Sikh Muslim Relationship

by

Sardar Shaikh Muhammad Yusuf
Editor The "Noor" Weekly

(Translated from Urdu by Maulana Aftab-ud-Din Ahmad)

Published by
The Publicity Committee, Ahmadiyya Anjuman Isha'at Islam, LAHORE.
1948

www.aaiil.org
SIKH MUSLIM RELATIONSHIP

It is a well-known fact that the present day Sikhs are a bit too much inclined towards the Hindu Community. This, however, has much to do with Hindu alertness and Muslim indifference towards this valiant community. It is, nevertheless, necessary to examine in the light of facts whether it is not more advantageous for the Sikhs to be in alliance with the Muslims than with the Hindus. To facilitate this discussion, I propose to divide it into four aspects—the spiritual, the historical, the cultural and the political.

Let me begin with the spiritual aspect. In this we have to see whether in the light of Shri Granth Sahib and other sacred books of the Sikh Community, the Sikhs should be allied to the followers of the Holy Quran or to the followers of the Vedas, whether they should be in close contact with the people of Makka or with the citizens of Benares. The Guru Sahib says:
Narankar nar bakar nar lamb,
Ad anil anad asamb,
Tanka murh uchardh bhedā,
Tanka bhed na pavat beda,

"He is one in His person, without any support, without any birth. He existed in the beginning, exists now and will be existing for all times in future. The secret of His existence is unknown to the Vedas." Again:

Parh parh pandit muni thakay vedon ka abhyas,
Harnam chit na away na nij ghar howey bas

"Even the big Rishis and Munis are exhausted by the study of the Vedas, without being able to secure the pleasure of God."

From this we can easily understand that the Guru Sahib or the Sikh scriptures do not favour unity and alliance with the followers of the Vedas. Had it been otherwise, they would not have expressed frankly such views about the Vedas. One can produce many sayings and shlokas of this nature. But what has been cited already may suffice for the present in view of the shortness of space at our disposal. It has to be seen now what the Guru Sahib has to say about the Holy Quran and its followers. On an enquiry on this
line, we find in Shri Granth Sahib Ram Kali, Mohalla One:

*Kal parwan kateb Quran,*
*Pothi Pandit Rahey Puran,*
*Nanak Nao bhea Rahman,*
*Kar Karta tu eko jan*

"In this age of evil, when there is an excess of sins in the world, salvation can be attained by basing one’s conduct on this Book, Quran, alone, because it has become accepted in the sight of God; but as against this all the scriptures, Pandits, Vedas and the Puranas that are to be found in the world have become ineffective and God has been addressed as Rahman (Beneficent) in this book."

These utterances of the Guru Sahib clearly show that in his opinion as compared with the Hindu scriptures including the Vedas, the Quran enjoys a distinct superiority. From this our Sikh brethren can very well find out whether Guru Sahib wants them to range themselves on the side of the followers of the Vedas or of those of the Quran.

I am not suggesting here that the Guru Sahib was a Muslim. Nor yet do I suggest that the Sikhs should accept the Quran as their
scripture. Every one is free to form his own opinion on such matters. But this much I must say that in view of these clear injunctions of their Guru, the Sikhs should form an alliance with the Muslims in preference to the Hindus. Again in Shri Guru Granth Ram Kali, Mohalla Five, we find it written:

*Mehrwana Maula to ek
Pir, paighambar Sheikh,
Dila ka malik karey hak,
Quran Kateb Tey Pak.

"God is but One, Whom the saints, the Prophets and the Shaikhs have been worshipping throughout the ages. But where is one to find teachings on the worship of this One God?" Evidently the owner of the hearts that is God, announces it ever and anon that you can find this One God in the Glorious Quran, which is Holy."

With all these sayings before them our Sikh friends can very well decide whether their holy founder and their holy scriptures want them to cultivate friendship with the people of Makka or they are in favour of their alliance with the people of Hardwar. It will interest them to know that when Guru Sahib once visited this latter place of Hindu pilgrimage,
contrary to the Hindu traditions, he started cooking fish there and throwing water towards the West instead of East remarking:

\[
\begin{align*}
&\text{Tee\text{r}a\text{th} \ \text{nahao na utras mael},} \\
&\text{Karm Dharam sab homey phail.} \\
&\text{Anek teerath jey jatan karey,} \\
&\text{Ta antar ki homey kadi na jai} \\
\end{align*}
\]

"Innumerable visits to pilgrimage centres cannot clear the mind of hypocrisy".

In other words, such visits by themselves cannot kill the sinful propensity.

