



BAHĀR (JOURNAL)

BAHĀR, a Persian literary, scientific, political, and social-affairs monthly founded by Mīrzā Yūsuf Khan Āštīānī, called E'tešām-e Daftar and E'tešām-al-Molk (q.v.; 1291-1356/1874-75-1937-38). Mīrzā Yūsuf was the son of Mīrzā Ebrāhīm Khan and the father of the poetess Parvīn E'tešāmī. He was a deputy in the second Majles, and later its chief librarian and a member of the Education Commission (Komīsīūn-e Ma'āref). *Bahār* was founded in Tehran and was published over two periods: 1. from Rabī' II, 1328/April, 1910 to Du'l-qa'da, 1329/October, 1911, and 2. from Ša'bān, 1339/April, 1921 to Jomādā I, 1341/December, 1922. Each issue comprised sixty-four pages and was distributed at an affordable price. In the first issue, E'tešāmī wrote, "the purpose of *Bahār* is to provide a proper and an appealing forum for various significant topics of scientific, literary, ethical, historical, and artistic interest to people of understanding and to acquaint the public with valuable information. . . ." Most of the material published in *Bahār* was written or translated by E'tešām-al-Molk himself. During the first period of its publication, Mīrzā Reżā Khan Modabber-al-Mamālek (later editor of *Tamaddon*, Šawwāl, 1338/June, 1920) was *Bahār*'s managing editor, and for the second period 'Abbās Ḳalīlī (later editor of *Eqdām*, 1299 Š./1921) assumed the editorship. The style of the journal remained uniform over both periods and the journal itself faithful to its stated purpose. During the second period of publication, the literary section was expanded and translations from the works of such French writers as Hugo and Rousseau appeared with greater frequency. The broad range of *Bahār*'s contents can be gauged from a reprint of the journal which was edited by Abu'l-Faḥ E'tešāmī (Tehran, 1321 Š./1943)



and arranged under seventeen different topics.

Bahār represented a departure from traditional Persian journalism; readers found its willingness to discuss contemporary literature and literary criticism a refreshing change. The journal's emphasis on educating the public about developments in European science and technology seems to have struck a responsive chord among the Persian reading public, who were hungry for new ideas. To E. G. Browne, *Bahār* appeared "very modern and European in tone" (*Lit. Hist. Persia* IV, p. 489; cf. Āryanpūr, *Az Šabā tā Nīmā* II, p. 115). E'tešām-al-Molk himself remarked in an article (2/12, 1341/1922, p. 705) "some have objected that the contents of the journal are predominately European in orientation." One must attribute this emphasis on the modern world to E'tešām-al-Molk himself, who though fluent in Arabic and well-versed in the culture of Islamic Iran, felt it his duty to inform the public about European literature and culture and about new forms of learning. *Bahār* also stressed the education of women and often introduced model women of note to its readers.

Though, according to Āryanpūr (II, p. 114), most of the European literature published in *Bahār* came via Turkish and Arabic translations which E'tešām-al-Molk retranslated into Persian, I suspect that, in addition to his foraging in Arabic and Turkish journals, E'tešām-al-Molk also found some of his material in French writings of the time. His clear and simple Persian prose was well suited to translate the ideas of European culture into terms the ordinary reader would appreciate. For its style and content *Bahār* won praise among such Persian writers as Moḥammad-Žiā' Haštrūdī (p. 11) and the poet laureate Moḥammad-Taqī Bahār (*Dāneškada*, founded 1297 Š./1919, nos. 11-12).

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