'idīs zealously cling themselves down to the present day³.

Identity of Tāhir Sombal :-

To the Farā'idīs of Bengal "Tāhir Sombal" is a familiar name. He is remembered by all with utmost reverence and admiration as the teacher (Ustād) and spiritual guide (Murshid) of Hājī Sharī'at Allāh. It may be noted that the

1. 'Abd al-Halīm: MS. Hājī Sharī'at Allāh, fol. 8.

2. ibid., foll. 8-9; Wazīr 'Alī: Muslim Ratnahār, p.2; and Durr-i-Muhammad: Puthi, p.9.

3. 'Abd al-Halīm: MS. Hājī Sharī'at Allāh, fol. 9.

Farā'idīs adhere to the Qādiriyah order of sufism, and the chain of their spiritual guides (Silsilat al-Murshidīn) proceeds back to Ḥaḍrat 'Abd al-Qādir Jilānī through Ṭāhir Sombal¹. This alone shows in what high esteem the Farā'idīs hold him. Besides, all important Farā'idī interpretations of Sharī'ah rest ultimately on the unassailable authority of Ṭāhir Sombal. But about his life and career we know very little, as all our knowledge about him is derived indirectly from the biographical data of Ḥājī Sharī'at Allāh. The absence of any external source coupled with the remoteness of time, has rendered the task of his identification somewhat a difficult problem.

From the Farā'idī sources this much is clear that Ṭāhir Sombal was a teacher in a religious seminary of Makkah under whom, as we have mentioned above, Ḥājī Sharī'at Allāh studied religious sciences for 14 years. Also, it will be seen later that the Haji met him at Makkah on his second visit (circa A.D.1820) and took permission from him for propagating pure doctrines of Islam in Bengal². Ṭāhir Sombal was, therefore, at the zenith of his fame from about A.D.1801 to, at least, A.D.1820. M. Hidayet Hosain's opinion that the Ḥājī's teacher whom he calls "Shaikh

1. See details in Wazīr 'Alī: Muslim Ratnahār, pp.52-55.

2. See infra.

Tāhīr al-Sunbal al-Makkī", and who, according to him, was the head of the Shāfi'ī sect at Makkah¹, does not, therefore, appear to be correct. In the first place the learned scholar has not been able to cite any authority in his favour. Secondly, an examination of the Farā'idī doctrines shows that they are all Hanafi², in which not a shadow of Shāfi'ī influence can be traced, and which, in this respect, stand in sharp contrast with the doctrines of Ahl-i-Hadīth movement betraying considerable Shāfi'ī leanings. Thirdly, the tomb inscription of Hājī Shari'at Allāh categorically states that the Hāji "followed the Hanafi school of law on the path of the Ahl al-Sunnat wa'l-Jamā'at"³. If the Hājī's teacher Tāhīr Sombal, to whom he owed almost every thing of his education and training, - was a Shāfi'ī, it is improbable that no Shāfi'ī influence should have been betrayed by the Hājī and his followers. Besides, Hidayet Hosain's opinion is contradictory to the Farā'idī sources, which call him as "Abū Hanīfah the Junior".

The earliest mention of Tāhīr Sombal is found in the Farā'idī Puthi, which call him simply "Tahir Sombal" (তাহির সোম্বল), or "Muhammad Tāhīr Sombal"⁴. This is

1. cf. "Fara'idī", Encyclopaedia of Islam, vol. 11, p.57.

2. See infra., Chapter vi.

3. See J.A.S.P., vol. 111, p.198.

4. 'Abd al-Halīm: MS. Hājī Shari'at Allāh, fol. 8; Durr-i-Muhammad: Puthi, p.9; and Wazīr 'Alī: Muslim Ratnahār, p. 2.

further corroborated by current tradition among the Farā'idīya. Moreover, the Puthis say that "Sombal" was his "urf" or surname, which is generally indentified with the Indian town of Sambhal, situated on the Mahishmat Nadi (Ganges) in the Muradabad district of Rohilkhand¹ by the Farā'idīya of the present time.

(iii) In the third phase, we find Hājī Shari'at Allāh busying himself in the time honoured university of Al-Azhar at Cairo. 'Abd al-Halīm records in his biography of the Hājī that after completing his study of religious sciences at Makkah he felt an urge to study "the subtleties of Islamic ideals" at Jāmi' al-Azhar². He, therefore, proceeded to Cairo and stayed there for two years³. The current tradition would have us believe that when the Hājī sought permission from his teacher and spiritual guide, Tāhir Sombal, to proceed to Cairo for the purpose of studying Hikmat or philosophy, the permission was given only with reluctance⁴, probably for fear or disapprobation of rationalism.

1. Sambhal is described in A.D.1875-76, as a place where the Muslims were in a majority (cf. A.C.L.Carlleyle: Archaeological Survey of India Report, vol. xii, pp.24-27).

2. 'Abd al-Halīm: MS. Hājī Shari'at Allāh, fol. 9.

3. Ibid.

4. Tradition current in the family of the Hājī. It is said that the reluctance was due to the apprehension of Tāhir Sombal that the Hājī might study Greek rationalism at Cairo and get deluded.

It is not known whether the Ḥājī attended any regular course at the great University. He is, however, said to have spent long hours at the library of Al-Azhar. Thereafter, he returned to Makkah, and paying a short visit to Madīnah decided to return to Bengal with the intention of propagating pure doctrines of Islam¹. This time too, he was permitted by Ṭāhir Sombal with reluctance: rather, he advised the Ḥājī to pass sometime more in his company for spiritual training². Thus, after an absence of about twenty years Ḥājī Sharī'at Allāh returned home in A.D.1818³.

Ḥājī Sharī'at Allāh as the Exponent of the Farā'idī

Movement:-

Having fortified ^{himself} with Islamic learning, the Ḥājī proceeded to his home country for preaching. Here many local socio-religious practices observed by the Muslim masses, which might have been quite normal to him before his pilgrimage to Makkah 20 years back, - appeared to him grossly superstitious and un-Islamic. An idea of these practices can be had from the contemporary and near contemporary writings. According to James Wise, "for three

1. 'Abd al-Ḥalīm: MS. Ḥājī Sharī'at Allāh, p.10.

2. Tradition current in the family of the Ḥājī.

3. See J.A.S.P., vol. iii, p.192.

generations or fifty years", from the date of the passing of the Diwānī of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa into the hands of the East India Company (A.D.1765) down to the advent of the Farā'idī movement (A.D.1818), "the Musalmans of Eastern Bengal, being without a shepherd, were led more and more (away) from their national faith, and conformed ... to many superstitious rites of the Hindus"¹. James Taylor, a contemporary of the Hājī, records a list of superstitious rites and heretic customs practised by the Muslims of Dacca, Faridpur and Bakarganj, such as Chuttee, Puttee and Chilla connected with the birth of a child, and a number of other rites and ceremonies connected with circumcision, marriage and funeral, which were abolished by the Haji². At a later date, Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī of Jawnpur says³ :

"When this humble person toured Southern Bengal in A.H.1389/A.D.1872, witnessed much pauperism, lethargy and negligence in matters of religion there, in comparison to other (Muslim) lands".

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1. James Wise: Eastern Bengal, p.21.
 2. James Taylor: A Sketch of the Topography and Statistics of Dacca. Calcutta, 1840, p.248. (Referred hereafter as Topography).
 3. Mawlāwī Karāmat 'Alī: Qawl al-Thābit, p.3.

In his Puthi, Durr-i-Muhammad says:¹

"Where had you been when Ḥājī Sharī at Allāh came thither (to Bengal)?"

"Who did abolish the custom of Fātiḥah, the worship of shrines, and stop the corrupt Mullāh?"

* * *

"When he set his foot in Bengal, all shirk (polytheism) and bid'at (sinful innovations) were trampled down".

He then lists those shirk and bid'at which were abolished by the Ḥājī, such as, worship of shrines of Bibi Fātimah², Ghāzu³, Kālu⁴, Pānch Pīr⁵, floating of Bherā⁶, holding of Jāri or bewailing in commemoration of the martyrdom of Ḥasan and Ḥusayn⁷, observance of ceremonious dance, music and fātiḥah, planting banana tree around the residence on the occasion of first menstruation of a girl

1. Durr-i-Muhammad: Puthi, pp.26-27.

2. For description, see James Wise: Eastern Bengal, p.9.

3. For details, see ibid., pp.13-14.

4. For details, see ibid.

5. For details, see ibid., p.17.

6. For details, see ibid., p.12 ff.

7. It may be noted that Jāri is derived from the Persian word Zāri, which means bewailing. In Bengali literature the term has come to be specifically used for the bewailing in commemoration of the Martyrdom of Ḥasan and Ḥusayn, two grandsons of the Prophet, and a rich variety of songs and poetry are known as Jāri Gān in Bengali literature.

and participation in the Ratha Yātrā and other idolatrous customs of the Hindus. Durr-i-Muhammad goes on to say:¹

"All these Bid'āt were then abolished and the sun of Islam rose high in the sky"

"Having arrived there Hājī Sharī'at Allāh propagated (true) religion throughout Bengal".

Hājī Sharī'at Allāh being a profound scholar in Islamic sciences, and one who had the privilege of being associated for a considerable time with the birth-place and centre of Islamic culture, - must have been pained to see such deplorable state of affairs. It is no wonder, therefore, that he dedicated himself to the onerous task of reforming the Muslim society of Eastern Bengal, and it is certainly gratifying to read Hunter's observation, who says:²

"The rapid spread of the Fara'idī movement in the life time of its founder affords sufficient justification for his enthusiasm".

The preachings of Hājī Sharī'at Allāh appears to have begun on his way home even before he set foot in Bengal.

1. Durr-i-Muhammad: Puthi, p.27.

2. W.W.Hunter, ed.: Imperial Gazetteer of India, vol.iv, p.339.

A number of anecdotes are current about his journey back home. A few of them are related below :-

(i) James Wise says that on his way home the Hājī fell in the hands of robbers who plundered him of all his possessions including books and souvenirs. But, "finding life insupportable without books or relics" he joined the gang himself and shared many of their wanderings. "The simplicity of his character and the sincerity of his conviction", however, stirred the conscience of the wicked band, and they "ultimately became his most zealous followers". "Such is the story", says Wise, "told at the present day of the first step taken by this remarkable man"¹.

(ii) Another story is told to the effect that when the Hājī was passing through the Monghyr district of Bihar he found the local Muslims steeped in superstitious beliefs and practices. This touched him so deeply that he decided to stop there for a while in order to urge them on the necessity of giving up their sinful innovations. He ultimately brought them to the right path before he started again for Bengal².

1. James Wise: Eastern Bengal, p.22.

2. 'Abd al-Halīm: MS. Hājī Shari'at Allah, p.10.

(iii) It is narrated that when the Ḥājī arrived at the residence of his uncle 'Azīm al-Dīn, none was able to recognise him on account of his long beards and big turban. Soon, however, the news spread that a Ḥājī has come from Makkah, and many came to see him. As the time of Maghrib (sun-set) prayer drew nigh, he called the Adhān (prayer-call) loudly. But, at his utter surprise, he found not a single person present when the prayer-call was over. He wondered at their depravity and said the prayer alone¹.

After the Maghrib prayer he entered into the inner apartment, and found his uncle in the death-bed. His uncle recognised him when he disclosed his identity and was much relieved to see him at that last moment. As he had no male issue, he asked the Ḥājī to look after his family and died that very night².

It is difficult to say whether these anecdotes are true or the result of hear-say. Their genuineness though can be questioned, they do not contain any superhuman colouring, for which the Farā'idīs show little enthusiasm.

He received his next shock on the following day when the funeral of his uncle was held. For, because of his

1. 'Abd al-Ḥalīm: MS. Ḥājī Sharī'at Allāh, pp.10-11.

2. ibid., p.12.

disapprobation of certain un-Islamic rites on the occasion, the villagers refused to co-operate with him in the burial ceremony¹.

These incidents led him ~~at once~~ to jump over the wide world with a burning desire to reform the Muslim society of Eastern Bengal. From that day on, he moved ungrudgingly addressing gatherings and preaching pure doctrines of Islam, indoors and outdoors, not only in his own village or in his own district, but in the neighbouring districts as well.

It is during this time that he formulated his policy and the line of reform that was to be introduced into the Muslim society of Eastern Bengal. The religious principles which were propagated by him will be examined in a separate chapter. What needs be mentioned here is that he put utmost emphasis on the necessity of observing the Fara'id or the obligatory duties prescribed by Islam. Naturally, therefore, his reform movement came to be known as the Fara'idī movement. Initially, however, his movement does not appear to have met with success. This initial failure is supposed to be the cause of his second visit to Makkah.

1. cf. 'Abd al-Halīm: MS. Hājj Shari'at Allāh, p.12.

His Second Visit to Makkah :-

James Taylor, a contemporary of the Hājī, categorically says, "he (Hājī Sharī'at Allāh) visited it (Makkah) a second time and took his abode among the Wahabees"¹. This is also corroborated by Wazīr 'Alī and 'Abd al-Ḥalīm². The latter's long account of the second visit and the tradition widely current among the Farā'idīs, lead us to believe that this visit took place in between A.D.1818 and 1820, and that, it was due to the failure of his mission in the early stage. The Hājī felt that the failure was due to his negligence in taking a formal permission from his teacher³. It is also said that during his second visit he received an order from the Prophet in a dream to preach true Islam in Bengal⁴. The reason stated above may or may not be true, and the anecdote about the dream may be questioned as ingenious; but the fact that the earliest Farā'idīs and their descendants are known to the present day as the Sātāis Sani Farā'idī (i.e., the Farā'idī of B.S.1227/A.D.1820-21), tends to explain the gap in between his first return in

1. James Taylor: Topography, p.248.

2. cf. Wazīr 'Alī: Muslim Ratnahār, p.3; 'Abd al-Ḥalīm: MS. Hājī Sharī'at Allāh, foll. 14-15.

3. cf. 'Abd al-Ḥalīm: MS. Hājī Sharī'at Allāh, foll.13-15.

4. ibid., fol. 15; Wazīr 'Alī: Muslim Ratnahār, p.4; and Durr-i-Muḥammad: Puthi, p.10.

A.D.1818 and the second return in A.D.1820-21¹. The first or the second visit of the Hājī to Makkah, given so much prominence by the Farā'idīs is of little significance to us except for academic interest. But, what is worthy of our notice is that the Hājī must have started his movement with greater impetus after his second return from Makkah, especially, as on this occasion he obtained permission and blessing of his teacher and spiritual guide Tahīr Sombal. Probably, this is the reason why the Farā'idī movement has been popularly regarded as beginning from B.S.1227/A.D.1820, though we have seen earlier that it actually began in A.D.1818 with the first return of the Hājī.

The Spread of the Farā'idī Movement :-

James Taylor, a contemporary of Hājī Sharī'at Allāh, testifies that the Farā'idī movement spread with "extraordinary rapidity". "Since his return", says Taylor, "he has been engaged in promulgating his doctrines, and he has succeeded in making converts to the number, it is estimated, of one-sixth of the Mussulmaun population" of

1. Mawlawī 'Adīl al-Dīn, the Persian biographer of the Hājī states that Hājī Sharī'at Allāh devoted himself to preaching pure doctrines of Islam on his return from Makkah in B.S.1227/A.D.1820-21 (cf. MS. Hālāt-i-Kārguzārī, fol. 7b). This view is also held by Muhammad 'Abd al-Bārī in his Nisār al-Dīn Ahmad Sāheber Jīvanī (Dacca, B.S.1359), p.1.

the districts of Dacca, Faridpur, Bakarganj and Mymensingh. He further says that in the city of Dacca, the Farā'idīs "are supposed to comprise about one third of the Mussulmaun inhabitants"¹.

J.E.Gastrell, who was engaged in the survey of the districts of Faridpur, Jessore and Bakarganj from A.D.1856 to A.D.1862, observes that the Farā'idīs "rapidly increased in number, and the greater part of the Mahomedans of the district (of Faridpur) and many in the neighbourhood districts have now joined the sect"². The Farā'idī movement spread likewise in the district of Tippera during the life time of the Hājī, as will be seen in a subsequent chapter³.

James Wise has regarded Hājī Shari'at Allāh as the first preacher in the swamps of Eastern Bengal "to denounce the superstition and corruption, which a long contact with Hindu polytheism had developed"⁴. "His blameless and exemplary life", observes Wise, "was admired by his countrymen, who venerated him as a father able to advise them in seasons of adversity and give consolation in times of affliction"⁵.

1. James Taylor: Topography, p.248.

2. J.E.Gastrell: Jessore, Fureedpore and Backergunge, op.cit., p.36, no.151.

3. See infra., Chapter ix.

4. James Wise: Eastern Bengal, pp.21-22.

5. ibid., p.23.

But, as it generally happens with all new movements, the Farā'idī movement was also destined to face many handicaps. In the first place, Hājī Sharī'at Allāh was opposed by a section of the conservative group of the Muslim society. He strictly enforced the simple monotheism of the Qur'ān, and, according to a government report, most emphatically denounced the worship of the saints and servile devotion to the Pīrs¹. Besides, the equality of the Muslims in general, and of the Farā'idīs in particular, which was "again and again emphasised"² by the Hājī "bound the Muhammadan peasantry together as one man". This emphasis on the unity of the lower classes alarmed the Hindu zamīndārs and the European indigo planters³, in the self-same manner as we have seen earlier in the case of Titu Mir⁴.

In A.D.1831, Hājī Sharī'at Allāh was campaigning vigorously for the abolition of various long standing superstitious customs of the traditional society. This resulted in an affray between his followers and the

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1. cf. A.R.Mallick: The Development of the Muslims of Bengal and Bihar, 1813-1856 (unpublished Ph.D.Thesis), p.80, quoted from Bengal Criminal Judicial Consultations, 3 April, 1932; no.6, Roobukoree of the Magistrate of Dacca Jelalpoore, 29 April, 1831.
 2. ibid., quoted from the Selections from the Records of the Bengal Government, vol. xlii, Trial of Ahmadullah, p.141.
 3. See James Wise: Eastern Bengal, p.22.
 4. See supra., p.70 ff.

supporters of the local customs in the month of April. On this incident both the parties were charged by the Police with rioting and plunder, and two leaders of the Farā'idīs were sentenced to one year's imprisonment with hard labour and a fine of Rs. 200/- each. Some others were similarly punished with a fine of Rs. 100/- each. Hājī Shari'at Allāh was also apprehended by the Magistrate of Dacca-Jalalpur, but, in the absence of evidence against him, was released after having taken a bond from him "which bound him on the security of Rs. 200/- to keep the peace for one year"¹.

Describing this incident Biharilal Sarkar says:²

"In A.D.1831, the Eastern Bengal had become excited, and in the month of April of the same year, Shari'at Allah of Faridpur ... had attacked and looted a village. The entire village was looted because one person of that village did not accept his creed".

On the other hand, the Farā'idīs allege that the Hindu zamīndārs were implicated in this case, and that, the conflict between the reformed sect and the traditional

1. A.R.Mallick: Thesis, op.cit., p.81, quoted from Board's (Board of the Directors of the East India Company) Collection 54222, pp.443-44, Enclosure no. 1, to Colvin's Report of 8 March, 1832.
2. Biharilal Sarkar: Titu Mir (in Bengali). Calcutta, B.S. 1304, p.13.

society would not have flared up but for their incitement. The Farā'idīs further hold that the incident took place at Nayabari (in the modern Charigram of the Dacca district), and that, the judgment was influenced by the powerful zamīndārs.¹

James Wise says:²

"The Hindu Zamindars were alarmed at the spread of the new creed, which bound the Muhammadan peasantry together as one man. Disputes and quarrels soon arose, and Shari'atullah was deported from Nayabari, in the Dacca district, where he had settled".

It may be noted that after his second return from Makkah, Hājī Sharī'at Allāh had gained a good number of followers at Nayabari, and in order to facilitate the Hājī's frequent visit to that place his disciples had erected an Astānā or rest house for him. In course of time Nayabari became a major centre of Farā'idī propaganda.³

In the face of above evidence Biharilal Sarkar's statement throwing all the blame on the Hājī and his followers, does not appear to be free from prejudice and

1. Tradition current in the family of Hājī Sharī'at Allāh, and also among the Farā'idī khalifāhs of Nayabari.

2. James Wise: Eastern Bengal, p.22.

3. See infra., Chapter ix.

bias, and the implication of the Hindu zamīndārs cannot be gainsaid. Unfortunately, however, no further detail of the case is available to us.

The incident of Nayabari points to the fact that from A.D.1831 the Farā'idī movement came into conflict with the traditional Muslim society on the one hand and with the Hindu zamīndārs on the other. As time went on this conflict became more and more clear. We have already stated the reasons of the Hājī's conflict with the traditional society. Later on the traditional sentiment was espoused by Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī, the well-known Ta'āyuni leader, who utilised it in his favour during his many encounters against the Farā'idī movement. The relation between the Farā'idīs and the Ta'āyunīs has been discussed earlier¹. Suffice it to note here that it is mainly through the opposition of the Ta'āyunīs and on account of the Babath or public debates which frequently took place between the leaders of both the parties that the Farā'idīs bound themselves into a strong tie as a religious brotherhood.

The reason of the conflict of Hājī Shari'at Allāh with the Hindu zamīndārs is not far to seek. Taking advantage of the weakness of the Muslim masses in the beginning of the nineteenth century, the Hindu zamīndārs

1. See supra., p.81 ff.

imposed not only various restrictions on the Muslim peasantry, such as, prohibition on the slaughter of cows within the areas of their zamīndārī, but also imposed idolatrous taxes beside the lawful land revenues, such as levies for the celebration of Hindu rites and for offering worship to the Hindu goddesses¹, which, being idolatrous ceremonies, were strongly detested by the Muslims.

Ḥājī Sharī, at Allāh being the exponent of Islamic revivalism, disapproved of these unjust and oppressive measures of the zamīndārs on the Muslim peasantry, especially because of the encouragement to idolatry involved therein². Moreover, as the Farā'idīs accepted him as their leader and guide, they naturally looked upon him for the redress of their grievances. The Ḥājī, therefore, could not help standing against these oppressive and extortionate practices of the zamīndārs. Hence, he directed his disciples to withhold the payment of the idolatrous cesses and encouraged them to slaughter cows, especially at the time of Īd al-Adḥā (the festival of sacrifice), in which sacrificing cow is less expensive and most convenient in Bengal. It is through this process that the originally religious reform movement of the Ḥājī, gradually took a social platform.

1. See James Wise: Eastern Bengal, p.24; see also infra., Appendix to Chapter viii.

2. See supra., p.111.

The conflict of the Farā'idīs with the Hindu zamīndārs was, therefore, of a socio-economic nature rather than the result of a pure fanaticism, as the opponents of Hājī Shari'at Allāh would have us believe.

The zamīndārs sharply reacted against this policy of Hājī Shari'at Allāh; for, the nonpayment of idolatrous taxes went against their economic interest and the encouragement to the slaughter of cows wounded their feelings. The bitter resentment of the Hindu zamīndārs against the Farā'idī policy of the non-payment of pujā taxes has been testified by the Head of the Bengal Police in A.D.1842¹, and their reaction against the slaughter of cows has been recorded by a Hindu gentleman of Dacca, who wrote to the editor of a local newspaper, Darpan, in A.D.1837 that a number of "evil persons/^(Javanas) from among the followers of Shari'at Allāh committed various rapacities to Babu Tarini Charan Majumdar of Patkanda village in the district of Faridpur, i.e., they obstructed the worship of gods and goddesses at his house by their evil actions such as the slaughter of cows". He further informs us that the Babu did not deem it fit to meet the Javanas in an open fight and brought the matter before Robert Grote, the Magistrate of

1. See infra., Chapter iv.

Faridpur, and that, after due investigation the Magistrate punished a few Javanas with imprisonment¹.

The author of the letter draws a horrible picture of the activities of Hājī Shari‘at Allāh and his followers. In the first place, he reports that the Hājī being imbued with the intention of establishing a kingdom or bādshāhī gathered together a party of about 12000 weavers and Musalmans around him. He started a new religious doctrine or shara‘ and directed his followers to keep beards and to wear the dhuti without passing one end between the legs (kāchhā khulā). His followers are also accused of obstructing the worship of Hindu gods and goddesses by entering the Hindu residences around with their cow-skinned belt put on their waist. Secondly, he accuses the Farā‘idīs of having demolished the twelve Siva Linga which were erected by Diwān Mritunjay Ray of Rajnagar in the district of Dacca. Thirdly, all the clerks (Amlahs) and pleaders (Mukhtārs) of the

1. Brajendranath Bandopadhyay: Sambād Patre Sekāler Kathā. Calcutta, B.S.1342, pp. 311-12:

“বার সুত হওয়া গেল সবিষ্কার দলজন্তু দু’ট মববেরা ঐ করিদপুরের অনুপাতি পাটকালা গ্রামের বারু ভাষ্ণীচরণ মহমদারের প্রতি মানা প্রকার দোরাওয়া বর্ষাৎ তাহার বাটিতে দেবদেবী পূজার বাসাত জন্মাইয়া মোহতা ইত্যাদি কুর্ষ উপস্থিত করিলে মহমদার বারু মববাদিগের সহিত সম্পূর্ণ যুদ্ধ অনুষ্ঠিত বোধ করিয়া ঐ সকল দোরাওয়া করিদপুরের মাজিস্ট্রেট সাহেবের হস্তে জ্ঞাপন করিলে ঐ সাহেব বিচারপূর্বক কএকজন মববকে কারাগারে বন্দ করিয়াছেন এবং এ বিষয়ের বিলম্ব অনুসন্ধান করিতেছেন।”

Faridpur Court, according to him, were disciples of Hājī Sharī'at Allāh. Hence, it was easy for the 12000 united Farā'idīs to prove or disprove any legal suit by means of false witnesses¹.

The author of the letter, therefore, naturally compares the Hājī with Titu Mīr who, according to him, also wanted to establish a bādshāhī or kingdom and who was crushed by the British government because of his assault on the life and property of the Hindus. Hājī Sharī'at Allāh, in his opinion, should also be treated in the like manner. Even more so, because Titu Mīr did less than a hundredth part of what Sharī'at Allāh's party was doing². "I am apprehensive", he says, "that the rapidity with which the party and power of the Javan, Sharī'at Allāh, were increasing, (if he is allowed to continue), the Hindu religion will soon be destroyed which will bring also world-destruction"³. Hence, he appeals to the editor of

1. cf. Brajendranath Bandopadhyay: Sambēd Patre Sekāler Kathā, op.cit., vol.iii, p.312.

2. ibid.

3. ibid: " আমি বোধ করি জাওয়ান যখন যে প্রকার দলবদ্ধ হইয়া উত্তর উত্তর প্রদেশ হইতেছে অল্প দিনের মধ্যে হিন্দু ধর্ম লোপ হইয়া অকালে প্রলয় হইবেক । "

Darpan and also to Mr. Grote to take steps for the disbandment of the Hājī's party in order to save the Hindu religion and the country from destruction¹.

James Taylor (the Civil Surgeon of Dacca), another contemporary of Hājī Shari'at Allāh writes in March, 1839, i.e., just two years after, that the Hājī had "more than once been in the custody of the Police on account of occasioning affrays and disturbances in the town", probably in the town of Faridpur. He adds further that the Hājī "is at present under the ban of the Police, I believe, for exciting his disciples in the country to withhold the payment of revenue"². We have seen earlier that Hājī Shari'at Allāh forbade his disciples to participate in or subscribe to the celebration of Hindu pujās³, which, according to him, violated the doctrine of tawhīd (i.e., monotheism as interpreted by the Hājī⁴). Taylor's reference to "withholding the payment of revenues" may relate to the idolatrous taxes, such as Kālī Vritti (tax for the Kālī puja) and Durgā Vritti (tax for the Durgā puja). For, there is no evidence to show that the Hājī or his successors had ever opposed the payment

1. cf. Brajendranath Bandopadhyay: Sambād Patre Sekāler Kathā, op.cit., vol. 111, p.312.

2. James Taylor: Topography, op.cit., p.250.

3. See supra., p. 111.

4. See supra., p.23 ff.

of the lawful land revenues. This view is corroborated by the report of the Head of the Bengal Police dated A.D. 1842¹.

It may be noted further that about A.D.1837, Dudu Miyān (the son of Hājī Shari'at Allāh) had returned from Makkah and begun to take active interest in organising the Farā'idīs into a solid block and training them in the art of affray-fighting. In A.D.1838, Dudu Miyān was accused by the Police of abetting the plunder of several houses².

The above evidences show that towards the end of Hājī Shari'at Allāh's life, the Farā'idī peasantry were coming increasingly into conflict with the Hindu zamīndārs, probably due to the initiative of Dudu Miyān in upholding the rights of the Farā'idīs. But, the violent fighting and large scale affrays, which were to characterise their mutual relations a few years later under the leadership of Dudu Miyān³, did not take place during the Hājī's life time. If anything of a serious nature had occurred before the Hājī's death, it must have found a prominent place in the Police reports of A.D.1838, 1842 and 1843⁴. Even the accusation of the Police against Dudu Miyān in A.D.1838, does not appear to have sufficient grounds, as the case fell through when he was tried before the law court.

1. See infra.; Chapter iv.

2. See ibid.

3. See ibid.

4. See ibid.

The Nature of Hājī Shari'at Allāh's Movement :-

Hājī Shari'at Allāh's conflict with the Hindu zamindārs and the cognisance of his activities by the Police, however, should not lead us to think that he ever took the role of a political leader or he ever meddled in politics against the established government of the country. The writings of Wise and Beveridge categorically negate any such proposition. Wise describes the Hājī's movement as "devoid of any political colour" and says that after the Nayabari incident (which took place in April, 1831), the Hājī "acted with great prudence and caution, rarely assuming any other character than that of a religious reformer"¹. Beveridge says:²

"It does not appear, however, that the Ferazis share the dangerous political views of the Wahhābis, or that their revolutionary views extend beyond disputing their landlords' claim for rent. Hindu zamindārs and alarmists generally are fond of representing the Ferazis as politically dangerous, but, I think, without sufficient reason. No doubt, they are more vigorous and less tractable than ordinary Mahomedans; but this need not be a disadvantage in their character".

1. James Wise: Eastern Bengal, p.22.

2. H. Beveridge: District of Bakargani, op.cit., p.255.

The above quotations suggest that the Ḥājī acted with prudence and always remained a religious reformer. So, if he was put under Police custody, it was not due to his anti-state activities but to his opposition to the oppressive and illegal taxes levied by the zamīndārs on the helpless peasantry. Had he betrayed any anti-state activity, he must have been dealt with severely by the British government, as was done in the case of his contemporary, Titu Mīr. Thus, far from being of a political nature, the reform movement of the Ḥājī was out and out religious in character.

The Character of Ḥājī Shari'at Allāh :-

Like Titu Mīr, Ḥājī Shari'at Allāh was born of an obscure family, and both alike came from the lower strata of the Muslim society; but unlike the former, the Ḥājī was profoundly learned in Islamic sciences and had the prudence of keeping his reform movement above politics. He was a man of struggle and keen foresight and knew well how to steer his movement clean through political intrigues and temptation. This is one of the main reasons why the Farā'idī movement could, not only survive him but flourish and continue down to the present day.

Ḥājī Shari'at Allāh had a strong but amiable personality. According to James Wise, he was a man of middle height,

of fair complexion, and wore a long and handsome beard¹. He possessed a stout and robust health, and usually covered his head with "a voluminous turban"². According to the popular tradition, his appearance was beautiful and awe-striking at the same time, which reflected well the strength of his personality and the softness of his heart. Wise observes that it required "a sincere and sympathetic preacher" to rouse the apathetic and careless Bengali peasant to enthusiasm, and "no one ever appealed more strongly to the sympathies of the people than Shari'atullah" with his "blameless and exemplary life"³. In Wise's opinion, the very fact of his rousing the Bengali Muslims to enthusiasm was even "more extra-ordinary" than his own rising from among the lower classes as the first preacher of puritanism amidst the swamps of Eastern Bengal⁴.

Haji Shari'at Allāh died at his native village Shamail, in A.D.1840, at the age of 59. He was buried at the backyard of his residence, which was, however, washed away by the river Arialkhan (Padma) not very long after his death, leaving to us only the tomb inscription, now preserved by the Asiatic Society of Pakistan at Dacca⁵.

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1. James Wise: Eastern Bengal, p.23.
 2. Tradition current in the Family of the Hāji.
 3. James Wise: Eastern Bengal, p.23.
 4. ibid.
 5. See J.A.S.P., vol. 111, p.187 ff.