From this it is evident that Guru Sahib was not in favour of his followers cultivating friendship with those who go to those places of pilgrimage. At this point one is tempted to see what his attitude was towards Makka and the people whose religious centre it happens to be. His utterance on this point is to be found recorded in Janam Sakhi Kalan and it reads as follows:

\[
\begin{align*}
&\text{Yeh Makka, Madina, ad jogad da Teerath hai,} \\
\end{align*}
\]

"Makka and Madina are houses of God from the beginning of the world, and will continue to be so as long as the world exists."
One can understand from this whether the Guru Sahib would like his followers to be in close association with the lovers of Hardwar or with those of Makka.

Again, Guru Sahib did not leave the matter at a mere statement. He went further and exemplified it in action, and this is what is recorded of him in Dera Bhai Gurdasji:

*Baba pher Makkay gia, nil bastar dharey banvali,
Asa hath, kitab kach, kooza bang musalla dhari
Baitha jai maseet vich jethay haji haj guzari.*

I do not propose to go into the details of this description. The words, “Kitab” (Quran), “Water-pot” “Call of prayer” and “Prayer-carpet” are quite significant. What one has to see now is whether the Guru Sahib enjoins his followers to ally themselves with the Hindus or with the Muslims. In the Granth it is written:

*Hindu anna, turku kana,
Dohan vichon giani siana*

Here he clearly gives preference to Muslims over the Hindus. This is because the Muslims even in these days of their degeneration have still one of their spiritual eyes opened, whereas the other party, namely
the Hindus, have both their spiritual eyes blind so to speak. It is evident that among these two ‘wise ones’ are those who have retained some of their vision because in any case a one-eyed man is better than the man who has lost both his eyes. It should be noted that Guru Sahib holds this view as regards the artificial degenerate Muslims. As for the true believers in Islam the Guru Sahib makes the following remarks:

\[
\begin{align*}
Jo \ Parabh \ param \ Purukh \ upjai, \\
Tan \ man \ apna \ rah \ chalaey.
\end{align*}
\]

\textit{i.e.} “When the first super-man appeared in the world, after his departure corruption crept in his faith”. What happened next is described in another verse:

\[
\begin{align*}
Maha \ Din \ tab \ Prabhoo \ apraja.
\end{align*}
\]

\textit{i.e.} “Then God sent the great religion,” \textit{i.e.}, the Religion which is the greatest of all.

What this great Religion was, can be ascertained from the following:

\[
\begin{align*}
Arab \ desh \ ko \ keeno \ raja.
\end{align*}
\]

\textit{i.e.} “Through this Great Religion the savages of Arabia became the rulers of the world.
This clearly shows that in the opinion of Guru Sahib the Muslims of the early days were possessed of both their spiritual eyes. It is for our sikh friends now to decide who are better—those who are spiritually blind or those who have their spiritual vision unimpaired. But the Guru Sahib does not leave the matter here. He goes further and gives us a comparative study of the two religious communities in a collective manner:

*Mussalman mom dil hoey,*
*Antar ki mael dil tey dhoey.*

*i.e.* “The Muslims are soft-hearted because their heart is clean” (Granth page 312)

Again:

*Mussalman sift shariat parh parh karey vichar.*

*i.e.* “Muslims are praiseworthy because they observe the Shariat.”

Further on he says:

*Hoey Muslim din mohaney,*
*Maran jeevan ka bharam chukaney.*

*i.e.* “By becoming a Muslim one is freed from the shackles of life and death and attains salvation.”
As against this one can see his attitude towards the Hindus in his following observation:

Hindu mooley bhooley ekhuthey jayen,
Narad kiha se kar karayen,
Andhey Gungey andh andhar,
Pathar lay poojey mugadh ganwar,
Oh jey ap dubey,
Tum kahan taran har.

I do not propose to enter into a discussion on the actual meaning of these verses. The words “blind” “dumb” and “obstinate” will make the reader easily understand what they mean. Elsewhere we are further told:

Hindu Hoey but parast, janat but khudaey,
Tiskar kafar akhia, hoey rahey gumraheyy.

(Janam Sakhi, Bhai Bala, P. 210.)

I do not want to clarify the meaning of these verses either. The reader can draw his own conclusion from words like—“Idol-worshipper,” “Infidel” and “the lost.”

In view of these clear sayings of Guru Sahib it is only proper that our Sikh friends should sit down with a dispassionate mind to decide
with which religious community they can cultivate friendship with advantage—what instructions in this respect can be found in the Holy Granth and the teachings of Guru Sahib. So much from the spiritual point of view.

