not worth more than 25*l.* But could the Government have refrained from interference? could they have taken any other course than they did take? I think not. They were partners in the Bank; they were directors of the Bank. The difficulties (since ascertained to have been the ruin) of the Bank had been mainly caused by the culpable remissness of those Government directors. Sir W. Mansfield admits this to be the fact. But when his Excellency blames the Government directors, he blames the Government itself, which must be responsible for the acts of officers and nominees."

It would serve no purpose to recapitulate the discussions that went on through the whole of 1867, and the schemes which were proposed and rejected for the resuscitation of the Bank of Bombay, for its amalgamation with the Banks of Bengal and Madras,—measures stoutly and effectually resisted by the prudent counsels of the Madras Presidency; of the establishment of an agency of the Bank of Bengal at Bombay; and of the final relinquishment of the water-logged vessel to its fate, and the launching of a new one under better auspices. The committee of inquiry was not formed till a year later, and did not commence its sittings till the summer of 1868.

The principle enunciated by Sir John Lawrence was a sound one. The head of a Government must be held liable to some extent for the failure of the officers he appoints.

The excuse pleaded by Sir William Mansfield will not be admitted for a moment, for it is obvious that the same principle would justify the bloody assize of Judge Jeffreys, the atrocities of the French Revolution, or the barbarities exercised under the "No Popery" cry in the time of Titus Oates.

CHAPTER XIII.

1868.

Disturbances in Kattyawar—History of the Waghurs—Military operations—Mahommedan disaffection—Revolution in Muscat—Expedition to Yunan—Breaking up of the Chinese Empire—Affghanistan—The Oude and Punjab Tenancy Bills—The Bank of Bombay scandal — Progress of public works — Barracks — Fortresses—Security of the Empire—Railway progress—Failure of private enterprise—Earl Mayo arrives—Sir John Lawrence's administration.

THE freedom from political disturbances and military operations which, as a general rule, characterises the history of the Indian administration from 1859, appears to have ceased with the close of 1867. In the latter end of that year an affray of rather a serious character, which was attended by the loss of some valuable lives, occurred with the Waghurs on the Western Coast in the Bombay Presidency.

At the extreme west of the peninsula of Saurashtra, or Kattyawar—itself the remotest province of India on the south-west—is an insulated point of land, called appropriately enough, Jugut Coont (land's end). On this island, comprising, together with the adjoining islet of Beyt in the Gulf of Cutch, the district of Okhamundel, stands the town of Dwarka, on the bold sea-coast; and on the most commanding eminence of the town is built the great temple of Krishna. That it is the holiest and most ancient of all the shrines consecrated to this divinity, may be inferred from another name for Krishna in the Hindoo mythology being Dwarkanath, or "Lord of Dwarka."

With reference to the remote situation of this celebrated temple, I may remark, in passing, on the strange superstition which has placed all the most sacred shrines of the Hindoos in the remotest and most inaccessible localities, as if to enhance, by material difficulties and dangers, the merit of the pilgrimages enjoined by their religion. The Hindoo shrines at Budrinath, Kidarnath, Gungootree, Jumnootree, are situated in the most inaccessible heights of the far Himalaya. Other shrines, in different parts of India, will occur to the reader who has any local experience to illustrate this remark. So dangerous was the approach to Budrinath especially, that hundreds of pilgrims perished annually on the way, till the British Government, pitying the superstition it could deplore but not control, constructed the pilgrim road leading from Hurdwar up the valley of the Alakanundee and Guneshgunga, to that holy of holies, the main source of the Ganges.

The temple of Dwarka being so sacred a shrine attracted thousands of pilgrims annually, high and low, from all parts of India. The Waghurs who possessed it, as also the adjoining shrine at Beyt, appeared to have lived from time immemorial in idle dependence on its endowments and the votive offerings of the pilgrims. When these failed, or time hung on their hands, they are said to have followed piracy for diversion or profit—a course for which their position, at the mouth of the Gulf of Cutch commanding the approach from the Arabian sea, afforded peculiar facilities. The first attempt we know of to reduce the tribe to order was in 1809, when Colonel Walker was sent against them with a force, and defeating them after a stout resistance, decreed a certain sum against the tribe in compensation for their depredations. In 1815 the district of Okhamundel was sold to the Guicowar on payment among other purchase-moneys of the amount of compensation above referred to, which we had been unable to realize. The acquisition of so barren a district was valued by the Guicowar solely for the honour of becoming the patron

