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MUNSHI NAWAL KISHORE(1836-1895): THE WILLIAM CAXTON OF INDIA

The early 18th century India is marked by a steady decline in the Mughal Empire which lead to the decentralization of power and the rise of numerous local kingdoms. Among the various powers that rose to prominence, Awadh under its Nawabs occupies a distinct place. Not only did Awadh emerge as a new political centre but it also grew to be known as one of the most important cultural centers of its own time. With the decline of Mughal Empire the nobles who had traditionally patronised literature and art, lost their former glory and dwindled in numbers. Devoid of the royal patronage, men of letters, poets and writers found it increasingly difficult to find employment. Nawabs of Awadh who were known to have a taste for literature and in most cases were themselves highly learned, offered a safe haven to scholars and men of letters who flocked to Awadh from every nook and corner of the country.

Abdul Lateef Shostari, an Iranian traveller who visited Lucknow in