

A novel marsia collection

KARACHI 'Jinnah-Illeg,' a volume, comprising unpublished elegies of the late Sultan Sahib Feroze, a marsia poet coming from the clan of Mir Anis, was launched under the aegis of the Idara Tahaseeb-o-Tarweeqah-e-Urdu at the NIPA auditorium on Monday.

Dr Saad Tariq Abedi, a Canada-based intellectual and researcher, also a physician, who researched, edited and compiled the hand-written elegies found in decaying condition, spoke with a zest on the elegies of Sultan Sahib Farid and the landscape of the early decades of the last century. As Mr Abedi had arrived with his three other research publications about another marsia poet, Mirza Dabeer, an equally impor-

tant contemporary of Mir Anis, he spoke on the Dabeer's merits and invaluable contribution to Urdu poetry.

Marsia, Dr Abedi said, was not just the poetry of sorrow "it encompasses the whole life," he emphatically argued while denying the critics who considered marsia as simply "religious poetry."

Talking about Sultan Sahib Feroze, he said, about 70 per cent of his 'Kalaam' was missing.

In the later part of his life, he had stopped composing marsia, reacting against the jealousies of lesser people in Lucknow, Dr Abedi said, adding that whatever could be found in the family treasure was the most precious.

Sultan Sahib Feroze's illus-

trious son Dr Iftakhar Ahmad, a botanist and also based in Canada, commenting on the merits of the marsia collection, admired Dr Abedi's efforts and pointed out some lapses in the compilation, mainly the omission of the efforts made by Dr Ahmad's elder brother in preserving the manuscripts.

The present volume carries fifteen elegies, thirteen Salams and twenty five Rubaiat.

Giving his views on Mirza Dabeer, Dr Abedi said he was the most 'victimized' poet of his time, maligned and abused by many. He had to his credit the largest number of couplets, while his command over various experiences of life and study of nature was amazing, he added.

He informed that the bicen-

tennial celebrations of Mirza Dabeer were going to be held in India.

Dr Farman Fatehpuri spoke highly about Dr Abedi and also admired Dr Iftakhar Ahmad. He suggested that a small portion of selected elegies might be published for lay readers, at a low price, to make the genre popular.

Dr Hilal Naqvi of the Idara, in his welcome address, briefly referred to the evolution of marsia in Urdu.

Dr Mohammad Raza Kazmi presented his critique on the elegies of Feroze. Prof Saher Ansari called it a "monumental work," Dr Abedi had done at the age of 55, and suggested that a history of Urdu marsia should also be compiled.—Hasan Abidi