of the celebrated shrine. But the Waghurs did not approve of the transfer. After giving the Guicowar's officers much trouble, they defeated his troops, and turned out his Governor, thus re-possessing themselves of their strongholds and profitable shrines. As we had sold the district to the Guicowar, and been duly paid, we appear to have considered it necessary to reinstate his rule by force of arms. This was accomplished in 1820 by the employment of a force under Colonel Stanhope, but not without having to make an assault on Dwarka; in an ineffectual attempt to repel which the Waghur chief, Mooloo Manik, fell like Tippoo at Seringapatam, in the breach. After the mutinies of 1857, Okhamundel was re-transferred by the Guicowar to the British, and the fact of our having immediately to move a force against the Waghurs, and make the desperate assaults on Beyt and Dwarka, was proof sufficient, that during the long interval the district had remained under the Guicowar, he had wholly failed, even if he had attempted, to reduce to obedience that lawless tribe.

These people never wholly abandoned their restless and predatory habits; and whether under an idea that the vigilance of the British Government was relaxed, or that it had grown tired of coercion, or acting under some of those sudden impulses which occasionally drive half-savage races into wanton and fatal excesses, for the last year they had been incessantly giving trouble, plundering villages, and slaughtering inoffensive villagers. Accordingly, the Political Agent, Colonel Anderson, took the field against them with a small force of forty cavalry and thirty British infantry, with a native contingent, accompanied by his two assistants, Captains La Touche and Hibbert.

After marching some distance across the country, Colonel Anderson obtained information of the enemy being within twelve miles of his camp, and leaving the infantry to follow, the officers, accompanied by Captain Reynolds of the 17th and the mounted portion of the little force, set off, and

after riding a considerable distance reached the foot of an isolated hill some three hundred feet high, upon the summit of which the outlaws were said to have taken up a strong position. The cavalry could not act upon such ground, so the party awaited the arrival of the infantry, who came up in about half an hour. The attack was then made: Captain La Touche, followed by a party of sepoys, gallantly assailed the position of the enemy from one direction, while Major Reynolds and Captain Hibbert ascended the hill on two opposite sides. Captain Hibbert was the first to cut down a Waghur chief, but was himself mortally wounded immediately after, being shot through the spine. Captain La Touche also fell in a hand-to-hand encounter while in the act of despatching the fourth of the outlaws he had slain with his own hand. Major Reynolds was dangerously wounded. Dearly purchased, the victory was complete; out of twenty-five desperate men, seventeen were slain, and two taken prisoners, but the success was a poor compensation for the loss of two such valuable officers as Captains La Touche and Hibbert.

A few months later, in February 1868, a body of rebellious Bheels were defeated by Captain Macleod, with parties of the 28th and 6th regiments of Bombay Native Infantry, and some of the Guicowar's horse. And shortly afterwards, on the further confines of the British Indian Empire, near Kohat, a gallant young officer, Captain Ruxton, lost his life in an encounter with one of the frontier tribes, the Bezooties, against whom a force had taken the field. The issue of the combat had been a little doubtful; but our troops vastly outnumbered the enemy, who were however strongly posted in such a position that it was extremely difficult to dislodge them. Captain Ruxton, carried away by excitement and youthful ardour, ventured rashly and against orders upon the ground held by the enemy, where he was killed, and his body left in their possession. They subsequently restored it to his friends.

Later in the year it was deemed necessary to assemble a considerable force on the North-west frontier, under General Wylde; and a regular campaign against certain tribes, occupying a large hilly region, called the Black Mountain, was undertaken. This being a military operation of some magnitude will be related in the chapter devoted to military operations on the North-west frontier.

