

## The Golden Jubilee of H. H. The Aga Khan.

ON January 19th and the four succeeding days the members of the Ismailiah section in collaboration with the other communities organised an elaborate programme fittingly to celebrate the Golden Jubilee of the accession to the Gadi of Imamat of their leader Moulana Hazar Imam His Highness Aga Sultan, Sir Mahommed Shah, G.C.I.E., G.C.S.I. We offer our most sincere and respectful felicitations. The preparations in Bombay were especially noteworthy, for the Khoji community wanted to celebrate the occasion in a manner the world would not easily forget. Unfortunately the news of the death of King George spread a gloom over the Country, and in accordance with the personal wish of H. H. the Aga Khan, only the religious ceremonies were observed. The most striking event of the celebrations was the ceremonial of weighing His Highness against bars of gold in a huge balance to assess the tribute from his followers in honour of the occasion. The practice of weighing against gold is associated with rich historical traditions, and it was a common feature of the royal pageantries in the past. Perhaps the faith in the nobility and incorruptibility of the temporal and spiritual ruler is symbolically represented by gold, whose value is distributed among his followers with his benedictions. His Highness, well known for his piety and people zeal, has desired that the entire amount should be devoted to the spiritual advancement of his followers.

When the history of contemporary events comes to be written, the contributions of H. H. the Aga Khan to the political and social developments of the Empire will occupy a prominent place. It will be recalled that he headed the Muslim deputation in 1906 to Lord Minto to urge the case for the increasing association of the members of the community with the administrative and political life of the Country, and, in its formative stages of development, he guided the destinies of the All-India Muslim League, and initiated a fund for raising the Aligarh

College to the University status. Gifted alike with the outlook of an astute statesman and the clear judgment of a critical philosopher, he laboured hard to soothe the Muslim sentiments during the Balkan Wars, and the support and loyalty of his immediate followers during the Great War had a most steadying influence on the community as a whole, when Turkey was drawn into struggle. The influence which His Highness has been exercising on the political life of India is largely reinforced by his intimate knowledge of the trend of the public affairs in Europe, and his personal association with the leading allied statesmen. His study of Indian and Middle Eastern affairs in *India in Transition* (1918) produced a great effect on the final form of the Indian Act of 1919, and was consistent with his criticisms of the British Government's Mesopotamian and Arabian policy. He joined in numerous representatives both at the Peace Conference and subsequently in urging on the importance of preserving the sovereign integrity of Turkey to the interests of Europe generally and of Great Britain in particular. For such distinguished services in the promotion of peace, His Highness on whom the titles G.C.I.E. and G.C.S.I., were already conferred, received the honour of a salute of 11 guns and the rank and status of a First Class Chief of the Bombay Presidency. In 1923 the Council of State recommended him for the Nobel Prize.

His war services were great, but those in the cause of the progress of the Muslim Community are greater. As the guardian of the historical traditions of his race and as one of the chief promoters of the Islamic learning and culture, and as a benefactor of Aligarh University, the Aga Khan is entitled to the lasting gratitude of his community. For his great learning and his disinterested efforts in promoting it, the University of Cambridge conferred on him the LL.D. degree. As India's greatest Muslim leader, and as one of her most respected sons, he will always be remembered in the prayers of all the sections of the Indian population.