

FALL OF AMANULLAH KHAN AS SEEN BY HIS CONTEMPORARIES

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R. N. G Scott has translated it from Persian into English. In the few lines Preface of the book he writes:

'In this translation from the Persian every endeavour has been made to render it as literal as possible without destroying the impression which the author has sought to convey.

The events and movements which have been described will, probably, have lost their interest in the course of a few years but the impression conveyed may remain. The solid commerciality of the sycophants and officials, the general treachery of all classes, the unscrupulous scheming for power and wealth, portray an Afghanistan despicable and unstable despite the veneer of civilisation imposed on it by Amanullah'.

After giving a brief background of Amanullah's coming to power, the author commented: 'In the vigour of youth and with the goal of progress before her eyes Afghanistan, like a child, began to run forward with blind rapidity. Advancement and civilization became the passion of Amanullah. In order to win the approval of the King courtiers and journalists vied each other in showering flattery on Amanullah and praising all his actions. The praise of these sycophants mounted like strong wine to his head and Amanullah became firmly convinced that never before had such a genius been fashioned in the womb of the world. Absorbed in the creation and building of the new city, 'Dar-ul-Aman', in

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municipal matters, in the illumination of roads, the establishment of factories and female education, Amanullah was blind to the aspirations of Afghanistan, to the needs of the army, ignorant on matters connected with frontier affairs and domestic and foreign policy....

Flattery and applause of Amanullah became the fixed habit of his ministers and entourage in order to gain their own ends. To please Amanullah palaces were erected by them in Dar-ul-Aman and Paghman. Money was subscribed towards companies and factories. But the end that Amanullah's ministers had in view was the lining of their own pockets and this they succeeded in doing to such an extent that, even now, thousands of pounds are deposited in their names in foreign banks. It was but natural, however, that private greed would lead to a national disunity'. (pp. 8-9).

Differences Created by Mohammad Wali and His Group Between Amanullah and Nadir Khan:

'Amanullah was confidentially informed that 9 in consequence of the withholding of the bestowal of Nur-us-Siraj in marriage to Hashim Khan, (two sisters of Amanullah married to Shah Wali and Shah Mahmud; Nur promised to Hashim but was married to Mohammad Hassan, nephew of Mahmud Tarzi) both he and Nadir Khan had felt themselves insulted and had determined either to obtain possession of Nur-us-Siraj, die in an attempt or kill Amanullah, her brother. On the other hand Nadir Khan was informed that Amanullah was about to bestow the hand of his sister to Abdul Aziz Khan who was the Minister for the Interior. The conspirators succeeded in subverting and in alienating Amanullah's feelings towards Nadir Khan'. 'As soon as Nadir Khan realized that Amanullah's feelings had changed towards him, the conspirators informed him that Amanullah had become afraid of his growing influence and had determined to bring about his ruin. (p. 10). An attempt was made on Nadir's life. Nadir considered that Amanullah was personally involved in the plot. He immediately shut himself up in his house and on the pretext of illness resigned his appointment as Minister for War. Meanwhile rebellion broke out in the Southern Provinces. Nadir was accused of secretly encouraging the rebels. His enemies convinced

Amanullah of giving the prestigious post to Mohammad Wali and of telling Nadir to quit Afghanistan which he did accordingly. (p.10).

Downfall:

On his return from Europe a 'Jashan' was arranged. In 'Jashan', 'at night dancing girls brought from Germany entertained their audiences in a state of nudity. One dancing girl from India, Idan Bai, also gave dancing entertainments. The result was public consternation as such things are contrary to Islam which forbids dancing by women in the presence of males'. (p.18).