Now I proceed to discuss the subject from the historical point of view. One of the best friends and companions of Shri Guru Nanak Sahib (mercy of God be upon him) was Bhai Mardana an out-standing Muslim of that time. He had also very cordial relations with Shah Farid and Pir Jalal-ud-Din Quraishi, so much so that the Guru Sahib undertook long journeys in the company of these Muslim sages (See Janam Sakhi Pp. 392 eq. and 445). It should be remembered that the Hindus also had their great Pandits in those days; but the student of the Guru Sahib’s life will never find any instance of his intimacy with any of these Pandits. From this practical conduct of his one can very well understand which religious community, the Guru Sahib would like his followers to associate with. Again in 1633 Vikram year, the fourth Guru Ram Dass Ji paid a visit to Emperor Akbar, as a result of which the Guru Sahib received 28 Bighas of land near about the villages of Sultan Wind and Tung, etc., and an appreciable amount of
cash present from the Emperor. On this occasion the disciples of the Guru Sahib were also exempted from the Road Tax. The present Durbar Sahib at Amritsar stands on the land so presented. The exemption from Road Tax went a great way to strengthen the consolidation of the Sikh Community and helped its prosperity. This is an indication of how much anxious the Mughal Emperors were to win the hearts of the Sikhs and this tradition of the Mughal court continues in the attitude of the Muslim community right up to the present moment. Now let us see what lesson we get from the life of Guru Arjan Dev Ji Maharaj in this connection. When the Guru Sahib intended to construct the Gurdwara at Taran Taran the Rajput Muslims of Bilaspur made a free gift of a piece of land for this purpose to the Sikh community. In addition to this, Abdul Majid Khan, the Governor of Fateh Abad gave them a written exemption from taxes. What is more, at the request of the Guru Sahib, Emperor Jahangir granted an exemption to the Sikhs from the land revenue for one year in view of a great famine that was causing distress to the people in those days. This exemption from the payment of the land revenue added much strength to the Sikh community because this made people in general
ysmpathetically inclined towards the Sikh Guru.

Now, we come to the Fifth Guru. When he started the construction of the Durbar Sahib of Amritsar, the foundation stone of this holy temple, which is most respected of the Sikh temples was laid by the great Muslim saint Hazrat Mian Mir (mercy of God be upon him). This step was taken by the Sikhs in spite of the fact that the Hindu community of the time had in it quite a large number of persons who were regarded as great Pandits, Rishis and Munis. One can very well understand from this to which religious community the Guru Sahib would like his community to be allied, if he were alive today. Nay, all the Gurus clearly indicated by their practical conduct that the benefit of the Sikh community lay in its alliance with the Muslims. Had it been otherwise the foundation stone of this holy temple would have been laid by Pandit Hardayal and not by Hazrat Mian Mir.

We now proceed to the Sixth Guru, Shri Har Gobind Sahib, who was closely associated with Sh. Jan Muhammad, Sh. Muhammad Ismail, Sh. Karimullah & Shahidullah Sahib of Gujrat. And this in spite of the fact
that there were at that time very big Hindu personalities, claiming the titles of Pandits, Rishis and Munis.

Indeed, Sikh history fails to prove that the Guru Sahib had any friendship with any Hindu Pandit. What is more, the Guru Sahib went so far as to build a mosque for Muslim worship in his native village Shri Har Gobindpura. This mosque is to be found in existence in the said village Har-Gobindpura, District Gurdaspur. Any one who wants to satisfy himself may visit the place to ascertain the truth of this statement. Let the inquirer read all the books of the Sikhs and ransack the whole history and literature of this community, he will nowhere find that any Sikh Guru has ever constructed Thakurdwara or Mandirs for the Hindus. What is still more striking is that Sikh literature contains copious praises for the mosque. For example we read:

*Mehr Maseet, sidq musalla, Haq halal Quran.*

That is to say, one cultivates mercy and fear of God by visiting the mosque” etc.

The fact that the Guru Sahib had this mosque constructed clearly shows what was in his mind with regard to the Sikh social attitude
towards other religious communities. When some Hindus brought the charge of rebellion against Guru HarGobind, the Muslim Emperor did not believe the accusation and had a personal interview with the Guru Sahib. After this meeting the Emperor was satisfied that the accusation was absolutely false. As a matter of fact, the Emperor was so pleased after this meeting that he sanctioned Rs. 500 per day for the expenses of the free guest house of the Guru Sahib. At the time of departure, the Emperor came in person to see the Guru Sahib and presented to him five horses, golden and silver saddles, a sword with a bejewelled handle, a robe of honour worth Rs. 5000, a pearl rosary, a jewel necklace and 101 Akbari gold coins. Over and above this he gave all the companions of the Guru a costly shawl each as present.

Now we come to the Eighth Guru Har-Kishanji. When this Guru paid a visit to Emperor Aurangzeb, the Emperor sanctioned Rs. 250 per day towards the expenses of Guru Sahib's guest house, and when the Guru Sahib had an attack of small-pox the Emperor sent his own Royal physician for his treatment. Remember it is the same Emperor Aurangzeb whom the Sikhs and Hindus are never tired of.
vilifying. These historical events are quite significant as regards the proper Sikh social attitude towards other religious communities.

