

Preface

The history of great men is a fountain of experience, faith and aspirations for us – a fountain which will never dry up. The great men of the world are like lofty peaks of mountains which we aspire to climb with great eagerness and ardent desire. They are the light-houses which keep darkness away from around us. It is due to the examples set by them that we have gained self-confidence. They have made us hopeful of life, taught us its aim and objects and helped us to avail of its amenities. If these great souls had not been there, we would have fallen prey to despair while combating with the unseen and intelligible forces and would have surrendered ourselves to death.

However, the righteous persons have not so far surrendered themselves before despair nor shall they do so in future, because they are entitled to victory and success. This is proved by the fact that in history many persons have been successful and victorious and Ali is one of them. These people who conquered death are always with us. Although time and space separate them from us, neither time prohibits us from hearing their words nor distance prevents us from seeing their faces.

[Preface of the first edition of the Arabic version published in 1956](#)

The best proof of what has been said above is the present book. It is the biography of a great man. Although he was born in Arabia his person is not meant for Arabia only. Although the fountains of his kindness and favours sprang from Islam he is not confined to the Muslims. If he had been for the Muslims only a Christian would not have been prompted involuntarily to analyse the events of his life and eulogize like a poet his fascinating judgments, his stupendous feats of valour and interesting incidents of his life.

Championship of Ali was not confined to the battlefield. He was also matchless in the matter of faith, piety, purity, eloquence, magnanimity, help for the deprived and the oppressed and support for truth. So much so that even after the passage of more than fourteen hundred years his wonderful achievements are a beacon light for us and extremely useful for making our lives sublime.

The author has explained the various events in detail and also mentioned at length the views and beliefs of the Imam regarding religious, political, social and financial matters. Furthermore, he has explained the events of the life of Ali with great dexterity and in a manner in which they had not been penned before.

No historian or writer, however deft and dexterous he may be, can draw a true picture of the Commander of the Faithful even in a thousand pages, nor can he explain the dreadful events which took place in his time. The things which this wonderful and unmatched person thought of, and acted upon, had not till then been seen or heard by anyone. They are more than a historian can cover even in a very detailed treatise. Hence, whatever picture of Ali is described by a writer will inevitably be incomplete.

However, the object of an author in writing a book like this is to collect the details of the actions and words of the Commander of the Faithful from all possible sources and to ponder over them very carefully and then to present them in such a way that it may be possible to see a glimpse of the Imam as he was. This is what the author has done in this book.

I am sure that George Jordac, a research scholar and an unbiased person as he is, has been successful in describing the life of the Imam to a large extent and those who read it will be obliged to say that it is the biography of a person who was second to the Prophet of Islam.

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