CHAPTER - IV

MUHSIN AL-DĪN AHMAD ALIAS DUDU MIYĀN

(A.D. 1819 - 1862)

Muhsin al-Dīn Ahmad alias Dudu Miyān¹ was the only son of Hājī Shari'at Allāh. He has been regarded by some as a co-founder of the Farā'idī movement². He was born in A.D. 1819³, at Mulfatganj⁴, then a Thana in the Madaripur subdivision of Bakarganj district, which was transferred later on to the district of Faridpur. Although a less accomplished scholar than his father, he played a role in the history of the Farā'idī movement which was second to

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1. In the family circle, he was fondly called "Dudu Miyān", by which name he became widely known in his later life. Wise called him "Dudhu Miyān" (cf. James Wise: Eastern Bengal, p.24), others referred to him as "Dhudu Mia" (cf. H. Beveridge: District of Bakarganj, op.cit., p.254), or "Dūdā Miyān" (cf. Karāmat 'Alī: Buhat, p.86). He is remembered by his followers as "Ustād Dudu Miyān" or "Mawlawī Dudu Miyān". They also called him simply "Ustād" or "Mawlawī". He usually signed his name as "Muhsin al-Dīn Ahmad 'urf Dudu Miyān". This last spelling has also been adopted here.
 2. For instance, H. Beveridge says, "He (Dudu Miyān) and his father, Shariyatollah, may be called the founders of the sect of Ferazis" (District of Bakarganj, p.381).
 3. James Wise: Eastern Bengal, p.23.
 4. H. Beveridge: District of Bakarganj, p.254.

none, rather in certain respects he even excelled his father notably in organising the Farā'idī brotherhood into a well-knit and powerful society¹.

The energetic and dashing career of Dudu Miyān from A.D.1838 to 1857, struck awe and terror in the mind of his enemies and brought relief to his friends and followers. The popular imagination was replete with his adventurous exploits against the oppressive landlords and indigo-planters. The Court files and the Police records were full of his accounts. Besides, several Puthis were written about his life and career. But, unfortunately a greater part of these materials has been swallowed up by the ravages of time. Whatever remain, are only brief notices to be found here and there, in the Court files, Police records, government reports, in the Puthis of Durr-i-Muhammad, Nāzin al-Dīn and Wazīr 'Alī, and last but not least, in the writings of Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī of Jawnpur, - which describe some of the events connected with his colourful activities. In preparing the following sketch of his biography the materials have been drawn from these sources.

1. See infra., Chapter viii.

His Educational Career :-

Dudu Miyān's early life passed smoothly under the immediate care of his father, who made provisions for his education at home in Arabic and Persian languages. After he had acquired some proficiency in this elementary education, he was sent to Makkah¹ about the age of twelve for schooling². According to tradition, while on his way to Makkah, he stopped for a few days at Calcutta and paid a visit to Titu Mīr, who was then residing in his country home in the district of 24 Parganahs³. As to his activities at Makkah and the duration of his stay there, we have no reliable source of information. The tradition, however, holds that he returned to Bengal after an absence of five years⁴. The government sources mention him for the first time in A.D.1838, as disturbing the peace of Faridpur⁵,

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1. M.Hidayet Hosain: "Farā'idī", Encyclopaedia of Islam, vol. 11, p.58; Wazīr 'Alī: Muslim Ratnahār, p.8; and James Wise: Eastern Bengal, p.23.
 2. Tradition current in the family of Dudu Miyān.
 3. A string of beads, preserved at Bahadurpur in the permanent residence of Dudu Miyān and his descendants, is identified by Bādshāh Miyān, the present head of the Farā'idīs, as a gift of Titu Mīr to Dudu Miyān, which was received by the latter at the time of his visit to the former on his way to Makkah. This string of beads has become a memorial and since Dudu Miyān's death, it has been inherited by the subsequent heads of the Farā'idīs.
 4. Tradition current among the Farā'idīs of Chandpur.
 5. James Wise: Eastern Bengal, p.25.

thus, indicating that he had returned sometimes earlier. Thereafter, Hājī Shari'at Allāh kept him in his company and gave lessons in higher studies. This is all we know about his educational career.

Dudu Miyān as the Organiser of Affray Parties:-

We have seen earlier that towards the end of Hājī Shari'at Allāh's life, he was increasingly coming in conflict with the Hindu zamīndārs. As a result, efficient affray fighters were needed in great numbers in order to resist the zamīndārs and their agents from oppressing the Farā'idī peasantry. The Hājī is, therefore, said to have given the charge of collecting clubmen to one of his influential lieutenants, namely Jalāl al-Dīn Mullāh of Faridpur¹. On his return from Makkah, Dudu Miyān joined hands with Jalāl al-Dīn and organised regular exercises for clubmanship. In course of a short time, he raised a sizeable volunteer corps of clubmen and trained them into skilful fighters. The above facts will explain why Dudu Miyān was charged by the Police in A.D.1838 with abetting the plunder of several houses². The remark of James Taylor that Hājī Shari'at Allāh was put under the ban of the Police in A.D.1839³, further indicates that the affray party of

1. Tradition current in the families of Hājī Shari'at Allāh and Jalāl al-Dīn Mullāh.

2. James Wise: Eastern Bengal, p.25.

3. James Taylor: Topography, p.250.

Dudu Miyān had at that time got considerable strength. Endowed with great physical energy and a keen sense of diplomacy, Dudu Miyān appears to have proved more capable in this practical field than in the field of acquisition of theoretical knowledge, as will be seen in the following pages and in a subsequent chapter on social reforms.

Dudu Miyān as the Head of the Farā'idī Movement :-

When Hājī Shari'at Allāh died in A.D.1840, the Farā'idīs met together and acclaimed Dudu Miyān as their "Ustād" or head¹. This election proved a turning point in the life of Dudu Miyān, and no less in the history of the Farā'idī movement. On his assumption of leadership, the indomitable spirit of Dudu Miyān, which was so long held in sway by the prudent restraint of Hājī Shari'at Allāh, eagerly sought an outlet for expression. He thought that the high-handed oppression of the zamīndārs on the Farā'idī peasantry, demanded quick and firm action. This was especially the case in rural Bengal where the government administration was less effective than the whimsical authority of the zamīndārs.

In A.D.1841 and 1842, he led two campaigns against the zamīndārs of Kanaipur, known as "Sikdārs" (Shiqdār),

1. J.E.Gastrell: Jessore, Fureedpore and Backergunge, p.36, no. 151. The "Ustād" literally means "teacher", which was adopted by the Farā'idīs as the official title of their Head.

and of Faridpur, known as "Ghoshes", with the intention of bringing them to reasonable terms with the Farā'idī peasantry; for, D udu Miyān found no other course open to him or to his followers to make these oppressive zamīndārs see reason except by applying force. These campaigns proved a success, and helped him to mould a new policy which gave a newer outlook to the Farā'idī movement. These campaigns are discussed below.

The Farā'idīs claim that the Sikdārs and the Ghoshes had formed a league against the Farā'idī movement. In their attempt to suppress the slaughter of cows (which the Farā'idīs openly practised), and to realise idolatrous cesses for the celebration of Kālī Pujā and Durgā Pujā (which the Farā'idīs refused to pay on principle), the zamīndārs had devised a variety of intensely painful method of physical torture. James Wise says:

"The zamīndārs again endeavoured to prevent their tenants (from) joining the Farā'idī (movement), and, it is said, often punished and tortured the disobedient. A mode of torture, intensely painful, but which left no marks to implicate any one, is said to have been adopted on both sides. The beards of recalcitrant ryots were tied together and red chilli powder

given as snuff. Coercion, however, failed, and the landlords did little to check the spread of the revival¹.

The Farā'idīs mention a variety of torture to which they were subjected by these zamīndārs besides the above "chilli powder snuff", such as, (i) severe flogging, (ii) breaking red ants' nest on the bare body, (iii) throwing chest-deep into a well of rubbish especially designed for the purpose, and (iv) shutting up such insects as grasshopper and white ant on the navel under the cover of a bowl, after forcing the victim lie down on his back². When these methods failed to turn the Farā'idīs from their adherence to Dudu Miyān, they imposed the infamous beard-tax, which was invented earlier by the Hindu zamīndārs of 24 Parganahs to punish the followers of Titu Mīr³. The frequent occurrence of torture proved too much for the impetuous Dudu Miyān to put up with silently.

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1. James Wise: Eastern Bengal, p.24.
 2. Tradition current among the Farā'idīs of Chandpur and Faridpur.
 3. See, Biharilal Sarkar: Titu Mīr, p.14; also, W.W.Hunter: Indian Musalmans, p.45, foot note 2. Hunter says Krishna Chandra Rai "levied a capitation tax of five shillings on each of his peasants who had embraced the new faith" of Titu Mir; and Biharilal says that the "beard-tax" was charged at the rate of two-and-half rupees. It may be noted that keeping beards was made compulsory by both Hājī Sharīf at Allāh and Titu Mīr. According to the Farā'idīs, they were charged by the Hindu zamīndārs at the rate of two-and-half rupees.

His Campaign Against the Sikdār of Kanaipur in A.D.1841:-

In A.D.1841¹, Dudu Miyān and Jalāl al-Dīn Mullāh proceeded to Kanaipur at the head of a few hundred clubmen, and encamped within the sight of the landlord's palace². Dudu Miyān then held out to the zamīndār the threat of taking away every brick of the palace if he did not come to terms. The Sikdār was frightened, and finding no way out, conceded to his stipulations. It was agreed that physical torture on the Farā'idīs would cease and extortion of illegal and idolatrous taxes from them would stop forthwith³.

His Campaign Against the Ghosh of Faridpur in A.D.1842 :-

Emboldened by his easy victory over the Sikdār, Dudu Miyān led another campaign against the powerful Ghosh family of Faridpur in the earlier part of A.D.1842⁴. The Police report describes the incident as follows :

"One of the cases of attack at night was of a serious nature. A body, stated at no less than 800 ferazees, the raiets (ryots) of one Joynarain Ghose, collected together, attacked his bareh (residence), plundered it of every thing, and carried off his brother Muddan Narain Ghose"⁵.

1. James Wise: Eastern Bengal, p.25.

2. Among the Farā'idīs this Palace is known as "Rāvan Kutī".

3. This detail is based on current tradition among the Farā'idīs, but is supported by what follows next.

4. See, Calcutta Review, vol. 1, (1844), pp.215-16; extract from Mr. Dampier's report of 1842, in the Art. "Rural Population of Bengal".

5. ibid.

According to the Farā'idī sources Madan Ghosh was killed and buried at the bottom of river Padma¹. Wazīr 'Alī says:²

"From the year B.S.1227,
The Hindus bore enmity against the Muslims;
(And) oppressed the poor (Muslims) in very many ways,
(By) restraining the barber (from serving them),
(and) by tying their beards together.
In this way many a Muslim were oppressed,
(Until) they killed the zamīndār, Madan Ghosh,
(And) disclosed openly that they have eaten him up.
Henceforth the Hindus were terror-stricken,
(And) dared not resist the march of Islamisation
Which then proceeded without hindrance".

1. Tradition current among the Farā'idīs.

2. Wazīr 'Alī: Muslim Ratnabār, pp.6-7:

"বাকুল' সাতাইশ জন এই বাঙ্গালার ।
হিন্দুগণ নর হ'ল মোসলম উপর ॥
পরীষ লোকেরে কত মত সাজা দিত ।
নাগীত বন্ধ দাঁড়ি বাধি সাজা দেলাইত ॥
এই মত সাজা কত মোসলমান পাইল ।
মদন ঘোষ জমিদারে মারিয়া কেলিল ॥
কোন করিয়া দিল খেয়েছি মদন ঘোষে ।
চসই হইতে হিন্দুগণ পড়িল ভ্রাশে ॥
এসলামিতে বাধা দিতে না উঠিল মন ।
সানন্দে এসলামি চলে বাকিয়া তখন ॥"

The Police report describes the manner of the attack as follows:¹

"This outrage shows the combination existing among this sect: they assembled from all quarters most suddenly and secretly, and after the attack, dispersed in the same manner".

In the judgement of the Head of the Bengal Police, this attack was motivated by a desire for revenge and not for plunder. He says:²

"They were not instigated by a desire of plunder, but of revenge for the oppression and extortion practised on them by this zamindar, and if a tenth part of what they say, after their conviction, stated to me in a petition extenuating their conduct, was true, I am only surprised that a much more serious and general disturbance did not occur. ... I have no doubt, however, of the general truth of the statements, and the zamindars appear to have done every thing which could degrade these men, their religion and their females".

He then cautioned the Magistrate of the district in the following words:³

"The Magistrate must keep a strict watch, not

1. Calcutta Review, vol.1, op.cit., pp.215-16.

2. ibid.

3. Calcutta Review, vol.1, op.cit., pp.215-16.

only over these people, but also over their zamindars, particularly, if Hindoos, as the latter are very apt to resent the non-payment of these men of puja expenses, &c., which they consider encouraging idolatry, by very gross ill-treatment. In fact, the Ferazees consider the payment of rent at all, especially to an infidel, as opposed to the word of God, and where a zamindar cares not for his raiets (ryots) or for any thing beyond extorting all he can from them by any means, a reaction on the part of a fanatical and ill-treated body of men must be expected".

On this incident the Magistrate arrested 117 persons, of whom 106 were tried before the Sessions, and finally 22 of them received 7 years' terms of rigorous imprisonment¹. According to current tradition, Dudu Miyān was also one of the accused, but was released by the Sessions Judge for lack of evidence against him².

These initial victories of Dudu Miyān captured the imagination of the masses, and had far-reaching influence on the future course of the Farā'idī movement. In the first place, the prestige of Dudu Miyān rose high in the esteem of the down-trodden peasantry, who hailed him as their saviour, and as the champion of their cause. As a result, his name,

1. Calcutta Review, vol. 1, op.cit., pp.215-16.

2. Tradition current in the Family of Dudu Miyān.

in the language of James Wise, became "a household word throughout the districts of Faridpur, Pubna, Bakarganj, Dacca and Noakhali"¹. Secondly, it gave an added impetus to the Farā'idī movement and drew within its fold those Muslims who had so far stood aloof for fear of the oppression of the zamīndārs. It is, therefore, not insignificant that the Bengal Police found Dudu Miyān in A.D.1843, as the leader of about 80,000 followers "who asserted complete equality among themselves, looked upon the cause of each as that of the whole sect"².

Reaction of the Zamīndārs:-

The zamīndārs felt grave apprehension at the growing power of the Farā'idī movement, and as a measure of safety began to foment the suspicion of the English administrators and indigo-planters. By their instigation Mr. A. Dunlop an influential indigo-planter, who had a factory at Madaripur,³ became an avowed enemy of Dudu Miyān. James Wise says that Mr. Dunlop "several times succeeded in causing him to be arrested and tried for illegal actions"⁴. James Wise informs us that Dudu Miyān was tried for trespass and illegal action in A.D.1844, and for abduction and plunder in A.D.1846. But on both these occasions he was acquitted for lack of evidence⁵.

1. James Wise: Eastern Bengal, p.23. supra.
 2. W.W.Hunter: Indian Musalmans, p.100; see also/p.106.
 3. H.Beveridge: District of Bakargoni, op.cit., p.339.
 4. James Wise: Eastern Bengal, p.25.
 5. ibid.

The Fara'idis, who are often boastful of their exploits against the oppressive zamindars¹, do not mention any campaign of Dudu Miyān against indigo planters before A.D. 1846, when they attacked the Brahman Gomashtah of Mr. Dunlop. The following statement of James Wise indicates that the zamindars and the indigo-planters had made a common cause against Dudu Miyān, apparently induced by their common vested interest which was in danger by the activities of Dudu Miyān. Wise says:²

"During his (Dudu Miyān's) father's life time the sect had opposed or come in contact with the law of the land; and the high-handed actions of the son united zamindars and indigo planters against him".

The propaganda of the zamindars and indigo-planters against Dudu Miyān and his followers, found ready ears at Calcutta which is evident from the following notice of the Calcutta Review in A.D. 1847. It reads:³

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1. For instance, the Calcutta Review of A.D. 1847, notices the Fara'idis in the following words: "The Ferazi too can fight, and single exception to the general rule, can boast of it afterwards to the official without scruple" (cf. vol. vii, 1847, p. 199). For an instance of Dudu Miyān's boasting in the Court in A.D. 1857, see, James Wise: Eastern Bengal, p. 25.
 2. James Wise: Eastern Bengal, p. 24.
 3. Calcutta Review, vol. vii, Jan.-June, 1847, p. 199: Art. "Indigo in Lower Bengal". It would appear from the language of the ~~above~~ quotation that this Jan.-June edition of Calcutta Review, went to the Press before the incident of the attack of the Fara'idis on the indigo factory of Mr. A. Dunlop in December, 1846 at Panch Char in the Madaripur subdivision. Otherwise, such a major attack on a European firm could not have been overlooked.

"The Ferazis are the same men who under Titu Mir gave the Government such trouble in Baraset district some fourteen years ago. They are at present headed by one Dudhu Miyan and abound in the districts of Dacca, Faridpore and Bakergonge. ... The chief tenets of these worthies are that murder and perjury in behalf of the sect, are not only pardonable but praiseworthy. ... If any disturbance now takes place in Lower Bengal, it will be through the instrumentality of the Ferazis, and though a company of sepoy might put them down, yet it would not be without a considerable effusion of blood".

J.E.Gastrell, Deputy Surveyor General & Superintendent Revenue Surveys, was a contemporary of Dudu Miyān, and was engaged in the survey of Jessore, Faridpur and Bakerganj from A.D.1856 to A.D.1862¹. As such, he is expected to have authentic information about the Farā'idī leader. But his following statements about Dudu Miyān is hardly corroborated by the evidence available from other sources. He says:²

"This man is said to have on several occasions abused the trust placed in him by his followers, and to have purchased an estate with the money placed in his

1. J.E.Gastrell: Jessore, Fureedpore and Backergunge, front page and p.46.

2. ibid., p.36, no. 151.

hands for religious purposes. He then became a great tyrant, and complaints against him became numerous.

On one of these he was tried, convicted and imprisoned".

He adds further:¹

"In 1857 he was removed to Calcutta, and kept in safe custody there until the close of the great mutiny".

In the first place, we know, on the authority of James Wise and Police report that Dudu Miyān was never convicted though he was accused and tried several times before law courts; and that he was never imprisoned prior to his arrest in A.D.1857 and removal to Calcutta which was rather for political reasons. About this last trial, James Wise says, "In 1857 Dudhu Miyān was thrown into prison and the story goes, that he would have been released, if he had not boasted that fifty thousand men would answer to his summons, and march whithersoever he ordered them"². Secondly, about the source of his information, Gastrell himself says, "the following description of the origin of this (Farā'idī) sect was given to me at Fureedpore by one of its members"³. Now, it is not expected that a follower of Dudu Miyān would spread

1. J.E.Gastrell: Jessore, Fureedpore and Backergunge, p.36, no.151.

2. James Wise: Eastern Bengal, p.25.

3. J.E.Gastrell: Jessore, Fureedpore and Backergunge, p.36, no. 151.

such blemish against his own leader, if he is not, for some reason or other, disaffected. On the other hand, James Wise testifies that the Farā'idīs supported him to the last although at one time a few had seceded, but for quite different reasons, as will be seen in the following quotation. James Wise says:¹

"Several actions of their Pir (Dudu Miyan) must have been disapproved of by many of his followers, as for instance when he forcibly carried off a Brahmani girl and made her his 'nikah' wife; but even this violent act did not cause them to desert him. On the contrary, they believed in him to the last, and liberally spent their hard earned savings in promoting the interest of the sect. At one time a few disciples seceded. They had been to Makkah and ascertained that the teaching of Maulavi Karamat Ali was orthodox, while that of their own spiritual chief was Wahabi in tendency and heterodox".

Nevertheless, the erroneous view of Gastrell, coming as it did from a responsible person, carried great influence

1. James Wise: Eastern Bengal, pp.25-26.

and eventually mislead many including W.W.Hunter¹. Thus, the enemies of Dudu Miyān were successful to a great extent in their attempt to influence the English official class against the Farā'idī leader.

It appears from the circumstantial evidence, as well as from the Farā'idī sources that after the incidents of A.D.1841 and 1842, the zamīndārs were afraid of disturbing the peace of the Farā'idīs by any direct violent means, although they indulged in hostile propaganda. Kali Prasad Kanjhi Lal, the Brahman gomashtah of Mr. A.Dunlop, who was in charge of Dunlop's indigo-factory of Panch Char in the Thana of Mulfatganj, was the only person remained to be dealt with. According to the Farā'idī sources, he was deadly against Dudu Miyān and under the protection of his English master continued to perpetrate oppression on the Farā'idīs.² The Farā'idīs hold that Kali Prasad used to pose himself as a little zamīndār and oppressed the sowers of indigo, a great many of whom were Farā'idīs. He forced them to plant indigo on their best rice-lands for only a nominal

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1. In the Imperial Gazetteer of India, Hunter repeats the views of Gastrell almost verbatim. He says, "This man appears to have abused the implicit confidence imposed in him. He was charged with having applied the subscription to his own use and with many tyrannical acts. On more than one occasion he was sentenced to terms of imprisonment by the British courts ..." (vol.iv,p.399).
 2. See, H.Beveridge: District of Bakargoni, op.cit.,p.399 and Wazir 'Alī: Muslim Ratnahār, op.cit.,p.8.

remuneration and punished the recalcitrant with "chilli powder snuff" and "beard-tax"¹. Having settled the matters with the zamīndārs, Dudu Miyān turned his attention to this notorious gomashtah and directed one of his influential disciples of Narayanganj subdivision, namely Qādir Bakhsh Jān, to lead a campaign against him. James Wise describes the incident as follows:²

"On the 5th of December 1846, a large body of armed men attacked and burned to the ground the factory of Panch Char. After pillaging the adjoining village³ they departed, taking with them the Brahman Gomastha, who was afterwards cruelly murdered in the Bakargonj district".

The account of Beveridge agrees with Wise's description and the former adds on the basis of a letter of the Magistrate, as follows:⁴

"It is said that the body (of Kanjhi Lal) was cut in pieces and thrown into the sea; hence the proverbial expression of making a Kanjhi Lall of one's enemy".

1. Tradition current among the Farā'idīs.

2. James Wise: Eastern Bengal, p.25.

3. The name of this village was Shimuliyā (see, infra.)

4. H. Beveridge: District of Bakargonj, p.340.

In the opinion of James Wise, this attack was inspired by Dudu Miyān's desire for revenge against Mr. Dunlop. He points out, as we have quoted earlier, that Dunlop had enmity against him, and further adds:¹

"The Miyān bent upon revenge, easily found willing agents to execute his order".

H. Beveridge says:²

"The reasons for Kanjhi Lal being carried off were that Dudhu Mia ... had disputes with Mr. Dunlop, and that the ryots considered that Kanjhi Lal oppressed them".

The grievances of the Farāīdīs, however, are mainly directed against Kanjhi Lal. For example, Wazīr 'Alī says:³

"In the Panch Char of Faridpur district, There was one of the biggest indigo-factories of Bengal; In which Kāli Kājaliyā (Kanjhi Lal) was the manager, Who used to oppress the Muslims very much. Qādir Bakhsh Jān, a disciple of the Miyān, one day,

1. James Wise: Eastern Bengal, p.25.

2. H. Beveridge: District of Bakargoni, p.340.

3. Wazīr 'Alī: Muslim Ratnahār, p.8:

"করিদপুর জিলাধীন পাঁচ চড় পর ।
বাহানার নীলকুঠী ছিল অধা বড় ॥
কালী কামলিয়া ছিল কর্মচারী বড় ।
উৎপীড়ন করিত বড় মোসলমান পর ॥
একদিন মিঞা শিষ্য কাদের বক মান ।
দুদু মিঞার এসারায় লিয়া সুবিদান ॥
বেইশানের ওরে যবে মারিয়া কেলিল ॥"

At the behest of Dudhu Miyān, taking many (other)
disciples with him,
(Led a campaign and) killed the infidel".

On this incident, Dudu Miyān and 60 of his followers were tried before the Sessions Judge of Faridpur, and were convicted in A.D.1847. But on appeal to the Sadar 'Adālat at Dacca, all of them were acquitted¹. It is said that a Puthī was written glorifying this event, which now appears to have been lost. Only a few lines could be recovered by us from the memory of an old Farā'idī of Tippera, which runs as follows:²

"I am, the well-known Nājāi Shiqdār,
Giving this news in rhyme:

They (the Farā'idīs) wear dhuti without passing
one end between the legs³, sons of weavers,
(and) true believers in Islam."

1. James Wise: Eastern Bengal, p.25; H.Beveridge: District of Bakargoni, p.340; he however, says Nizāmat 'Adālat in the place of Sadar 'Adālat; and Wazir 'Alī: Muslim Ratnabār, p.8.

2. " কবিতাতে বাখিয়া কলম প্রচার ।
সেই মুন্সেফের নাম নাজাই শিকদার ॥
তার কাছাখোলা, জোনার পোলা, বাটী মোসলমান ।"

3. The term used "Kānchā Khulā". See, also W.W.Hunter, ed.: Imperial Gazetteer of India, vol.iv, p.399; and L.S.S. O'Malley: Bengal, Bihar and Orissa, p.210.

It continues:¹

"It is Dudu Miyān who gave them their dress.

You go home ! believe me ! (and) give this message
(to others)!

This you may take for granted as the sign of the
Ustād (and his followers).

Ustād Dudu Miyān !

Dudu Miyān reforms the country by admonition.

The clubs in the hands of the lower classes go
jumping on;

There, Kamlā Chhochhā, Pokkā Mochhā², go to
Chawdhuri's residence,

(And) play with their sticks often near the tank of
Lālmaniyā.

Oh ! how much can I say about the houses in the hemlet !

Dudu Miyān made the village of Shimuliyā³ desolate³

1. "দুদু মিঞা বিয়া তামো দিম কইদান ।

কামলা চোখা বেরে কবিতা মাও, কইও মুখের বাণী,
এই মত মাঝারে তাই উস্তাদের নিশানী ॥

উস্তাদ দুদু মিঞা । দুদু মিঞা তাম দিয়া বাক্য তামা করে ।

ছোট লোকের হাতে মাঠি কাম বাজিয়া করে ।

আতে কফলা চোখা পেকুলা চোখা ছদরী বাড়ী যায় ।

কামলাচোখার পুতুরেতে হামেলা ছুরায় ॥

আতে ক'ব কত মুখের কত মত পাড়া ।

দুদু মিঞা শিমুলিয়ার গাঁও কইরা দিম ছাড়া ॥"

The above two passages, apparently from a Pūthi, was recovered from the memory of Munshī 'Irfān al-Dīn of Bajarikhula in the interior of Sadar subdivision of Tippera, by the present writer, during a tour in 1958.

2. Kamlā Chhochhā and Pokkā Mochhā appear to be fond names of two trainers in clubmanship, which was, at that time, very important in fighting country affrays.
3. Shimuliyā was a village in the vicinity of the indigo factory of Mr. Dunlop at Panch Char, in which the workers of the factory and the clubmen (Lātivāls) of Mr. Dunlop, were housed. After razing the indigo factory to the ground, the Farā'idīs sacked this village as described above.

We have seen in the Police Report that the attack of the Farā'idīs on the Hindu zamīndārs of Faridpur was motivated by the desire of revenge for the oppression and extortion to which they were subjected. We have also seen that Mr. Dunlop had become an avowed enemy of Dudu Miyān and attempted several times to put him behind the bars. Edward de Latcour (in his evidence before the British Parliament in A.D.1861), mentions that an indigo planter had, on one occasion, attacked the residence of Dudu Miyān with 700 to 800 armed men, wounded several persons and looted property valued at 12,00,000 rupees¹. He further adds that the Police was bribed, the English magistrate dined with the planter and Dudu Miyān was committed to trial without any investigation being carried out².

Although the date of this outrage has not been mentioned, there is little doubt that it occurred before the "Kanjhi Lal incident", as no incident of the kind or the occurrence of any affray between the Farā'idīs and the indigo planters has been reported thereafter. The Farā'idī attack on the indigo factory of Mr. Dunlop may, therefore, have been in revenge of this earlier outrage or vice versa.

1. cf. Evidences of Edward de Latcour: Parliamentary Papers, vol. xlv, 1861, Minutes of Evidences in Reply to Question nos. 3917 and 3918; quoted by Dr. A.R. Mallick in his Thesis, The Development of the Muslims of Bengal and Bihar, 1813-1856 (unpublished), University of London, 1953, p.63.

2. Abid.

Dudu Miyān's campaign against Kali Prasad Kanjhi Lal removed the last hurdle from his path. Henceforward, the Farā'idīs could walk with their heads high without fear of being molested by the zamīndārs and the indigo planters or by their underlings. As a result, Dudu Miyān appears to have enjoyed the peace of the land from A.D.1847 to 1857.

From A.D.1857 to A.D.1860:-

At the outbreak of the Great Indian Revolt in A.D. 1857, Dudu Miyān was arrested by the British government and removed to Calcutta where he was thrown into prison¹. The charge against him, is not stated. James Wise simply says that he would have been released if he had not boasted before the Court that 50,000 men would answer his summons and march whithersoever he ordered them². Probably, the apprehension produced by Mr. Dampier's Police report of A.D.1843, in which Dudu Miyān was described as a Wahhābī leader at the head a "gathering of eighty thousand men"³, led to this arrest. The reason for this arrest appears to be purely political; for, as soon as the danger of rebellion had passed away in A.D.1859, he was released from Calcutta⁴.

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1. J.E.Gastrell: Jessore, Fureedpore and Backergunge, p.36; and James Wise: Eastern Bengal, p.25.
 2. James Wise: Eastern Bengal, p.25.
 3. W.W.Hunter: Indian Mussalmans, pp.100 and 109.
 4. J.E.Gastrell: Jessore, Fureedpore and Backergunge, p.36. He, however, does not give the year, but categorically says that Dudu Miyān was kept in safe custody at Calcutta "until the close of the great mutiny". The date A.D.1859 is, therefore, easily deducible.

But, when he reached home, he was again arrested by the Police of Faridpur, and immured in the Faridpur gaol. From the account of J.E.Gastrell, the manner of this arrest appears to be most intriguing. Gastrell says:¹

"On his (Dudu Miḡān's) return to the district he was cleverly captured to answer another charge against him by one of the Fureedpore Thannah Darogahs, who disguising himself and taking some Policemen with him presented himself before Doodoo Meah and represented to him that they all desired to join the sect of Ferazees. Doodoo on hearing this and suspecting nothing left his hiding place with them, was immediately captured, put on board a boat which the Darogah had in waiting, was taken to Fureedpore and lodged safely in jail".

On this occasion, too, the charge was not stated. Gastrell simply says that when he was "released, he left the district then too hot to hold him, and it is believed, sought refuge in Dacca, where in 1861, he was said to be very ill"². In the first place, the above statement shows that he was released in the summer of 1860. Secondly, the language itself suggests that he was released from the

1. J.E.Gastrell: Jessore, Fureedpore and Backergunge, p.36.

2. ibid.

Police custody without being brought before a law court. This arrest and imprisonment may, therefore, have been merely detention by the Police.

The Nature of Dudu Miyān's Struggle :-

Dudu Miyān's career as discussed above, shows that his antagonism with the zamīndārs and indigo planters was aimed at giving protection to the Farā'idī peasantry from their oppression. The European writers, however, accuse him of criminality, lawlessness and rebellion against the British government.

(i) Mr. Dampier, the Commissioner of Bengal Police, alleged that "the real object" of the Farā'idīs was the expulsion of the foreign rulers and the "restoration of the Mahomedan power". He characterised Dudu Miyān as a dangerous intriguer and recommended (circa. A.D.1847) his transportation for life and cautioned the government to watch closely the activities of the Farā'idī "sect"¹.

(ii) We have seen earlier that Dudu Miyān was linked by a columnist of the Calcutta Review, in A.D.1847, with the disturbances created earlier by Titu Mīr. He characterised Dudu Miyān as a criminal and disturber of peace².

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1. cf. Translation of the Proceedings of Two Cases Tried in 1847, before the Sessions Judge against Dudu Miyān and his Followers. Calcutta, 1848, Appendix, pp. xxvii-xxxiv; quoted by Dr. A.R.Mallick in his Thesis, The Development of the Muslims of Bengal and Bihar, 1813-1856, op.cit., p.87.
 2. See Calcutta Review, vol. vii, 1847, p.199.