At Loe Jirga, convened after the 'Jashan' various things were discussed. 'The abolition of the veil, the question of the day, was at last referred to. Some Mullahs amongst the representatives spoke against this reform and quoted verses from the Koran and cited traditions in support of their views. Amanullah, in reply said that- although he himself was not a Mullah still he know that veiling in accordance with Islamic law was confined to covering the body from the throat down to the knees. The Mullahs emphatically refuted Amanullah's dictum whereupon Amanullah, recollecting the advice given to him by Mustafa Kamal, lost his self control and thundered out 'All national calamities can be laid at your doors, you mullahs, who are nothing more than procurers of women. I shall enforce what I like and I will enforce this unveiling even at the point of the bayonet but not by flattery. Know that I am a revolutionary monarch'. Then turning to the audience he screamed out 'Oh representatives of my beloved nation! My advice to you, which advice you should explain to the whole nation is that you should realize that these mullahs are, through their teachings, responsible for the dissemination of enemy intrigues in this country. The backwardness of our people is due to the myths with which they feed the masses and by which they deceive them. I will deal with these mullahs in my own time. But you representatives should place the nation in a position to understand and not to be deceived by this handful of men, ill wishers of the nation'. (p. 19).

The Revolution:

'The revolution in Afghanistan has focused the attention of politicians throughout the world. In Afghanistan itself the causes which led up to the revolution have been attributed by high officials and courtiers to the mechanisation of the British Government. Although the fact was emphatically known that the British Government had no hand whatsoever in the revolution, the Afghan people were tutored to believe that Mullahs in the pay of the British had engineered the rising in order that the Afghan nation's progress should be retarded and to stamp as heretical all actions and measures which were advantageous to the advancement of the nation.

The real motive lying behind the welter of blood and fratricidal strife was the weakening of the Afghanistan and the dismemberment of this Islamic land. Amanullah's attitude contrary to the religious sentiments of Afghanistan added fuel to the fire. The causes of the revolution, however, as they appear to the writer are as follows:

- a) The 'Hab-ul-Matin' a newspaper published in Calcutta quoted the French Press in one of its issues referring to Queen Souriya and stated that the French were greatly surprised at the dress and manners of the Queen and other ladies of the Afghan Royal party as they 'appeared to be European by nature and by descent'. The object of the Editor of the 'Hab-ul-Matin' was to bring discredit on Afghanistan because a member of this paper's editorial staff had been discourteously treated by Ghulam Siddiq whilst on a visit to Kabul and had returned greatly incensed at his reception. The effect produced in Afghanistan by this article was unfavourable to Amanullah.
- b) During the European tour numbers of photographs of Queen Souriya appeared in the European Press and large numbers found their way into Afghanistan depicting the unveiled Queen in European dress. Pro-Amanullahites destroyed as many copies as they could obtain but anti-Amanullah personages were able to circulate photographs of Queen

Souriya throughout Afghanistan amongst influential Khans and mullahs. The effect produced was exceedingly bad. The Kabul Police endeavoured to collect all such photographs but they failed and the mischief had already been done.

- c) Whilst in Russia films were taken of Souriya showing her in the company of men, unveiled, and the se films had been despatched to Afghanistan. When the films arrived from Moscow in Mazar-i-Sharif the Russian Consular Agent there wished to show them publicly but the Governor would not at first give his sanction. After three days of secret discussion the Governor agreed and official invitations were issued to all civil and military officers to view the films. A most undesirable impression was created on the audience some of whom protested to the Governor and characterised the films as being 'revolutionary'. The Governor replied that as the films were intended to be shown in Kabul itself they in Mazar-i-Sharif should have no qualms about the matter. The films were subsequently despatched to the Russian Legation in Kabul. They were shown for two nights in Kabul but as the effect produced was deleterious the Ministry for Education ordered the showing of the films to be discontinued.
- d) When Amanullah arrived at the frontier station of Batum from Turkey *en route to Persia*, he received a telegraphic message from Riza Shah to the effect that while welcoming him to Persia it was hoped that the sentiments of Persia would be respected and that as Persia was a Muslim country that Queen Souriya would resume the wearing of her veil whilst in Persia. The stay in Persia was purposely curtailed and Amanullah hurriedly let for Afghanistan.