It is somewhat curious that the symptoms of disaffection which accompanied the Umbeyla campaign of 1863-64, should have shown themselves in connexion with the Black Mountain campaign of 1868. There has been a repetition of the same activity among the Wahabee Mussulmen of the more southern part of India, especially in Bengal and the neighbourhood of Patna, which in 1863-64 eventuated in a regularly organized transmission of recruits and supplies from many of the principal cities of Bengal, even as far south as Dacca, to support the cause of the trans-Indus Mahommedan fanatics in arms against the British Government. And generally throughout India, during the year under review, there has been an active proselytizing spirit abroad, both among Hindoos and Mahommedans, itinerant preachers of both these religions having been constantly noticed in the bazaars and streets of large cities, preaching much as missionaries do, to any of the passers-by who may be disposed to listen. The feature is peculiar, because, generally speaking, neither Hindoos nor Mahommedans exhibit any proselytizing tendencies.

As on the former occasion in 1863-64, the conspirators made use of the ready-made machinery our commissariat system provided them with, to carry out their designs, passing men and money up to the frontier in the guise of commissariat *employés* and bills on commissariat agents, so now it appears they resolved to avail themselves of the means which modern civilization places within their reach, and established depôts conveniently situated as regards the railways for the transmission of recruits and contributions.

The history of the Abyssinian expedition is foreign to the plan of this work. The preparations for the part which India took in it, however, for a while awakened almost as much interest in military matters as if the whole expedition had been an Indian campaign. It was not till the 9th of January of this year that the rear of the Bengal brigade left the Hooghly under Brigadier-General Stewart, with the mountain train battery and the last of the Bengal cavalry. But although the Abyssinian war, except for the share the army of India took in it, is unconnected with the history of that country, the state of affairs in the Persian Gulf, and the revolution in Muscat, can hardly with propriety be passed over. Some acquaintance with this subject is also desirable, because, unlike the Abyssinian campaign, matters in the Persian Gulf are very far from having reached the climax where our interest in them may cease, and a knowledge of the political complications that preceded the recent revolution will enable the reader to understand the object of any future operations which England may undertake in that quarter.

The "blue waters" of Oman, immortalized by the muse of the Irish bard, are subject to the sway of the Imam of Muscat. Early in the present century we were engaged, in conjunction with Syad Said, the then Imam, in waging war against the Wahabee pirates, who interfered with the commerce of the Persian Gulf and the Indian Ocean, and ever since that time we have preserved friendly relations with the successor of the Syad. The venerable old chief, after a reign which extended over half a century, was gathered to his fathers in 1856, leaving several sons, one of whom became ruler of Zanzibar and another succeeded his father on the throne of Muscat. His name was Thowaynee. After these arrangements had been completed, the two brothers of Muscat and Zanzibar fell out, the Sultan of Muscat claiming a tribute from his brother of Zanzibar. This tribute had no doubt formerly been paid by the ruler of the latter country to the Imam of Muscat: and the

brothers not being able to settle their differences, agreed to refer them for arbitration to Lord Canning. This nobleman being the referee—as if he had not enough to claim his attention in India—gave a decision, calculated, as he supposed, to content both parties. He ruled that Zanzibar should be independent of Muscat, but that the tribute should be paid.

So matters went on till 1865, when the Sultan of Muscat was murdered, it was supposed by his own son, Selim, who, after a nominal acquittal of the guilt of parricide by the chiefs and people, was raised to the throne, and the British Government being but little concerned in the matter of the guilt or innocence of the new sultan acknowledged his authority. His uncle of Zanzibar, however, deemed it a good opportunity for crying off the tribute, and receiving some countenance from the Shah of Persia, declined to pay it any longer. The Shah had for many years allowed the Imams of Muscat to occupy for trading purposes the port known as Bunder Abbas, on payment of a certain tribute. In short, the Imam rented the port on a sort of lease, but he had been a tenant for so long that he claimed at last rights of occupancy; and the Shah, although he would have been glad to dislodge him so as to resume the harbour, did not know very well how to set about it, for he had no marine that could cope with that of Muscat. Pretending, however, a righteous horror at the alleged parricide of the reigning Sultan, he declared his lease of Bunder Abbas forfeited and prepared to seize the place, while the Imam, on the other hand, threatened a blockade. At this juncture the British Government were obliged to interfere to protect their own interests, which palpably would be better served by keeping the ruler of Muscat in possession of so important a marine port as Bunder Abbas, and they refused to allow the Shah to obtain possession of the coveted harbour. The question of the tribute was under discussion when news was received of another revolution in Muscat, Sultan Selim having been driven from his throne by his

brother-in-law, Azan ibn Ghas, who took the capital by assault with little trouble.