(iii) H. Beveridge refers to Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī and Dudu Miyān as two non-officials, who "exercised more influence than any judge or magistrate" in the district of Bakerganj. He, however, adds that Dudu Miyān's character was "stained with vices", and that, he was not prepared to say that "his influence has been beneficial"¹.

(iv) James Wise says that Dudu Miyān was "constantly compromising himself by the lawlessness of his conduct". In support of this contention he cites the instances of Dudu Miyān's trials in A.D.1838, 1841, 1844 and 1846, which we have discussed above.

But, examined in the context of contemporary situation and various odds against which Dudu Miyān struggled, the above allegations appear to be unwarranted. In the first place, we have seen that the charge of rebellious character against Dudu Miyān has never been proved. In a recent study Dr. Mallick says:²

"Nowhere do we come across any intention expressed by him (Dudu Miyān) that he wanted or ever aimed at the establishment of a political power of the Muslims in place of the British. The only reference

1. H. Beveridge: District of Bakergoni, London, 1876, p.87.

2. Dr. A.R. Mallick: The Development of the Muslims of Bengal and Bihar (unpublished Thesis), op.cit., pp.87-88.

of the Farā'idīs uniting with the Wahhābīs (i.e., the followers of the Patna school or Tarīqah-i-Muhammadiyah), for the purpose of creating a disturbance was made by the Joint Magistrate of Faridpur in his letter of 27 June, 1857, and that again was based on rumour".

Secondly, we have already noticed that the Hindu zamīndārs and the European indigo planters and their underlings subjected the peasantry to unbearable extortion and oppression¹. It will be seen in a later chapter that the zamīndārs of Faridpur imposed not less than 23 items of "illegal cesses" on their tenants in addition to the authorised land revenues². Dudu Miyān, who championed the cause of the peasantry, could not put up with these oppressive measures silently, and this was the reason which, in course of time, brought him in conflict with the zamīndārs and the indigo planters. The violence committed by his followers in this process were, as we have seen, actuated by the desire for protecting the Farā'idī peasantry from these oppressive measures³.

Thirdly, Biharilal Sarkar, the Biographer of Titu Mir says that during the time under review, the British

1. See supra., Chapter II, Section "B".

2. See infra., Appendix, to Chapter viii,

3. See supra., p.110 ff.

administration had not taken firm root in rural Bengal¹, which left the zamīndārs free to dispose their affairs in accordance with their despotic whims. As late as A.D.1879, the executive head of the Madaripur subdivision (the home subdivision of Dudu Miyān) admitted, that the government administration failed to protect the Farā'idī peasantry from the inhuman oppressions of the zamīndārs². Latcour's evidence further shows that it was almost impossible on the part of Dudu Miyān and his followers to secure justice against the outrages and oppressions of the European indigo planters³. Dudu Miyān was, therefore, compelled by circumstances to resort to some amount of physical force in the interest of the welfare of the down-trodden peasantry.

Fourthly, H. Beveridge admits that the Farā'idīs did not appear to "share the dangerous political views of the Wahabis or that their revolutionary views extend beyond disputing their landlords' claim for rent"⁴

He further adds:⁵

"Hindu zamīndārs and alarmists generally are fond of representing the Ferazis (i.e., Farā'idīs)

1. cf. Biharilal Sarkar: Titu Mīr. Calcutta, B.S.1304, pp. 14-17.

2. See infra., Chapter v, Section B and Chapter viii.

3. See supra., p. 200.

4. H.Beveridge: District of Bakargoni, op.cit., pp.254-55.

5. ibid.

as politically dangerous, but, I think, without sufficient reason. No doubt, they are more vigorous and less tractable than ordinary Mahomedans, but this need not be a disadvantage to their character".

Fifthly, although Hunter accuses the Farā'idīs of bigotry and of intolerant attitude to other's points of view, he characterises the later Farā'idīs as peaceful cultivators and traders. He says:¹

"At the present day, the Faraizis do not exhibit any active fanaticism nor would it be just to accuse them, as a class, of disloyalty to the British government. The majority of them are cultivators of the soil but not a few occupy the rank of traders, being especially active in the export of hides. All alike are characterised by strictness of morals, religious fervour and faithful promotion of the common interests of the sect".

Thus, it appears that like Titu Mīr, Dudu Miyān was also pitted against the vested interests of the Hindu zamīndārs and European indigo planters and, as a consequence, was involved into a dangerous situation which threatened not only his life and property but also the very existence of the

1. W.W.Hunter, ed.: Imperial Gazetteer of India, op.cit., vol. iv, p.339.

reform movement led by him. It was, therefore, his uncommon acumen and tactful manipulation of affairs that enabled him to escape from the sorrowful plight in which Titu Mīr had got stuck.

Dudu Miyān's Death:-

At Dacca, Dudu Miyān lived at Bansal Road, where he was quite often suffering from illness¹. Finally, he died there in B.S.1268/A.D.1862², probably on the 24th September as stated by Wise³. He lies buried at the backyard of the residence (137 Bansal Road) in which he lived. His grave still stands on a flat ground, enclosed later on by a boundary wall.

In the light of the above evidence, the contention of James Wise and Hidayet Hosain that Dudu Miyān "died at Bahadurpur, on the 24th September 1860", that, he "was buried there", and that, "the Arial Khan river has within the last few years washed away every trace of his house and tomb"⁴, proves incorrect. Dudu Miyān's lasting contribution to the

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1. J.E.Gastrell: Jessore, Fureedpore and Backergunge, op.cit., p. 36.
 2. Wazir 'Alī: Muslim Ratnahār, p.9: gives the B.S. date; and W.W.Hunter, ed.: Imperial Gazetteer of India, p.399: gives the A.D. date. As both the dates correspond with each other, it leaves no room for doubt.
 3. See James Wise: Eastern Bengal, p.26.
 4. James Wise: Eastern Bengal, p.26; and M.Hidayet Hosain: "Farā'idī", Encyclopaedia of Islam, vol.ii, p.58.

Farā'idī movement, and the most remarkable achievement had, however, lain in the field of social reform, which will be considered in a separate chapter¹.

Family Life of Dudu Miyān:-

Dudu Miyān has been described as a handsome² and tall person with dark flowing beards³. He wore a large turban on his head⁴. Current tradition ascribes 18 marriages to him; but it is said, at the same time, that he never kept more than four wives at a time. His last wife was a Brahman girl⁵ from Kala Mridha⁶ (a village about 8 miles west of Bahadurpur, the native village of Dudu Miyān). During his last days, at Dacca, she lived with him, and continued to live in the same residence after his death. She lies buried by the side of Dudu Miyān within the same enclosure⁷.

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1. See infra., Chapter viii.
 2. Wazīr 'Alī: Muslim Ratnahār, pp.7-8; and Durr-i-Muḥammad: Puthi, p.13.
 3. James Wise: Eastern Bengal, p.26.
 4. ibid.
 5. ibid., p.25, also, corroborated by tradition current in the family of Dudu Miyān.
 6. Tradition current in the family of Dudu Miyān.
 7. Tradition current in the family of Dudu Miyān, also attested by the local people of Bansal Road (Dacca).

CHAPTER - V

LATER FARĀ'IDĪS

SECTION - A

SUCCESSORS OF DUDU MIYĀN

Dudu Miyān's death in A.D.1862, plunged the Farā'idī movement into a great crisis. We have seen earlier that it was the personality of Hājī Sharī'at Allāh, and the firmness and courage of Dudu Miyān that inspired the rural Muslim society of Faridpur and its neighbouring districts with the zeal for reform and eventually brought a large number of Muslim inhabitants of Eastern Bengal under one banner. On the death of Dudu Miyān this personal force was found lacking.

Dudu Miyān left three sons behind him. The eldest son Ghiyāth al-Dīn Haydar succeeded to the leadership¹, about whose activities, we have no authentic information. He appears to have died shortly after his election, probably in A.D.1864², and was succeeded by the second son of Dudu Miyān, namely 'Abd al-Ghafūr alias Nayā Miyān, who was, according to tradition, only twelve years old at that time³.

1. Wazīr 'Alī: Muslim Ratnahār, p.9.

2. The date has been calculated on the basis of current tradition, see next note.

3. Tradition current in the family of Nayā Miyān. He was born in A.D.1852 (see, infra). His election to leadership in A.D.1864, also indicates that his elder brother Ghiyāth al-Dīn Haydar died in the same year.

Soon after Dudu Miyān's death, the zamīndārs of Faridpur renewed their old hostilities against the Farā'idīs, and the intensity of their oppression daily increased. On one occasion the agents of the zamīndārs made a night attack on the residence of Dudu Miyān's family at Bahadurpur, and burned all the houses to the ground¹. Thus, the hostilities of the zamīndārs threatened the security of Dudu Miyān's family and followers.

On the other hand, Mawlānā Karamat 'Alī of Jawnpur, who opposed the Farā'idī doctrines vehemently, launched a series of mass campaign with the intention of demolishing Farā'idī movement root and branch². He tried to stigmatise Hājī Shari'at Allāh and his followers by designating them as "the Khāriīs of Bengal"³, and preached untiringly against them in the towns and market places (bāzārs), as well as in the village mosques, throughout the length and breadth of Eastern Bengal⁴. This threatened the existence of the Farā'idī movement itself. The following observation of James Wise testifies to the trying situation in which the Farā'idīs were landed. He says:⁵

"Three sons (of Dudu Miyān) survive, of whom

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1. Tradition current in the family of Dudu Miyān. Also, it is said that all the relics of Hājī Shari'at Allāh and Dudu Miyān including many books and manuscripts were consumed by fire in this mishap.
 2. See, infra., Chapter vii.
 3. See, supra., p.83.
 4. See, infra., Chapter vii.
 5. James Wise: Eastern Bengal, p.26. It may be noted that the Ta'āyuni, is the religious reform movement of Mawlānā Karamat 'Alī (see, James Wise: Eastern Bengal: p.7, and for details see supra., p.82 ff.)

none has as yet exhibited any of the energy and abilities of their father. The Sect is consequently diminishing in number and many families are yearly joining the next, or Ta'aiyunī, division".

Thus, the death of Dudu Miyān was an irreparable loss to the Farā'idī movement; and it was not until Nayā Miyān attained to maturity that the movement regained some of its lost strength.

Dudu Miyān had, however, appointed one Munshī Faīd al-Dīn Mukhtār, his legal attorney in A.D.1849, and authorised him to deal with all matters relating to his property¹. On the eve of his imprisonment in A.D.1857, he had appointed his son-in-law, Banī Yāmin Miyān of Barisal, his Mutawallī to look after his household affairs². Besides, Dudu Miyān was fortunate enough to have a learned theologian like Khalīfah 'Abd al-Jabbār³ among his disciples, who usually acted as the Muftī of the Farā'idīs, and whose profound knowledge in religious sciences amply compensated the lack of it in Dudu Miyān himself⁴. During his life time these three persons acted as his representatives and personal envoys, and after his death they continued to help the family

1. See, supra., p.6, no.ii.

2. Tradition current in the family of Dudu Miyān.

3. See, infra., Appendix to Chapter vii. - "D", p. 353.

4. See, the account of his debate with Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī, infra., Chapter vii.

of Dudu Miyān and protect the Farā'idī movement from falling into disintegration. Thus, Dudu Miyān's confidence in them proved eventually to be a redeeming feature after his death. Moreover, Dudu Miyān had given a centralised hierarchical organisation to the Farā'idī society.¹ Despite all trials and tribulations, this organisation stood the ground, and proved itself to be the strongest prop to the Farā'idī movement.

SECTION-B

‘ABD AL-GHAFŪR ALIAS NAYĀ MIYĀN

(A.D.1852 - A.D.1883)

‘Abd al-Ghafūr alias Nayā Miyān, the second son of Dudu Miyān, was born in B.S.1258²/A.D.1852, at Bahadurpur³. Our main source of information about him is the autobiography of Navin Chandra Sen, a prominent Bengali writer and a civil servant. He was posted as Subdivisional Officer at Madaripur (the home subdivision of the Farā'idī leaders), from A.D. 1879 to A.D.1881⁴. He was regarded as the first successful

1. See infra., Chapter viii.

2. Wazir ‘Alī: Muslim Ratnakār, p.9.

3. Bahadurpur is the native village of Dudu Miyān and of his descendants. It is in the Madaripur subdivision of the present Faridpur district.

4. cf. Navin Chandra Sen: Anār Jīvan. Calcutta, B.S.1317, vol. iii, pp.154 and 274.

administrator of the area, and he himself claims that the secret of his success was his alliance with Nayā Miyān¹. He knew the Farā'idīs as well as their opponents very closely with whom he often had to deal with in his official capacity, and has left a detailed account of his dealings with them in his autobiography. The second source of our information is the Farā'idī Puthis. Besides, family traditions of the Farā'idīs have been utilised sparingly wherever found helpful.

His Early Life:-

Wazīr 'Alī records that Nayā Miyān's education started under his father². It must, however, be recalled that Dudu Miyān was imprisoned in A.D.1857³, i.e., at the fifth year of Nayā Miyān's age. This opportunity, therefore, must have been short. Wazīr 'Alī further says that, later on, a Peshawari Mawlawī was engaged for tutoring him⁴. It appears from the current tradition that this Mawlawī stayed at Bahadurpur for a considerably long time, and Nayā Miyān owed much to this Pathan teacher for his training and education.

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1. cf. Navin Chandra Sen: Amār Jīvan. Calcutta, B.S.1317, Vol. iii, p.154.
 2. Wazīr 'Alī: Muslim Ratnahār, p.10.
 3. See, supra., p.201.
 4. Wazīr 'Alī: Muslim Ratnahār, p.10. His actual name has not been mentioned and he was so much well-known as the Peshawari Mawlawī that his actual name is not remembered by the present day Farā'idīs.

We have mentioned earlier that Nayā Miyān¹ was elected leader of the Farā'idīs in A.D.1864¹. He was, however, too young to take the responsibilities of leadership on his own shoulder, and the Farā'idīs were wise enough to appoint the three illustrious lieutenants of Dudu Miyān, namely Munshī Faiḍ al-Dīn Mukhtār, Banī Yāmin Miyān and Khalīfah 'Abd al-Jabbār, to act as his guardians. To their credit, they acted with singular devotion and remarkable harmony until the time their protégé became capable of taking his responsibilities in his own hands².

Nayā Miyān as the Leader of the Farā'idīs:-

The date of Nayā Miyān's assumption of full responsibility of leadership is not known. But, in A.D.1879, two remarkable incidents took place at Madaripur, viz., (i) a series of conflict between the Hindu zamīndārs and the Farā'idī peasantry; and (ii) a religious debate or bahath between the Farā'idīs and the Ta'aiyunīs. On both these occasions, we find Nayā Miyān moving enthusiastically at the head of the Farā'idīs. Navin Sen testifies that at this time his leadership was well established among the Farā'idī community. He says:³

"Nayā Miyān is the son of the famous Dudu

1. See, supra., p.210.

2. Tradition current in the family of Nayā Miyān and among the Farā'idīs at large.

3. Navin Chandra Sen: Amār Jīvan, op.cit., vol.iii, p.149.

Miyān and the leader of the Farā'idīs. ... A greater portion of the Muslims of Eastern Bengal, notably of Faridpur, are Farā'idīs, who accept Nayā Miyān's words as divine revelation".

He adds further:¹

"In this region (i.e., Madaripur) Nayā Miyān has established a State of his own within the British regime".

In the interest of good administration Navin Sen had entered into an alliance of mutual help with Nayā Miyān². This marked the beginning of a co-operative policy of the Farā'idī leaders towards the government administration. Once having entered into an understanding, Nayā Miyān kept his promise to the last, as Navin Sen himself says:³

"During my stay of two years at Madaripur, Nayā Miyān never broke his promise. This was one of the secrets of my success in administering Madaripur (subdivision)!"

1. Navin Chandra Sen: Amr Jivan, op.cit., vol.iii, p.149.

2. ibid., p.154.

3. ibid: "যদি যে দুই বৎসর মাদারিপুরে ছিলাম, তিনি (নোয়ামিয়া) এ প্রতিজ্ঞা লঙ্ঘন করেন নাই। আমার মাদারিপুর শাসনের ইহাই একটি নিশ্চয় তত্ত্ব।"

Conflict Between the Farā'idīs and Chakravartī Zamīndārs of Palang:-

It may be noted that Madaripur (the native subdivision of the Farā'idī leaders) has a predominantly Muslim population and, according to Navin Sen, "all Muslims ra'iyats of the area were the followers of Nayā Miyān, i.e., Farā'idīs¹. The biggest zamīndārī of the area was held by the Chakravartīs of Palang. In A.D.1879, when Navin Sen took charge of Madaripur subdivision, a series of family intrigues brought the Chakravartīs to the notice of the government. This incident also offers a good side-view of their relations with the Farā'idīs.

Navin Sen says that the large zamīndārī estate of Palang was held by three brother, who were Chakravartī Brahmanas. "The eldest was good natured and peaceful, the middle was of a medium character and the youngest was so oppressive that he was known in that area as Kaṁsāvātār", i.e., the incarnation of the infamous Kaṁsa, the wicked uncle of Kṛishna. Although one of their cousins was legally entitled to one half of the whole estate, the three brothers gave him neither the possession of any part of the zamīndārī nor assigned him any benefit thereof. This cousin tried his best to come to an understanding with them but all in

1. Navin Chandra Sen: Amār Jīvan, op.cit., vol. iii, p.142.

vain and at last, being exasperated, decided to lease his legal title to the Farā'idī leader, Nayā Miyān¹.

When the plan of their cousin came to light, the three brothers felt deep apprehension; for, Navin Sen says that the Farā'idī peasantry of the area being under the religious control of Nayā Miyān, he was "so powerful and so undescribably oppressive" that the above proposal made even the Kāṣāvatār tremble. Still instead of making a compromise with their cousin, they decided to dispossess him by foul means. They forged a document for the purpose, influenced the local Sub-Registrar and got it registered by him secretly at dead of night. On complaint of their cousin, the District Magistrate, Mr. Jaffery, investigated the case personally and being convinced of the forgery, instituted a case against three brothers and the Sub-Registrar².

It was at this time that Navin Sen was appointed Sub-divisional Officer at Madaripur. On his appointment Mr. Jaffery appraised him of the situation and instructed him to try the case personally and to see that justice is being done. Navin Sen tried the case, found the accused guilty, and according to the normal procedure, committed the three brothers to the Sessions. This was, according to Navin Sen, an obvious case

1. Navin Chandra Sen: Amār Jīvan, op.cit., vol.iii, p.142.

2. ibid.

and had created a good deal of sensation among the people. Everybody thought that these notorious oppressors would get their due this time. But to their utter surprise, they were acquitted by the Sessions Judge, which, the people suspected, could not have happened but for the conflict that existed between the Judge and the Magistrate¹.

On being released, the three brothers returned home in a triumphant mood, and the youngest, Kamsāvatār, began creating a havoc by his oppressions upon the peasantry who were mainly the Farā'idīs. They appealed to the government for protection and filed numerous suits against the zamīndārs in the court of the Sub-divisional Officer. Everyday such suits multiplied. Navin Sen tried a selected number of these cases, found the zamīndārs guilty, and sentenced them to different terms of imprisonment. But, on appeal to the Judge's Court, the zamīndārs were acquitted. In the interest of good administration, Navin Sen then took a firm stand, and began to try the rest of the cases against the zamīndārs. But, every time he sentenced them, they were invariably released on appeal to the Judge's Court. This process went on for about six months until all the charges against them were exhausted².

1. Navin Chandra Sen: Amār Jīvan, op.cit., vol.iii,p.143.

2. ibid.

Things then took a serious turn. For, being confident on their triumph over their cousin, as well as over the peasantry and the government, they held a gorgeous celebration of their victory in one of the houses of their cousin, which they forcibly occupied on the plea that it then belonged to them and their agents did not hesitate even to put the suckling calves on auction to realise the arrear rents and to extort money from the peasantry¹.

According to Navin Sen, the peasantry had no illusion that the government administration failed to protect them. They, therefore, took the matter in their own hands, and circulated in the bāzārs that since the District Magistrate and the Subdivisional Officer could not deliver them from the oppressions of the zamīndārs, they themselves would save the country by three of them going to the gallows after having killed the three Chakravartis. Meanwhile, a band of agents (gomashtahs and pivādahs) of the zamīndārs were kidnapped from Palang and were carried away along with their boat, in which they used to pass their night as a measure of precaution. On this incident, the Police carried out an extensive search but no trace of them or of their boat was found. At the time of investigation, the Police were told that the local people had no knowledge of them;

1. Navin Chandra Sen: Amār Jīvan, op.cit., vol.111, p.143.

even they never saw the agents of the zamīndārs at any time. It was suggested by some, rather sarcastically, that those scourge may have been taken away by Allār Dhil (more correctly Allār Chil or the kite of God). This was, as Navin Sen says, a typical Farā'idī expression, indicating murder, and the Police had no confusion that they were murdered and drowned in the river Meghna. The Police were, however, helpless as it was impossible to elicit evidence from the Farā'idīs¹.

This incident combined with the rumour of attempt to their murder overwhelmed the landlords with fear and dismay; and taking their families with them, they left for Faridpur town for the safety of their life. There they took refuge in the residence of Babu Taranath, the government pleader of Faridpur. The whole matter was thus settled, to the satisfaction of the Farā'idīs, and also to the satisfaction of the government, as after this incident they offered to settle their dispute with their cousin amicably².

If the above account of Navin Sen is true, and coming from a neutral and contemporary source, there is no reason why it should not be accepted, - it leaves no room for doubt

1. Navin Chandra Sen: Amār Jīvan, vol.iii, p.144. It may be noted that the phrase "পায়ার ডিল" (kite of God) is widely known among the Farā'idīs. Probably the word "ডিল" in the text is a printing mistake for "ডিল".

2. ibid., p.145 ff.

that Nayā Miyān had assumed his full responsibility much earlier than A.D.1879. For, in A.D.1879, he succeeded in regaining a good deal of the lost power and prestige of the Farā'idī movement.

Debate Between the Farā'idīs and the Ta'āyunīs on the Permissibility of Jumāh:-

In A.D.1879, Mawlawī Hāfiẓ Aḥmad, the eldest son of Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī of Jawnpur, came to visit Madaripur and began to preach against the Farā'idī doctrines. This created a great commotion among the public. At one stage, the situation threatened peace and order, and the matter came to the notice of the Police. Thereupon, Navin Sen intervened, and proposed a debate to be held at Madaripur on a specified date, in which fair chances would be given to both the parties to prove their points of view. This was accepted, and a debate was held at a public place under the supervision of the Police. Navin Sen called it Jumār Yuddha or the battle of Jum'ah. The debate was attended by about 5,000 men and lasted for 7 hours, from 10 A.M. to 5 P.M. It, however, ended in a fiasco¹.

The proceedings of this debate are said to have been published in a Bengali Puthī called Muhjir Nāmā² (Muzhir Nāmā?).

1. Navin Chandra Sen: Amār Jīvan, vol.iii, p.150 ff.

2. Wazīr 'Alī: Muslim Ratnabār, p.11. This work was not available to us.

Navin Sen's account gives an impression that Nayā Miyān was considerably well versed in religious sciences, and defended the Farā'idī doctrines with remarkable success. Considering the meagreness of his educational training, it may be suggested that he must have been greatly benefited by his association with Khalīfah 'Abd al-Jabbār, who was at that time at the zenith of his fame as a learned theologian¹, and who, as we have mentioned above, was one of the guardians of Nayā Miyān.

His Pilgrimage to Makkah and Death:-

In B.S.1289²/A.D.1884, Nayā Miyān went on a pilgrimage to Makkah and died about six months after his return to Bengal at the age of 32³. He was buried at Bahadurpur.

SECTION - C

KHĀN BAHĀDUR SA'ĪD AL-DĪN AHMAD

(A.D.1855 to 1906)

On the death of Nayā Miyān in A.D.1884, the third and the youngest son of Dudu Miyān, Sa'īd al-Dīn Ahmad was acclaimed leader by the Farā'idīs. He was born in B.S.1261⁴

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1. See Appendix, "D" to Chapter ix and Chapter vii.
 2. Wazir 'Alī: Muslim Ratnabār, p.12.
 3. ibid.
 4. ibid.

/A.D.1855, at Bahadurpur. His education started at home under one Munshī Bashīr al-Dīn¹ of Faridpur. Later on, he was sent to Dacca for higher education, where he had the opportunity to study Islamic sciences under the then renowned philosopher Mawlānā Dīn Muḥammad². When the Muḥsinīyah Madrasah of Dacca was started in A.D.1874³, he enrolled himself there as a student and prosecuted studies under Mawlānā 'Ubayd Allāh⁴ 'Ubaydī for a considerable time. He got married at Dacca and often lived there until the time of his election to the leadership in A.D.1884.

Sa'īd al-Dīn Ahmad as the Leader of the Farā'idīs:-

As the leader of the Farā'idī movement, he scrupulously maintained the policy of co-operation with the government, which was adopted earlier by his elder brother Nayā Miyān. In B.S.1304⁵ /A.D.1899, the government of India conferred on him the title of "Khān Bahādur". His close relation with the British government appears to have caused some amount of suspicion among a section of the Farā'idīs, who, although

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1. Tradition current in the family of Sa'īd al-Dīn: also supported by the tradition current in the family of his colleague in student-life, Mawlāwī Kafīl al-Dīn Ahmad of Mamalapur in the modern town of Faridpur (see Appendix "C" to Chapter ix, p. 345 ff.
 2. About Mawlānā Dīn Muḥammad, see James Wise: Eastern Bengal, p.94.
 3. See, Munshī Raḥmān 'Alī Ṭā'ish: Tawārīkh-i-Dhākā, A.D.1910, p.245.
 4. Tradition current in the family of Sa'īd al-Dīn.
 5. Wazīr 'Alī: Muslim Ratnahār, p.13.

did not create any dissension within the movement, themselves gradually slipped out of it. When the question of the partition of Bengal came in A.D.1905, he supported Nawāb Sir Salīm Allāh Bahādur in favour of partition¹. The policy of co-operation with the government was, as a matter of fact, continued even by his successor Rashīd al-Dīn Ahmad alias Bādshāh Miyān, the present head of the Farā'idīs down to B.S.1319/A.D.1913, when the European powers began to show all-out hostility against the Turkish empire². The Farā'idīs were completely disillusioned at the end of the World War I, when the European powers including the British, dismembered the Turkish empire and divided its territories among themselves. For, the Farā'idīs regarded the Turkish Sultan as the rightful khalīfah of the Muslim world³. In B.S.1328/A.D.1922, Bādshāh Miyān joined the Khilāfat and the non-co-operation movement, and was arrested and imprisoned⁴.

During the time of Sa'īd al-Dīn, the conflict between the Farā'idīs and the Ta'aiyunīs had reached its climax, and religious debate (bahath) between them had become a commonplace occurrence in the towns and villages of Eastern Bengal. The main point of their difference was on the question

1. Tradition current in the family of Sa'īd al-Dīn.

2. Wazīr 'Alī: Muslim Ratnahār, p.18.

3. ibid., pp.18-19.

4. ibid., pp.19-20.

of the legality of holding congregational prayers of Jum'ah and 'Id, in Bengal under the British rule¹.

Accordingly, the Muslims of Faridpur and its neighbouring districts, where the Farā'idī movement was strong, - were divided into two factions known as Jum'ah Wālā or the supporters of the Friday congregational prayer, and Be-Jum'ah Wālā or those who opposed Friday prayer. In B.S.1309/A.D.1903, two debates were held on the question of Jum'ah at Dawud Kandi in the district of Tippera². In the first debate Khalīfah 'Abd al-Jabbār represented the Farā'idī point of view and was opposed by one Mawlawī Yūsuf 'Alī³. The Farā'idī Puthis claim that the Farā'idī Khalīfah pushed his points of view successfully and proved before a large gathering that the prayer of Jum'ah was not lawfully permitted in the villages⁴. The defeat of the supporters of Friday prayer on this occasion, led to a great commotion among them and they decided to hold a second debate, for which they invited many learned theologians of the time. One Mawlawī Muḥsin of Jawmpur, a relative of Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī, who was then touring Eastern Bengal also joined his hands with the opponents of the Farā'idīs. He actually paid a visit to the village of Matha Bhanga near Dawud Kandi, and had invited the Farā'idīs to meet him in a debate at Naya Kandi⁵.

1. Durr-i-Muhammad: Puthi, p.123 ff.

2. ibid., pp.126-33.

3. ibid.

4. ibid., p.117.

5. Nāzim al-Dīn: Puthi, pp.111-119.

But, he is said to have withdrawn on the eve of the appointed day¹. The Farā'idīs, however, had proceeded to Dawud Kandi on the appointed day, headed by Khalīfah 'Abd al-Jabbār and Mawlawī Thanā Allāh². They were competent theologians and experienced in the art of debate, who succeeded to manipulate the situation in their favour and won the day³.

Khān Bahādur Sa'īd al-Dīn Ahmad died in B.S.1312/A.D. 1906, at Madhupur in Bihar, while on an excursion there. His dead body was brought to his native village Bahadurpur and buried there⁴.

He was a kind hearted person, generous to his friends, and amiable to high and low. He was deeply read in Islamic sciences and was fond of learned discussion. In this respect he was singularly fortunate to have a group of learned theologians around him, like Khalīfah 'Abd al-Jabbār, Mawlawī Thanā Allāh, Mawlawī Kafīl al-Dīn Ahmad⁵ and Mawlawī 'Abd al-Hayy⁶.

He was survived by three sons and two daughters⁷. On his death, his eldest son Abā Khālid Rashīd al-Dīn Ahmad alias Bādshāh Miyān succeeded him to the leadership of the Farā'idī movement, who is still living*.

1. Nāzim al-Dīn: Puthi, pp.117-119.

2. About Mawlawī Thanā Allāh see, Appendix, p. 353.

3. Durr-i-Muhammad: Puthi, pp.134-38; and Nāzim al-Dīn: Puthi, pp.107-20.

4. Wazīr 'Alī: Muslim Ratnahār, p.14.

5. About Mawlawī Kafīl al-Dīn Ahmad see, Appendix, p. 345 ff.

6. About Mawlawī 'Abd al-Hayy see, Appendix, p. 354.

7. Wazīr 'Alī: Muslim Ratnahār, p.14.

* It is regretted that Bādshāh Miyān died on the 13th December, 1959, when this study was completed.

CHAPTER - VI

RELIGIOUS DOCTRINES OF THE FARĀ'IDĪ MOVEMENT

Since its inception down to the present day, the Farā'idī movement pursued a predominantly religious programme. The socio-economic programme of Dudu Miyān¹ gave added impetus to the movement and gained for it the support of the masses of Eastern Bengal and Assam. Although, its socio-economic aspect appears to have been most attractive to the mass of the people, its religious aspect was never underrated by its adherents.

As we have seen earlier, the Farā'idīs identified themselves with the Hanafī school of law², to which the rest of the Muslims of Eastern Bengal and Assam generally belonged. There are, however, some peculiarities in the Farā'idī doctrines which distinguished them from the rest. A study of these religious peculiarities of the Farā'idīs is of special interest to the students of history, because in the first place, it gives us a close view of the various problems - social, religious, economic and political - which were faced by the Muslims of Bengal after the loss of their political power; secondly, because, as a type of

1. See infra., Chapter viii.

2. See supra., p.44 ff.

religious reform movement, it connects Eastern Bengal with the historical trend of religious reform, so common in the nineteenth century Muslim world.

In launching his reform programme, the foremost aim of Hājī Sharīʿat Allāh was to enforce the original teachings of Islam and to purge the society of various superstitious rites and ceremonies which were practised by the Muslims of Bengal. His first policy was to call upon the Muslims to be penitent for the past sin as a measure for the purification of the soul. This principle is known as the doctrine of tawbah or penitence. After this purification, he called upon them to observe strictly the farāʿid or the duties enjoined by God and the Prophet. Thus, the doctrine of tawbah led naturally to the second step, namely the doctrine of farāʿid¹, and it is on account the great emphasis laid on this doctrine that the movement came to be known as Farāʿidī. Thirdly, the doctrine of the Unity of God or tawhīd, as enunciated in the Qur'an, was strictly enforced; and whatever beliefs or customs were found repugnant to it were to be given up. Fourthly, the Farāʿidīs differed from other Muslims of Bengal on the question of holding congregational prayers of Jumʿah and ʿĪd; and fifthly, they denounced all popular rites and ceremonies which had no basis on the Qur'an and the Prophetic tradition and abolished them

1. For explanation see supra., p.22 ff.

unsparingly. These five principles of the Farā'idī, are discussed below.