After his arrival in Kabul Amanullah made derogatory remarks concerning Persia in his speeches and on one occasion said that although half the houses in Tehran were brothels the 'Mujtahids' had not raised their voices in protest against them but had singled out Queen Souriya for not wearing a veil. Amanullah considered the incident to have been a personal slight by Riza Shah. There was, subsequently, a decided animus against Persians and some who were

employed in the Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Education were dismissed and expelled from Afghanistan. Saiyid Muhammad, Taqizadah, an influential Persian merchant, was deported together with his brother and they suffered in consequence considerable loss.

At an open Darbar and in the presence of the Persian Minister, Amanullah stated that the one country which was in an even more backward condition than Afghanistan was Persia. The Qizilbash of Kabul, who held special personal appointments, lost prestige and the old style of veil used by Qizilbash women henceforth described as 'Chanddauli'. Two things resulted. One was that the 'Hab-ul-Matin' on account of the dismissal of Persians from official post commenced an intensive campaign on the question of veiling. The other result was that the Qizilbash turned hostile to Amanullah and inaugurated a campaign against him criticising his behaviour on his return from Europe.

- e) The 'Loe Jirga' discussions antagonised the public and also the officials and ministers on account of the threatened action of Amanullah regarding the close scrutiny of the accounts of the ministers, etc. (On his return from Europe, Amanullah also spoke to an assembly of his officials and trunculently informed them that he was aware of the fact that drinking was a common practice amongst them and that they had in his absence taken bribes freely and that he would mete out harsh punishment to such offenders. He indicated that he would order doctors to rip open the stomachs of those he suspected of drinking in order that examination of their livers could be made to ascertain whether they took alcohol or not. To ascertain whether his officials had been taking bribes he would cause examination to be made of the expenses incurred by his officials and would balance these against their income and private means. As the majority of Amanullah's officials were addicted to both heavy drinking and bribe taking they were alarmed at what the King had said" (p. 17).

Fearing to lose their valuable properties and the wealth they had accumulated it was decided to divert Amanullah's

attention from themselves to the suppression of a rising which it was agreed should be engineered.

f) The system of village administration by Maliks and 'Qaryadars' was abolished by Amanullah in about 1925 and in its stead villagers were made to have direct dealings with revenue officers and paid in their dues twice yearly direct and not through intermediaries. Although the new system was beneficial both to the peasant and the State in that the peasant avoided any extortion on the part of the Maliks and the State received its revenue at fixed times, this system did not benefit the Maliks who lost thereby their Only means of livelihood and, in addition, had to pay up all arrears due from them. Their prestige and local standing also suffered, being deprived of the privilege of having formal relations with officials. As a whole the Maliks became antagonistic towards the Central Government and were biding their time to declare themselves openly against Amanullah. The rising provided the opportunity for which they were waiting and being in close touch with the people they immediately incited the masses to throw in their lot with the rebels and they themselves took a leading part in the upheavals.

g) A cause for discontent was the practice of Amanullah of substituting for men of ripe experience holding official appointments, boys of low origin lacking, sometimes, even in education. Deprived of their appointments and thrown out of office these men, too, fostered discontent.

h) Conscription and the methods employed to avoid service gave rise to almost general discontent. The method of obtaining the necessary quota of recruits was by drawing lots. Payments of a sum of Rs. 1,000 Afghani as purchase money exempted the recruits from service. If payments, owing to pecuniary circumstances, was not possible, exemption could be obtained by producing signed certificates from the residents of the locality or through religious intervention. Otherwise the man whose name had been drawn was bound to serve. As will be realized the purchase of exemption gave rise to corrupt

practices and was a fruitful field for bribery. Persons of position whose names had been bribed the officials who falsified identification registers to show such persons as sole supporters of families and without property. The poor and the friendless person on the other hand if he desired to purchase exemption was forced to dispose of his all in all in order to raise the necessary Rs. 1,000 and in many instances families were reduced to complete penury on this account.

