of high standing, but have renounced the world on account of their misfortunes. They are supernaturally guided to a certain city where, through the good offices of a king, himself a disappointed man, they are reunited with their loves and are happy once more. The book is a typical example of medieval optimism. We are made to feel that all is right with us in the long run. Our path may be in the dark for some time, but there is a special Providence watching over us through whose benevolence wrongs are righted and sorrows and loss end in joy and restitution.

Fort William literature has aroused a great deal of attention on account of the service it is believed to have rendered to the cause of Urdu. That, in a way, it marks the beginning of modern Urdu prose may be conceded. But it is important to remember that it stands outside the main current of Urdu prose and as such has no place in its evolution. It did not grow out of the soil but was artificially cultivated by a few scholars working under official instructions. Nor did it exert any influence on the course of Urdu prose. The writers of the Aligarh school did not look back to it for guidance or inspiration when they launched the new school of prose after the Mutiny. They wrote rather in response to a new set of intellectual, social, and economic requirements, and they derived their inspiration from the West and not from the Fort William College. No doubt, Sayyid Ahmad, the leader of the movement, speaks of Mir Amman's book with approval, but nowhere in his writings does he admit to have modelled his own prose style on him or to have resummed the broken thread of a once living tradition.

Grahame Bailey sums up Dr. Gilchrist's work in these words: '...he has given a great impetus to prose composition in these languages. It is true that after Gilchrist left the country the movement hung fire, but it is not possible to doubt that the revival of interest which took place later on was in great measure due to his work.' As far as I can judge there is no evidence, historical or literary, to support this statement. Besides, Fort William literature is not the product of a movement as Grahame Bailey would have us believe. A movement is the expression of the collective will, aims, ideals or instincts of a people, or a section of a people, and the Fort William literature owed its genesis to a decision of Lord Wellesley. So little indeed has our modern prose been influenced by the Fort William College translators that if the College had never existed the course of modern Urdu prose in all probability would not have differed, in any important respect, from what it has been. To sum up, Fort William literature did not enter as a formative factor in the development of modern Urdu prose.