(1) Tawbah :-

According to Hājī Sharī'at Allāh, tawbah means penitence for the past sin and a resolve to abstain from sinful act in future¹; and the process of tawbah consists in administering a formula by the ustād (i.e., the spiritual guide) to the shāgird (i.e., the disciple), both of them sitting face to face. The formula is as follows:²

"I am repenting for whatever sin I have committed knowingly and willingly, in the form of ascribing God's partnership to any other (shirk), indulging in sinful

1. cf. James Wise: Eastern Bengal, p.22.

2. The formula is still in use, which runs as follows:

"আমি জানিযা, ই ছায় যে সমস্ত শেরেক, বেদাত, নাক্বনাশি অন্যায়, কত্যাচার করিয়াছি - সমস্ত হইতে তওবা করিলাম এবং জ্বাদা করিতেছি যে আল্লাকে এক বলিয়া বিশ্বাস করি এবং তাঁর যাবতীয় আদেশ ও নিষেধ যথাশক্তি পালন করিব এবং হজরত রসূলুল্লাহ (সঃ) এর সুনত তরিকা দোতাতেক চলিব।"

(Given to the present writer by Bādshāh Miyān, the present head of the Farā'idī movement).

innovation (bid'ah), disobedience (to God), injustice or oppression; and I am resolving that I shall continue to believe in the Unity of God (tawhīd), and carry out His ordinances in so far as it lies in my power and lead my life in conformity to the tradition of the Prophet of God".

A person so initiated into the Farā'idī fold is called Tawbār Muslim (i.e., a Muslim who has purified his soul by means of tawbah), or Mu'min (i.e., a true believer), and enjoyed equal rights in all respects with the rest of the Farā'idīs. The doctrine of tawbah is, in fact, the gate-way to the Farā'idī reforms, and the rest of the Farā'idī doctrines are reflected in the formula quoted above.

The process of administering tawbah is called by the Farā'idīs "istighfār"¹, i.e., seeking forgiveness from God. It is also called "iqrārī ba'iyat", i.e., taking oath by the Ustād from the Shāgird orally without touching each other. This distinguishes the Farā'idī ba'iyah from the other types of ba'iyah administered by traditional Pīrs (or the spiritual guides), in which they usually lay their hands in the hand of the Murīd (disciple). Such physical contact between the Pīr and the Murīd is popularly believed to be

1. The term "Istighfār" is derived from the Arabic verb "ghafara" which means "to forgive" (in the past tense). Being on the metre of Istaf'ala, Istighfār means to seek forgiveness.

designed for the transmission and diffusion of spiritual blessings from the former to the latter. The Farā'idīs denounce this latter kind of ba'iyah as sinful innovation or bid'ah and call it dastī ba'iyah; for, according to them, it has no basis in the Qur'ān or the Sunnah. On the other hand, they claim that iqrārī ba'iyah is based on the practice of the Prophet.

One significant point to be noted here is that the tawbah was administered by Hājī Shari'at Allāh and his successors in Bengali language as against the general practice of the Pīrs to administer it in Arabic, Persian or Urdu. The adoption of the formula in Bengali language was apparently to simplify and popularise this doctrine among the ignorant multitude who did not know Arabic, Persian or Urdu, or as Hunter says, "not one in ten of whom could repeat the kalima"², i.e., the simple formula of the faith.

(ii) Farā'id :-

The doctrine of farā'id or observance of obligatory duties as enjoined by Islam, is the central principle of the Farā'idī reform programme from which it has derived the name itself. By the term "farā'id", Hājī Shari'at Allāh meant all the duties enjoined by God and the Prophet as

1. W.W.Hunter: England's Work in India. Madras, 1888, p. 47 ff.

implied in the formula of tawbah. But he put special emphasis on the absolute necessity of observing the five fundamentals of Islam (biṅā' al-Islām), which are (a) profession of the kalimah or the article of the faith, (b) five time daily prayers, i.e., namāz or salāt, (c) fasting during the month of Ramadān, i.e., rozā or ṣawm, (d) payment of zakāt or poor-tax, and (e) pilgrimage to Makkah or hajj¹. In conformity to the Islamic injunctions, the first three are enforced on the rich and poor alike, while the last two are for the rich who alone can afford them². We have in the Farā'idī Puthi a good concept of Islam as believed by the Farā'idīs and the way they sought to improve the conditions of Islam through the new principles. Durr-i-Muḥammad compares the five fundamentals of Islam with the root, branch and flower of a tree in the garden of Islam, with bumble-bee sucking the honey and the nightingale singing sweet melody. The rest of the religious duties or farā'id, are, according to him, like innumerable smaller branches and leaves of the tree which not only embellish it but accomplish its beauty and vitality. He is of the opinion that Hājī Shari'at Allah's contribution to Islam in Bengal consists in revitalising the tree of faith (īmān) and in raising the garden of Islam into the vigour of

1. cf. Wazīr 'Alī: Muslim Batnahār, p. 32 ff.; and Durr-i-Muḥammad: Puthi, p.11 ff.

2. ibid.

Durr-i-Muhammad cautiously guards himself from ascribing any miracle to Hājī Sharī'at Allāh for the spectacular success of the Hājī in revitalising Islam in Bengal. Because, as a typical Farā'idī, he sees the welfare of the universe in the rigorous operation of the divine law. Hence, he attributes Hājī Sharī'at Allāh's success to his right interpretation of Islam which is an embodiment of the universal laws, and to the right type of leadership provided by the Hājī.

The Farā'idīs claim themselves to be Hanafī, and both in doctrinal and legal matters follow the Hanafī school of law. In their observance of religious duties (farā'id) they have always been very strict. For instance, James Taylor, a contemporary of the Hājī, testifies that the Farā'idīs had the character of "being stricter in their morals than their other Mahomedan brethren"¹. The observance of the five fundamentals of Islam are especially enforced by the Ustād and his Khalīfahs in every locality where the Farā'idīs live, and irregularities are strictly censured.

(iii) Tawhīd or Unity of God :-

Hājī Sharī'at Allāh being the protagonist of an Islamic revivalism, laid emphasis on the necessity of going

1. James Taylor: Topography, p.248.

back to the simple Quranic conception of the Unity of God or tawhīd. This concept is included in the formula of tawbah. The doctrine of the Unity of God was, therefore, strictly enforced in the Farā'idī society and any belief or custom which was found repugnant to tawhīd was abolished. The Farā'idī doctrine of the Unity of God, needs elucidation, not only because the present day Farā'idīs consider it as a separate tenet, but because the Farā'idīs came into direct conflict with the traditional society on the interpretation as well as in the practice of this doctrine.

Hājī Sharī'at Allāh being anxious to impress his co-religionist with the real meaning of tawhīd, had included various implications of this doctrine in the formula of the tawbah. Bent upon practising in the fullest measure what one professed, he was unable to satisfy himself with the conventional interpretations of the doctrine of tawhīd, which stress only on the belief in the Unity of God. He interpreted īmān or faith as founded on two pillars, viz., (a) to believe in the Unity of God and to stick to it firmly in practice, and (b) to refrain from ascribing God's partnership to any other¹. Thus, in his opinion tawhīd was not only a theory but also a principle to be practised. Any belief or action which had the remotest semblance of infidelity (kufr), polytheism (shirk) or sinful innovation

1. Nāzim al-Dīn: Puthī, p.3.

(bid'ah), such as subscribing money to or participation in Hindu rites and ceremonies, unusual reverence to the Pīrs, the traditional fātihah and such other practices, ~~was~~, therefore, declared as repugnant to the doctrine of tawhīd¹. In fact, this boldness of the Hājī and his followers was the cause of much irritation in one section of the traditional society, and it eventually led Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī to denounce Hājī Sharī'at Allāh and his followers as "the Kharijīs of Bengal"². In order to prove his point the Mawlānā argued that both the Farā'idīs and the Kharijīs regarded work (amal) as a part and parcel of faith (īmān). In a hand-bill (ishtihār) which the Mawlana circulated in Eastern Bengal about A.D.1867, he says:³

"Because of the ignorance of the masses of Bengal, notably of the masses of the towns of Dacca, Faridpur and Barisal and their neighbourhood, and

1. Nāzim al-Dīn: Puthi, pp.2-4.

2. Mawlāwī Karāmat 'Alī: Haiyat-i-Qāti', pp.85,87,95 and 97.

3. See, Dhakhīrah-i-Karāmat, vol.1, p.108:

” چونکہ اس ملک بنگالہ کے عوام لوگ خصوصاً شہر ڈھانہ اور فریدپور اور بریسال اور ان شہروں کے قریب و جوار اور اطراف کے عوام لوگ اپنے دین اور اپنے مذہب اور دین کے عقائد سے واقف نہ ہونے کے سبب اور ایمان اور عمل میں جو فرق ہے اسے نہ جانتے کے سبب سے خارجیوں کے جال میں گرفتار ہونے کے [کلمہ کو مؤمن کو نماز نہ پڑھنے کے سبب سے کافر کہتے تھے]۔ “

the unacquaintance of the multitude about their religion (Dīn), school of law (Madhhab) and creed (‘Aqā’id), and because of their inability to discern between faith (Īmān) and work (‘Amal),- they have fallen into the trap of the Khārijiīs" (of Bengal, i.e., the Farā’idīs).

Thus, the Farā’idī doctrine of tawhīd can be characterised as a doctrine of puritanism which aimed at purging the Muslim society of un-Islamic accretions. The following quotations from the contemporary and later writings will illustrate the point.

(a) James Taylor says:¹

"They (the Farā’idīs) profess to adhere to the strict letters of the Koran, and reject all ceremonies that are not sanctioned by it".

(b) W.W.Hunter says:²

"The articles of faith on which he (Hājī Sharī‘at Allāh) chiefly insisted were the duty of the holy war (Jihād), the sinfulness of infidelity (Kufr), of introducing rites and ceremonies into worship (Bid‘at), and of giving partnership to the One God (Shirk)".

1. James Taylor: Topography, p.249.

2. W.W.Hunter, ed.: Imperial Gazetteer of India, vol.iv, p.399.

(c) H. Beveridge observes that the Farā'idī movement:¹

"appears to aim at a sort of primitive church movement, or return to the doctrine of Mahomed, and to attempt to abandon the superstitious practices which have gathered round the earlier creed by lapse of time and by contact with Hindus and other infidels".

In this doctrine of tawhīd, therefore, we find the closest resemblance, between the Farā'idīs and the Wahhābis of Arabia².

(iv) Congregational Prayers of Jum'ah and 'Īd:-

The most noticeable distinction between the Farā'idīs and other Muslims of Bengal is that the former suspended the congregational prayers of Jum'ah and 'Īd under the British regime in Bengal. These prayers were resumed by them in the towns of East Pakistan³ only after independence in 1947. For, the Farā'idīs think that in accordance with Hanafī law the congregational prayers are not permitted except in misr al-jāmi' i.e., in such a township where the Amīr (or administrator) and the Qādī (or the Judge) are present; and the important point is that the Amīr and the Qādī must be appointed by a lawful Muslim Sultān. Thus, the misr al-jāmi'

1. H. Beveridge: District of Bakargoni, p. 254.

2. See supra., p. 23 ff.

3. See infra., Appendix "E" to Chapter ix, p. 355 ff.

is a constituted township in this special sense. The Farā'idīs, therefore, held that such constituted township did not exist in Bengal under the British regime.

The controversy over the legality of congregational prayers in India was not a Farā'idī innovation. It may be dated back to the period of Muslim Sultanate in Delhi. In A.D.1344, a controversy revolved around the question, whether the congregational prayers could be lawfully held under an unrecognised Sultān, i.e., in the regime of Muḥammad bin Tughlaq who did not obtain the recognition of the Abbasid Khalīfah of Cairo at that time. The contemporary historians record that in the same year the question arose in the reign of Muḥammad bin Tughlaq about the legal position of the Sultān, and after a good deal of controversy "Qutlugh Khān, the Sultān's teacher convinced the monarch that no monarchy could be lawful without a recognition from the Khalīfah". Then the Sultān himself began to believe firmly that organised social or religious life was not lawful without the Khalīfah's consent, and ordered that the congregational prayers of Jum'ah and two 'Ids be kept in abeyance. These prayers were revived only after he received a decree from the Khalīfah recognising him as a lawful Sultān¹.

1. cf. I.H.Qureshi: Sultanate of Delhi, pp.33-35; and "Facsimile of the Memoir of Muḥammad bin Tughlaq" in Agha Mahdi Husain's The Rise and Fall of Muḥammad bin Tughlaq. London, 1938, Persian Text at the end 2 fols; and English Translation p.174.

Among the Muslim jurists also the differences of opinion prevailed on the question of holding congregational prayers. In this second instance, the controversy centres round two important points, viz., (a) the presence of the Amīr, i.e., Khalīfah and in later times the Sultān or their representative; and (b) the status of the place, i.e., whether it is a misr al-jāmi' or not. We have already seen the controversy relating to the presence of the Amīr and the other part of the controversy which relates to the definition of misr al-jāmi' is discussed below.

In earlier times the jurists generally agreed that misr al-jāmi' is a prerequisite for holding congregational prayers¹. But in their interpretation of the term "misr al-jāmi'", they differ widely among themselves. Imām Shāfi'i defines it "as a habitat of 40 or more persons" on whom congregational prayers are obligatory. Imām Ahmad ibn Hanbal is in full agreement with Imām Shāfi'i. Imām Mālik permits congregational prayers even in such localities where the inhabitants count less than 40. The Hanafī jurists reject the above views, but still differ among themselves in their interpretation of misr al-jāmi'. Imām Abū Yūsuf defines

1. For instance Shaykh Burhān al-Dīn Marghinānī open the chapter on Jum'ah in his Hidāyah (an authoritative text book of Hanafī law), with the following words:

.. لا تصح الجمعة الا في مصر جامع او في مصر ولا تجز في القرى - ..

Translation: Jum'ah is lawful only in misr or in the neighbourhood of misr and it is not permitted in the qurā or villages (cf. Hidāyah, Lahore, n.d., part 1, p. 148).

misr al-jāmi' as "a locality where the Amīr (the administrator) and the Qādī (the Judge) reside, who enforce civil and criminal laws of Islam"¹. According to authoritative sources, the addition of the clause "who enforce civil and criminal laws", is purported to excluding those localities from the status of misr al-jāmi' where these officers do not possess the authority to enforce sharī'ah or any part thereof². This view has also been ascribed to Imām Abū Hanīfah, though a different view narrated from him has been accepted generally as more representative of his views. According to this last narration, Imām Abū Hanīfah defines misr al-jāmi' as "a locality where if all its inhabitants assemble in the biggest of its mosques, they are not properly accommodated". In other words, he means a considerably large number. According to a third report, Imām Abū Hanīfah defines misr al-jāmi' as "a large township in which there are roads, lanes, market-places and many villages attached to it, and where the Wālī (the governor or administrator) resides, who is able to administer justice and to protect the oppressed from the oppressor and to whom the people (of the attached villages) turn whenever any calamity befalls them"³.

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1. Shaykh Burhān al-Dīn Marghinānī: Hidāyah, op.cit., p.148; and 'Allāma 'Ainī al-Hanafī: 'Umdat al-Qārī li-sharh Sahīh al-Bukhārī, part iii, p.264.
 2. See Shaykh Burhān al-Dīn Marghinānī: Hidāyah, op.cit., part i, p.148, foot note (Hāshiyah) nos.6 and 7, by Mawlānā 'Abd al-Hayy.
 3. ibid., p.148, see also foot note nos. 4 and 5 by Mawlānā 'Abd al-Hayy; and 'Allāma 'Ainī al-Hanafī: 'Umdat al-Qārī li-sharh Sahīh al-Bukhārī, op.cit., part iii, p.264 ff.

Moreover, the Hanafi jurists of the earlier times laid down six conditions which must be fulfilled in order to hold congregational prayers of Jum'ah and 'Id, viz., (a) to be in misr al-jāmi', (b) presence of the Muslim ruler or his agent, (c) prescribed time for prayer, (d) delivery of khutbah or sermon, (e) Jamā'at or congregation, and (f) access for all to the place of prayer¹. As the first two conditions cannot be fulfilled except in a country ruled by the Muslims, the jurists held that congregational prayers were not obligatory on the Muslims living in Dār al-Harb i.e., a country ruled by non-Muslims.

After the occupation of India by the British the Muslim jurists were asked to give their decision on the status of India, as to whether it continued in its previous status of Dār al-Islām (a country of Islam) or had relapsed into Dār al-Harb (country of the enemy). This problem was also linked with the question of holding congregational prayers; for, if it had relapsed into Dār al-Harb, in addition to the above-mentioned difficulties, the prayer of Jum'ah could no longer be deemed obligatory on its inhabitants. The question of holding the prayer of Jum'ah was, therefore, revived in this subcontinent along with the question of the status of the country. Hunter describes

1. cf. Shaykh Burhān al-Dīn Marghinānī: Hadāyah, op.cit., pp. 248-251.

the situation as follows:¹

"As we gradually transferred the administration to our own hands, pious Musalmans were greatly agitated touching the relation which they should hold to us. They accordingly consulted the highest Indian authorities on the point, and both the celebrated men above mentioned (Shāh 'Abd al-'Azīz and Mawlawī 'Abd al-Ḥayy), gave forth responses. Here are their decisions word for word :-

"When Infidels get hold of a Muhammadan country", 'Abd al-'Azīz declared, "and it becomes impossible for the Musalmans of the country, and of the people of the neighbouring districts, to drive them away, or to retain reasonable hope of ever doing so; and the power of the infidels increases to such an extent, that they can abolish or retain ordinances of Islam according to their pleasure; and no one is strong enough to seize on the revenues of the country without the permission of the infidels; and the (Musalman) inhabitants do no longer live so secure as before; such a country is politically a Country of the Enemy (Dār al-Ḥarb)".

1. W.W.Hunter: Indian Musalmans, pp.142-43.

Hunter adds:¹

"When we consolidated our power, the decision of the Doctors became more and more distinct as to India being Daru-l-Harb. Mawlawi Abdu-l-Hai, who belonged to the generation after Abdu-l-Aziz, distinctly ruled as follows :-

"The Empire of the Christians from Calcutta to Dehli, and other countries adjacent to Hindustan (i.e., North-West Provinces), are all the Country of the Enemy (Daru-l-Harb), for idolatry (Kufr and Shirk) is everywhere current, and no recourse is made to our holy law. Whenever such circumstances exist in a country, the country is Daru-l-Harb".

He adds further:²

"These decision have borne practical fruit. The Wahabis, whose zeal is greater than their knowledge, deduce from the fact of India being technically a Country of the Enemy, the obligation to wage war upon its rulers."

"The more enlightened Musalmans, while sorrowfully accepting the fact, regard it not as a ground of rebellion, but as a curtailment of their spiritual privileges. For example, in a Country of Islam, where

1. W.W.Hunter: Indian Musalmans, pp.142-43.

2. ibid.

the full religious status exists, the Friday prayer is absolutely incumbent. In India not only do many devout Muhammadans refrain from this service, but some of the mosques refuse to allow its performance. Thus, the two most eminent Musalmans of Calcutta in their respective walks of life, the late head Professor of the Muhammadan College (Maulavi Muhammad Wajih) and the late Chief of all the Muhammadan Law Officers (the Kazi-ul-Kusat Fazl-ur-Rahman), refrained from saying the Friday prayer. They accepted the position of India as Country of the Enemy as a curtailment to this extent of their religious privileges. But they lived loyal subjects to, and honoured servants of, the British Government".

Thus, in the first case, the presence of a lawful Muslim ruler was in question for the permissibility of the congregational prayers of Jum'ah and 'Id; and in the second case, it was the status of the country, i.e., Dār al-Harb, which induced a section of the learned circle to refrain from saying the prayer of Jum'ah. The Farā'idīs, however, do not lay so much emphasis on the question of the political status of the country, i.e., whether it is Dār al-Islām or Dār al-Harb, as they do on the question of the status of the locality, i.e., whether or not it is a miṣr al-jāmi', which virtually includes the condition requiring the presence of

a lawful Muslim ruler or his agent. This point was clearly brought out during a debate between Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī and the Farā'idī khalīfah, 'Abd al-Jabbār, held in A.D. 1867 at Barisal. For, when the Mawlānā proposed to include the question relating to the status of India in the agenda of the debate, the khalīfah showed the greatest reluctance to discuss a problem of political nature; so that the point was dropped out of the agenda¹.

A Fatwā or legal opinion of the Farā'idīs (which has been recently recovered by the present writer), has dealt elaborately with the problem of Jum'ah. This Fatwā opens with the following question:²

"In the name of Allāh, the most compassionate and merciful. Is the prayer of Jum'ah permitted in the villages of Bengal, in accordance with the tradition of the Prophet (Hadīth), and Islamic Law (Fiqh), or not? Please explain"

1. See, Mawlawī Karāmat 'Alī: Hujjat-i-Qāti', p.104 ff.

2. Farā'idī Fatwā (see supra., p.6 ff.). It reads:

” سوال :- دیار بنگالہ میں نماز جمعہ گاؤں میں جائز ہے یا نہیں احادیث اور فقہ کے موافق بیان کیجئے۔ “

In their answer, the Farā'idī 'ulamā' make no reference to the status of India under the British rule, but go back to the old Hanafī school of jurists in order to prove that holding congregational prayer of Jum'ah is not permitted in the villages (or qurā, plural of qaryāh). In the Farā'idī Fatwā they quote from 'Allāma 'Ainī, the well-known Hanafī commentator of Sahīh al-Bukhārī, the following:¹

"The learned Doctors have differed in their opinion regarding such places where the prayers of Jum'ah can be held. Imām Mālik said, 'Jum'ah is obligatory on the inhabitants of a locality (qaryāh) which has a mosque or a market in it. ... Imām Shāfi'ī

1. Compare 'Allāma 'Ainī al-Hanafī: 'Umdat al-Qārī li-sharh Sahīh al-Bukhārī, op.cit., part iii, p.264, reads:

« واختلف العلماء في الموضع الذي تقوم فيه الصلاة في القرية
 كل قرية فيما مسجد أو مسجدة فالجمعة واجبة في كل قرية
 أهلها العمور وإن كثرت إلا أنهم في حرم المسافر في كل قرية
 كل قرية فيما أربعين ميلاً أو ثمانين ميلاً بالغير غير
 عنها صيفا ولا شتاء إلا ظعن حاجة فالجمعة واجبة في كل قرية
 كان البناء من حجر أو خشب أو عجين أو قصب أو غيره بشرط
 أن تالون الأبنية مجتمعة فإن طانت متفرقة لم تصح الصلاة
 ومذهب أبو حنيفة رضي الله تعالى عنه لا تصح الجماعة إلا في
 مصر جامع أو في مصر ولا يجوز في القرى - »

and Imām Ahmad said, 'every locality which is inhabited by 40 free men, who have come of age, are in sound brain, and permanently residing there, who do not leave that place for any other place in the summer or winter except for occasional necessity, - the Jum'ah is obligatory on its inhabitants, all the same whether their residences are built of wood, mud, bamboo or any other materials; only on one condition that their residences stand closely together. But, if the houses lie scattered (in separate localities), Jum'ah is not lawfully permitted there. ... Imām Abū Hanīfah holds the opinion that Jum'ah is not lawful except in miṣr al-jāmi' or in its neighbourhood (muṣallā al-miṣr); and it is not lawful in the village (qurā)".

In the same Fatwā, the Farā'idīs contend that in the light of the Tradition of the Prophet (Hadīth) and of his companions (Āthār al-Ṣaḥābah), the opinion of the Hanafī school of law (i.e., not permitting the prayer of Jum'ah in the villages), is sounder than, and preferable to other schools of opinions. The Farā'idīs then quote from the Tradition of the Prophet and his companions in support of their contention. After a lengthy discussion, they come to the following conclusions:

- (a) miṣr al-jāmi' in which alone the prayer of Jum'ah is

permitted, "is a locality where the Amīr (the administrator) and the Qāḍī (the Judge), or else the Hākīm (the Judge-administrator) reside". Therefore, such localities where they do not reside cannot be regarded as miṣr al-jāmi'; and consequently, the prayer of Jum'ah cannot be lawfully held there¹.

(b) Speaking properly, there is no mosque at all in the majority of the villages of Bengal. "Even if there are a few Houses of Prayer, they cannot be regarded as mosque without being endowed for the purpose. How then these villages can be regarded as miṣr al-jāmi'; and how can the prayer of Jum'ah be permitted there? We take refuge with Allāh from misunderstanding and prejudice"².

1. of. Farā'idī Fatwā, see supra., p.6 ff. It reads:

” مختصر تعریف یہ ہے کہ جہاں امیر و قاضی یعنی حاکم رہتے ہوں وہ جگہ شہر ہے۔ -“

2. ibid., it reads:

” اور بنگالہ میں اکثر دیہاتوں میں اصلاً مسجد ہی نہیں ہے اگر کسی گاؤں میں دو ایک گھر مخصوص نماز کے لئے ہے تو وہ بھی بلاشرائط وقف مسجد ہو نہیں سکتے ہیں۔ پھر کہاں مصر اور کیونکر جمعہ پڑھنا۔ نعوذ باللہ من سوء الفہم والتعصب۔ -“

Thus, the arguments of the Farā'idīs centre round the definition of miṣr al-jāmi', which, in their opinion, must be a residence of the Amīr and the Qādī or else of the Hākīm in whom the functions of the Amīr and the Qādī are combined. As neither the villages nor the towns of Bengal under the British, fulfilled these requirements in the technical sense (i.e., through the delegation of authority by a lawful Muslim ruler), the Farā'idīs saw no justification in holding the prayer of Jum'ah in the British regime.

The traditional society, however, continued to hold the congregational prayers as usual, despite the political changes taking place in the country. Hunter refers to them saying, "Many Muhammadans who acknowledge the lapsed state of India, do not go so far as to deny themselves the consolations of the Friday Service"¹. Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī advocated in A.D.1870, the status of Dār al-Islām for India, on the plea that under the British rule India was Dār al-Āmān or a State of Security where civil and religious liberty was ensured². Even earlier in A.D.1867, he appears to have regarded India as continuing in the previous status of Dār al-Islām, and on that basis argued that the congregational prayer of Jum'ah was farīdah or obligatory on the Muslims of India.³

1. W.W.Hunter: Indian Musalmans, p.143.

2. cf. Abstract of Proceedings of the Mahomedan Literary Society of Calcutta of a Meeting held at the Residence of Maulvie Abdool Luteef Khan Bahadoor on 23 November, 1870, Lecture of Mawlāwī Karāmat 'Alī, p.5 ff.; and W.W. Hunter: Indian Musalmans, pp.139-40.

3. cf. Mawlāwī Karāmat 'Alī: Hujjat-i-Qāti', p.104 ff.

Furthermore, Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī pointed out that the prayer of Jum'ah was one of the biggest monuments of Islam¹, which, therefore, must be carried out under all circumstances. The then lapsed state of India was, however, too obvious to be denied altogether, and the doubt in the permissibility of holding the prayer of Jum'ah, could not be easily repelled. He, therefore, advocated that four rak'at of Zuhr prayer be added to the usual prayer of Jum'ah²; so that, even if the prayer of Jum'ah fell short of fulfilling the full spiritual obligation because of the lapsed state of the country, the prayer of Zuhr would, at any rate, repair the deficiency.

As a matter of fact, this last position, namely the addition of four rak'at of Zuhr prayer with the prayer of Jum'ah was not an innovation of Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī. This was advocated earlier by Shāh 'Abd al-'Azīz. He was asked to give legal opinion (fatwā) with regard to "whether the prayer of Jum'ah in the regime of infidels obliterates the obligation of saying the prayer of Zuhr (as it is usual in Dār al-Islām) or not³". Shāh 'Abd al-'Azīz (A.D.1746-1823)

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1. See, Mawlawī Karāmat 'Alī's Ishtihār, in Dhakhīrah-i-Karāmat, vol.1, Calcutta, A.H.1344, p.108.
 2. See, Mawlawī Karāmat 'Alī: Miftah al-Jannat, 3rd ed., A.H.1251, p.159 ff.
 3. cf. Shāh 'Abd al-'Azīz: Fatāwā-i-'Azīzī, vol.1, p.32; and vol.ii, p.4:

سوال: صحت ادائے نماز جمعہ و سقوط فرض نماز در این زمان و در این مکان

چہ حال دارد؟

replied, "the older school of the Hanafī had made the permissibility of the prayer of Jum'ah conditional to the presence of the Sultān or his agent. The later school of the Hanafī at the time of Chingiz (Khān), however, gave the fatwā that when the infidels (holding the political power) appoint a Muslim governor in a town, he (i.e., the Muslim governor) stands in the place of the Sultān; and the holding of the prayers of Jum'ah and 'Īds is permissible in his presence. Because of the rise of the new situation they relaxed the rules proportionately". "It has been laid down in the Fatwā-i-'Ālāngīrī", he continues, "that it is permissible for the Muslim to hold the prayer of Jum'ah under the regime of the infidels, and the Muslims have the right to appoint a Qādī by mutual agreement, but they must strive for a Muslim regime. But in addition to the prayer of Jum'ah four rak'at (of Zuhr prayer) are necessary by way of caution¹".

1. cf. Shāh 'Abd al-'Azīz: Fatāwā-i-'Azīzī, vol.1, p.32; and vol.11, p.4:

"جواب: صحت اداي نماز جمعہ نزد قدما حنفیہ مشروط بسلطان یا نائب سلطان است متاخرین ایشان در عہد چنگیزیہ فتوی دادند یا انکہ ہر گاہ از طرف کفار والی مسلمان در شہر متمکن باشد او حکم سلطان دارد و اقامت جمعہ و اعیاد از وی صحیح است و کسانیکہ متاخر تر پیدا شدند از این قدر ہم توسع کردند - فی العالمگیریہ بلاد علیہا ولایة کفار یجوز للمسلمین اقامتہ الجمعہ و یصیر القاعنی قاضیا ہنرا د المسلمین و یجب علیہم ان یاتمسروا والیا مسامنا - ... بالجہلہ اداي چہار رکعت علی سبیل الاحتیاط ضرور است - واللہ اعلم -"

The Farā'idīs detested this new position of saying the prayers of Jum'ah and Zuhr together, and expressed their indignation against it, as recorded by Durr-i-Muhammad. He says:¹

"It (the prayer of Zuhr or Ākhir-i-Zuhr together with that of Jum'ah) has no root in the madhhab; rather some of the theologians of the later time have invented it on account of their doubt about the permissibility of saying the prayer of Jum'ah secretly at their private homes".

The Farā'idīs also detested the general practice of holding the prayer of Jum'ah in the villages. For, they equated the villages of Bengal with the Arabian qaryah as opposed to misr or town; and held that the congregational prayers of Jum'ah and 'Id were not only unlawful but near prohibited (makruh tahrimah) in the village of Bengal². In the above-mentioned Farā'idī ~~Kitāb~~ Fatwā, the Farā'idīs singled out the Ahl-i-Hadīth for criticism on

1. cf. Durr-i-Muhammad: Puthi, p.41:

« وليس لها أصل في المذهب وإنما وضعها بعض المتأخرين عند الشك في صحتها الجملة »
 في البيت مخفياً - »

2. ibid., p.81.

this point. It reads:¹

"But the new sect, whose adherents do not follow any particular Imam, and claim themselves to be Ahl-i-Hadīth, hold the prayer of Jum'ah in every place without distinction".

The above discussion clearly shows that the Farā'idīs were not in the tradition of the reform ideas disseminated by Shāh Walī Allāh and his successors; whereas the Tarīqah-i-Muhammadiyah, Ahl-i-Hadīth and the Ta'āyuni belonged, in one way or another, to the reformist tradition of the Shāh. The doctrine of Jum'ah being one of the cardinal points of the Farā'idī movement, it is also difficult to establish a link of the Fara'idī trend of reform either with the Wahhābī tradition of Arabia or, as H.A.R.Gibb suggests, with the Salafiyah movement of Egypt². The main source of its inspiration may, therefore, be sought in the indigenous soil, which demands an examination of the contemporary events in Bengal against which the Farā'idī doctrines had developed.