- i) Desirous of obtaining religious legality to his proposed reforms of unveiling, etc., Amanullah secretly asked Mullah Abdur Rahman, a high cleric, to sanction them. This he refused to do despite attractive offers of money and advancement. He was finally informed that if he persisted in with-holding assent he would be put to death. Abdur Rahman asked for five days in which to consider the question. This was granted. He consulted the Hazrat Sahib of Shor Bazaar who realized that were Abdur Rahman to become the object of hatred by Amanullah his fate would be a similar one and so they decided on flight together to the Southern Province with the ultimate intention of joining Hazrat Sher Agha in India. Their flight was discovered and they were both captured in the Jaji country. Mullah Abdur Rahman was shot and the Hazrat of Shor Bazaar was imprisoned in the Arq in Kabul. The facts of the case soon became public property and the anti-Amanullah 'Party' spread propaganda freely amongst mullahs that Amanullah had determined to carry out the advice given to him by Mustafa Kamal which was to kill or expel all mullahs in order that the road to progress should be freed from obstacles and that Amanullah had initiated his campaign by exterminating Abdur Rahman. The propaganda had the desired effect. Thoroughly nervous, the mullahs commenced to stigmatise Amanullah as 'Kafir'. They preached against unveiling and the masses were told that soon all their wives would have to be unveiled and all their daughters would be sent to Turkey. The nation now turned hostile to Amanullah.

j) The officials holding important appointments, enriched as they were but still greedy for more, would not pay attention to grievances laid before them unless they received gratification beforehand. These officials, too, had become so swollen with self conceit that the showing of any sympathy to the mere peasant never even entered their minds. They did not refuse bribes, however, but they never did anything even after having accepted a bribe. Men representing petitions seldom had a chance of dealing direct with the official. The unsympathetic and despotic attitude of his officials brought discredit on to the Amanullah regime.

k) The Governments of Russia and Turkey paid great attention to Afghanistan: the two Governments, however, differed in their respective policies. The policy of the Turks aimed at furthering the influence of Turkey in Afghanistan with a view to establishing ultimately in Afghanistan and in parts of Persia, like Azarbaijan, and in Russian Turkistan, a government which would be under Turkish suzerainty. Professing to be a real friends of the Afghans on Islamic grounds, Turkey provided military officers to train the Afghan army; accepted a large number of girls to be educated in Turkey and made attempts to further the extensive use of the Turkish language in Afghanistan.

The Turks persuaded the Russians to believe that their policy in Afghanistan, was aimed strengthening Afghanistan, which being opposed to the desire of Britain, was in reality, therefore, advantageous to the Russians. Amanullah in his colossal inexperience allowed himself to be made a tool of by the two Governments. He favoured the Turkish policy which denoted a strong and independent nation, and Russia, too, signified her approval and supported the policy which aimed a blow at Russia's rivals.

Following the advice of Kamal Pasha, Amanullah despatched girls to Turkey to be educated. The plans of the two Governments began to take shape but the fire of revolution consumed Amanullah, and the well laid plans were destroyed. The calamity of the present revolution and its costs in men and money can be directly attributed to the suicidal

policy of Amanullah in allowing himself to become tool of the Russians and the Turks'. (pp. 21-23).

Anglo-Afghan Tussle by S. A. Akhtar Kazmi, (Islamabad, National Book Foundation, 1984), pp. 200. chapters 23; copies, 1000; foreword written by I. H. Qureshi, 2 May 1979.