Lastly, we come to the 10th Guru Sahib Govind Singh Ji. It will interest the readers to know that when the Rajas of Satpahari-Bhim Chandar, Kirpal Chandar, Kesli Chand, Sukhdev, Hari-Chandar, Pirthwi Chandar and Fateh Chandar—made a combined attack on this Guru Ji, on the simple plea that the Guruji and his followers were making the Shudras and the untouchables equal in rank to the high class Hindus like the Brahmans and Kshatriyas—when they so attacked the Guru, 500 of his so-called followers who were living at his expense deserted him and gave a written statement that they no longer regarded him as their Guru and were no longer his disciples. Strange to say, the one man who came to the help of this Guru at this most critical point of his life was a Muslim gentleman known as Syed Budhan Shah Sadhuri who sent an army of 2000 soldiers at the command of his son for the help of the Guru Sahib. This army succeeded in inflicting a signal defeat on the Rajas of Satpahari, although the valiant son of Syed Budhan Shah was himself slain in action. From this event one can very well understand
what was the attitude and the conduct of the Hindus towards the Guru Sahib in contrast to the conduct of the Muslims with regard to him. Are not these historical events quite sufficient guides for the Sikh community in forming their social attitude towards other peoples? Later on, when these Pahari Rajas had to be encountered for the second time at Anandpur in the year 1759 C.E. two valiant Muslim warriors, Amin Beg and Mamun Khan by name, came forward to fight on behalf of the Guru Sahib. The feats of valour which these two Muslim warriors displayed on this occasion are recorded with admiration by the Sikh historians themselves. It is also significant that the body-guards of the Guru Sahib were all Muslim Pathans. From this one can understand whom the Guru Sahib regarded as dependable. Do not these events bearing on the practical conduct of the Guru Sahib point to the fact that it is advantageous for the Sikhs to cultivate friendship with the Muslims? There is another incident in the life of the Guru Sahib which throws further light on this question. It was when the Guru Sahib escaped from the vigilance of the Royal Army and fled to Machiwarah. On his arrival there the Guru Sahib sought refuge with a disciple of his, known by the name of Gulab
Dass, mentioned in Sikh history as Gulaba. This gentleman was not only the disciple of the Guru Sahib, but one of his trusted officers inasmuch as he was authorised to collect gifts and presents and donations on his behalf, and used to receive quite a good salary. The Guru Sahib on his arrival at Machiwarah was refused this much-wanted refuge by this trusted disciple and the person who came to his assistance at this critical hour were two Pathan Muslims, Ani Khan and Ghani Khan by name, who risked their own safety in affording protection to the Guru Sahib, although they had nothing whatsoever to do with him. When the royal spies came to trace the whereabouts of the Guru Sahib at Machiwarah they enquired of Ani Khan and Ghani Khan about him. These Khans however used all sort of devices to save him from arrest and said that the gentleman living with them was not Guru Govind Singh but their own Pir who had come from Uch. The spies accordingly returned to their commander Deler Khan who had pitched his tent at a place twenty miles from Machiwarah and narrated to him the whole story. The Commander said that it was all right and that if it was so, he should himself like to have the honour of seeing the Pir Sahib.
So Ani Khan and Ghani Khan who were brothers, carried the palanquin of the Guru Sahib on their own shoulders, traversed the twenty miles of way and brought the Guru Sahib to Deler Khan. The Commander did not fail to understand that the gentleman who was introduced as Pir Sahib was no other than Guru Govind Singh; because with all the attempts at disguise, the face of a man can scarcely be concealed. But when this Muslim commander found that some Muslim gentlemen were at his back, he did not want to stand in their way but gave a dinner in the honour of the Guru Sahib. This incident of Gulab Das, otherwise known as Gulaba Musnad and this example of chivalry as set by the Khan brothers are luminous sign posts for the Sikhs and carry a lesson for them. They can very well find for themselves whether people like the Khan brothers will be of help to them or people of the type of Gulab Das. The Guru Sahib’s own observation on this subject is very significant. “Mine Masand Aur Narhimar se ittihad Nahin Chahie”. Our Sikh friends will understand better than my ownself to which religious community these words can apply both in respect of their meaning and the events they allude to. The Muslims, however, did more than help Guru Govind Singh at a
critical hour. When at the death of Aurangzeb, his son Bahadur Shah held a majestic darbar at Golcoonda he presented the Guru Sahib with a very precious piece of diamond at this darbar and appointed him the Governor of the district of Nandir (Deccan). At the present moment the Gurdwara of Nandir otherwise known as Upchal Nagar or Hazur Sahib is in the dominion of the Nizam of Hyderabad.