1. Fara'idī Fatwa, see supra., p.6 ff. It reads:

” علاوہ اسکے غیر مقلدین کا جدید فرقہ بنام اہل حدیث اپنے کو مشہور کرتے ہیں
بل امتیاز مکان ہر جگہ کیف ما اتفق جمعہ ادا کرتے ہیں۔ “

2. H.A.R.Gibb: Mohammedanism, an Historical Survey, 1955; p.138.

We have seen that the main objection of the Fara'idis to the congregational prayers in Bengal is that the presence of Amir and the Qadi which was a necessary condition for holding those prayers, was missing. In the pre-British Muslim administration the Qadi had many important functions to do besides his normal function of the administration of justice. For, being the custodian of the shari'ah or Islamic law and morality, his assistance and supervision were indispensable to the Muslim community. The administrative changes which were brought about by the British during the second half of the eighteenth century and after, had curtailed the powers and privileges of the Qadi drastically, with disastrous effect on the Muslim community.

James Wise observes that prior to the British occupation of Bengal, the Qadi was the spiritual leader of the Muslims, who, although was appointed by the Nawab, was subordinate only to the Qadi al-Quddat of Dehli. He administered the law, superintended the education of the Muslim children, expounded the orthodoxy of religion to the Muslims and resolved all religious disputes. Evenly scattered throughout the country were his Nalibs or assistants, "who watched over the spiritual welfare of the Muslims, instructed them in faith and suppressed dissent or profession of independent thought". The power of the Qadi was great and "was equally dreaded by the monarch and the people". "In 1765,

when the Diwānī passed into the hands of the East India Company", continues Wise, "a great change took place". The Qādīs still served but deprived of their power, and no longer a terror to evil-doers. They became "judicial officers without any authority as religious instructors, or arbitrators"¹. The importance of the position of the Qādī and his assistants in the then Muslim social system is further seen in Hunter's reference to the accusation of the Muslims of Bengal against the British regime. He says:²

"They accuse us of having brought miseries into thousands of families by abolishing their law officers, who gave the sanction of religion to the marriage tie, and who from the time immemorial have been the depositories and administrators of the Domestic law of Islam. They accuse us of imperilling their souls by denying them the means of performing the duties of their faith".

Examined in the tenor of above evidences, it appears that the Farā'idī doctrine of the non-permissibility of the congregational prayers was not only a doctrine for doctrine's sake, but implied a protest against the administrative changes wrought by the British to the detriment of the Muslim society and to the utter disregard of the Muslim

1. James Wise: Eastern Bengal, p.21.

2. W.W.Hunter: Indian Musalmans, p.148.

sentiment. The specific mention of the Amīr, Qādī and Hākīm by them, in this connection lend further support to this view.

As a matter of fact, the question of the status of India had equally agitated the Muslim mind in the middle of the eighteenth century, when the Marhattas overran the Mughal empire. But, in the words of Hunter, "as the Marhattas satisfied themselves with taking one-fourth of the revenue (Chauth), without further interfering with the actual administration" India was regarded as continuing in the status of Dār al-Islām; and the learned Doctors of the time gave fatwā in favour of continuing the normal social and religious life. With regard to the British regime Hunter himself admits, "Not one of the reasons here assigned (i.e., in the case of the Marhattas), for India continuing a Country of the Faithful holds good at the present day"¹.

This point (i.e., the protest of the Farā'idīās), is further illustrated by a remark of Khalīfah 'Abd al-Jabbār in course of his debate with Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī at Barisal in A.D.1867. During this debate it was suggested by a theologian on the basis of a Makkan fatwā that if the Muslims of a locality under the British regime and British administration, appointed an imām to lead them in prayer,

1. W.W.Hunter: Indian Musalmans, p.137.

the prayer of Jum'ah could be lawfully held. Thereupon, addressing the Kutwāl of the town (a Police Officer), the Khalīfah replied, "If we appoint an Imām you would put handcuffs on our hands"¹.

Thus, the reluctance of the Farā'idī khalīfah to discuss the status of India in the debate, referred to above, was probably due to the fear of the British power and his unwillingness to come in conflict with that power rather than the indifference or confusion of the Farā'idīs with regard to the status of India. In fact, the suspension of congregational prayers itself implies that they assumed Indo-Pakistan subcontinent under the British rule to be Dār al-Harb.

(v) Denunciation of Popular Rites and Ceremonies:-

We have seen in the doctrine of tawbah that the Farā'idīs are required to part with shirk, bid'ah and all kind of un-Islamic practices. This puritan attitude of the Farā'idīs is further emphasised in the doctrine of tawhīd, which demands abstention from indulging in any belief or practice antagonistic to the doctrine of the Unity of God.

1. Mawlawī Karāmat 'Alī: Hujjat-i-Qāti', p.104 ff:

” عبد الجبار نے کوتوال شہر کی طرف مخاطب ہو کر کہا کہ اگر ہم امام مقرر کریں تو آپ ہاتھ میں ہتھکڑی ڈال دیں گے۔ “

Naturally, therefore, Ḥājī Sharī'at Allāh abolished numerous customs, usages, rites and ceremonies, and not a semblance of kufṛ, shirk or bid'ah, was left untouched. The contemporary and later sources are replete with lists of vices of every description that were condemned by the Ḥājī, and abolished from the Farā'idī circle.

James Taylor records that the Farā'idīs rejected the rites of Puttee, Chuttee and Chilla, which were performed between the first and the fortieth day after the birth of a baby, and observed only the rite of 'aqīqah or the naming ceremony, which is in conformity with Islamic injunction, and which consists of sacrificing two he-goats for a male baby and one for a female baby for the entertainment of friends and relatives. He further records that the ceremonies on the occasions of shaving the child's head, marriage and funerals were simplified and divested of all un-Islamic customs and formalities, such as shabgasht procession of the wedding, and various fātiḥahs connected with the funeral¹.

1. cf. James Taylor: Topography, pp. 249-50. It may be noted that "Chuttee" is correctly Chāṭi, and "Chilla" apparently corresponds to Asauchi Ghar, for the description of which, see James Wise: Eastern Bengal, pp. 50-52. Fātiḥah is a rite for the remembrance of dead ancestors (see supra., Chapter 11, Section B).

Enumerating the purges made by Hājī Shari'at Allah,
Durr-i-Muhammad says:¹

"It was the custom of the Mushrik² to float the
Bherā³ on the water, in the name of Khawāj.
The Mushrik Gānyār used to build shrines of Ghāzī and
Kālu⁴ and worshipped them.

They used to worship the shrine of Bibi Fāṭimah⁵ and
and many held twelve Pujās in twelve months
(of the year)⁶.

Dance, music and Fāṭihah (and other) rites and cere-
monies of the Mushrik and many Bid'āt
were theirs;

(Such as) witnessing the Dasērā, Ratha Yātrā, and
Charak Pujā, and the worship of saints"⁷.

1. Durr-i-Muhammad: Puthi, p.27:

"মোশ্বেকশের কাম ছিল কালে কালে ॥ ধোয়াজের ভেড়া ভাসাইত জলে +
গাঙ্গী ও কালুর দর্গা কবিত তৈয়ার ॥ পুজিত তাহাকে যত মোশ্বেক গাঙ্গার +
বিবি কাতেমার দর্গা পুজিত যতনে ॥ বারমাসে বার পূজা দিত জনে জনে +
নাচ বাদ্য বৃহ্ম কাতোহা মশ্বেকের ॥ আর যত বেদাত নাছিল তাহাদের +
দশহরা বৃধ যাত্রা চড়ক দেখিত ॥ পীরের নামেতে পূজা জনে জনে দিত +"

2. The Arabic term "Mushrik" means one who gives partnership to God. But in this passage this term is applied to the corrupt Muslims.
3. For description, see James Wise: Eastern Bengal, p.12 ff.
4. Two popular Muslim saints, see, ibid., pp.13-14.
5. See ibid., p.9.
6. The Hindus are said to have twelve or thirteen Pujās in twelve months some instances of which are given below in the passage.
7. See description in James Wise: Eastern Bengal, p.11.

He adds further:¹

"Weeping and the holding of Zārī in commemoration of the martyrdom of Ḥasan and Ḥusayn,² were the custom of the Mushrik.

(They) raised the Makām of Pānch Pīr,³ and held ceremonial fast.

On the occasion of first manustruation they planted banana trees around the residence.

All these Bid'āt were abolished (by the Ḥājī), and the sun of Islam rose high on the sky.

Having arrived there, Ḥājī Sharīāt Allāh propagated religion throughout Bengal".

Although the Farā'idīs carried out sweeping reforms, as it is evident from the above quotations, without much

1. Durr-i-Muhammad: Puthī, p.27:

"বহুবধে এমাম হাছেন হোছেনের ॥
হায় হায় জারি ছিল মসরেকপনের +
পাচ পীরের নামেতে মোকাম উঠাইয়া ॥
উপবাস করিত সে সকলে মিসিয়া +
প্রথম হাযোম যদি হইত কাহার ॥
ক্লাগাছ গাড়িত বাড়ীর চারি ধার +
সে সব বেদাত এবে হইল মেছমার ॥
উঠিল এছলামি সূর্য গগন মাঝার +
হামি শরিফুল্লা দেখা জারিক আনিয়া ॥
দীন জারি করিলেন বাঙ্গালা ছড়িয়া +"

2. See James Wise: Eastern Bengal, p.9.

3. See ibid., p.17.

let or hindrance¹, yet their laying of hands on a few time-honoured institutions relating to Pirism, caste prejudices and employment of Dai or midwife, evoked considerable opposition from a section of the traditional society.

(a) Pirism :-

We have seen earlier that Hājī Sharī'at Allāh was initiated into the Qādiriyah order of sufism by his teacher Ṭāhir Sombal. He regarded mysticism as a branch of higher religious knowledge, and held that in order to be able to tread on the mystic path a person must be well conversant with the sharī'ah (or Islamic law) as well as with tarīqah (or the science of mysticism); because an initiate would otherwise, be perpetually in danger of falling a victim to temptation and allurements, which might ultimately lead him astray. The Hājī, therefore, made a distinction between the khawās (the select) and the ʿawām (the commoners), and permitted only the former to be initiated into mystic order², the latter were, on the other hand, encouraged to recite from the Qur'an regularly.

Bent upon eradicating all practices which directly or indirectly conflicted with the pure monotheism (tawhīd)

1. See, James Wise: Eastern Bengal, p.22.

2. See, the argument of Khalīfah 'Abd al-Jabbār to this effect, in Mawlawī Karāmat 'Alī: Hujjat al-Qāṭi, op.cit., p. 104 ff.

of Islam, the Ḥājī denounced the then prevalent practice of regarding the pīr (the mystic guide or master) as an intermediary between God and man¹. He defined the pīr-murīd (master-disciple) relationship, as one of teacher (ustād) and student (shāgird), and pleaded that the terms "ustād" and "shāgird", which "did not suggest complete submission", should be used in place of "pīr" and "murīd"². He further alleged that the term "pīr" had, through corrupt usage, acquired an air of demigodness and had lost its real significance in the wilderness of corrupt and superstitious practices that had gathered lately around the names of many real as well as legendary pīrs³. He, therefore deemed it necessary to dispense with this term altogether.

Ḥājī Sharīʿat Allāh had also denounced the custom of holding ʿurs or the death anniversary of pīrs⁴, as, it was in reality a fātihah which he viewed as a bidʿah (sinful innovation). With regard to the initiation ceremony, the Ḥājī disapproved the practice of laying the hand of the

1. This degraded state of Pirism in Eastern Bengal, has been fully described by James Wise in his Eastern Bengal, pp. 10-20; and by Mawlānā Karāmat ʿAlī in his Muqāmiʿ al-Muhtadīʿīn (see, Dhakhīrah-i-Karāmat, vol.ii, pp.177-200), and in Mukāshifāt-i-Rahmat (see, ibid., vol.i, p.13 ff.).

2. See, James Wise: Eastern Bengal, p.22.

3. See, instances in ibid., pp.10-20.

4. See, supra., Chapter 11, Section B.

ustād or pir in that of the disciple. This subject later on figured prominently in a debate between Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī and Khalīfah 'Abd al-Jabbār, and will be discussed further in the next chapter.

(b) Caste Prejudices:-

Probably, due to the presence of an overwhelming majority of Chandāls or Name-Sudras among the Hindu population of Faridpur and Bakarganj, who were despised, segregated and often tortured by the caste Hindus, the practice of untouchability and racial discrimination had been, until very recently, the dominant feature of the Hindu society of Faridpur, Jessore and Bakarganj¹. Some sort of these discriminatory prejudices appear to have also been contacted by the Muslims from their Hindu neighbours, and the Sayyids, Shaykhs, Pathān and the Mullāhs occupied a position in the Muslim society of Faridpur which is not unfavourably comparable to that of the high caste Hindus. Among them the Sayyids of Girda and Gopalganj, the Khundkārs of Gotti, the Chowdhurīs of Gobra, Belgachi, Khanpura, Kartikpur and Habiganj, and finally the Qādīs of Gopalpur and Baghdanga are well known for their hereditary high tradition². On the other hand, the Julābā (weaver), Beldār (digger), Nikāri (fish monger),

1, cf. L.S.S.O'Malley: Bengal District Gazetteers, Faridpur, pp. 46-47.

2. Information collected from local people during a tour of the present writer in A.D.1957.

Kulu (oil grinder), Kāhār or Chākār (Pālki bearer and Pānkā puller), and the Dai (midwife), who formed exclusive castes¹, were discriminated by other Muslims. For instance, O'Malley gives an account of "a peculiar class of Muhammadans called Chaklai Musalmans" who dwelt in the district of Jessore. He says that these Muslims were "practically ostracised by other Muhammadans", because some of their ancestors were said to have committed the offence of selling fish in the open market or to a group of fishermen². Beveridge tells us that the Muslims of Bakarganj were fond of talking about their caste, and that, there were several subdivisions among them. He gives one example of "Chākars (servants)" who were "Pālki bearers and Pānkāh pullers", and who lived in considerable number near Barisal, and who were looked down upon by other Muslims³. Describing the population of Dacca city, James Taylor, a contemporary of Hājī Sharīf Allāh, says:⁴

"Several of the communities into which the lower classes of the Mahomedans are divided, according to their occupations and employments, have assumed the

1. See, the list of Muslim caste of Faridpur in Appendix.
2. L.S.S.O'Malley: Bengal District Gazetteers, Jessore, p.48 ff.
3. H.Beveridge: District of Bakargoni, op.cit., p.255 ff. They are also called "Kāhār".
4. James Taylor: Topography, p.244.

character of castes, and in regard to marrying and eating with each other they are quite exclusive as the Hindoos".

James Wise says that the Muslims of Bengal "have followed in many respects the system of caste as practised by the Hindus, although the principle that a son must carry on the trade or occupation of his father has never been reduced to a formula"¹. These evidences show that some amount of discriminatory prejudices had existed among the Muslims, in some form or other.

The Farā'idī reformer, Hājī Sharīf at Allāh viewed the existence of social discrimination among the Muslims with grave concern, and denounced it as a deadly sin, because, in his opinion, such practices were contradictory to the spirit of the Qur'an. He emphasised on the equality of all Muslims and held that the Farā'idīs or the Tawbār Muslims, - who have submitted most humbly to the will of God, repented for their past sins and resolved to lead a more godly life in future², - could not be subject to unequal treatment or discrimination either among themselves or in the outside society. In fact, by dint of their fuller submission to God, the Farā'idīs had a better claim to social or humane privileges if there were any, over the

1. James Wise: Eastern Bengal, p.34.

2. See ibid, p.22.

Riwāīīs or those who followed the traditional customs and superstitions. This declaration of equality appears to have borne good fruit, as it attracted the teeming multitude of the lower classes, consisting of the illiterate peasantry, the weavers (Julāhās), oil-grinders (Kulus) and such other Muslims of Dacca, Faridpur, Jessore and Bakarganj to the Farā'idī movement. The fact that Hājī Sharī'at Allāh was proverbially reproached by his opponents as the "Pīr of the Julāhā" (জোলাহা পীর)¹; and that, the Farā'idīs were generally called as "the sons of Julāhā" (জোলাহা সোনা)², is therefore, not without significance; especially, as we now know, that the Hājī was the son of a Tālukdār (i.e., a petty land-holder)³, and not the son of a Julāhā or weaver as claimed by James Wise⁴. According to the current tradition among the Farā'idīs, the Hājī, at first, changed the family titles of the Julāhās and the Kulus to Kāriḡar (technician), he called those who could read the Qur'ān and had some knowledge of the fundamentals of religion, as "Mullāh"; but later on the Farā'idīs were encouraged to drop their family titles altogether. The fact that in the census of

1. Tradition current at Faridpur.

2. See, supra., p.147 and p.172

3. See, supra., p. 147 ; also J.E.Gastrell: Jessore, Fureedpore and Backergunge, p.36, no. 151, in which he admits that the Hājī possessed a small estate.

4. James Wise: Eastern Bengal, p.22.

A.D.1872, out of the total 588,522 Muslims of Faridpur 574,740 registered themselves as "unspecified" Muslims, and that, 142 Muslim weavers registered as "Kārigar" against 6036 of the same casts who registered as "Julāhā"¹, - lend support to the above tradition.

(c) The Employment of the Dai Caste:-

The census of A.D.1872 lists the Dais of Faridpur as an exclusive caste of the Muslims. James Wise says that the women-folk of this caste were professional mid-wives, but their number, compared to the great demand of their service, was very small.² The profession of Dai was, however, considered low, especially because of the stigma attached to the "cutting of the navel cord" of a new born child. James Wise says "a common term of abuse applied to midwife is 'Nār-kātā' or the cutter of the cord"³. No respectable Hindu or Muslim would, therefore, cut the navel cord, even if they performed other services relating to the delivery, in a case of emergency.

The Farā'idīs held that this prejudicial practice was contacted by the Muslims from their Hindu neighbours⁴,

1. See, Appendix.

2. See, ibid., where only 195 Dais are recorded against the total Muslim population of 588,522 of the district of Faridpur. See also, James Taylor: Topography, p.263.

3. James Wise: Eastern Bengal, p.50.

4. ibid., p.22.

and was, therefore, a sinful innovation or bid'ah. The prejudice against cutting the cord is said to have brought untold hardship to bear upon the mothers; for, owing to the scarcity of Dai women, notably in the district of Faridpur, the mothers had often to wait for a day or more for the arrival of the Dai and to have the navel cord severed. Hājī Shari'at Allāh protested against the exclusive employment of Dai for midwifery, and declared that there was nothing low in cutting the navel cord, and advised that this might be done by an elderly woman of the family or of the village, and if needs be the father of the baby ought to do it.

This raised a considerable opposition from the traditional society, which was later on espoused by Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī in his debate with Khalīfah 'Abd al-Jabbār, as will be seen in the next chapter.¹

(d) The Dress of the Farā'idīs:-

The manner of the dress of the Farā'idīs, had drawn considerable attention of the English writers, and may be briefly noticed here. Hājī Shari'at Allāh had advised his followers to wear Pajama or Lungi instead of wearing Dhuti, the national dress of the Hindus, which was, however, generally used by the Muslims of Bengal at that time. He pointed out that the Pajama and Lungi were more convenient

1. See, infra., p. 280.

for the daily prayers. It was, however, conceded that if anybody wore Dhuti for necessity, he should wear it plainly without passing one end between the legs¹ so as to avoid inconvenience at the time of prayer. It is a curious fact that this peculiarity of the Farā'idī mode of wearing the Dhuti, not only attracted the attention of the Englishmen², but roused considerable suspicion in their mind. For instance, Hunter observes:³

"Externally a Faraizi may be known by the fashion of wrapping his dhuti or waist cloth round his loins without crossing it between his legs, so as to avoid any resemblance to a Christian's trousers".

It is needless to point out that the Pajama, the Muslim dress, has the greatest resemblance to, what Hunter calls, "Christian trousers" - in comparison to which the resemblance of dhuti with trousers cannot be judged anything but fictitious. As a matter of fact, this measure was taken by the Hājī to ensure that his disciples keep their thigh covered with dress in accordance with Islamic morality.

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1. For wearing the Dhuti in the above manner, the Farā'idīs were called "Kāchhā Khulā"; see, supra., p.172.
 2. See, H. Beveridge: Bakarsoni, p.255; W.W.Hunter, ed.: Imperial Gazetteer of India, vol.iv, p.399; and L.S.S. O'Malley: Bengal, Bihar and Orissa, p.210.
 3. W.W.Hunter, ed.: Imperial Gazetteer of India, p.399.

Thus, it may be concluded that the Farā'idīs adhered to the Hanafī school of law to which almost all Muslims of Eastern Bengal still belong. As such, they followed the doctrinal and legal systems of the Hanafī school. Hence, in the strict sense, they did not have any principal difference with the rest of their neighbours. The above peculiarities which distinguished them from the rest of the Muslims of Bengal were due to their insistence on puritanism and strict observance of religious tenets especially in an age so well-known for laxity and corruption.

APPENDIX TO CHAPTER - VI

The following manuscript document, signed by W.A. Wells, Collector of Faridpur, on the 19th of September, 1872, gives the census of different races and castes living in the district of Faridpur. The document has been preserved in the Collectorate Record Room of Faridpur and was copied by the present writer in 1957.

According to this document, the total number of inhabitant in Faridpur district was 10,12,524; the Muslims being 5,88,522, Hindus 4,23,599, Christians 401, Assamese 1 and Malabar 1.

The Hindus are listed under 108 castes and sub-castes and the Muslims under 18 castes. The portion which deals with the Muslims is reproduced below:

Ref. No.520 dated 19.9.72.

From : W. A. Wells, Collector of Faridpur.

To : The Commissioner, Dacca.

Subject : Castes of Faridpur.

Mahamadans (sec. 1)

Caste	Members	Remark
1. Beldar	313	Diggers and excavaters.
2. Dai	195	The women mid-wife.
3. Dhawa	20	Grocers (?)

Caste	Members	Remark
4. Jola	6036	Weavers
5. Kahar	13	Bearer
6. Karigars	142	Weavers same as Jola
7. Kulu	379	Oil manufacturers
8. Kunjea	4	Sell vegetables
9. Moghal	2	Mogal up-countrymen settled here.
10. Masalchi	50	Torch bearer
11. Mollah	85	Priest
12. Unspecified	574740	
13. Nagarchi	40	Ploy on the tom tom
14. Nikari	260	Sell fish, cut up fish
15. Panjari	10	Sell fish
16. Pathan	229	
17. Shaikh	5534	
18. Syed	480	
Total	588522	

CHAPTER - VII

THE TA'AIYUNĪ OPPOSITION OF THE FARĀ'IDĪ MOVEMENT

It may be recalled that the nineteenth century religious reform movements, i.e., the Farā'idī, the Ta'aiyunī, Ahl-i-Hadīth and Patna school struggled side by side and competed with one another in their common pursuit of winning over the Sābiqīs or the followers of local customs to their respective doctrines. Hence there was occasional conflict among them. Moreover, though all these reform movements rejected the superstitious customs and ceremonies of the Sābiqī, yet the Ta'aiyunī, unlike others, appears to have stood for moderation and detested all kinds of radicalism that were characteristic of the Farā'idī, Patna school and Ahl-i-Hadīth. Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī made scathing criticism of the superstitious beliefs and practices of the traditional society on the one hand, and of the radical approaches of the Farā'idī, Patna school and Ahl-i-Hadīth on the other¹. Nevertheless, the Mawlānā approved in a modified form, some of the traditional ceremonies, such as, Fātiḥah (a rite for the dead), and Qiyām (or standing) in the birth day celebration of the Prophet (Mīlād), which were rejected by

1. For Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī's criticism of the traditional customs, see his Ḥaqq al-Yaqīn, Maqāmi' al-Mubtadi'īn and Mukāshifāt-i-Rahmāt published in Dhakhīrah-i-Karāmat, vol. 1, Calcutta, A.H. 1344; and for his criticism of the reformists see supra., p. 53 ff.

the three other groups, and wrote several books and pamphlets in vindication of these practices¹.

Naturally, the upholders of the traditional customs regarded Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī as a champion of their own cause. An examination of the Ta'āyunī opposition to the Farā'idī movement is, therefore, important, not only for its own sake, but also because of the fact that the objections of the traditional society to the Farā'idī movement are reflected in it.

Although Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī met Ḥājī Shari'at Allāh in A.D.1836-37, the Farā'idīs and the Ta'āyunīs appear to have come in direct conflict as late as A.D.1839². The first Bahath or public debate between them was, however, held in A.D.1867, and the next in A.D.1879. Although subsequently many debates were held between them, these two debates are of paramount importance for our purpose; for, they determined once for all the basic lines of their argument. Fortunately, we have got the full proceedings of the first and a good deal of description of the second. The central point of their discord, as will be seen in the following pages, was the problem of holding congregational prayers of

1. Mawlawī Karāmat 'Alī's Quwwat al-Imān and Haqq al-Yaqīn may be cited under this category.

2. See infra.

Jum'ah and 'Īd in Bengal under British rule. But various other points also cropped up in course of the debate on which they could not reach an agreement.

According to Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī's own account, in B.S.1272/A.D.1867 a debate took place between him and the Farā'idī khalīfah, 'Abd al-Jabbār, at Barisal¹. Long before that date, Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī had launched a mass campaign against the Farā'idī doctrines, and had stated his objections in an Ishtihār or hand-bill, which was circulated widely in Eastern Bengal. The Ishtihār, which was reproduced later on by the author himself in one of his pamphlets², gives in a nut-shell almost all the objections advanced by the Ta'aīyunīs as well as by the Sābiqīs against the Farā'idī movement. It is, therefore, worthwhile to summarise them first, before we go into the details of the debates.

The Objections of Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī against the Farā'idīs:-

The objections of Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī against the Farā'idīs, as advanced in his Ishtihār and elsewhere in his writings, can be summarised as follows :

(i) Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī states that the Farā'idīs regarded 'amal (or action) as a part of īmān (or faith).

1. See infra.

2. See Dhakhīrah-i-Karāmat, Vol. i, Calcutta, A.H.1344, p.108.

Accordingly, to the Farā'idīs a person who professed the dogma of faith (i.e., kalimah) but did not observe the daily prayers (namā or ṣalāt), was a disbeliever (or kāfir), hence, they did not hold it lawful to have funeral prayer for such a person on his death. As, this view was the characteristic of the Khāriji sect, Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī identified the Farā'idīs with the Khārijis and called them "the Khārijis of Bengal".¹

(ii) Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī accuses the Farā'idīs of having demolished the pulpit (mimbar) of many mosques in order to force their doctrine of the suspension of congregational Friday prayer or Jum'ah. He regards the prayers of Jum'ah and 'Īd as the most important institutions of Islam (sha'ā'ir al-Islām), which must not be abandoned under any circumstances. Hence, the Farā'idīs were deluded from the right path by their own peculiar views and were also misguiding others.²

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1. cf. Mawlawī Karāmat 'Alī: Hujjat-i-Qāṭi', Calcutta, A.H. 1344, pp. 87-88; and "Ishtihār" in Dhakhīrah-i-Karāmat, vol. i, Calcutta, A.H. 1344, p. 108. It may be noted that the Khāriji school was one of the principal contending party against the sunnī school of law (i.e., Ahl-i-Sunnat wa'l-Jamā'at) in early Islam (see Encyclopaedia of Islam, vol. 11, pp. 904-908, under the article "Kharidjites" and vol. iv, pp. 555-57, under the article "Sunna").
 2. cf. Mawlawī Karāmat 'Alī: "Ishtihār" in Dhakhīrah-i-Karāmat, p. 108.

(iii) He contends that the Farā'idīs were wrong in their objection to the ḡūfī custom of clasping by the ḡīr the hand of the murīd or disciple at the ^{time of} initiation into mystic orders¹.

(iv) He says that Farā'idīs held it near obligatory (ḡālib) on the parents to cut off the navel cord of a new born babe, which was, in his opinion, a gross misinterpretation of Islamic laws².

(v) He alleges that the Farā'idīs ate grass-hopper by mistaking it for locust³.

(vi) He accuses the Farā'idī leaders of unlawfully accepting sadaqah-i-ḡīr (i.e., poor-tax for the ḡīd festival), from their disciples in spite of their wealthy circumstances⁴.

(vii) He accuses the Farā'idī leaders of improperly beating their disciples with shoes as a punishment for all kind of offences⁵.

The Debate of Barisal Between the Farā'idī and the Ta'āyūnī in A.D. 1867 :-

On Monday, the 19th Asārh, B.S. 1272/A.D. 1867, thousands

1. cf. Mawlawī Karāmat 'Alī : "Ishtihār" in Dhakhīrah-i-Karāmat, p.108.

2. cf. Mawlawī Karāmat 'Alī: Hajjat-i-Qāḡī, pp.105-106.

3. cf. Mawlawī Karāmat 'Alī's "Ishtihār" in Dhakhīrah-i-Karāmat, p.108.

4. Ibid.

5. Ibid.

of Farā'idīs and Ta'aiyunīs thronged the Shāh Sāhib's Mosque at Barisal, which was chosen as the venue for a debate between Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī and Khalīfah 'Abd al-Jabbār, and the two leaders appeared on the scene accompanied by their retinue of the 'ulamā'. Many respectable citizens of the town (including Mawlawī Muḥammad Fāḍil, the kutwāl of the town i.e., Police Officer), were present. Four renowned theologians of Barisal, namely (i) Khān Bahādur 'Abd al-Karīm, (ii) Khān Bahādur Mufīd al-Dīn Muḥammad, (iii) Qāḍī Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad, and (iv) Sayyid Tajammul 'Alī were appointed Judge and arbitrators. They formulated six questions on the above-mentioned six controversial points, which were then put to the contending parties one by one¹.

(1) In the first place, it was asked, "Whether the funeral prayer would be said or not, on the corpse of a person who professed the kalimah (or dogma of the faith) but did not observe the daily prayers and fasting in the Ramadān)?"²

On this point both the parties agreed to the Hanafī and Sunnī view, and held that such a person was a fāsiq or a sinful believer; and not a kāfir or disbeliever, as the Khārijiīs believed. Therefore, both of them agreed that the funeral prayer was to be said on the corpse of such a person.³

1. Mawlawī Karāmat 'Alī: Hujjat-i-Qāṭi', p.104 ff.

2. ibid.

3. ibid.

This implies that the Farā'idīs do not regard 'amal or action as an integral part of Imān or faith, as was alleged by Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī, and the Mawlānā's identification of the Farā'idīs with the Khārijis, therefore, is groundless.

(ii) Secondly, it was asked, "what is your opinion about the custom of clasping by the pīr the hand of the murīd (i.e., disciple) during the ceremony of initiation into sūfī orders?"¹

Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī made a distinction between two kinds of bay'ah or initiation ceremony, viz., (a) bay'at-i-tabarruk (i.e., initiation with a view to obtain the blessings of the pīr), and (b) bay'at-i-idārat (i.e., initiation into deeper mysteries of sūfism). He maintained that the former process was open to all - commoners (awām) and the chosen (khawās) - while the latter process was open to the chosen alone. He further maintained that in the former process (i.e., bay'at-i-tabarruk), the pīr is lawfully permitted to take the hand of the murīd in his own hand. In his opinion, the latter process (i.e., bay'at-i-idārat) involved various conditions which a murīd (i.e., one desirous for initiation) must fulfil. He, however, did not explain, what these conditions were².

1. Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī: Huṣṣat-i-Ḥaṣṣī, op.cit., p.104 ff.

2. ibid.

Khalīfah 'Abd al-Jabbār questioned the validity of initiating the commoners (awām) into mystic orders. He held that among the mystics only those who have successfully passed through all mystic stages and whose high attainments made them uṭb al-aqtāb (i.e., the pole of the poles), were lawfully permitted to initiate disciple. In order to be eligible for initiation into the mystic orders, the ṭālib or the seeker must, on the other hand, possess adequate knowledge of Islamic law and morality (sharī'ah) and of the mystic path (ṭarīqah). For, in his opinion, it was useless for an ignorant person to be initiated into the mysteries of sufism and likewise it was of no use to be initiated by an imperfect mystic whose eyes were not free from the veils¹.

We have seen earlier that the practice of clasping hand in the initiation ceremony, was opposed by the Farā'idīs. They called it dastī bay'at and denounced it as a sinful innovation. Hence, the Farā'idīs practised oral or iqarā'ī bay'at². This point appears to have been skipped over by the khalīfah in the debate, as otherwise Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī would not have dropped an important point like this from the proceedings.

1. Mawlawī Karāmat 'Alī: Hujjat-i-Qāti', op.cit., p.104 ff.

2. See supra., pp.231-32.

(iii) Thirdly, it was asked, "is it wājib or near obligatory on the parents to cut off the navel cord of a new born babe with their own hands or do you hold a different view?"¹.