The author, Professor S. A. Akhtar Kazmi has spent a long time in Kabul, Basically a resident of Saharanpur in India, he joined the Afghan Ministry of Education on 1 May 1922 and remained there till 1 June 1950. To quote him 'I am neither a historian, nor a scholar of history, nor can I claim to be so, because my all career including the Afghan Government Educational Service (1922-50) at Kabul, is spent as a teacher student and worker in the field of Biology. However I was present in Kabul when Amanullah Khan's regime was at its zenith and I have witnessed both rebellions of his time. Intentionally or unintentionally, I stayed there for about two months further after the King abdicated, to enjoy, so to say, the reign of the brigand Bucha-i-Saqao, the successor of that King. Therefore it occurred to me that if I recorded my own observations and experiences, they might possibly serve some useful purpose in dispelling the mythology that has grown around Amanullah Khan. And all these considerations prompted me to present this book' (p. vii).

Comments of Intelligentsia About the Change of Dress:

'In those days the current of the world progress, particularly the rise of Japan, was not without its effects on Afghanistan. The minds of the intelligentsia of the country were strongly influenced by the rise of Japan. Amanullah Khan issued orders that women could have unveiled if they so desired. He ordered that everyone should wear the dress of home-made cloth and in the European fashion. Those who did not do so, would not be allowed to move in certain public places, on streets, parks or the Royal gardens at Paghman. The order was observed in Kabul and the Amir did not care for other towns. Iqbal Shah states that all this the people hated from the bottom of their hearts. I well remember, however, when I enquired of several shopkeepers and some other men, how they were feeling in their new dress, *Ma khush hastaim ba har*

tauray key Padshah-i-mah khush bashad'(we are happy in whatever dress our King likes to see us). (p. 146).

In 1926, according to the author, Amir Amanullah abolished the title of 'Amir' and assumed the title of 'Padshah' or King. He introduced a new system for maintaining Government accounts with double-entry reckoning. He abolished the system whereby the officials and their descendants were liable in perpetuity for small irregularities in the accounts. He introduced the budget system to be followed at all levels of the Government officials. The whole procedure was not well understood by the general public and it became a common point to blame all failures on the budget system, as some posts were abolished when the new budget for the next year was passed. (p. 147)

British Intrigues in Removing Amanullah:

'The British had learnt through experience that the payment of bribes or blackmail (subsidies) was the touchstone of tribal diplomacy'. They had also used 'religious propaganda to cover up the essentially uses of the tribal resistance' against Amanullah. (In the absence of the King from Afghanistan) Now the Mullahs aroused the emotions of the tribesmen because they had received the bribes and the idea from the British that the reforms made by King Amanullah Khan were against Islam and would harm their own position and prestige'.(p. 149).

The author mentions the activities of Colonel T. E. Lawrence, popularly known as the Lawrence of Arabia, who was sent by the British Government to stir a revolt against Amanullah Khan. He, according to Kazmi, arrived in Karachi in 1926 and wrote to his brother on May 2, 1928 that 'I am leaving Karachi for upcountry'. He got himself transferred to Miranshah. Stationed there he soon became 'Shaw, the aircraft's mad. According to Aldington, a friend of Lawrence, he spent about eight months 'flying and driving over every yard of the north-western territory between the administered area and Afghanistan or the tribal area. On January 8, 1929, 'when his work was over, he was removed from Wana, taken to Lahore and then to Bombay for transfer to England'.(p.149).

After Effects of the European Tour:

Hardly two or three months had passed since King Amanullah left for Europe, when news spread all over the country that the King and the Queen in Europe had adopted European manners and the Queen had appeared unveiled. Then one day someone brought in Habibia College, a picture of Queen Surrya in western dress and unveiled. He informed us that such pictures had been distributed in thousands all over the eastern parts of the country from Jalalabad to Qandhar. The picture was finely printed on art paper of newspaper size and in attractive colours. When I looked down at the right bottom corner of the picture, I found there printed in small letters: 'Printed at the Times of India Press, Bombay'. The circulation of the picture of Queen Surrya unveiled and in European dress in the frontier districts of Afghanistan, was sufficient to stir up resentment among the people of the eastern and southern provinces and to strengthen and substantiate the anti-Amanullah Khan propaganda particularly among the illiterate tribesmen. A few weeks after, the few embassies who cared to arrange for cine record of the royal visit in their own countries, displayed in Kabul, the Queen and her ladies appearing unveiled. Then the gist of the report sent by the British embassy at Kabul to England in the absence of King Amanullah Khan, as Gould, the Councillor of the British embassy states, was that 'he (Gould) had been in frequent and close touch with the King's Regent or Vakeel (the greedy Muhammad Wali) and other Afghans who mattered (high officials and religious leaders) and all seemed to be quiet. History has shown that Afghanistan was a country where at any time, a little cloud like a man's hand might arise and soon the whole sky would be overcast. (p.150).