This was the condition of affairs at the close of 1868 and the commencement of 1869. It may be remarked that Muscat is a place of some importance, as it commands the entrance to the Persian Gulf, and our policy will probably be directed to maintaining, as it has always done, the authority of the *de facto* sovereign.

The reader is now solicited to follow me across the continent of India to the extreme eastern limit of British dominion, where the noble river, the Irrawaddy, flows through the forests and swamps of Burmah. Upon its bank, in the dominions of Burmah Proper, is the capital city of Mandalay. Following the course of the river up the stream, to the north of Mandalay is another city, marked in large letters on the map, called Bhamo.

In former years a brisk trade existed between Yunan, the south-western province of China, and Burmah, and of late years a desire has often been expressed to re-open, if possible, the long-choked-up channels of commercial intercourse With the view of collecting the necessary information regarding the physical geography of the intervening country, and the disposition of the inhabitants there, and in the province of Yunan, Captain Sladen was despatched early in the year at the head of a small party of explorers, to make his way from Bhamo to Momein, the first city of importance on the route, in Yunan, and if possible to the capital of the province, Tali. After a great deal of trouble, and after overcoming many obstacles and difficulties, which were chiefly due to the treachery and jealousy of the King of Burmah and his people, Captain Sladen accomplished the purpose for which he had been sent, and returned in September, having left in January, after penetrating as far as Momein. His further progress to the capital was barred by the disturbed state of the country, over which the Chinese imperial troops were swarming, nominally engaged in resisting the progress of the revo-

lutionary party in Yunan. The officials at Momein received him most courteously, and expressed themselves most anxious that the old trade should be restored. They entertained him and his suite with the utmost hospitality, and his return journey was accompanied with none of the difficulties and deprivations that our treacherous ally, the King of Burmah, had contrived to throw in his path before.

There can be little doubt that the Chinese empire is disintegrating. Apart from the rebellion of the Taepings, several other movements of a similar kind have been in progress for years past, though very little has been known about them in Europe. One of these, and not the least important, has been brought to light owing to the proximity of the Russian forces to the territories where the revolutionary spirit has been at work, and a missing link in the chain of events has been supplied by the information collected and forwarded to the Government of India by the Political Resident at Leh, together with that furnished by Mr. Johnson, who was an uncovenanted *employé* of the Indian Government engaged in the survey under Major Montgomerie, and who incurred the displeasure of his superiors by penetrating without orders as far as Khoten. The revolution effected in Western China has been mainly a Mahommedan movement. There is a little uncertainty as to the events which led to the settlement of Mahommedans in Western China, but it appears to have originated in a Mahommedan contingent sent at the request of two successive Emperors of China,[1] in the eighth century, by the Caliphs of Bagdad. When the work for which their aid was solicited and supplied had been accomplished, a portion of the contingent, either as a grant in lieu of pay, or in reward for services rendered, were allowed to settle in one of the provinces of Western China. Here they flourished, and multiplied. The descendants of these men, who are called by the Burmese, Panthays, claim an Arabic origin; and the more learned among them still cultivate that

[1] *Edinburgh Review*, March 1868.

language, not only as the language of their religious services, but as the medium of polite communication. This would seem to indicate a difference of origin between these people, who belong to the southern districts of Western China, and the Mussulmans of Northern China and Eastern Toorkistan, who are clearly of Toork descent.

The Panthays, or Mahommedans of Arabic descent in the South-West, are of the sect of Soonees. It is supposed they took advantage of the progress of the Taeping rebellion in 1855 to assert their own independence, which they succeeded in establishing, now twelve years ago, and have maintained ever since. In 1857, vague rumours were abroad of a great Mahommedan movement somewhere in the unknown regions to the eastward of our eastern frontier, which it was suggested, might have some connexion with the Mahommedan element of strife then active in India. But there appears to be no foundation for the report, for the Mussulman rebellion in China commenced two years before the mutiny occurred in India. Success attended the effort. The imperial troops were everywhere defeated, and the new Mahommedan kingdom was established under a sovereign called by the Mussulmans themselves Suleiman, by the Chinese Tuwintsen. He assumed all the signs and symbols of imperial sovereignty, and was assisted in the government by a council of eight (four military and four civil) ministers. The administration is conducted much on the old Chinese model; taxation is light, consisting principally of moderate assessment on land.