On this point both the parties agreed on principle that cutting of the navel cord was a part of the profession of qābilah or midwife and that, it was not wājib on the parents to cut off the navel cord with their own hands. But in their interpretation of the term qābilah, they differed. Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī interpreted it as, meaning dai (i.e., midwife belonging to the dai caste), the khalīfah as dudh pilā'ī (i.e., wet nurse), and one Mawlawī Ibrāhīm pointed out that the Arabic term "qābilah" literally means dai jinā'ī (i.e., professional midwife). To this last interpretation, the khalīfah also agreed².

In this context, it is necessary to clarify the sense of the word dai jinā'ī, agreed to by Khalīfah 'Abd al-Jabbār and identified with the Arabic word "qābilah". The latter really applies to the profession of midwifery which can be followed by any body in the society. The term dai, derived from the Sanskrit dhātri, on the other hand, came to have two meanings in Bengali viz., (a) midwife and (b) foster

1. Mawlawī Karāmat 'Alī: Hujjat-i-Qāṭi', op.cit., p.104 ff.

2. ibid.

mother¹. Here dai as a midwife was a Muslim hereditary caste belonging to the lower classes, to which the abusive term nār kātā (i.e., the cutter of the navel cord) was applied². But the foster mother or dudh pilā'ī, was a lady of some respect. The Farā'idīs raised their fingers against the hereditary caste of the dais though they had no objection to the profession of a midwife followed in the usual course of life. Hence, it is in the sense of a voluntary profession that Khalīfah 'Abd al-Jabbār agreed with Mawlawī Ibrāhīm on the interpretation of the term qābilah.

(iv) Fourthly, it was asked, "do you identify tiddī (i.e., locust) with bhungé' (i.e., grass-hopper)? And, do you regard either or both of them as halāl³ (i.e., edible in accordance with the dietary rules of Islam)?"

Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī replied that, in his opinion, the locust and the grass-hopper are two distinct species and that, the former was lawfully edible and the latter, forbidden. The Mawlānā records further in his proceedings of the debate that Khalīfah 'Abd al-Jabbār did not differentiate between the two and regarded both as lawfully edible. According to the same source, the Khalīfah observed, "Should we regard the cock of Arabia as different from the cock of Bengal?"⁴ It is,

1. cf. James Wise: Eastern Bengal, p.50.

2. See supra., p.269 ff.

3. Mawlawī Karāmat 'Alī: Hujjat-i-Qāti', p.104 ff.

4. ibid.

indeed, reminiscent of James Wise's remark that Dudu Miyān regarded the locust and the grasshopper as belonging to the same species, and passed the latter as lawfully edible on the analogy of the former - the difference in size and figure being explained with reference to the divergent climatic influences, such as visible between the big goats of the bank of River Jumna (in Bengal) and the small ones of the country-side.¹ Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī further reports that the Khalīfah finally stated that any grasshopper, the constitution of which conformed to the description of locust as given in the standard law books, would be regarded as lawfully edible, and if it did not conform, it would be regarded as forbidden. The kutwāl of the town, thereupon, produced a grasshopper before them, and asked their opinion about it. Both Mawlānā and the Khalīfah agreed that it was forbidden².

(v) Fifthly, it was suggested by Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī that the question regarding the British rule³ in India be included in the questionnaire; that is, as to whether this country was Dār al-Islām or Dār al-Harb. But Khalīfah 'Abd al-Jabbār opposed the move because of the political implications which the discussion of such a problem might entail. The suggestion was, therefore, dropped on the insistence of the

1. cf. James Wise: Eastern Bengal, p.23.

2. Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī: Huḥūḍ-i-Qāṭi'; p.104 ff.

3. See our discussion of the problem in chapter vi.

Khalīfah, and it was asked, "what is your opinion about the congregational prayers of Jum'ah and 'Īd to be held in Bengal and Hindustan at the present time under the British regime and British administration¹?"

Mawlawī Karāmat 'Alī replied that under the then prevailing circumstances he regarded the prayer of 'Īd as wājib or near obligatory, i.e., fard-i-'amali the observance of which is obligatory though strict faith in it may not be enforced; and that, he regarded the prayer of Jum'ah as fard-i-i'tiqādī, i.e., in which belief as well as practice are obligatory. Khalīfah 'Abd al-Jabbār disagreed and opined that the congregational prayers were not lawfully permitted in Bengal and Hindustan under the circumstances which prevailed at that time, and maintained that according to certain standard law books, congregational prayers under the then circumstances would be makruh-i-tahrimah or near prohibited. The Mawlānā challenged him to prove this point on the basis of the fatwā of Makkah,² but the Khalīfah replied that the opinion of the Jurist-Consult of Makkah was not sought on the question of Jum'ah; his opinion was sought on the question of misr al-lāmi³ in which the solution of the problem of jum'ah and 'Īd also lay³.

1. Mawlawī Karāmat 'Alī: Hujjat-i-Qāti', p.104 ff.

2. See Appendix, p. 293 ff.

3. Mawlawī Karāmat 'Alī: Hujjat-i-Qāti', p.104 ff.

At that stage of the discussion it was evident that in the fatāwā, which were previously sent to Makkah, the Mawlānā had sought the opinion of the Makkan Jurist-Consult on six points including the question of the congregational prayers, whereas the Khalīfah had sought the opinion on five points only, leaving the question of the congregational prayers to be decided on the basis of the question of the miṣr al-jāmi'¹; for, as we have seen in the preceding chapter, the Farā'idīs believed that the congregational prayers could be held in the miṣr al-jāmi' alone. One Ḥājī 'Abd al-Jalīl then produced a fatwā of Makkah (probably the one which was sent by Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī for approval), in which it was stated that under the circumstances which then prevailed in India, if the Muslims of a locality appointed an imām to lead them in prayer, the prayer of Jum'ah was lawfully permitted. Thereupon, addressing the kutwāl of the town the Khalīfah observed, "if we appoint an imām you would put handcuffs on our hands". The kutwāl kept silent, and the discussion on the point was closed².

It may be pointed out that the approach of Ta'āyunīs and that of the Farā'idīs to the problem of the congregational prayer were fundamentally different. The former viewed it from the angle of the status of the country, i.e., whether it is Dār al-Islām or Dār al-Harb; and the latter viewed it

1. See Appendix.

2. Mawlawī Karāmat 'Alī: Hujjat-i-Qāṭi', p.104 ff.

from the angle of the status of the locality in which it is to be held, i.e., whether it is miṣr al-jāmi' or not. Thus, Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī argued that under the British regime, which he termed as "Dār al-Āmān" or State of Security, India was continuing in its former status of Dār al-Islām; the congregational prayers were, therefore, lawfully permitted¹. The Farā'idīs, on the other hand, argued that the congregational prayers could not be held except in miṣr al-jāmi', i.e., in a constituted township in which the presence of Amir and Qādī was necessary; but such miṣr al-jāmi' was not found in the then British regime of Bengal. They, therefore, held that the congregational prayers were not lawfully permitted there².

(vi) The sixth and the last question was asked, "how do you define miṣr al-jāmi' (or constituted township) which is a prerequisite for the permissibility of the congregational prayer of Jum'ah? Do you accept either or both the interpretations provided by the Hidāyah?³"

1. See, supra., p.251.

2. See, supra., Chapter vi.

3. Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī: Hujjat-i-Qāti', p.104 ff. Imām al-Hammām Shaykh Burhān al-Dīn al-Mārghinānī has advanced two interpretations of miṣr al-jāmi' in his monumental law book Hidāyah which were fixed as the term of reference for the discussion on this point. The passage is reproduced below. He says:

(a) "Miṣr al-jāmi' are those places where reside the Amir and the Qādī who enforce civil and criminal laws of Islam. This is the interpretation of Imām Abū Yūsuf".

(b) "According to Imām Abū Ḥanīfah, it is such a locality, where, if all its inhabitants (i.e., on whom Jum'ah is obligatory) congregate in the biggest of its mosques, it cannot accommodate them all" (cf. Hidāyah, p.148). For a detailed discussion of the controversy of Jum'ah and Miṣr al-Jāmi', see Chapter vi.

Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī replied that both the interpretations as provided in the Hidāyah were acceptable to him. Khalīfah 'Abd al-Jabbār said that he gave preference to the first interpretation of the Hidāyah which demanded the presence of Amīr and Qādī¹; and that, the second interpretation was unacceptable to him¹.

It may be noticed that the two above-mentioned definitions of miṣr al-jāmi' are contradictory to one another, at least, in one important respect; for the first interpretation demands a well-set administration as a necessary condition for miṣr al-jāmi', whereas the second interpretation is based on a simple enumeration of the inhabitants of a locality. Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī did not indicate as to how he accepted two contradictory propositions together. We have already seen the reasons of the Farā'idīs for accepting the first interpretation in preference to the second. In the first place, the Farā'idīs argued that the first interpretation has also been ascribed to Imām Abū Ḥanīfah; and secondly, another interpretation of Imām Abū Ḥanīfah narrated by Burhān al-Dīn in Hidāyah, which demands the presence of an Amīr or administrator, able to administer justice, was accepted by the Farā'idīs².

1. Mawlawī Karāmat 'Alī: Hujjat-i-Qāti', p.104 ff.

2. See supra., p.250.

The Mawlānā, however, pointed out that the Jurist-Consult of Makkah had laid down in the fatwā that both the interpretations as provided in the Hidāyah were acceptable. The Khalīfah replied that his rejection of the second interpretation of the Hidāyah was based on the evidence of many standard law books. This reply made the Mawlānā angry, and he bluntly challenged the Khalīfah, saying "did he (the Jurist-Consult) give an incorrect opinion?" Apparently in order to pacify him, the Khalīfah observed, "the knowledge of the Jurist-Consult is greater than mine. Probably, he has given this opinion on the evidence of some acceptable law books. I agree to¹ that". Thus in spite of this face-saving agreement the debate ended in a fiasco.

We have already dealt with the questions of holding congregational prayers and the definition of misr al-jāmi' in the preceding chapter, and need not go into further details. What is important to note here is the underlying difference in the respective approach of the Fara'idīs and the Ta'aiyunīs to the problem of holding congregational prayers. As a matter of fact, the controversy over the prayer of Jum'ah was the real bone of contention between them, as the Mawlānā himself observed in course of his debate, "the foundation of the whole debate was laid on the controversy of Jum'ah".² Even subsequently this controversy never ceased to be a subject

1. Mawlawī Karāmat 'Alī: Hujjat-i-Cāti', p.104 ff.

2. ibid.

of hot debate between them down to the present day. For, notwithstanding the fact that the Farā'idīs has recognised the lawfulness of holding congregational prayers in the towns of East Pakistan since independence, on the plea that the Magistrate and the Judge in the district headquarters, and the Subdivisional Officer and the Munsif in the sub-divisional headquarters, have now legally taken the place of Amīr and Qādī; they still hold the view that the congregational prayers cannot be lawfully held in the villages or Qurā which do not fulfil the conditions of miṣr al-jāmi'.

It appears from later evidences that the Mawlana was not satisfied on any of the points debated at Barisal; for, he renewed all his allegations against the Farā'idīs in his Ishtihār¹ and in his subsequent lectures. It is, however, interesting to note that in his Qawl al-Thābit, which was not written earlier than A.H.1289/A.D.1878, he changed his line of attack on the Farā'idī leaders, and described Dudu Miyān and his followers as Wahhābīs in reality² instead of calling them the Khārijīs of Bengal.

On the other hand, the debate of Barisal proved a landmark in the development of the Farā'idī movement. In the first place, this was the first time that the Farā'idīs made, or rather were able to take, a decided stand against Mawlānā

1. See supra., p. 277 ff.

2. Mawlawī Karāmat 'Alī: Qawl al-Thābit, p.4.

Karāmāt 'Alī after being chased by the latter from place to place for years¹. The very fact that Khalīfah 'Abd al-Jabbār firmly stood his ground against the attack of a person of Mawlānā Karāmāt 'Alī's calibre, indicated a significant progress in the intellectual growth of the Farā'idīs too. Secondly, the Farā'idī polemic being once formulated by the Khalīfah, was quickly grasped by the educated section of the Farā'idīs. A Farā'idī Fatwā on the problem of holding congregational prayer, written in Arabic and Urdu, was subsequently published and distributed among the local Khalīfahs, and the Farā'idī points of view were further elaborated in popular Puthis written by the Farā'idīs in Bengali language².

The debate of Barisal had focussed the gaze of the multitudes on the problem of Jum'ah and marked the beginning of a new era of debate on this topic, not only between the Farā'idīs and the Ta'āyunīs, but also, between the Farā'idīs and the followers of the local customs. One such important debate took place, as we have seen earlier, at Madaripur in A.D.1879, between Hāfiz Ahmad (son of Mawlānā Karāmāt 'Alī) and Nayā Miyān, which Navin Chandra Sen described as Jumār Yuddha or the battle of Jum'ah³. Another important debate on the subject was held in B.S.1309/A.D.1903, at Dawud Kandi between the Farā'idīs and the followers of the local customs⁴.

1. See, Appendix, p. 296 ff.

2. See, Chapter i, sources, p. 8 ff.

3. See, Chapter v, Section B.

4. cf. Durr-i-Muhammad: Puthi, p.123 ff. and Nāzim al-Dīn: Puthi, p.98 ff.

APPENDIX TO CHAPTER - VII

MAWLĀNĀ KARĀMAT 'ALĪ'S ENCOUNTERS WITH THE FARĀ'IDĪS

According to Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī's own account, he met Ḥājī Sharī'at Allāh, for the first time, in A.H.1252 (A.D.1836-37) at the Gol Patti Masjid of Calcutta. They had a brief conversation and soon they came to grips. In course of their conversation the Mawlānā proposed for a public discussion on several controversial points with the Ḥājī, but the latter did not agree; and the Mawlānā claims that the Ḥājī fled from the place at night¹. It appears from the Mawlānā's account of this meeting that the topics discussed were of general nature having nothing to do with the Farā'idī doctrines, yet from that time on the relations between the Ta'aiyunī and the Farā'idī were marked by growing antagonism.

It may be noted that Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī came to Calcutta from Jawnpur, for the first time in A.H.1250 (A.D.1835) and remained in Bengal for 18 years, that is, down to A.D.1853. During this period, he visited almost all the districts of Bengal including Dacca, Faridpur and Bakarganj², the area of Farā'idī influence. In Muslim Ratnahār, Wazīr 'Alī mentions the Mawlana had collided with

1. Mawlawī Karāmat 'Alī: Hujjat-1-Qāti', pp.85-86.

2. Mawlānā 'Abd al-Bātin: Sīrat-1-Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī Jawnpūrī.
Ilahabad, A.H.1368, p.53.

the Farā'idīs in B.S.1245 (A.D.1839), which falls in the last year of Hājī Sharī'at Allāh's life. He says:¹

"In the year 1245 of the Hindustānī era (i.e., B.S.), Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī came to Bengal (i.e., Eastern Bengal);

And ordered to hold the prayers of Jum'ah and 'Id. Hence some people inclined to that;

And, thus the opinion of Karāmat 'Alī also spread, Whereas all followed Dudu Miyān before".

Thus, although there was a possibility of the Mawlānā's second meeting with the Hājī, such a meeting did not take place. For, after describing his first meeting with Hājī Sharī'at Allāh, the Mawlānā places next his meeting with Dudu Miyān². He says that he met Dudu Miyān "at the residence of Qādī Shafī' al-Dīn of Barisal", on one Thursday, the date of which has not, however, been mentioned. According to the

1. Wazīr 'Alī: Muslim Ratnahār, p.9:

‘বাকুল’ পাঁচ চল্লিশ সালে হিন্দু-হামী ।
 মাওলানা সনাতন আলী আসে বদে খুনি ॥
 তিনি আসি দুমা ইদ আসে শিয়া দিল ।
 তথ্যাত দু' একজন সেদিকে হুসিন ॥
 এইমাত্র সনাতনালীর রায় হইল নাম ।
 পূর্বেতে দুদু মিস্তার রায় আছিল তমাম ॥”

2. Mawlawī Karāmat 'Alī: Hujjat-i-Qāti', p.86.

opinion of the present day Farā'idīs, a meeting between Dudu Miyān and Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī took place¹ at Barisal during the former's residence at Dacca, that is, in between A.D.1860 and A.D.1862¹. This approximation is quite probable; for after a short absence from Bengal in A.D.1853, the Mawlānā returned to his missionary activities in Eastern Bengal and Assam for a second time. He says:²

"This humble person has always been touring from Hindustan to Calcutta, Chittagong and Sandwip on the one hand, and from Dacca to Sylhet on the other, visiting all the towns and villages of the Eastern Region (Eastern India), in a continuous effort to defend the fundamentals of Islam. In this endeavour over fifty years of (my) life was passed".

Thus, his second meeting with the Farā'idī leader, i.e., with Dudu Miyān, appears to have been held not earlier than A.D.1860. Regarding this meeting of Barisal, no datum is available from the Farā'idī sources. The Mawlānā, however, observes "after having made humble, Dudu Miyān had promised to attend the prayer of Jum'ah the next day" (as the meeting was held on Thursday); "but, he fled at night"³. In another place the

1. See supra.; Chapter iv.

2. Mawlawī Karāmat 'Alī: Murād al-Mu'minīn, quoted in Mawlānā 'Abd al-Bāṭin: Sīrat-i-Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī Jampūrī, op.cit. p.45.

3. Mawlawī Karāmat 'Alī: Ḥalīqat-i-Qaṭī', p.86.

Mawlānā says that he had challenged Hājī Shari'at Allāh and Dudu Miyān, "the leaders of the Khārijīs of Bengal", to show the validity of their doctrines on the basis of any standard book of religion, which, he claims, "they were unable to do"¹. This meeting of Barisal, therefore, appears to have been the venue of his challenge to Dudu Miyān.

Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī had several encounters with Khalīfah 'Abd al-Jabbār an eminent Farā'idī theologian, and the Mawlānā gives an impression that he chased the Khalīfah from place to place until a public debate (bahath) was held between them in B.S.1272 (A.D.1867)². He claims to have met the Khalīfah for the first time at Jhalukati (in the district of Bakarganj) and on a second time at Bayazidpur (in the same district). But on both these occasions the latter tactfully managed to fly at night, and thus, avoided from coming to grips with the Mawlānā³. In B.S.1271 (A.D.1866), the Mawlānā met the Khalīfah again at Jhalukati, and on this occasion the latter agreed to meet him in a public debate (bahath). The Khalīfah, however, argued that those 'ulamā' of the place who were competent to preside over the debate were all servants of the British government, and for that reason, could not be expected to give independent judgment.

1. Mawlawī Karāmat 'Alī: Hujjat-i-Qāti', p.86; see also Mawlānā 'Abd al-Bātin: Sirat-i-Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī Jawnpūrī, op.cit., p.86.

2. See supra., Chapter vii.

3. Mawlawī Karāmat 'Alī: Hujjat-i-Qāti', p.86 ff.

Thereupon it was decided that each party would prepare a set of Fatāwā (or legal decision) on six controversial points, viz., (i) relation between faith and work, (ii) the manner of initiation into mystic orders, (iii) employment of Dai, (iv) edibility of locust and grasshopper, (v) prayers of Jum‘ah and ‘Īd, and (vi) the definition of misr al-iāmi‘, - and submit the respective fatāwā to the Jurist-Consult of Makkah for his judgment, through a neutral person, who would convene a public debate (bahath) next year at Barisal for the discussion of these controversial points in the light of the opinion of the Makkan ‘ulamā‘. Qādī Shafī‘ al-Dīn of Barisal was chosen as the middle man and two sets of fatāwā were duly submitted to him to be sent to Makkah¹. Thus, the ground for the first important debate between the Farā‘idī and the Ta‘aiyunī was prepared, which we have just discussed.

1. Mawlawī Karāmat ‘Alī: Hujjat-i-Qāti‘, p.85 ff.

CHAPTER - VIII

SOCIAL ORGANISATION OF THE FARĀ'IDĪS

The biographical sketch of the Farā'idī leaders, as discussed earlier, gives us an insight into the nature of the gradual evolution of the movement itself. Hājī Sharī'at Allāh based his plan of reform on purely religious principles. But his son Dudu Miyān added a new feature, giving a socio-economic basis to the movement. The pattern of the then Muslim society as described by the contemporary English writers needed such an evolution to rest the movement on solid foundation¹. It is, therefore, necessary to examine the organisational principles as laid down by Dudu Miyān.

It may be recalled that although the Farā'idīs were Hanafī and like the vast majority of the Bengali Muslims followed the Hanafī school of law, yet a few peculiar doctrines which they developed gave their movement a distinctive character. Naturally, therefore, the Farā'idī movement fostered a community of beliefs and interests among its followers, which brought them into a common platform and unified them into a brotherhood. The unifying tendency of the Farā'idīs became apparent even at the initial stage when

1. See for instance, "A Police Report of the Zilah Dacca-Jalalpur dealing with the manners and morals of the people, dated A.D.1799", (edited by the present writer), Journal of the Pakistan Historical Society, vol.vii, part 1, Karachi, January, 1959, pp.24-35; and James Wise: Eastern Bengal, p. 6 ff.

Hājī Sharī'at Allāh preached his doctrines at Nayabari. The sense of growing unity among his followers, according to James Wise, alarmed the Hindu Zamīndārs, and as a result, he was expelled from the place¹.

The current tradition in the Farā'idī settlement of Rekabi Bazar² credits Hājī Sharī'at Allāh for organising the local Panchāyat there. But he is not known to have attempted to bring the Farā'idīs into a compact organisation. In all appearance, it was Dudu Miyān who first realised the necessity, or conceived the ambitious plan, of organising the Farā'idīs into a strong body, and it was he who brought them under a central and hierarchical organisation. As James Wise holds, the credit of organising the Farā'idī society, therefore, goes to Dudu Miyān³.

In organising the Farā'idī society Dudu Miyān had two main objects in view, viz., (i) protecting the Farā'idī peasantry from the oppression of the Hindu zamīndārs and European indigo planters, and (ii) securing social justice for the masses of the Muslims. In order to secure the first object, he raised a volunteer corps of clubmen and arranged for their regular training in the art of affray fighting.

1. James Wise: Eastern Bengal, p.22.

2. Rekabi Bazar is in the Munshiganj subdivision of Dacca district, visited by the present writer in 1958.

3. James Wise: Eastern Bengal, p.23.

For securing the second object he revived the traditional Panchāyat system under Farā'idī leadership. The former was known as the political branch (siyāsī) and the latter, the religious branch (dīnī). Both these branches of the Farā'idī organisation were then co-ordinated by an hierarchical khilāfat system, which brought all the Farā'idīs of Eastern Bengal under direct control and supervision of Duḍu Miyan.

The Siyāsī or Political Branch of the Farā'idī Organisation :-

The political branch of the Farā'idī organisation was an outcome of the conflict between the Farā'idī peasantry and the Hindu zamīndārs. We have seen earlier that Ḥājī Shari'at Allāh protested against the imposition of idolatrous cesses by the Hindu zamīndārs on the Farā'idī peasantry, which brought him in conflict with the zamīndārs in his later life¹. According to a government report, the zamīndārs levied not less than 23 items of unauthorised cesses in addition to the lawful land revenues as late as A.D.1872². In order to resist the zamīndārs from extorting these cesses, Ḥājī Shari'at Allāh commissioned Jalāl al-Dīn Mullāh to organise affray fighters³. James Wise says that Duḍu Miyan made his "most determined stand" against the "levying of illegal cesses by the zamīndārs", especially against the idolatrous taxes. Wise

1. See supra., Chapters iii and iv.

2. See Appendix.

3. See supra., Chapter iv.

considers it as an intolerable act of oppression that "a Muhammadan ryot should be obliged to contribute towards the decoration of the image of Durga (a Hindu goddess), or towards the support of any of the idolatrous rites of the Hindu landlord", as the "only apology" for their continuation was claimed to be their "antiquity and adaptation to the feelings of the people"¹.

Thus, the conflict between the Farā'idīs and the zamīndārs arose from a peculiar religio-economic reason. This was instrumental to Dudu Miyān's realisation of the necessity of organising the Farā'idīs into a strong body.

On his assumption of leadership, Dudu Miyān appointed several siyāsī khalīfahs (i.e., political agents or deputies) in different parts of the Faridpur district (including Madaripur subdivision), where the zamīndārs were specially hostile to the Farā'idīs. The duty of the siyāsī khalīfah was to raise volunteer corps of affray fighters and to arrange for their regular training; and secondly, to keep Dudu Miyān fully acquainted with every new political development of his area. Later on, when the dīnī or religious branch of the Farā'idī organisation was developed into a centralised and hierarchical khilāfat system, the political branch was also absorbed into it, as will be seen below.

1. cf. James Wise: Eastern Bengal, p.24.

The Farā'idī Khilāfat System :-

The Farā'idī khilāfat system was designed to bring all the Farā'idīs under the direct control and supervision of an hierarchy of authorised agents or khalīfahs. At the apex of this hierarchy stood the Ustād (i.e., the head of the Farā'idīs; below him were the Uparastha khalīfahs (or the superior agents); next to them were the Superintendent khalīfah; and at the lowest rung of the hierarchy stood the Gāon khalīfah (village agent) or the Ward khalīfah (the agent in the ward of a town), as the case may be. The Farā'idī settlements of Eastern Bengal were divided into small village units, each consisting of 300 to 500 Farā'idī families as the geographical conditions permitted. One prominent member of each unit was appointed a khalīfah and given the charge of the unit. Ten or more such village units formed what was often called a gird (i.e., a circle or neighbourhood), which was under one Superintendent khalīfah. The respective unit khalīfahs of the area were subordinate to him¹. The Superintendent khalīfah

1. Family records of (a) Jalāl al-Dīn Mullāh of Faridpur, khalīfah of Dudu Miyān, and of his grandson Kafil al-Dīn Ahmad, khalīfah of Khān Bahādur Sa'id al-Dīn; and (b) tradition current in the Family of Darwesh 'Alī Munshī of Tippera, khalīfah of Dudu Miyān (c) of Munīr al-Dīn khalīfah and (d) Pahlwān Ghāzī of Chandpur, khalīfahs of Dudu Miyān. See also James Wise: Eastern Bengal, p.23. Wise suggests that in partitioning Eastern Bengal into smaller units or circles, Dudu Miyān followed the Vaishnava practice, but he did not state his reasons for thinking so. On the other hand, we know very well that assigning a certain area to a khalīfah is a time-honoured practice of the sūfī orders familiar to Bengal for centuries.

was required to maintain a Piyādah (i.e., a guard or footman), and a Peon (or messenger). The Piyādah worked as the executor of orders of the Superintendent khalīfah; and the Peon was sent back and forth with messages and circulars to the unit khalīfahs of the gird on the one hand, and to the Ustād at Bahadurpur (in Faridpur district) on the other. Thus, the Superintendent khalīfah acted as an intermediary between the unit khalīfah and the Ustād, and kept in constant touch with both.

A few highly competent persons were appointed as advisers to the Ustād, who were styled as Uparastha or Superior khalīfahs. Such were, for instance, the guardians of Nayā Miyān¹. Their functions were multifarious: to advise the Ustād on important matters, guide the Farā'idī community, propagate Farā'idī doctrines and promote the advancement of the Farā'idī movement. Some of them were assigned a particular subdivision or a district but mostly they worked as personal envoys of the Ustād to the Farā'idī community in general².

1. See supra., Chapter v.

2. The above picture of the structure of the Farā'idī organisation has been drawn from the family records of the Farā'idīs and from personal observation. The practice of appointing Uparastha Khalīfah has fallen into disuse; but the rest of the hierarchy as well as the maintenance of a Piyādah and a Peon continue down to the present day.

Functions of the Unit Khalīfah :-

The Unit khalīfah being responsible for the overall welfare of the Farā'idī community residing within the unit, his duties were, and still are, manifold. In the first place, he taught them the kalimah or the formula of faith¹, and the dīniyāt or the religious practices. Secondly, he enforced the farā'id or religious duties, such as, the daily prayers, fasting of the Ramādān, payment of zakāt and fitrah. Thirdly he made suitable arrangement for prayer-halls in those places where no mosque existed and led the community prayers or appointed an imām for the purpose. Fourthly, he controlled the social and religious morals of his community, and administered justice in consultation with the elders. Fifthly, he administered religious services at the weddings and funerals, and shrived a dying man. Lastly, he maintained a Maktab or elementary school for the education of the children².

As a remuneration for all these duties, he received a sort of 'ushar or tithe from the produce of the land belonging to the Farā'idīs of his unit. The rate was, however, one-fortieth (i.e., equivalent to the rate of zakāt³).

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1. The kalimah is a short formula in Arabic consisting of two phrases, i.e., اشهد ان لا اله الا الله واشهد ان محمداً رسول الله - which means, I give witness that there is no God but Allāh, and that Muhammad is the Prophet of Allāh.
 2. Based on family records and personal observation.
 3. This is still practised in the Farā'idī villages of Chandpur in the district of Tippera.

The functions of the Unit khalifah were, and still are, purely religious. He is required to keep himself aloof from politics. He must, however, take notice of all political developments in his unit, and report regularly to the Superintendent khalifah. He is also empowered to settle petty disputes relating to marriage, divorce, inheritance, domestic or public quarrels, feuds over land or over any other property. This he does with the help of the elders of his unit.

Functions of the Superintendent Khalifah :-

The duties of a Superintendent khalifah were by no means an easy job. In him was vested the religious as well as the political leadership of his gird. In the first place, he was required to watch closely the activities of the Unit khalifahs, guide their steps and check excesses. The inhabitants of the gird were entitled to lodge complaint against any oppression or excess of the Unit khalifahs to the Superintendent khalifah and seek for redress of any injury or harm done to them. Secondly, he acted as the court of appeal against the decision of the Unit khalifahs to which the disputants were entitled to resort to if they were not satisfied with any decision of a Unit khalifah. Such appeal suits were retried by the Superintendent khalifah sitting in a council of the Unit khalifahs of his gird. Thirdly, he was responsible for social and spiritual welfare of the

Farā'idīs of his gird, and was required to pay frequent visit to different localities and preach the fundamentals of religion. He had also to maintain an Astānā or a religious club in his own locality which was used as the venue for community prayers, public meetings, religious conferences and other functions of the community. When the Ustād or any other honourable guest came to visit the gird, the Astānā was used as the rest house. Moreover, as the Farā'idīs followed the Qādiriyah order of sufism, mystic meditation (ḥalqah dhikir) was held in the Astānā on every Wednesday night. Fourthly, he was required to take active interest in the political development (siyāsī mu'āmilat) of his gird, in addition to his religious duties. If, however, he preferred to remain absorbed in religious affairs, a siyāsī khalīfah (political agent) was appointed for the area concerned. With the assistance of the Piyādah and the Peon, he kept himself in touch with every political development and kept the Ustād appraised of the situation through regular post. Fifthly, he was required to visit every locality of his gird once a year and see that the Farā'idīs, one and all, had adequate knowledge of the fundamentals of religion. Lastly, the Superintendent khalīfahs of Faridpur district, were required to raise a volunteer corps of clubmen and arrange for their regular training. This special measure was deemed necessary in the district of Faridpur, where the

zamīndārs and the gomashtas were hostile to the Farā'idī movement¹.

Uparastha Khalīfah and the Ustād :-

Records of all transactions of the Unit khalīfah and the Superintendent khalīfah were kept in books of proceedings. When the Ustād or the Uparastha khalīfah came to visit the gird the proceedings were presented to him. If he approved of them, he put his signature and seal on them. If he did not approve, he would direct that the proceedings be sent to Bahadurpur for further examination. In all important matters the advice and interference of the Ustād were eagerly sought by the local khalīfahs. In all religious and secular matters the Ustād was the final authority, and his decision was binding. If any party was not satisfied with the decision of the Superintendent khalīfah, an appeal lay with the Ustād. In such cases, the Ustād would fix a date for the hearing, and summon the Superintendent khalīfah and the parties concerned to Bahadurpur. In complicated cases an Uparastha khalīfah was sent to the spot to hear the appeal and to give appropriate judgment in the capacity of being personal envoy of the Ustād².

1. Based on family records and personal observations, corroborated by James Wise: Eastern Bengal, p.23 ff. and Navin Chandra Sen: Amār Jīvan, op.cit., vol.iii, p.149 ff.

2. Idem.

The Farā'idīs were not allowed to bring any dispute or legal suit before the government court without obtaining permission from the Superintendent khalīfah or the Ustād. The non-Farā'idīs (Muslim and non-Muslim alike) having a dispute with the Farā'idī were encouraged to bring the case before a Farā'idī court instead of taking it to the government court, and if anyone ventured to take such a case to the law courts, the enforcement of the decree was resisted by the powerful Farā'idī khalīfahs especially, if it went against a Farā'idī¹.