'British had purchased the support and loyalty of some high officials, of some high Mullahs and of some tribal chiefs. The distribution of money was so liberal that even Shaikh Mahbub Ali, Oriental Secretary of the British Legation, received six thousands rupees per month to spend on this very item'.(p. 155).

Pukhtun, Utmanzai:

In the very first issue of *Pukhtun* (May 1928) Abdul Majid Afghani, a student of Mission College, Peshawar, contributed an article entitled *Da Afghanistan Malika Au Da Europe Libaas*'. After giving details of Amanullah's European tour, he elaborated on the unveiling of Queen Surrya and termed it as a bold step on the part of the Queen, of course, with the approval of Amanullah. According to Abdul Majid, Amanullah was well-aware that the unveiling of the Queen would result in a negative propaganda of the anti-Amanullah clerics and might lead to an agitation of the Pashtoon tribesmen who regarded the unveiling of Queen as un-Islamic, but despite all this he allowed it. The main purpose of Amanullah was to show to the world that Afghanistan was a civilised country where both males and females had equal rights. The author gave examples from the routine life of the Pashtoons where the females helped their husbands, brothers and fathers in cultivation, in bringing firewood from the nearby forests and also in the battlefields. (pp. 37-41).

Mian Ahmad Shah after giving his opinion on the above article sensed a conspiracy and saw some hidden hands working for the disgrace of Amanullah. He warned the Pashtoons to be aware of the such circles and not to, pay any heed to anti-Amanullah propaganda. (p.41).

In July 1928 another article '*Da Afghanistan Malika Au Badshah tha Harkaley*' appeared in *Pukhtun*. Mian Ahmad Shah had welcomed the royal couple back to Afghanistan. After lauding the efforts of Amanullah Khan towards the modernisation of Afghanistan, Mian Ahmad Shah informed the King that not only his subjects in Afghanistan but also their brethren across Durand Line were looking towards Amanullah for inspiration. He warned the King of the intrigues against the Pashtoon nation and then advised him to consult the Pashtoon elders and took them into confidence before you start on the modernisation of Afghanistan. (pp.5-7).

In August 1928 in an article entitled '*Da Shah Afghanistan Barkhilaaf Sazish: Da Firangiano da Shar Na Dak Karoona*' the British Indian Government was directly accused of creating troubles for Amanullah Khan. The photographs of the unveiled

Queen, in a western dress, were distributed in thousands in Afghanistan. Moreover the fabricated account of Amanullah's intended un-Islamic steps was also circulated through the Mullahs. *The Pukhtun* accused the clergy of taking huge bribes from the British Government in order to spread the anti-Amanullah propaganda in Afghanistan. The British, according to *Pukhtun*, were afraid of the rising popularity of Amanullah Khan whom they considered their worst enemy since the Third Anglo-Afghan War of 1919. Moreover, Amanullah's heavy reliance upon Turkey and his leaning towards Russia also antagonised the British to such an extent that they decided to deprive the King of the throne of Kabul. (pp. 32-36).