The Nizam's Government has granted to this Gurdwara an estate which fetches it an annual income of four lacs of Rupees nowadays. Not to speak of others, no Sikh State has granted such a big estate to any Gurdwara. Only recently the poor Muslims of Machiwara have offered to the Sikhs a piece of land free of cost for the construction of a Gurdwara. A similar event took place at Kathgarh, District Hoshiarpur. As against this there is a Sikh Gurdwara in Jhabal in the District of Amritsar the possession of which is persistently denied by the Hindus of the place to the Sikhs for the last several years. Do not the example of the Nizam of Hyderabad, the generosity of the poor Muslims of Machiwara and Kathgarh and the cordial relationship between Guru Nanak and Pir Jalal-ud-Din and Sh.
Farid and between Guru Arjan Devji and Hazrat Mian Mir provide the best guidance for the Sikhs as to whether their alliance with the Muslims will benefit them or that with the Hindus? If our Sikh friends cannot come to any decision in the light of these clear events the only thing left for me is to pray to God that He may help their understanding.

Now I turn to the cultural aspect of the question—that is, whether the Sikh culture will gain by their alliance with the Muslims or by that with the Hindus.

To began with, the act of prayer is much in vogue among the Sikhs in the same way as it is among the Muslims. Among the Sikhs it is called Ardas which is evidently a corrupted or adapted form of the Persian word Arzdasht. Then they have an evening prayer which is obligatory in nature and is called Rahodas which must be a shortened form of Rahrast. Further, before one can take to Ardas and Rahodas one must perform panjashnana (five ablutions). And these are washing the mouth, washing the hands and the arms up to the elbows, and washing the two feet. Obviously this panjashnana is only another name for Muslim Wuzu. From this
one can very well understand whether or not from religious and cultural points of view the Sikhs are nearer to the Muslims than they are to the Hindus, and whether as such they will gain more by their contact with the Hindus or by that with the Muslims.

Again just as it is customary with the Muslims for one man to raise his hands in prayer and for the rest of the congregation to join this leading man in their mind with their hands raised, the same custom prevails among the Sikhs with this much of difference that whereas the Muslims keep their palms apart, among the Sikhs, the palms are joined together. Again, as it is customery with the Muslims to sit together for eating, the same is the case with the Sikhs. Thus when they celebrate the festival of Pohl all those who participate in this ceremony take their food from the same dish. As is customary with the Muslims, when the Sikhs set out on a journey they appoint one of themselves as the leader of the party who is called Amir-i Jama‘at among the Muslims and Jathedar among the Sikhs. The Hindus have no such custom. As it is permissible among the Muslims to marry among near relations so it is with the Sikhs.
Now I come to the question of the respect for the cow. I need hardly describe the great veneration shown by the Hindus to this animal and the communal riots between the Hindus and Muslims arising of it. The reader will be astonished to hear that no such sentiment of veneration for the cow exists in the minds of the Sikhs. Thus in the famous Granth Sahib called Rag Basant it is written:

“Gobar jhuta, chaunka jhuta, jhuti dini kara,” i.e., the cow dung is an impure thing and it is an impure thing to smear the kitchen floor with it.

Again in the Rahat-Nama of Bhai Chopa Singh it is written:

“In the guest house (Langar) no cow dung should be burnt nor should it be used for smearing the floor with.”

Again, Sardar Bahadur Bhai Kahan Singh, who is acknowledged to be the most learned scholar of the Sikh religion and of whom the Sikhs are rightly proud, writes on page 209 of his famous book, “We Are Not Hindus,” addressing the Hindus:

“In your religion the urine and other four excretions of the cow are used for purification
whereas in the Sikh religion their impurity can be guessed from the fact that if in a Sikh kitchen the floor is besmeared with cow dung or cow dung cakes are used as fuel it will be unlawful to cook the sacred Kara or pudding in that kitchen. And this prohibition is not of recent growth but has been handed down to us from the times of sacred Gurus."

So here is another affinity between the Sikh and the Muslim cultures.

Again, the pig is abhorred by the Sikhs as it is done by Muslims, as is evident from the following two verses in Shri Granth Sahib:

_Ek bhagat bhagwan jahen purani key nahen man, Jaisey sookar, swan, Nanak janon tanhin tan._

_i.e. “The man in whose heart there in no love for One God is as unholy and dirty and impure as a dog and a pig.”_

In the matter of eating and drinking also there is much affinity between the Sikhs and the Muslims. The great value attached to _Kara Parshad_ (a kind of pudding or _Halwa_) is a well-known fact. But among the Muslims also this particular dish is a very favourite one, as is shown by the famous Arabic adage which
translated in English will read “The believer is sweet in disposition and so is fond of sweet dish or Halwa.”