Further Examination of the Khilāfat System :-

The above sketch of the Farā'idī khilāfat system which has been drawn mainly from the family records of the Farā'idī khalīfahs and from personal observation of the present day Farā'idī society, is corroborated by the contemporary writings, especially by those of James Wise, Navin Chandra Sen, Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī and H. Beveridge. But, as their account of the Farā'idī society is partial and in many respects misleading, their views cannot be wholly relied upon. James Wise says:²

"Following the example of the

1. cf. James Wise: Eastern Bengal, p.25; and Navin Chandra Sen: Amār Jīvan, vol. iii, p.149.

2. ibid., p.23.

Vaishnavas¹, he (Dudu Miyān) partitioned Eastern Bengal into circles, and appointed a khalīfah or agent to each, whose duties were to keep the sect together, make proselytes, and collect contributions for the furtherance of the object of the association. They further kept Dudhu Miyān ... acquainted with every occurrence within their jurisdiction".

He further adds that Dudu Miyān settled disputes, administered summary justice and punished any Hindu, Muslim or Christian who dared to bring a suit for recovery of debt in the adjoining Munsif's court instead of referring the case to his decision².

With regard to the influence of the Farā'idī Panchāvat over the masses of the people, Wise says:³

"These Panchāvats (of Eastern Bengal) possess great influence among the people and in Farā'idī villages as they take cognizance of all offences, it is exceedingly

1. In his analogy of the Farā'idī khilāfat system with the Vaishnavya organisation, James Wise appears to have been misled by the apparent similarity between the two. For, the khilāfat system including various gradations of the khalīfahs and the assignment of an exclusive area to each, was not a new invention of Dudu Miyān but derived from the time-honoured practice of the sūfīs, which was in vogue in the Muslim society of Indo-Pakistan subcontinent even centuries before the advent of Vaishnavism. No wonder, therefore, that we find an organisation amongst the followers of the Patna school at Maldah which is almost similar to the Farā'idī khilāfat system (see W.W.Hunter: Our Indian Muslims. London, A.D.1971, pp. 81-82).
2. James Wise: Eastern Bengal, p.25.
3. ibid., p.34.

rare that any case of violence or assault, committed within them finds its way to the regular courts".

In the autobiography of Navin Chandra Sen, we find a detailed account of the actual working of the Farā'idī society in the time of Nayā Miyān. The following translation of a passage from Bengali into English will illustrate the point. Navin Sen says:¹

"The majority of the ra'iyats of Eastern Bengal, notably of the district of Faridpur, are Farā'idī Muslims. They accept the words of Nayā Miyān as divine revelation, and such slavish submission to the preast is not seen in any other human race. In this area (the subdivision of Madaripur), Nayā Miyān established a State of his own within the British regime. In every village, he appointed a superintendent and a Piyādah through whom he kept the Farā'idīs in his control. No dispute of the village could be submitted to the Diwanī or Fawzdārī 'Adālat (i.e., the civil and the criminal courts established by the Government), without the permission of the superintendent."

1. Navin Chandra Sen: Amār Jīvan, op.cit., vol.iii, p.149:

"মুর্শাবন্দেয়গ, বিশেষতঃ করিমপুর অঞ্চলের গ্রামা অধিকাংশই 'ফরাঈদি' মুসলমান । নোয়াখিয়ায় মুর্শেয় কথা তাহাদের পক্ষে বেদ । এমন ধর্ম্মবিরুদ্ধ দাসত্ব অন্য কোন জাতিতে নাই । এ অঞ্চলে নোয়াখিয়া ইংরাজ রাজ্যের উপর এক প্রকার আপনাব রাজ্য স্থাপন করিয়াছিল । প্রত্যেক গ্রামে তাহার এক সুপারিন্টেন্ডেন্ট ও পিয়াদা নিয়োজিত ছিল, এবং ইহাদের দ্বারা সে ফরাঈদিদেরকে সম্পূর্ণ করায়ত্ত রাখিত । গ্রামের কোনও বিবাদ সুপারিন্টেন্ডেন্টের অনুমতি ছিন্দে দেওয়ানী কি ফৌজদারী আদালতে উপস্থিত হইতে পারিতনা" ।

He adds further:¹

“At first, the case was tried by him and then if he accorded permission it could be submitted to the Police or brought before the Law Courts. If anybody acted to the contrary, he was branded as a renegade from religion or kāfir². As a result, to whichever party of the dispute the superintendent lent his support, it would usually come out victorious even if it were on the wrong side. People would give false witness at his bidding, and when he went against anybody his case could never be proved even if the accusations were true. For, the Police and the Judge were helpless in eliciting any evidence in favour of the case. ... Even if a person secured a decree from the Law Court on a piece of land, having spent a considerable sum, he was powerless to take possession of it if the superintendent went against him!”

1. Navin Chandra Sen: Amār Jīvan, op.cit., vol.iii, p.149:

“অগ্রে তাহার কাছে বিচার হইত এবং সে অনুমতি দিলে ইংরাজ পুলিশে কি বিচারালয়ে অভিযোগ উপস্থিত হইত। ইহার অন্যথা কেহ করিলে তাহাকে বন্দীকৃত ‘কাকের’ হইতে হইত। ইহার ফলে সুপারিন্টেন্ডেন্ট যে পক্ষ অবলম্বন করিত সে পক্ষ মিথ্যা হইলেও প্রমাণিত হইত। তাহার আদেশমত লোকে মিথ্যা সাক্ষ্য দিত এবং সে যাহার বিপক্ষে যাইত তাহার অভিযোগ সত্য হইলেও শত পুলিশে কি বিচারকে চেষ্টা করিয়াও বিদ্রুমান প্রমাণ পাইত না। ... সুধু তাহা নহে। বিচারালয়ে বহুবারে যদি কোন সম্পত্তি কেহ জিয়ারী পাইল, সুপারিন্টেন্ডেন্ট তাহার প্রতিকূলে গেলে, তাহার সাধ্য নাই যে সে সম্পত্তির নিকট যাইবে।”

2. Navin Sen appears to have confused between a renegade from the Farā'idī movement and one from the religion of Islam. It is true that the Farā'idīs ostracised a renegade but never branded such a person as renegade from Islam or kāfir, for, they also professed themselves to be Hanafī and followers of Ahl al-Sunnat wa'l jamā'at like the most non-Farā'idī Muslims of Eastern Bengal.

One of the arguments of Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī against the Farā'idīs was that since the Farā'idīs had established a sort of their own regime in Eastern Bengal, they had no excuse to shrink from the prayer of Jum'ah. He says:¹

"Ask them: Whereas you have established the custom of administering justice among your disciples, and whereas you punish them by giving shoes and imposing fines to the extent of one hundred stroke and one or two hundred rupees, and as these disciples still do not bring their complaint before any of the Judges (appointed by the British), what excuse has remained there, in accordance with your own principles, to refrain from saying the prayer of Jum'ah within the regime of your elected Amīr ?".

1. Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī: Hujjat-i-Qāti', p.107:

” ان سے پوچھو... کہ تم لوگوں میں جو یہ بات جا رہی ہے اپنے شاگردوں کا مقدمہ فیصلہ کرتے ہو اور ان لوگوں کو مارنے اور ان کو لپٹے ہو یہاں تک کہ سو سو جوٹا مارنے اور سو سو اور دو دو سو روپیہ جرمانہ لینے کی نوبت پہنچتی ہے اور وہ شاگرد کسی عالم کے پاس نالیش نہیں کرتا تو اب تمہارے مقرر لیتے ہوئے امیر کی حکومت میں تمہارا قاعدے کے موافق کیا بات باقی رہ گئی ہے جو جمعہ نہیں پڑھتے ؟ ”

In his account of influential personalities of Bakarganj district, H. Beveridge says:¹

"If I were to mention non-officials, there are at least two who have exercised more influence than any judge or magistrate. I refer to the Mahomedan preachers named Keramat Ali and Dudhu Miyan".

If the above evidence is true, it must be conceded that Dudu Miyān's effort to organise the Farā'idī society was crowned with success. For, he was not only able to bring millions of the Farā'idīs under his direct control by means of the khilāfat system, but was also successful in securing social justice for them and in safeguarding their interests from the oppressive hands of the Hindu zamīndārs, European indigo planters and their underlings. In organising the Farā'idī society, Dudu Miyān laid down the principle of equality and brotherhood, the influence of which on the Farā'idī society was far-reaching. This principle is discussed below.

The Principle of Equality and Brotherhood:-

James Wise says that Dudu Miyān asserted "the equality of mankind" and "taught that the welfare of the lowest and the poorest was as much an object of interest as that of the

1. H. Beveridge: District of Bakargani, op.cit., p.381.

highest and the richest"¹. He further declared all men as brothers, and pleaded that when a brother fell into distress, it was the "duty of his neighbours to assist him"². According to government reports, the equality of the Farā'idīs was "again and again emphasised"³, and a common fund was created for the welfare of the brotherhood⁴.

Furthermore, following the Qur'ānic verse "Whatever is in the heavens and in the earth belongs to God"⁵, Dudu Miyān declared that land is a bounty of God, and man being His most favoured creature has equal right to exploit this divine gift. Land, therefore, belong to those who exploit it. Hence, he regarded the exploitation of the peasantry by the zamīndārs as a gross injustice (zulm)⁶.

Dudu Miyān, however, did not oppose the levying of taxes by the government. He only challenged the right of the zamīndār to impose illegal and idolatrous cesses on the

1. James Wise: Eastern Bengal, p.24.

2. ibid.

3. Selections From the Records of the Bengal Government, vol. xlii, Trial of Ahmadullah, p.141: quoted by Dr.A.R. Mallick in his Thesis: The Development of the Muslims of Bengal and Bihar, 1813-1836, (unpublished), University of London, 1953, p.80.

4. See, James Wise: Eastern Bengal, p.23.

5. Qur'ān: 2:129; 4:101.

6. Tradition current in the family of Dudu Miyān. See also James Wise: Eastern Bengal, p.24.

cultivators. For, he regarded the zamīndārs as merely tax collectors of the government. Hence, in his view, they were competent to realise only the land revenues authorised by the government. But, as the laws provided by the Permanent Settlement were prejudicial to the zamīndārs, "the peasantry were persuaded to settle on Khān Mahāl lands managed directly by the government" and thus to escape "the payment of any taxes but that of the land revenue claimed by the State"¹.

Nevertheless, the bulk of the Farā'idīs had to live within the jurisdiction of the zamīndārs, and the latter often found excuse to attach their lands for non-payment of taxes or to bring civil suits against them for disowning them from their tenancy rights. Whenever the zamīndārs tried to enforce their so-called legal rights against the Farā'idīs, funds were provided by Dudu Miyān from the common purse for the defence of the ryots and even to sue the zamīndārs in the Law Courts;² "or if it could be safe", says Wise, "clubmen were sent to destroy his (zamīndār's) property and the servants"³.

1. James Wise: Eastern Bengal, p.24.

2. Tradition current in the family of Dudu Miyān. See also James Wise: Eastern Bengal, pp.23-24.

3. James Wise: Eastern Bengal, p.24.

APPENDIX TO CHAPTER - VIII

'A'

A REPORT OF THE COLLECTOR OF FARIDPUR SHOWING THE ITEMS OF TAXES AND CESSSES LEVIED IN THE DISTRICT IN A. D. 1872¹

From the Collector of Faridpur.

To the Secretary to the Government of Bengal.

Subject : Report on the Local Cesses and Taxes.

Sir,

With reference to your (Circular) no. 16, dated 10th instant (May, 1872), I have the honour to report that there is no local Taxes or Cesses raised under Government orders in this district.

I attach for your perusal two lists, one containing the Taxes under the Law in force² and the other containing a list of illegal Cesses which, I believe, are levied.

sd. W.A.Wells.

2. List of Illegal Cesses Levied in the District of Faridpur.

Names of Cesses	Description
1. Murucha	Fee on marriage.
2. Agomani Kharcha	Fee on the arrival of the Zamindar on his estate (i.e., at the local Cutchery).

1. Recovered by the present writer from the Record Room of the Faridpur Collectorate in 1958 with the permission of the District Magistrate of Faridpur. See Letter Issued, no. 169, dated the 16th May, 1872, File: Year 1872-73, Faridpur Collectorate Records.

2. List no. 1, of Legal Taxes was missing from the File.

Names of Cesses	Description.
3. Bebāha (Bibaha) Kharcha	... Fee levied when any marriage takes place in the Zamindar's family.
4. Srudh Kharcha	... Fee levied on the death of father, mother, or some other elderly member of the Zamindar's family.
5. Paita Kharcha	... Levied when the Zamindar's son takes sacred thread.
6. Bhura Kharcha	... Levied when the arms of the Zamindar's son are pierced. (It is also called Godani Kharcha).
7. Terpan	... Levied since the cyclone of A.D.1864.
8. Mukaddama Kharcha	... Levied to meet the expenses of (the Zamindar's) Mukaddama (litigation) at Court.
9. Jarimana or fines	... Levied on the occurrence of dispute between ryots.
10. Rusum for Darkhast	... Levied on every petition filed by the ryot to his Zamindar.
11. Bain Selami	... Levied on the preparation of Gur or Molasses (from date tree?).
12. Selami	... Levied on the preparation of Gur or Molasses (from sugarcane?).
13. Ruth Kharcha	... Levied on Zamindar's Ratha Yatra celebration.
14. Batta	... Levied for alleged deficit on coins paid by ryots as rents.
15. Peyadah Kharcha	... Peon's fee for collecting rents etc.

Names of Cesses	Description.
16. Tohuree	... Consideration Cess paid to Zemindar's Amlah (<u>i.e.</u> , clerk) for receiving rent.
17. Bhet	... Presents (to the Zemindar) on the occurrence of Srudh in the ryot's family.
18. Matshu Jugar	... Supply of fish by fishermen free of cost.
19. Peura Kharcha	... (illegible).
20. Guzee Kharcha	... Contribution on account of Zemindar's winter clothing.
21. Malikan Suranjami Kharcha..	Levied to re-imburse the expenses on account of the salary of Amlah (clerk).
22. Chhata or Chhatra Kharcha..	Levied to defray the expenses of Zemindar's umbrella bearer.
23. Imam Kharcha	... Levied for the Muharram, to which the Hindu as well as the Muslim Zemindars subscribed.

sd. W.A.Wells.

APPENDIX TO CHAPTER - VIII

'B'

A REPORT OF THE COLLECTOR OF FARIDPUR RELATING TO THE RATE
OF LAND REVENUES LEVIED IN A.D. 1872¹

From : W.A. Wells, Collector of Faridpur.

To : The Secretary to the Government of Bengal.

Sir,

With reference to your Circular no. 33, dated the 4th ultimo, I beg to forward two statements, one for the subdivision of Gualunda and the other for the Saddur subdivision.

2. The rates have been carefully ascertained by enquiries made through the Police. Many respectable people of the different parts of the district who are expected to possess thorough and intimate knowledge on the subject have also been consulted.

3. The measures vary in different Parganahs but nobody could give any satisfactory explanation of the cause of this variation. Different rates are also paid in different Parganah's situated within the jurisdiction of the same Police Station for the same kind of land for the same crops, but the difference is not so great as to call for explanation.

1. Recovered by the present writer from the Record Room of the Faridpur Collectorate in 1958 with the permission of the District Magistrate of Faridpur. See Letter Issued, no. 424, dated the 12th September, 1872, File: Year 1872-73, Faridpur Collectorate Records.

It is supposed that the levy of the rates depended originally, as it does at the present day, on the power and influence which the Zamindar possessed. It is generally found throughout the district that two plots of land situated side by side and similar in every respect pay different rates, and this is because the proprietor of those (lands) is more powerful and exacting than that of the other. In short, where the Zamindar is powerful he can and does in many instances enhance the rates, while the neighbouring Zamindar if he happen to be weak and poor must content himself with low rates.

sd. W.A.Wells.

CHAPTER - IX

THE GEOGRAPHY OF THE FARĀ'IDĪ MOVEMENT

Although the paucity of materials renders it difficult to ascertain the areas where the Farā'idī movement was effective, yet a few contemporary accounts throw considerable light on the tempo of its progress. However inadequate, these sources give us a general idea of its geography and population.

The earliest mention of the Farā'idī movement is found in a Ru-be-Kārī of the Magistrate of Dacca Jalalpur, dated the 29th April, 1831. It shows that Ḥājī Sharī'at Allāh was at that time propagating his doctrines among the peasantry of Nayabari, in the modern village of Charigram in Dacca district. His conflict with the local Muslims and the Hindu zamīndārs, which resulted in his expulsion from the village¹, indicates that by that time he did not succeed in gaining a good number of followers.

In A.D. 1837, a Hindu gentleman of Dacca reports in Darpan (a local Bengali newspaper), that Ḥājī Sharī'at Allāh had about 12,000 weavers and Musalmans (i.e., Muslim weavers and peasants)^{disciples} in the district of Faridpur and had become the most powerful man in the area. A few incidents referred

1. See supra., p. 168.

to in the same report indicate that the Hindu zamīndārs were beginning to feel their inability to cope with the Farā'idīs either in the contest of physical power or in the law courts. The writer states that Hājī Sharī'at Allāh had become much more powerful than his predecessor Titu Mir and that his influence on the clerks and pleaders of the Faridpur court was extensive¹. The venue of his activities was at that time, Bahadurpur, a village in the Sibchar Thana², where Dudu Miyān settled later on.

James Taylor, a contemporary of Hājī Sharī'at Allāh states in A.D. 1839 that the Farā'idī movement spread with "extra-ordinary rapidity" in the districts of Dacca, Faridpur, Bakarganj and Mymensingh³. In A.D. 1843, the head of the Bengal Police described Dudu Miyān as a leader at the head of 80,000 men⁴. In A.D. 1847, the Farā'idīs are noticed by the editor of the Calcutta Review as a very powerful sect. He says that they abound in the districts of Dacca, Faridpur and Bakarganj.⁵ J.E. Gastrell, a contemporary of Dudu Miyān observes that the majority of the Muslims of Faridpur were Farā'idīs and they formed an important part of the Muslim population of the neighbouring districts, i.e. Dacca,

1. cf. Brajendranath Bandopadhyay ed., Sambād Patre Sekāler Kathā, Calcutta, B.S.1342, Vol. iii, pp. 311-12.

2. ibid.

3. cf. James Taylor: Topography, op.cit., pp. 248-50.

4. See supra., p. 201.

5. See supra., p. 192.

Bakarganj and Jessore. He adds further that down to A.D.1862, their number was "steadily increasing"¹.

The next important report is found in the autobiography of Navin Chandra Sen, who was posted as the Subdivisional Officer of Madaripur in A.D. 1879. In his opinion, the majority of the Muslim peasantry of Eastern Bengal, notably of the district of Faridpur were Farā'idīs². Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī, who passed his life in touring Eastern India (A.D. 1835-1874) also testifies that the Farā'idī movement spread extensively in the towns of Dacca, Faridpur and Bakarganj and in the rural areas attached to them³. It will also be seen later on that the Farā'idī movement spread in Tippera during the life time of the Hājī⁴.

As the Farā'idīs did not register themselves in the census as a separate sect, their statistical position cannot be ascertained. In A.D. 1885, Hunter says, "the reforming faith of the Faraizis has spread rapidly through the district" of Dacca and that though they were mainly engaged in cultivation, many of them were also "engaged in trade - dealing in rice, jute, hides and tobacco"⁵. He describes the Muslims

1. cf. J.E. Gastrell, Jessore, Fureedpore and Backergunee, op.cit., p. 36.

2. See supra., p. 310.

3. Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī: "Ishtihār" in Dhakhīrah-i-Karāmat, Vol. 1, p. 108.

4. See infra., Appendices A and B.

5. W.W.Hunter ed. : Imperial Gazetteer of India, 1885, Vol. iv, p. 339 ff.

of Noakhali district as belonging "almost without exception to the sunni sect" and "most of them" as Farā'idīs¹. Likewise, the Muslims of Nadiya district are described in the Gazetteer as a "powerful Faraizi or Wahabi community"². About A.D. 1886, the Farā'idī movement was also exerting considerable influence in the district of Pabna in North Bengal³. In A.D. 1908, the Chittagong Gazetteer records some extent of progress of the Farā'idī movement in that district and its attainment to "great strength in Eastern Bengal"⁴. In the Statistical Account of Assam (A.D.1879), considerable progress of the Farā'idī movement has also been reported by Hunter. In the districts of Sylhet, Goalpara, Lakhimpur, Sibchar, Darang and Kamrup, there were many Farā'idīs among the Muslim population, who, as a community, were generally well off⁵.

J.E. Gastrell, who was engaged in the survey of the districts of Jessore, Faridpur and Bakarganj from A.D.1856 to 1862, ascribes a riverine character to the Farā'idī movement. He observes that the Farā'idīs were especially

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1. W.W.Hunter ed.: Imperial Gazetteer of India, 1885, Vol.x, p. 344.
 2. ibid., p. 134.
 3. ibid., p. 514.
 4. cf. East Bengal District Gazetteers, Chittagong, Calcutta, 1908, p. 56.
 5. W.W.Hunter: Statistical Account of Assam, London, 1879, Vol. 1, pp. 39, 188, 245; and Vol. 11, pp. 47 and 283.

numerous along the river banks and that the banks of Madhumati, Navaganga, Barakur and Haringhata practically belonged to them¹. A field-study of the Farā'idī settlements (undertaken by the present writer in 1958 and 1959) and the data supplied by the Farā'idī family traditions, however, indicate that the Bhuvaneshwar-Arialkhan river beds² were the main route through which the Farā'idī missionaries moved back and forth and spread their doctrines.

Bhuvaneshwar river being the off-shoot of the Padma river, the Farā'idīs could make easy contact with the northern and eastern districts, namely Mymensingh, Dacca, Tippera and Pabna through Padma, Jamuna and Meghna rivers. On the other hand, as the Arialkhan river falls into the Padma and flows southwards into the sea, the coastal sides of Chittagong and Noakhali were also accessible to them

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1. J.E.Gastrell: Jessore, Fyreedpore and Backergunge, Calcutta, 1868, p. 36, nos. 150 and 151.
 2. It may be noted that the Bhuvaneshwar-Arialkhan form a continuous river-bed, which, a few centuries back, was the channel for the waters of Padma (Ganges), and is still the main artery of the Faridpur district. The Bhuvaneshwar river branching out from Padma at a little distance east of Faridpur town, flows zigzag in a south-easterly direction towards Sibchar (where Shamail, the native village of Hājī Shari'at Allāh and Bahadurpur, the native village of his successors, are located). At Sibchar, it takes the name of Arialkhan and divides itself into two streams, one flowing to the left and the other to the right, but both in a semicircular direction, to meet again at a little distance from the Madaripur town. From there it flows almost parallel to the river Padma and goes to Barisal town in the Bakarganj district. During the life-time of Hājī Shari'at Allāh, it flowed by the side of his native village Shamail, and was at that time popularly known as Padma. Thus, Bhuvaneshwar-Arialkhan rivers connected the villages of the Farā'idī leaders with the town of Faridpur on the one side and with the town of Barisal on the other -- providing extensive opening to different parts of Eastern Bengal.

through Bay of Bengal. Moreover, as Gastrell testifies, the Farā'idīs made contact with the western parts of the districts of Faridpur and the eastern parts of the districts of Jessore and Khulna through Haringhata and Madhumati rivers¹. Naturally, the Farā'idī movement spread extensively over these riverine areas. In this connection, it may also be noted that during the rainy season, greater parts of the districts of Faridpur, Bakarganj, Dacca, Tippera, Pabna and Noakhali go under standing flood water, which facilitates easy access by small boats². The family traditions

1. It may be noted that Haringhata and Madhumati rivers run in a continuous stream between the district of Faridpur on the one hand and Khulna and Jessore on the other and flowing north-to-south connects Padma with the sea.
2. It may also be noted that Faridpur and Bakarganj (the native districts of the Farā'idī leaders) are riverine districts where boat is the main means of communication. On account of this riverine condition, railways could not be introduced in Bakarganj and about Faridpur, J.C. Jack says that there must be very few spots "from which a journey of a single mile in any direction will not be obstructed by a stream of water course" (cf. Final Report on the Survey and Settlement Operations in the Faridpur District, 1904-1914. Calcutta, 1916, p.6). Moreover, about the distribution of population of Faridpur district, L.S.S.O'Malley says, "it may be predicated as a rough generalisation that the Muhammadans predominate in the riverside lands and chars and the Hindus in the inland marshes" (cf. Bengal District Gazetteers, Faridpur, Calcutta, 1925, p.36). This may be considered another reason for the riverine character of the Farā'idī movement.

of the Farā'idī leaders show that Hājī Shari'at Allāh, Dudu Miyān and Khān Bahādur Sa'īd al-Dīn almost always travelled by boats. This was also the reason why Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī and his successors preferred boat journey while going on their errand of preaching in Eastern Bengal.

Another feature which is noticeable in the spread of the Farā'idī movement is the thoroughness with which it was propagated. Hence, wherever conversion took place, it was wholesale. Such was the case, for instance, in the Madaripur subdivision of Faridpur, Chandpur subdivision of Tippera and the village Rekabi Bazar in Dacca. On the other hand, little or no attempt was made to extend the Farā'idī influence outside of Eastern Bengal. In fact, the existence of a good number of Farā'idīs (at the close of the nineteenth century) in Assam, Agartala State and Chittagong Hill Tract is accounted for by the migratory activities of the Muslims of Mymensingh and Tippera districts to these outer regions. In the absence of such migratory activity of the Farā'idīs to West Bengal, the movement did not spread there at all.

The administrative changes wrought by the British in Bengal had affected the urban and rural Muslim populace somewhat differently. For, whereas, the former were losing their hold on the government jobs, trade and commerce of the country and on the facilities in other vocations, the

latter were oppressed by the new class of Hindu zamīndārs and European indigo planters. Thus, the sufferings of the former accrued mainly from the political weakness of the Muslims, whereas the suffering of the latter was mainly due to the changes effected in the agrarian economy of Bengal. The Farā'idī movement, with its doctrines of equality and brotherhood as well as by its relentless struggle against the Hindu zamīndārs and European indigo planters, had little appeal in the urban centres such as Dacca, Comilla and Chittagong towns. But as these were the real problems in the interior of Eastern Bengal, specially in those areas where Hindu zamīndārs and European indigo planters were powerful, the Farā'idī movement answered the demands of the common men. Hence, it flourished mainly among the lower classes of rural Bengal and became most popular in those places where Hindu zamīndārs and European indigo planters were oppressive.

The progress of the Farā'idī movement followed a somewhat definite pattern. First of all, the leaders established a few propaganda centres in a local town or a village. Such centres were established by Hājī Sharī'at Allāh at the river-port of Chandpur in Tippera district, Nayabari and Rekabi Bazar in Dacca district and at Kamalapur in the town of Faridpur. Usually, the local Farā'idīs built and maintained a rest-house, called Astānā, in each of these centres, for the comfort of the leaders as well as for those

who came to meet them from the interior. The Farā'idī leaders would then keep on touring these places at short intervals, and made contact with the people of the out-lying regions. On occasions of Ḥājī Shari'at Allāh's visit to these Astānās, numerous people used to throng from far off places to see him, as his name as a theologian had spread far and wide.

The new converts usually turned out to be great enthusiasts, and not only carried the message of the Ḥājī to their brethren in the interior but also tried to imitate the "propaganda centre" by building an Astānā in their own village and electing an influential Farā'idī as their leader. Later on, specially at the time of Dudu Miyān, such local leaders were made Gāon khalīfahs¹. Numerous examples of this category are observed in the district of Tippera. For instance, one 'Azīm al-Dīn Khundkār of Singardah (a village near Laksam) met Ḥājī Shari'at Allāh at Chandpur and became a convert. On return to his native village, he devoted most of his time to the propagation of the Farā'idī doctrines, and in a few years so many converts were made that the necessity of appointing a local leader for the interior of Tippera was urgently felt. 'Azīm al-Dīn was, therefore, appointed khalīfah by Ḥājī Shari'at Allāh².

1. See supra, Chapter viii.

2. Based on traditions current in the family of 'Azīm al-Dīn Khundkār, collected during a field-study of the present writer in 1958. The above account is also corroborated by tradition current in the family of Ḥājī Shari'at Allāh. See Appendix B.

But the Farā'idīs increased in the interior of Tippera Sadar subdivision so rapidly that in Dudu Miyān's time five more khalīfahs and a Superintendent khalīfah over them were to be appointed¹.

During the time of Dudu Miyān, the Farā'idī propaganda was intensified. His spectacular success against the Hindu zamīndārs, his tactful dealings with the English officers, and his marvellous organising capacity, captured the imagination of the masses; and his extensive cross-country tours brought the hero in their close contact. None hesitated to join his party. As a result the flood of the Farā'idī movement swept over the whole of eastern Bengal. Even so, the Farā'idīs did not get as many disciples as they got supporters. This became evident specially after the death of Dudu Miyān, when the tide was turned by the preachings of Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī.

Undoubtedly, the Farā'idī preachers made the followers of the traditional society (whom they called Riwāī) realise, how blindly they were groping in darkness and following superstitious beliefs and practices in the name of Islam. But, along with their doctrines of purification, the Farā'idīs prohibited the congregational prayers of Jum'ah and 'Id, which the Riwāīs were unwilling to give up. The attraction and repulsion thus produced in the minds of the people, probably created a new conflict in the Muslim society of Bengal, which prepared the ground for the general acceptance

1. See infra., Appendix B.

of Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī's milder reforms. Thus, during the later half of the nineteenth century, when the protagonists of other religious movements, such as, Ta'āyuni, Farīqah-i-Muhammadiyah and Ahl-i-Hadīth, who supported the prayers of Jum'ah and 'Id, also intensified their propaganda in Eastern Bengal, the number of the Farā'idīs steadily decreased except in the districts of Dacca, Tippera, Faridpur and Bakarganj, where the Farā'idīs had strong propaganda centres. Even in these districts the Muslims became sharply divided on the question of holding the prayers of Jum'ah and 'Id, and the Farā'idīs came to be known as the Be-Jum'ah Wālā (i.e., the antagonists of the Jum'ah) and the rest as Jum'ah Wālā (i.e., the protagonists of the Jum'ah). A good deal of family records and current tradition, collected by the present writer from various parts of the above-mentioned districts, indicate that from the time of Dudu Miyān's death in A.D.1862 down to the present day there has been a general tendency among the people to part away with the former group and join the latter; so that, at present the Farā'idīs are seen in appreciable number only in the Narayanganj and Munshiganj subdivisions of Dacca and in the Chandpur¹ and Sadar subdivisions of Tippera². Thus, the sudden swelling of the Farā'idī movement during the time of Dudu Miyān, shows how the Muslim masses of Eastern Bengal were groping for leadership.

1. See infra., Appendix A.

2. See infra., Appendix B.

APPENDIX TO CHAPTER - IX

'A'

FARĀ'IDĪ SETTLEMENT OF CHANDPUR: A FIELD-STUDY

(A.D. 1958)

The river-port of Chandpur played very important role in the spread of the Farā'idī movement. Chandpur was frequently visited by Hājī Sharī'at Allāh and his son Dudu Miyān. It has always been a formidable Farā'idī stronghold, and the Farā'idīs retained considerable strength throughout this subdivision in the social as well as religious spheres down to the present day. This is clearly borne out in the village administration of the subdivision, where out of about 53 Presidents of the Union Boards about 35 are claimed to be Farā'idīs.¹

According to the Farā'idīs, Chandpur proper is the land between Char Lakshmi to Shaitnol (about 30 miles from south to north) and from Meghna to Shakdi (about 8 miles from west to east), which is divided by the Farā'idīs (from the time of Dudu Miyān) into one hundred units, each unit being put under the control of a khalīfah. About twenty-two to twenty-eight khalīfahs of the units (whose official title is Block khalīfah) are again brought under the supervision of a Superintendent khalīfah. Thus, at present, there are four Superintendent khalīfahs and about 100 Block khalīfahs

1. Statement of Hājī 'Abd al-Qādir Bhuiyan, President, Union Board (Chandpur Town Area), who himself is a Farā'idī.

in Chandpur. Muhammad Ḥabīb Allāh, who is the Superintendent khalīfah of the Chandpur town and its surroundings, has only 10 Block khalīfahs under him. This reduction in the number of Block khalīfahs under him and consequently, reduction in area, is due to the inclusion of the town and its knotty problems under his supervision¹. Mawlawī Hārūn al-Rashīd, who is a Block khalīfah, has 360 houses to look after².