In November 1928 Abdul Ghaffar Khan contributed an article on the Lawrence of Arabia. in his article entitled '*Da Arabistan Be Taja Badshah*' Bacha Khan elaborated on the arrival of Col. Lawrence to the Pashtoon belt. The main purpose of Lawrence's visit, according to *The Times of India* (dated 28- October, 1928) was to acquaint himself of the Afghan society, their culture and way of life. Moreover, he, according to the same source, intended to study the implementation of the reforms of Amanullah and its repercussions on Afghanistan. Bacha Khan warned the Pashtoons that being aware of the evil designs of Lawrence, they would pay no heed to his propaganda in the garb of religion. (pp. 33-34).

In a lengthy article '*Afghanistan*'. (*Pukhtun*, December 1928), Mian Ahmad Shah reiterated the nationalist's Pashtoons support to Amanullah in the modernisation of Afghanistan. He was critical of the anti-Amanullah propaganda of the Mullahs whom he considered the supporters of British Imperialism in that part of the world. A certain number of Mullahs, according to Mian Ahmad Shah, were getting regular subsidies from the British Government. He reminded them of the plight of the Pashtoons in British India, the blood-feuds in the Pashtoon society, the alarming number of rise in crimes in the Pashtoons and many other anti-social activities common in the Pashtoon society. He urged upon the Mullahs to pay heed to the solution of the problems in Pashtoon society and not to be misguided or become tools of the British imperialism. (pp. 5-15)

In January 1929 Mian Jaffar Shah contributed an article on the development of education. He highlighted the achievement of

Amani government in that connection. In the same issue of the *Pukhtun*, Syed Rahat Zakheli, another Pashtoon intellectual expressed his opinion on the second phase of reform programme introduced by Amanullah. In his article entitled '*Da Shinwaro Ghobal au da Spin Makho Murad Bal*' he sensed British involvement in the Shinwari revolt. According to Rahat, the trouble spot was always that part of Afghanistan which was adjacent to the British India. He knitted together various events i.e. the Shinwari revolt, spread of the rumours that Amanullah had demolished several mosques, had blown into pieces those Mullahs from cannons who opposed his modernisation programme and the circulation of the photographs of Queen Surrya wearing western dress, in Pashtoon areas. He was of the firm opinion that all these things were engineered by the British just to avenge the insult after their defeat in the Third Anglo-Afghan war. (pp. 43-50).

With the abdication of throne by Amanullah more articles appeared in *Pukhtun*. In February 1929 *Pukhtun* published '*Da Afghanistan Pukhtano, tha da Kaka Khelo Swal au Zari*, exhorting various Pashtoon tribes including Afridis, Aurakzais, Mohmands, Shinwaris, Khogianis, Wazirs, Mahsoods and Utmankhels to help Amanullah restore his throne at Kabul. In March 1929 Bacha Khan wrote an editorial exposing the British intrigues in the disposition of Amanullah Khan from his throne. He urged the Pashtoons to help the crisis-ridden country and to restore the lost prestige of the Pashtoons. He was particularly critical of the Mullahs who organised the rebellion against Amanullah on behalf of the British government and offered their allegiance to the bandit King, Bases on the fall Saqao. (pp.5-12). April 1929 issue of *Pukhtun* also carried a number of article of Amanullah. Bacha Khan in his lengthy editorial on '*Da Afghanistan da Baghawat Pa Haqla Dunya sa Waye* accused the British government of master-minding the over-throw of Amanullah Khan. In the support of his charges he quoted from various international newspapers. He gave details of how Col. Lawrence utilised the services of several prominent Mullahs who for the sake of few coins showed their willingness to serve the purpose of the British in adding fuel to fire against Amanullah. Moreover, *Pukhtun* published a letter of one Mullah Jalil who

gave details of how he became a tool in the hands of Col. Lawrence and of how the Col. exploited his services against the King (pp.5-18).

My Life: From Brigand To King:

Autobiography of Amir Habibullah

Published by: Sampson Low, Marston & Co, Ltd, London.

Total pages: 286 with XXIV sub-chapters.

Eight illustrations including a: Habibullah during the height of his power as the brigand chief, and, b: Habibullah with his followers, after his defeat and capture at Kabul.