The Sikh Gurus are held in high esteem by the Muslims. Thus Guru Nanak’s name is not mentioned without the suffixes of “Waliullah” and “Rahmatullah Alaih,” the one meaning “friend of God” or ‘Saint’ and the other “mercy of God on him’—both titles of highest honour that a Muslim can confer on a person because these are given to the greatest of Muslim saints and God-realised persons. As contrasted with this the greatest leader of the Hindu religion in this age, Swami Dayanand, has given the insulting epithet of “Dambhi” to Shri Guru Nanak. Although I quote the actual Hindi word, decency and regard for the Guru Sahib prevents me from translating it into English. I leave it to the Sikhs to coolly consider whether they can appropriately ally themselves with those who regard Baba Nanak as a saintly figure and invoke the mercy of God on him or with those who give him the abusive title of “Dambhi”.

It is a well-known fact that the Sikhs are very much fond of blue or black colour as is evident from the adoption of black turban by
the *akalis* and of black colour for their flag as also from the fact that *Hazrat* Guru Nanak used black dress. As to this last mentioned fact we read in Waran Guru Dasji:

*Baba pher Makkey gia, nili bastar dharey ban vali.*

*i.e.*, “Shri Guru Nanak Ji went to the Ka‘ba for Hajj attired in blue.”

In the same manner we learn that Shri Guru Govind Singh had a great liking for ash colour.

I need hardly mention that it is a very favourite colour also with the Muslims. The colour of the flags of Abbasid Caliphs was black. The cover of the sacred house of Ka‘ba is of black colour, and the Holy Prophet himself liked black turban for his head dress.

Now I turn to the political aspect of the question. To start with, you should take note of the fact that the Muslims are about 10 crores in number in India whereas the Sikhs are only 40 lacs. If 40 lacs enter into an alliance with a community 10 crores strong it is evident that there will accrue no benefit to this latter community, whereas the former stand to gain
a lot thereby. Some one may object here saying that if to be joined to a larger community is of advantage to the Sikhs, why not join hands with the Hindu Community, which, even if one sets aside the lower castes and the aborigines number about 20 crores? This is quite a plausible objection that a community of 40 lacs should make an alliance with a community of 20 crores instead of one claiming only 10 crores of souls. But going deeper we shall find that such an alliance will prove to the smaller community injurious to the extreme. Because, leaving aside other and smaller things, the Sikhs will run the risk of losing their separate communal existence altogether if they enter into an alliance with the Hindus. The reason is that a Sikh, Amar Singh by name, can be a Sanatani or an Arya Samaji with the peculiar length of the hair of his head, and beard etc. unaffected and very few will know by his appearance that he has changed over from Sikhism to Hinduism. But the same Amar Singh cannot become a Muslim unless he changes his name and shortens his hair. Thus a change over to Islam can neither be disguised nor camouflaged and is accordingly fraught with much risk and entails much sacrifice, which is not the case with the Sikh’s conversion to Hinduism. This shows
clearly that the 40 lacs of Sikhs with their present appearance and names can very easily be absorbed by the 20 crores of Hindus in their larger fold; whereas it is equally difficult for them to be so merged into the fold of Islam. That we are not imagining things is shown by the fact that when some time ago Dr. Cripps koti Shankaracharia and Seth Birla made an announcement to the effect that the Sikhs were Hindus, the Hindu and Arya papers of India gave this announcement a wide publicity and now the Hindu press openly declares that the Sikhs are nothing but Hindus, and the Sikhs do not appear to show any adverse reaction to such announcements. A few years back a Sikh would not even tolerate the very suggestion of his being a Hindu. But this advance on the part of the Hindu community is only the beginning of a long procedure of absorption.

Further, taken as a whole the Muslims are a race of soldiers and so are the Sikhs. So by remaining allied with the Muslims, the Sikhs will be able to maintain their martial spirit; but in their alliance with the Hindus they may very well memorise certain arithmetical tables, but they are sure to lose their martial spirit.
Thirdly, both Muslims and Sikhs are weak in their economic resources and for this very reason they both are victims of a third and a capitalist community. Common misery must therefore form a strong ground for making a common cause. Both these communities are anxious to better their economic condition. But the Hindus who constitute a capitalist class will prove no good to the Sikhs because they can have no sympathy with them.

Fourthly, in the Punjab the Sikhs are mostly agriculturists. So from this point of view also they have a common interest with the Muslims, whereas the Hindu's interest in this respect is absolutely different.