One curious result of this change of rule has been the total cessation of traffic that formerly existed between this part of China and Burmah. It will be recollected that a project for a railway connecting Rangoon with Western China was recently set on foot, and it now appears that, had it not been found impracticable owing to physical obstacles, and the difficulty of obtaining labour in the tract of country through which the proposed rail-

way would have had to be constructed, the results aimed at would not have been attained, in consequence of the policy adopted by the King or Emperor Suleiman, who, true to Chinese prejudices imbibed during the connexion of the country with the celestial empire, forbade his subjects to engage in trade with outside barbarians.

The exclusiveness of the Chinese is, however, rapidly wearing off, and accounts go to show that no impediment is now offered to a European traveller provided with proper passports. A similar influence appears to have guided the counsels of the Yunan government in their acceptance of Captain Sladen's proposal to renew the traffic so long closed.

While the southern part of Western China was thus becoming disintegrated from the dominions of the Emperor of Pekin, the northern portion of it also, which is bounded on the west by Thibet, was slipping from his grasp. Very little is known even now about the progress of the rebellion in this portion of what was the Chinese empire. The reader may recollect the expedition undertaken by Colonel Sarel some years ago, which penetrated within 150 miles of Ching-tu-fu, and then was forced to return in consequence of the whole country being in a disorganized state from rebellion. This rebellion must be still making head, as Jung Bahadoor's embassy, which started from Khatmandoo in August 1866, was unable to reach the capital, and forced to return to Nepal, in consequence of the country being in such an unsettled state. After crossing the Chinese frontier, a message reached the ambassador from Pekin, desiring him not to proceed, as the journey was impracticable, but to exchange the royal presents at the frontier town and return. This rebellion is not a Mahommedan movement, as was that in the Southern Province, although it is supposed there are a great many Mahommedans mixed up in it. It appears to have arisen from a love of plunder and a desire for independence, advantage being taken of the embarrassment caused to the

Imperial Government by the old Taeping rebellion. That the country has been much desolated by the violence of the rebels appears from the following extract from the report furnished by the Nepalese ambassador:—

"In our journey onwards from the city of Batang, every city we passed through had been destroyed by fire and deserted by the inhabitants: habitations were rarely met with. As far as Lithang the country is in the same bad state, and everything is dear. . . . The war has now lasted nine years, and the country is in a miserable condition."

To the northward, again, of this tract of country lies a vast territory, comprising Eastern Toorkistan and Dungana, the desert of Gobi, and the Chinese provinces of Kansu and Shensi, inhabited mostly by a race of Mahommedans called Toonganies or Dungeas. They are Soonees, like the Mussulmans of the Lower Provinces, and in their observance of the tenets of the Koran exhibit considerable enthusiasm. They are completely under the influence of their Imams or Akhoonds, even in secular affairs. They are remarkable for their abstinence from spirituous liquors, opium, and tobacco; but in temper they are passionate and overbearing, and unhappily addicted to the use of the knife in the settlement of their disputes with one another. But they have the character of being industrious and honest in commercial dealings. They had a great antipathy to the Imperial Government of the Manchoo dynasty, which feeling was not lessened by various measures designed to coerce them into subjection, and which, as might have been expected, had the very contrary effect: such were imperial decrees subjecting them to heavy taxation, requiring the men to wear the hated pigtail, and the women to compress their feet into the dimensions prescribed by Chinese fashion.