A Note' is written as a preface of the book, introducing Jamal Gul and. his relation with Habibullah, popularly known as Bacha Saquo, and a brief introduction of the book. According to Bacha Saqao, the main causes of Amanullah Khan's downfall were following:

'When the time came to revert to his scheme of reformation, Amanullah committed a cardinal error in his efforts to placate the tribesmen. He informed the chiefs, with a wealth of verbiage, that they were God's children and that the only people who had resisted the reforms in the first instance were the Mullahs. He thereupon addresses himself to the task of hounding the clergy - easily the most powerful and most numerous individual class within his domains. The priests, he said, were the barriers to real progress. Therefore, the priests must bend the knee, or go.

'He hit at time-honoured customs and tradition, and the people began to murmur, and asked if their King had become afflicted in his mind. Not only did they hesitate to obey the Royal commands, but it was the invariable custom to refer these matters to the Mullahs. The advice tendered by the priests frequently ran counter to the Royal *firman*. (p. 100)

'Amanullah was determined that the women of Afghanistan should forgo the veil. All women were ordered to show their faces, and his favourites were those men who ordered their womenfolk to plaster their skin with European cosmetics, and to array their bodies in the latest confections from Paris.

'According to ancient custom, women only had their hair shorn if they were disgraced, but Amanullah thought that all should cut their hair, in irritation of the women of the West. Also, he decreed that the ancient tradition of regarding Friday as a holiday and a holy day in fact, should be abandoned, and that the Moslem holiday should be on Thursdays.

His most fantastic order was that the people should desert their ancient garb, and resort to European clothes. He actually gave orders that only those attired in European raiment should be admitted to certain parks and thoroughfares....

'Also, the ancient methods of recruitment for the army were abandoned, and a system of ballot substituted, (p.101)

European Trip Criticised:

'In an atmosphere definitely antagonistic to the Throne, Amanullah decided upon his great 'European Pilgrimage'. Had he known of the great weight of feeling against him he would have hesitated in leaving his kingdom at such a time, but he was fully under the impression that the people welcomed his reforms, and that the only persons with whom he had to contend were the Mullahs. His courtiers told him this, and none others were allowed to approach the Royal presence. So satisfied was the King that his policy was right that his principal amusement was to hale a bearded Mullah before him, and then deride him for his bearded face and his comical garments. The courtiers, in their creased trousers from London, and their faultless morning coats, would preen themselves, laugh with the King and thus spend a pleasant hour....

'In order to secure funds for the King's going, the Treasury had to embark upon perilous schemes. The host of reforms which Amanullah Khan had initiated had eaten up the taxes as fast as they were garnered, and when the King asked for his fare to Europe there was much scratching of heads.

'Eventually it was decided to mulct the wealthy who were required to provide 'voluntary' contributions to this great Affair of State, and for the rest, to levy three years' taxes in advance on the remainder of the population...' (p. 103)

'The Royal *firman* was that the face of Afghanistan must be changed. Amanullah Khan saw in our flowing pyjamas and embroidered waistcoats only that which was repugnant. He would have all, from the highest to the lowest, in European garb. He had returned from the West with the silk-hat complex, and he thought more of the correct position for a trouser crease and of the shine to his patent leather shoes than he did for the dignity of his countrymen.

'Here was his second cardinal blunder. He decreed that his countrymen should sacrifice their dignity and make themselves ridiculous. - and that is something to which no true-born will submit with equanimity. (p. 108)

'There were murmuring among the people; the army was disgruntled, and a rebellious clergy was stalking the land impressing upon the peasants that they were in the hands of Satan. The court was reviled; Amanullah was likened to a madman; tax-gatherers who still endeavoured to mulct the poor were murdered, and there was a dying up of resources in Kabul. The King had spent all on his journeys abroad, the country had paid its taxes long in advance, and the State coffers were running empty. (p.110)