Fifthly, the Punjabi language is very dear to the Sikhs. But equally dear is Hindi to the Hindus who are anxious to give currency to this language and to popularise it through their schools, high and primary. On the other hand, the Muslims have throughout been making efforts to keep alive the Punjabi language, and it is a recognised fact that Punjabi lives through the contributions of Muslim poets like Waris Shah, Bulle Shah, Ghulam Rasul, Sultan Bahu and Hidayatullah, of whom every Punjabi-speaking man and
woman can justly be proud. As against this there is no Hindu poet who has ever done any service to the Punjabi language. Among the Punjabi poets just mentioned Maulvi Ghulam Rasul and Bulle Shah and Sultan Bahu and Hidayatullah’s writings are of special importance. Because the works like *Yusuf Zulaikha, Pakki Roti* and *Bara Mah* are read and regarded with special respect by the Muslims. As contrasted with this the Hindus show their love and devotion to the Hindi language alone.

Sixthly, if the Hindus have real sympathy for the Sikhs and are genuinely anxious for Sikh-Hindu friendship, they should expunge from their famous book, *Satyarath Prakash*, those very seriously objectionable words which refer to the personality of Shri Guru Nanak Sahib. Let the Sikhs ask the Arya Samajists to remove from their scripture at least that infamous expression *Dambhi* which is sure to hurt the feelings of all those who have any regard for the Guru Sahib. But if this reasonable and minimum demand of the Sikhs is refused, it will remain for the Sikhs to decide whether they should ally themselves with the people who delight in calling their Guru *Dambhi* or with those who mention his name
with the invocation of the mercy of God on his holy name.

The Sikhs number about 13% of the Punjab population whereas the Hindus number about 30% and the Muslims about 57%. And the Sikhs mostly live in the Punjab. Now it is evident that it will be more to the advantage of the Sikhs to ally themselves with a community that represents 57% of the population than with the one which represents only 30%.

In brief, consider it from any point of view without any bias in your mind, and you will find that the alliance of the Sikhs with the Muslims is bound to prove a blessing and of advantage to the former.

Two things are most emphatically presented for general propaganda to incite the Sikhs against the Muslims.

1. The tragic fate of the sons of Guru Govind Singh, and
2. The case of Guru Arjan Devji.

As for the murder of the sons of Guru Govind Singhji, what really happened was this. When Guru Govind Singhji was imprisoned in the Anandpur fort he somehow secured
the escape, one night, of his two sons and his elderly mother and sent them out under the escort of a reliable man. These escaping from the fort proceeded to and stayed during the night with their family priest Gangu Brahman in the village of Kherhi. The Brahman fell into temptation. He siezed all the cash and the ornaments of these fugitives and sent information to Nawab Sahib. The Nawab Sahib sent for the boys and when they appeared before his court he sought the advice of those present as to the treatment to be meted out to them. Nawab Sher Muhammad Khan, ruler of Malerkotla, who was luckily present in the court, was of the opinion that the person who was really at war was the father of these children and that they could not on any ground be held responsible for the father's act and should therefore be released at once. The Nawab Sahib was so emphatic in his statement that all those present in the court were impressed by his arguments and were ready to release the boys. On seeing this the family priest Gangu and Diwan Kuljas Rai and Diwan Sachdanand, the two ministers, expressed the view that it would be a fatal mistake to let these boys off as it would amount to killing a serpent and keeping alive its young ones.
Accordingly, on the insistence of these three Hindus, these two boys were handed over to Diwan Sachdanand. Now, there are three versions of the story about the fate of these boys. According to one of these they were beheaded. According to the second they were entombed in a wall. According to a third the whole story of their being killed is a concoction pure and simple, designed to incite the community against the Muslims. Even if it be assumed that the boys were actually killed, the Hindus should be regarded more responsible for this than the Muslims. On the one side was Nawab Sarhind pleading for their release and on the other Gangu Ram the Brahmin and Diwan Kuljas Rai and Dewan Sachdanand, the ministers of the State, who insisted that they should be killed. Unfortunately, our Sikh friends unacquainted with the facts of history, while they blame the whole Muslim community for the individual act of Wazir Khan, they fail to see that the real culprits who brought about the death of these boys, if it actually happened, were three Hindus, one a priest and the other two ministers. It was certainly an act of injustice and oppression and I do invoke the curse of God on the perpetrators of the act whether they be Hindus or
Muslims. But one must not lose sight of the fact that the persons responsible were all Hindus. This act of oppression was neither an act of the State nor the result of any verdict of the Islamic law. It was, on the contrary, the outcome of the insistence of three Hindus, of whom two were ministers.

Later events show that Guru Govind Singh himself never held Hazrat Aurangzeb and his imperial policy responsible for this dastardly act. Thus the Guruji addressed a letter (versified in Persian) some time after this event, a few verses of which are presented in English below, because they throw sufficient light on the question under discussion:

Aurangzeb the Conqueror of the world,
Who is king of the time and king of the earth,
Strict adherent to the law Divine,
Possessed of high eminence,
When he comes to the town of Kangara,
Therein I shall have repeated interviews with him.
I shall then narrate to you in person my case, with your kind permission.
Come with one trained horse and a hundred thousand.