The first Farā'idī khalīfah of Chandpur was Munīr al-Dīn Khalīfah. He came to Chandpur in his boyhood from Hatiya to study Arabic and Persian. Later on, he married a local girl and settled permanently at Chandpur. When grown up, he met Ḥājī Sharī'at Allāh several times in course of latter's visit to Chandpur, and became an ardent disciple of the Ḥājī. He was a very pious man, and shortly before the Ḥājī's death, he was made a khalīfah³. He died in Agrahāyan, B.S. 1282⁴.

His khilafat was inherited by Ḥamīd Allāh, his son-in-law, who died in B.S. 1322 at the age of about 76 years. His son 'Abd al-Qādir is the present President of the Chandpur Union Board. The khilafat has been bestowed on 'Abd al-Qādir's son-in-law, Muhammad Ḥabīb Allāh.

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1. Statement of Muhammad Ḥabīb Allāh.
 2. Statement of Mawlawī Hārūn al-Rashīd.
 3. Statement of Ḥājī 'Abd al-Qādir.
 4. Tomb inscription of Munīr al-Dīn in the Nutan Bazar 4/12 Ward of Chandpur Town. The name is inscribed as "Pīr Muniruddin Khalifā" in Bengali script.

The second important Farā'idī khalīfah of the olden days, was Pahlawān Ghāzī Munshī. He built a Masjid and a Madrasah, and made an endowment of about 15 bighas of land for their maintenance. The Madrasah, is named after Dudu Miyān¹ "Muhsiniyah Madrasah", and is still running in good condition. The Ghāzī was a khalīfah of Dudu Miyān. He died about A.D. 1925, when he was 120 years old.

Pahlawān Ghāzī was a Superintendent khalīfah and was assigned 28 villages. His khilāfat was inherited by his grandson Rafī' Muhammad Pātwāri. Rafī's son Mawlawī Samīr al-Dīn Ahmad was appointed khalīfah after his father's death. The present khalīfah of the area is his son Muhammad Sa'īd al-Dīn Khalīfah².

Another Superintendent khalīfah of a later time was Shāh Muhammad Wāhid Bakhsh, who died in 1940, when he was about 60 years old. He had 25 villages under him in the Pargana of Anirabad. He was a khalīfah of Khān Bahādur Sa'īd al-Dīn³, and was a Talukdar. He established a High Madrasah at Saharmali, and had great hold on the people⁴.

During the lifetime of Hājī Shari'at Allah there were only a few thousand Farā'idīs in Chandpur. But when

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1. Dudu Miyān's name was Muhsin al-Dīn Ahmad.
 2. Statement of Muhammad Sa'īd al-Dīn Khalīfah.
 3. The youngest son of Dudu Miyān and later Ustad of the Farā'idī movement.
 4. Statement of Shāh Muhammad Hasan relative of the deceased Shāh Muhammad Wāhid Bakhsh.

Dudu Miyān came to the helm of affairs, the number increased with extraordinary rapidity, and in a short time the entire population of the subdivision became staunch adherents of the great leader.

During the time of Munīr al-Dīn Khalīfah and Pahlawān Ghāzī, there was no law court at Chandpur town. The nearest law court was located at Narsingpur. The khalīfahs then played very important role in maintaining order and justice in the society.

The Farā'idīs were organised in small Samāj, consisting of about 40 families or more. Each Samāj had five Mātbars (Elders), with whose help, the khalīfah administered justice to the people. If a person was not satisfied with the judgement of the khalīfah, he was at liberty to make an appeal to the head of the Farā'idī movement at Faridpur. But, if he took resort to the court of the British Government his case was invariably lost. Because, in the first place, none would like to offend the powerful khalīfah by standing witness for him; and secondly he was sure to be ostracised in the society. Besides, it was difficult to enforce the judgement of the court in the remote villages against the organised Farā'idīs.

The forms of punishment which were imposed by the khalīfah were whipping, blows of shoes and ostracision, -

which are practised by the Block khalīfahs and the Superintendent khalīfahs down to the present time.

Pīr Bādshāh Miyān, the present head of the Farā'idīs, has a great hold on the people of Chandpur. His piousness, simplicity and moral courage are admired by the Farā'idīs and non-Farā'idīs alike. He is said to have cleared Chandpur town of a few hundred prostitutes.

At the present time, the Farā'idī khalīfah exercises considerable control in the social and religious sphere of the society. He is required to give sanction to matrimony and receives a fee of two rupees on every marriage taking place in his area. He arbitrates disputes relating to landed property, inheritance, marriage and divorce; he punishes those who indulge in antisocial and irreligious activities, and his advice and assistance are eagerly sought in times of distress.

In 1947 there was an attempt at Chandpur to revive the old Farā'idī system of administration. An association was formed, which was called "Chandpur Sharī'atīyā Momen Committee", 24 branches^{of which} were opened in the villages^{/and} each branch with a five-men committee,^{was} entrusted to administer sharī'ah to the people¹.

1. A number of documents relating to the Sharī'atīyā Momen Committee have been collected by the present writer.

The association functioned vigorously for about one year, but since 1949 sank gradually into non-existence.

Shortly after independence, Pīr Bādshāh Miyān visited Chandpur and permitted the people to pray Jum'ah in the town. A meeting was called by the Sharī'atiyā Momen Committee on the 5th November 1947 to fix the date for the first Jum'ah. Since then the Farā'idīs pray Jum'ah and 'Īd in the town. But these prayers are not permitted in the villages. Still, some of the Farā'idīs mix with other Muslims and pray Jum'ah with them in the villages as well.

APPENDIX TO CHAPTER - IX

'B'

FARĀ'IDĪ SETTLEMENTS IN THE INTERIOR OF THE DISTRICT OF
TIPPERA : A FIELD-STUDY

(A. D. 1958)

In the spread of the Farā'idī movement, the propaganda centres of Bahadurpur (in the district of Faridpur), Rekabi Bazar (in the district of Dacca) and the river-port of Chandpur (in the district of Tippera), played an important role. In fact, these three centres formed as if the tops of a triangle from which the Farā'idī influence flowed into the interior regions.

Chandpur had become a Farā'idī stronghold during the life time of Ḥājī Sharī'at Allāh and his frequent visit to this port-town created a sensation among the credulous masses of the interior of Tippera. Inspired by religious motive or just curious to see him, many people came to Chandpur from far off villages at the time of his visit.

Ḥājī Sharī'at Allāh's call for repentance (tawbah) and his appeal to them to join him in strengthening Islam, enkindled new hopes and roused noble sentiments in their hearts. As a result, they returned home as inspired Farā'idīs or at least supporters of the reform movement. As Ḥājī Sharī'at Allāh never visited the interior of Tippera, this

was in general the pattern of contact between ~~him~~ him and the mass of the people.

Evidences gathered from the district of Tippera and Noakhali indicate that the Farā'idī movement met with no effective opposition in the interior of these districts during the life time of the Hājī (i.e. till A.D.1840). For, Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī, the leader of the Ta'aiyuni movement and Mawlawī Imām al-Dīn (who preached the reform doctrines of Sayyid Aḥmad Shaḥīd in the district of Noakhali), began to exert their influence about A.D. 1850 onwards, who on account of their zeal for/defending the congregational prayers of Jum'ah and 'Id curved the progress of the Farā'idī movement. Hence, the fact that the Farā'idī movement did not become universal in the interior of Noakhali and Tippera before this time, may have been due to the lack of proper exertion on the part of the Farā'idī leaders.

During eighteen-thirties the number of Farā'idīs had, however, increased considerably in these two districts, specially in the Sadar subdivision of Tippera; so that in the latter place, the need for appointing a khalīfah was deeply felt. Thus, 'Azīm al-Dīn Khundkār of Singardah was appointed khalīfah by Hājī Sharī'at Allāh, and was given the charge of administering religious law (sharī'ah) to the Farā'idīs and settling their disputes by arbitration. 'Azīm al-Dīn died about A.D.1840 and the khilāfat remained hereditary in his family down to the present day.

In eighteen-forties the Farā'idī propaganda was intensified by Dudu Miyān and his colleagues. Dudu Miyān's spectacular success against the Hindu zamīndārs, his tactful dealings with English officers and his uncommon organising capacity captured the imagination of the masses. On the other hand, his cross-country tours in the interior of Tippera brought them in contact with his attractive personality. As a result, the flood of the Farā'idī movement swept over Tippera district.

If we are to accept the witness of the present generation, the Brahman Baria subdivision appears to have been a compact colony of Dudu Miyān's supporters. But at present the number of Farā'idīs there is negligible. In the interior of two other subdivisions, *i.e.*, the Sadar subdivision and Chandpur subdivision, Dudu Miyān was able to gain a large following, and a considerable number of villages continue to be compact Farā'idī settlements down to the present day.

The remnants of the Farā'idī settlements in the interior of the Sadar subdivision indicate that the penetration of the Farā'idī influence flowed from Chandpur and Dawud Kandi. A narrow strip of villages stretching from Chandpur to Kachua and thence to Dawud Kandi is still dominated by the Farā'idīs.

During the life time of Dudu Miyān (d. 1862) the number of khalfahs in this area was increased to five

including the successors of 'Azīm al-Dīn Khundkār¹. Again, one of them, Darwesh 'Alī Munshī was made Superintendent khalīfah of Kachua, Chandina and Dawud Kandi which formed a circle or gird. In this circle he had his own khalīfahs², with whose assistance he was commissioned to administer the sharī'ah or religious justice to the Farā'idīs. Also, he was empowered by Dudu Miyān to make his own disciples.

The rail-road from Chandpur to Laksham has disturbed the Farā'idī settlements which formed a continuous line there. But from Singardah to Dawud Kandi a Farā'idī belt exists down to the present day.³ There are other Farā'idī settlements in the rest of the two subdivisions and individual Farā'idīs here and there, but they are sporadic and scattered.

1. The following were the khalīfahs of Dudu Miyān :-
 (1) 'Aṭā' Allāh Munshī of Singardah (2) Maṭī' Allāh Munshī of Singardah (3) Bakhshī Miyānjī of Baichhara Nayapara (4) Faiḍ al-Dīn Munshī of Purba Baichhara and (5) Darwesh 'Alī Munshī of Bajarikhula.
2. The following persons were the khalīfahs of Darwesh 'Alī Munshī :-
 (1) Anis Miyānjī of Satbaria, (2) Akhtar Allāh Munshī of Kalagaon (3) Yānus Munshī of Batakashi (4) 'Aṭā' al-Dīn Akhand of Kalasuna and (5) Saḍar al-Dīn Miyānjī of Atomur. Even today the descendants of these khalīfahs pay allegiance to the descendants of Darwesh 'Alī.
3. This Farā'idī belt includes the following villages:-
 Kumarkasha, Andhirpar, Nahara, Singardah, Noagaon, Baichhara, Ainpur, Sankarpur, Krishnapur, Ragdoil, Jaynagar, Kalasuna, Maligaon and Mahmudpur.

APPENDIX TO CHAPTER - IX

'C'

A FEW PROMINENT FARĀ'IDĪ LEADERS1. Jalāl al-Dīn Mullāh of Faridpur:-

Jalāl al-Dīn was a resident of Kamalapur in the modern Faridpur town. According to his family tradition¹, one of his uncles met Ḥājī Sharī'at Allāh at Makkah. When the Ḥājī returned to Bengal and started his reform movement Jalāl al-Dīn's uncle supported him. Through his influence, Jalāl al-Dīn was converted to Farā'idī doctrines at his young age.

Jalāl al-Dīn belonged to a "Mandal" family. After becoming a Farā'idī, he read the Qur'ān and learnt a little bit of Arabic and Urdu. Thereupon Ḥājī Sharī'at Allāh changed his family title to "Mullāh".

In eighteen thirties, he rose to an influential position in the society of his locality, not only as an elder but also as a good wrestler. For, in those days, affray fighting over disputed lands was a common occurrence and Jalāl al-Dīn Mullāh could play wonderfully with sticks.

In this period, the antagonism between the Hindu zamīndārs and Farā'idī peasantry created a tense situation.

1. Supplied to the present writer by Mawlawī Rafī' al-Dīn Ahmad of Kamalapur, great grandson of Jalāl al-Dīn Mullāh in 1958.

Hājī Shari'at Allāh felt the need of raising a band of affray fighters to defend his followers from the oppression of the zamīndārs and commissioned Jalāl al-Dīn Mullāh to organise a corps of affray fighters and to train them in clubmanship. When Dudu Miyān returned from Makkah about A.D. 1836, he joined hands with Jalāl al-Dīn Mullāh in training and supervising affray parties.

During Dudu Miyān's time, Jalāl al-Dīn played an important role in the siyāsī or political branch of the Fara'idī organisation. He died sometimes after 1850.

2. Munshī Faid al-Dīn Mukhtār:-

Faid al-Dīn Mukhtār son of Agar Muḥammad Sutkār, was originally a resident of Jessore¹, who emigrated to Faridpur about A.D.1840. According to tradition current in his family at Faridpur², he was sent to Calcutta to study Arabic and Persian at an early age. He was strong and stout, and soon developed a taste for wrestling. At that time Titu Mīr was a professional wrestler at Calcutta, and young Faid al-Dīn joined his party. Later on when Titu Mīr (after being a disciple of Sayyid Aḥmad Shahīd), returned to Calcutta

1. cf. MS. Document, giving power of legal attorney by Dudu Miyān to Faid al-Dīn Mukhtār, dated A.D.1849, recovered by the present writer and preserved in the Asiatic Society of Pakistan, Dacca.

2. Supplied to the present writer by Mawlawī Rafī' al-Dīn Aḥmad, grandson of Faid al-Dīn Mukhtār of Faridpur.

(circa. A.D.1827), Faïḍ al-Dīn had the opportunity of meeting him there. Thereafter, Faïḍ al-Dīn became a staunch supporter of Titu Mīr, and on his return to Jessore, his native district, he began to preach the puritan doctrines advocated by Titu.

Not far from his native village Panipara, there was an indigo factory at Mirganj, on the bank of Barasia river. The oppression of the indigo planters on the Muslim cultivators soon attracted his attention. He preached the new reform doctrines to the peasantry and organised them into a solid party. About A.D.1840, the conflict between the cultivators and the European planters had come to grips, and in one of the skirmishes Faïḍ al-Dīn was wounded. Thereafter, he did not feel secure to live within the reach of the Mirganj indigo planter, and emigrated to Faridpur. There he married the daughter of Jalāl al-Dīn Mullāh, an eminent Farā'idī leader, and settled there permanently. He, however, did not become a Farā'idī himself but remained a follower of Titu Mīr till his death¹.

At Faridpur, he took up legal profession or Mukhtārship at the district court. In A.D. 1849, he was appointed legal attorney by Dudu Miyān to look after his landed property and to represent him in the court and other government offices².

1. Supplied to the present writer by Mawlawī Rafīʿ al-Dīn Ahmad, grandson of Faïḍ al-Dīn Mukhtār of Faridpur.

2. MS. Document, op.cit.

In A.D. 1862, on the death of Dudu Miyān, ~~in A.D. 1862~~ he was appointed one of the guardians of Dudu Miyān's sons¹. He died sometimes later.

3. Mawlawī Kafīl al-Dīn Ahmad²:-

Kafīl al-Dīn Ahmad, the eldest son of Munshī Faīd al-Dīn Mukhtār, was born in A.D. 1856. He was a colleague of Khān Bahādur Sa'īd al-Dīn Ahmad and went to school together with him at Bahadurpur and Dacca. At Dacca, he studied under Mawlānā Dīn Muḥammad. Later on he got admitted at the Muḥsiniyah Madrasah and became a student of Mawlānā 'Ubayd Allāh 'Ubaydī.

On his return to Farīdpur about A.D. 1885, he was appointed a khalīfah by Khān Bahādur Sa'īd al-Dīn. Subsequently he was made a Superintendent khalīfah. Towards the close of the 19th century he was promoted to the position of Uparastha khalīfah, and a sanad was granted to him, assigning him the charge of maintenance of social and religious justice among the Farā'idīs of Rajbari, Bhangra, Maqsubpur, Bhushna, Farīdpur, Sadarpur, Nagarkanda and of the surrounding territories. In other words, he was given the charge of Farīdpur Sadar subdivision and parts of Goalunda subdivision.

1. See supra., Chapter v, Section "C".

2. The following account is based on the family tradition of Mawlawī Kafīl al-Dīn Ahmad collected by the present writer during a tour in 1958, from his son Mawlawī Rafī' al-Dīn Ahmad of Kamalapur in the town of Farīdpur.

Under Mawlawī Kafīl al-Dīn there were Superintendent khalīfahs. The most prominent among them were (1) Kazem Mullāh¹ of Gird-i-Jahānpūr and (2) Munshī Ghīyāth al-Dīn Shāh Faqīr² of Gird-i-Tālmā.

In the Farā'idī organisation the administration of justice occupied a prominent place. The Farā'idīs were not allowed to file a suit in the law courts without the permission of the Superintendent khalīfah. Such permission was given only in complicated criminal cases. All other disputes were settled by the khalīfahs. As a Uparastha khalīfah, Mawlawī Kafīl al-Dīn was required to go around his area frequently for settling disputes and administering justice and to give spiritual training to numerous Farā'idīs who were initiated into the Qādiriyah sūfī order. Besides, he was a good orator, and preached in large and small gatherings arranged by the Farā'idīs at different places. Sometimes religious conferences were held by the Farā'idīs at Faridpur, Madaripur, Barisal, Dacca, Chandpur and Rekabi Bazar, in which he took a prominent part.

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1. Formerly Kazem Mullāh belonged to a Julaha (weaver) caste. On his acceptance of the Farā'idī doctrines, his title of "Julaha" was changed to "Kārīgar". Later on, as he learnt to read the Qur'ān and to understand its simple meaning, he was given the title of Mullāh.
 2. Ghīyāth al-Dīn was living in 1958, whose age was claimed to be 120 years.

From the middle of the 19th century Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī of Jawnpur and his followers vehemently challenged the Farā'idī point of view on the question of holding congregational prayers of Jum'ah and 'Īd. Public debate between them and the Farā'idīs had become a familiar scene in Bengal. Mawlawī Kafīl al-Dīn was frequently called for defending the Farā'idī tenets in such debates. When Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī's son Mawlawī 'Abd al-Awwal visited Eastern Bengal¹, Kafīl al-Dīn had a number of debates with him.

At the time of the partition of Bengal in 1905, Mawlawī Kafīl al-Dīn and Khān Bahādur Sa'īd al-Dīn supported the move and joined their hands with Nawab Sir Salīm Allāh of Dacca. They stood against the propaganda drive of Śrī Ambikā Charan Majumdār of Faridpur, the one time president of All-India National Congress. As the Hindus boycotted the English goods, he opened a store of Liverpool salt at Faridpur.

During the non-cooperation movement of 1921-1922, he sided with the khilafatists, and was jailed along with

1. Mawlānā 'Abd al-Awwal is known to have paid several visits to Eastern Bengal (cf. Abū'l-Bashar and 'Abd al-Bāṭin: Sīrat-i-Mawlānā 'Abd al-Awwal Jawnpūrī. Jawnpur, 1370 A.H., pp. 52, 53, 99, 127, 134, 153 and 185 ff.). But, no mention of the debates between him and Mawlawī Kafīl al-Dīn has been made in his biography. The Mawlānā had, however, written and published a tract in Urdu, entitled Idhān al-Warā bi-Sibat al-Jum'ah fi'l-Mudun wa'l-Qurā (i.e. Permission of the pious theologians on the lawfulness of holding the prayer of Jum'ah in the towns and villages), which was precisely the subject of controversy between them (cf. ibid., p. 189). Thus, it appears that such debate between them may have actually taken place.

Bādshāh Miyān, From that time on the Farā'idīs changed their previous policy towards the British government of India from friendship to antagonism.

From the time of khilāfat movement, the learned doctors of Deoband school were exerting great influence in the interior of Bengal. The need of the unity of the Muslims was looming large in the imagination of everyone, and the importance of the petty theological controversies such as the problem of holding the prayer of Jum'ah, had receded to the oblivion. As the congregational prayers of Jum'ah and 'Īd were instrumental to unity, many of the Farā'idīs, especially the younger generation, felt strongly inclined in favour of holding these prayers. In accordance with the Farā'idī tenets Mawlawī Kafīl al-Dīn was of the opinion that congregational prayers could not be lawfully held in the villages. But when he visited the metropolis of Calcutta in 1927, he had participated in the prayer of Jum'ah at the Jāmi' Masjid and saw nothing wrong in holding the congregational prayers in such towns and cities which were the seats of government authorities. On the insistence of his son Mawlawī Rafī' al-Dīn Ahmad to re-examine the Farā'idī views on holding congregational prayers, he sent Rafī' al-Dīn, in 1934, to Mawlānā 'Abd al-Rauf Dānāpūrī and Mawlānā Zafar Ahmad'Usmānī to consult their opinion on the matter. As they gave their opinion with appropriate evidence from the Qur'ān

and the Sunnah, - in favour of holding congregational prayers in the villages and towns of Bengal, Mawlawī Kafīl al-Dīn granted permission to his followers to hold the prayers of Jum'ah and 'Īd at Faridpur. But unfortunately Kafīl al-Dīn was attacked by paralysis at that time and could not participate in the first Jum'ah prayer held by the Farā'idīs of his locality in 1935. Mawlawī Kafīl al-Dīn died about A.D. 1938.

4. Sayyid 'Azīm al-Dīn Khundkār of Tippera And His Successors¹ :-

Sayyid 'Azīm al-Dīn Khundkār (d. circa. 1842) came in contact with Hājī Sharī'at Allāh at the river port of Chandpur during one of the visits of the Haji to that place. Whenever the Hājī came to Chandpur, people of the interior of Tippera district used to come there in groups to meet him. 'Azīm al-Dīn came to see the Haji from far off Singardah, his native village, about A.D. 1830, and was greatly impressed by his admonition. He returned home as a sincere disciple of the Hājī and an ardent supporter of the Farā'idī movement.

Towards the end of Hājī Sharī'at Allāh's life, when he decided to appoint khalīfahs at different places, 'Azīm

1. This is based on geneological evidence and tradition current in the family circles of Sayyid 'Azīm al-Dīn Khundkār of Singardah, Bakhshī Miyānjī of Baichhara, Faiḍ al-Dīn Munshī of Purva Baisara and Darwesh 'Alī Munshī of Bajarikhula, having been corrected and modified by other data collected during cross-country tour of East Pakistan by the present writer in 1957 and 1958.

al-Dīn was made a khalīfah for the interior of Tippera. He died about A.D. 1842. After his death, the khilāfat was inherited by his nephews, 'Aṭā' Allāh Munshī (d. circa., A.D. 1858), and Maṭī' Allāh Munshī (d. circa., A.D. 1860); and their descendants claim to be Farā'idī khalīfahs down to the present day¹.

Faiḍ al-Dīn Khundkār was a man of some learning. He took prominent part in the village politics, and preached Farā'idī doctrines in the interior of Tippera district. At home, he opened a Maktab where he gave lessons to the children in Qur'ān reading and Urdu and elementary Persian, and attracted students from distant villages. One of his favourite students was Darwesh 'Alī Munshī, who, later on, rose to the position of Superintendent khalīfah.

5. Darwesh 'Alī Munshī of Bajarikhula:-

Darwesh 'Alī Munshī of Bajarikhula became a disciple of Dudu Miyān about A.D. 1843. Dudu Miyān intensified his efforts to win over the masses of Eastern Bengal to his side. In the interior of the Chandpur subdivision (of Tippera district) alone, he appointed five khalīfahs² including

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1. For instance, Faiḍ al-Dīn Khundkār of Singardah, a grandson of 'Aṭā' Allāh Munshī claims to be a Farā'idī khalīfah.
 2. The khalīfahs of Dudu Miyān were the following :-
 (i) 'Aṭā' Allāh Munshī of Singardah, (ii) Maṭī' Allāh Munshī of Singardah, (iii) Bakhshī Miyānji of Baichhara, (iv) Faiḍ al-Dīn Munshī of Purba Baichhara and (v) Darwesh 'Alī Munshī of Bajarikhula.

Darwesh 'Alī. Through their untiring efforts the Muslims of a narrow strip of villages from Singardah (near Laksam) to Dawud Kandi river-port (of Sadar subdivision) were converted wholesale to Farā'idī doctrines.

This spectacular success of the Farā'idī movement in the interior of Tippera is said to have been manipulated by Darwesh 'Alī Munshī for which Dudu Miyān rewarded him by raising him to the position of a Superintendent khalīfah. About A.D. 1850, Dudu Miyān paid a visit to the interior of Tippera from the river-port of Chandpur. He went straight to the residence of Darwesh 'Alī Munshī at Bajarikhula, and taking him along proceeded to Singardah and then made a detour of the Farā'idī settlements. He appointed five more khalīfahs at different areas and subordinated them to Darwesh 'Alī¹. It is said that Dudu Miyān formed a Farā'idī gird in this part of Tippera which consisted of the present thanas of Kachua, Chandina and Dawud Kandi, and Darwesh 'Alī was commissioned to administer Islamic law and social justice to the Farā'idīs of this gird.

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1. The khalīfahs who were subordinated to Darwesh 'Alī Munshī:-
 (i) Anis Miyānjī of Satbaria, (ii) Akhtar Allāh Munshī of Kalagaon, (iii) Yānus Munshī of Batakashi, (iv) 'Atā' al-Dīn Akhand of Kalasuna and (v) Safar al-Dīn Miyānjī of Atomur.

It is interesting to note that the successors of these khalīfahs do pay their allegiance to the successors of Darwesh 'Alī Munshī down to the present day.

After the death of Darwesh 'Alī, his son 'Abd al-Raḥmān Munshī became the Superintendent khilāfah. He died in B.S.1322/A.D.1915, and was succeeded by his son 'Irfān al-Dīn Munshī whose Superintendentship was formally renewed by the present Head of the Farā'idīs, Bādshāh Miyān¹.

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1. The Sanad of khilāfat of 'Irfān al-Dīn Munshī was personally examined by the present writer during a tour of Bajarikhula in 1958, and its genuineness was confirmed by Bādshāh Miyān.

APPENDIX TO CHAPTER - IX

'D'

FARĀ'IDĪ 'ULAMĀ' OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

Among the Farā'idī theologians of the nineteenth century, Mawlawī 'Abd al-Jabbār, Mawlawī Thanā Allāh and Mawlawī 'Abd al-Ḥayy were very prominent. But despite our strenuous attempts, very little of their biographical data could be recovered.

Mawlawī 'Abd al-Jabbār was a resident of Madaripur subdivision of the Faridpur district and a disciple of Ḥājī Sharī'at Allāh. He was a colleague of Dudu Miyān. He came to the prominence about A.D. 1867 when a debate was held between him and Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī. Subsequently, as we have seen in Chapters i, iv and vii, he dominated the intellectual life of the Farā'idīs. He appears to have died about A.D. 1903.

Mawlawī Thanā Allāh was a resident of Faridpur district. He is claimed to have been educated in Hindustan, i.e., at Lucknow or Delhi. The Farā'idīs refer to him generally with the laudable title "Rā'as al-Muḥaddithīn", i.e., the crown of the doctors of Prophetic tradition. According to the Farā'idī sources, he took prominent part in the

debate of Dawud Kandi held between the Farā'idīs and the followers of local customs in A.D.1903. He appears to have died soon after.

Mawlawī 'Abd al-Ḥayy was a resident of Madaripur subdivision and served as a teacher of theology in the Farā'idī Madrasah of Bahadurpur during the time of Khān Bahādur Sa'īd al-Dīn Ahmad.

APPENDIX TO CHAPTER - IX

'E'

THE FARĀ'IDĪ 'ULAMĀ' CONFERENCE OF 1947

After independence in 1947, the Farā'idīs felt the need of re-examining their principle with regard to the congregational prayers. An 'ulamā' conference was, therefore, held by the Farā'idī leaders in October, 1947, at Rekabi Bazar. A hand-bill, entitled "Jumā Samvandhe Mimānsā"¹ - which is available to us - shows that the conference was convened by Abā Khālīd Rashīd al-Dīn Aḥmad alias Bādshāh Miyān, the head of the Farā'idīs, and was presided over by Mawlānā Abū'l-Barakāt 'Abd al-Rawf Dānāpūrī (who was especially invited from United Province or Uttar Prdesh of India).

In the hand-bill, Bādshāh Miyān declares that in former times the Farā'idīs deemed it unlawful to hold the prayers of Jum'ah and 'Id in this country because of its being Dār al-Harb. But since, by the grace of God, Pakistan has been established, these prayers have become lawful in

1. The above hand-bill is a joint communique bearing the signature of Bādshāh Miyān and Mawlānā Dānāpūrī, published in Bengali from Patuakhali in the district of Bakarganj but released from Bahadurpur, It bears the B.S. date, the 3rd Kartik, 1358 and A.D. the 17th October, 1947; i.e. 3 days after the conference, which was held on the 29th and 30th Ashvin, B.S.1358. The hand-bill was seen by the present writer at Rekabi Bazar in 1958, and a true copy was made, which is now in the possession of the present writer.

this country. There is, however, a second condition, laid down by the Hanafi jurists, which must be fulfilled for holding congregational prayers. This relates to the status of the place. For, in the opinion of the Hanafi jurists it is not lawfully permitted to hold the prayers of Jum'ah and 'Id in the villages. These prayers can be held only in the towns. There is also difference of opinions with regard to the definition of "township". Taking all these into consideration, we are inclined to hold the prayers of Jum'ah and 'Id in the towns of Pakistan and in such other settlements which though are not generally regarded as towns yet resemble township on account of the existence of roads and lanes, large settlements and market places in them.

In short, we deem it lawful to hold the prayers of Jum'ah and 'Id in the district and subdivisional towns of Pakistan as well as in such settlements and ports which resemble the subdivisional towns and the population of which is not less than 4,000. In the latter places, these prayers are to be held by way of caution.

Mawlānā Dānāpūrī endorsed the above opinion and opined that the riverport of Rekabi Bazar¹ was a small town or a big qasbah. Hence, the prayers of Jum'ah and 'Id ought to be held in it by way of caution.

1. It may be noted that when the present writer visited Rekabi Bazar in 1958, its population was estimated to be 3,000.

APPENDIX TO CHAPTER - IX

'F'

INDIGO PLANTER IN RURAL BENGAL

In A.D.1878, an interesting case was tried by Justice Pontifex at the Calcutta High Court involving the murder of a ra'iyat, Shaykh Munşif by Mr. White, an indigo planter of Nadiya. Mr. White was accused of killing Shaykh Munşif by physical assault and evidences were produced in such details and clarity that there was no room for doubt. It is alleged that Mr. White was released by the partiality of the Jury¹ and the Judge. The following excerpt is reproduced from the daily Englishman, published from Calcutta.

Monday, 8 July, 1878²:

"The Judge - I cannot tell you, gentlemen of the jury, that there is no evidence; but I cannot say what you think of it. I must say I think that if you believe the evidence, you can only find the prisoner guilty of murder. There are no links wanting in the evidence.

1. The Jury consisted of 8 Europeans and one Hindu gentlemen.
2. Englishman, dated 8 July, 1878, p.3, column 5: the judgment in the case "Empress vs. White". It may be noted that the witnesses were examined for two days before the judgment was pronounced, and the full proceedings are available in the Englishman dated the 6th July (p.3, column 2-4) and the 8th July (p. 3, column 3-5).

The Foreman - We don't wish to hear the defence as we have already made up our minds.

The Clerk of the Crown asked the jury if they had agreed upon their verdict.

The Foreman said they had; they found the prisoner not guilty of all the charges against him.

The Judge - I quite agree with you, gentlemen of the jury.

The evidence is utterly unreliable.

The accused was then discharged".

On the 8th July, the Englishman commented editorially as follows¹:

"The Trial "Express vs. White" is a striking example of how formidable a weapon the criminal procedure may become in the hands of the natives of the country, and of the dangerous position of a European in the Mufasal.

An English gentleman, Manager of a factory in the Nuddea District, is charged with murder of an atrocious character, is discharged by one Magistrate, and twelve months afterwards is committed to the High Court by another".

1. Englishman, 8 July, 1878, p. 2, column 3.

Subsequently, the late prosecutor of Mr. White urged in a letter published in the Englishman¹, "not to prosecute the witnesses" who gave evidence against Mr. White but to try to find out the man behind the scene who was the real conspirator".

1. Englishman, 13 July, 1978, p. 2, column 1.

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