So that you may take this territory from me.

I am your Imperial Majesty's servant, if you order I shall present myself.

If the king so commands, I shall only be too pleased to appear before him.

What an eulogy of Hazrat Aurangzeb one finds in these lines! If the Guru Sahib had the slightest bitterness against the Emperor entertained in his mind, he could never have been so lavish in his praise of the latter. This letter is a clear proof of the fact that the Guru Sahib's heart was quite clear in its attitude towards Emperor Aurangzeb.

Now I proceed to discuss the question of the other Guru, viz., Guru Arjan Dev who is alleged to have been brutally persecuted by the Mughal Emperor of the time. There is no denying the fact that the sufferings through which the Guruji had to pass do constitute a great act of oppression; but it is for us to see who was responsible for this. Let us find out the true facts about the case. To start with, Prince Khusro, who later assumed the title of
Shah Jahan, had rebelled against his father Emperor Jahangir and Guru Arjan Devji had given him shelter. He invested him with tilak (ceremonial marks of royal power on forehead), and presented him with a purse of one thousand rupees. He further started maintaining an army and a military band which he named ‘Ranjit’. He also constructed a fort and had two swords suspended from his waist, one symbolising his spiritual leadership and the other of chieftainship. The reports of all these irregularities kept on reaching Emperor Jahangir. As we all know, all these autocracies are unusually suspicious. History bears testimony to the fact that in affairs like these the father does not care for the son nor the son for the father, nor yet the brother for the brother. But in this particular case Emperor Jahangir showed an extra-ordinary forbearance. He did not mind these accusations against the Guruji. Even if we leave aside other things the very act of Guruji making too much of the rebellious prince is by itself an act of treason which no Government, autocratic or democratic can take lightly. It, therefore, speaks much of the large-heartedness of Muslim kings that Emperor Jahangir showed no signs of impatience at this series of political irregularities on the part of Guruji. The Emperor happened to be in
Kashmir in those days. During his absence the administration of the Punjab was left in the hands of Dewan Chandu Lal, the Revenue Minister. The Dewan Sahib wanted his son to be married to the daughter of the Guruji. The Guru Sahib on his part considered this proposed match to be an outrage on his religious self-respect. Because the Dewan was an idol-worshipper whereas the Guru Sahib was a monotheist. Accordingly, the Guru Sahib refused this offer of matrimonial alliance. The Dewan took it as an insult and to wreak his vengeance he began to persecute the Guru Sahib. Here again we are confronted with two versions of the story. One is to the effect that the Guruji was tortured to death in the burning sun of May and June. The second version of the story is that once when the Guruji went to the river Ravi for a bath, he miraculously disappeared in the act of bath. But in this confused welter of events and their narrations and in the midst of difficult circumstances through which the Guruji had to pass towards this fag end of his life, the one event that stands out in a most shining manner is that the great Muslim saint Hazrat Mian Mir Sahib (mercy of God be upon him) who was a great adviser of the Guruji asked his permission to invoke curses of God on Chandu
Lal and inform Emperor Jahangir about the persecutions suffered by the Guruji. But the Guru Sahib, we are told, did not allow Hazrat Mian Mir to do either of these. Of course, he requested the Muslim saint to pray for him that God may keep him steadfast in the midst of his trials.

When the Emperor returned from Kashmir, the Sikh community appealed for justice to the court of the Emperor. An investigation was held and the Dewan was found guilty. The Government awarded a punishment but the Sikhs insisted that the culprit be handed over to them. As we all know, it is never the custom of any Government, however weak, to hand over the convict to the party that is wronged. Mughal Empire, I need hardly remind the readers, was at that time in the pinnacle of its glory and power. And the Sikhs as a community were of no political importance as compared with the powers and resources of the Empire at that time. What is more, the person convicted was not an ordinary person but the revenue minister of the State. But with all these facts calculated to give a different turn to the decision of the Government, the Emperor did actually hand over the convict to the Sikhs,
just out of regard for the religious sentiments of the Sikhs who dragged their victim from Lahore to Amritsar under a shower of shoe-beating and then put an end to his life in the midst of great torture. The critic, therefore, should pause here to consider the attitude of the Government towards Guru Arjan Devji through all these episodes. I think I cannot be accused of any partiality if I assert that in the whole course of world's history one cannot find a better instance of sympathy and consideration for a subject people. It is high time that our Sikh friends were made acquainted with these important facts of Sikh-Muslim relationship in the past so that in their light they may judge which way lies their true political salvation.