Long smouldering, the spirit of rebellion burst into open flame first in 1862. The Imperial forces were despatched to suppress the outbreak with the usual result, and the insurrection spreading, the enthusiasm of the Mahom-

medan population was everywhere aroused by the well-known artifice of preaching a holy war. The emissaries despatched to proclaim the "jehad" went to work with a will, "and ere long there was not a town in the two provinces where the mosque had not rung with their passionate exhortations."[1]

It is hardly necessary to repeat that the rebellion was successful. And from the seat of its origin it rapidly spread over a very large tract of country, designated by names of provinces, cities, and mountains altogether unknown to and unrecognisable by the general reader, until the tide of revolution washed up as far as Yarkund and Kashgur, names with which we are all of us more or less familiar. At Yarkund the rebels speedily drove the Chinese troops into the fort, and there besieged them. At Kashgur, the commandant of the Imperial troops adopted a bloody stratagem with the view of destroying his enemies. He invited the Toonganies to a feast in the fort, and while they were doing justice to his hospitality he opened upon them a volley of musketry, which destroyed the whole of the guests except fifty, seven hundred having been invited. This atrocity was the signal for all the Mahommedan population of Kashgur to fly to arms, and the result was that the Imperial troops, with their treacherous commander, were shut up in the fort. Almost at the same time a similar tragedy was enacted at Khoten, where an attempt was made to massacre the Toonganies, who, however, proved too strong for their assailants; and the latter, having no fort to take refuge in, were totally destroyed, a moolla named Hajee Habeeboolla being raised to the throne of Khoten. The beleaguered garrison of Yarkund, being pressed by fresh reinforcements sent to the aid of the insurgents, set fire to their own magazine, and perished in the conflagration.

Meantime the Chinese troops, in the fort of Kashgur, were as hard pressed as their fellow-soldiers had been at

[1] *Edinburgh Review*, March 1868.

Yarkund. The insurgents were aided by a leader from Kokand, called the Kooshbegee, or commander-in-chief of the Kokand forces, who in 1847 betrayed to the Russian general, in return for a large sum of money, a portion of the territory of Kokand committed to his charge. This man arrived one day at Kashgur, with a following of about five hundred men. The siege was pressed, the garrison was decimated by famine; and in March 1865 the remnant committed suicide, and Yakoob Kooshbegee became master of the place.

The new Mahommedan power thus established in the north-west of China was now divided into three principal factions. In the east one named Rashud-ood-deen —whose rise to fortune space has not allowed me to relate—held sway; in the south reigned Habeeboolla, who, as we have seen, was raised to the throne of Khoten; and at Yarkund, Yakoob Kooshbegee, with the help of his Kokand followers, had seized the reins of government. The first and last of these successful adventurers were the first to come to blows; the third, or the Khoten ruler, standing aloof. And it was at this crisis of the affair that, in October 1865, Mr. Johnson, the first European traveller who, with the exception of M. Adolphe Schlagentweit, had been seen there for centuries, made his appearance at Khoten. The Khan Habeeboolla had sent him an invitation, which he accepted on his own responsibility. For this he incurred the displeasure of the Government, who reprimanded him for placing himself, without orders, in a position which might have led to serious political embarrassment. Much as we may admire the spirit of curiosity and research that induces travellers to venture into unexplored regions, and place themselves in the power of barbarian chiefs and rulers, Englishmen have too lively an impression of the enormous cost of the Abyssinian expedition to countenance acts of rashness in individuals which are calculated to lead to the loss of their own lives, or of the perhaps still more valuable lives of those whom

the country may deem it its duty to despatch to their rescue.

The contest ended in the victory of Yakoob Kooshbegee, who seized Yarkand in April 1860, and reduced to submission a large tract of country, including Khoten; the ill-fated Habeeboolla, Mr. Johnson's host, an old man of upwards of eighty years of age, having been cruelly murdered.

This brief outline of recent events in a large, and to us not unimportant tract of Southern and Central Asia, belongs only indirectly to the history of Indian Administration. It is quite certain, however, so far as we can say that any future event is certain, that the writer who shall record the history of Indian Administration during the ensuing ten years will have much to relate of these countries in connexion with Russian progress and politics, as well as, it is to be hoped, in connexion with an extended trade between India and the Southern and Western provinces of China.

It is worthy of remark that, as the Russian power has approached the limits of the Chinese empire, a revolution, or succession of revolutions, should have come to a head, which have had the effect of bringing them in contact in the next step of their advance with a Mahommedan instead of a Manchoo power. With this new dynasty of Mussulman Chinese the Russians have next to deal, as soon as they have established themselves in the territories recently overrun But although Mahommedan fanaticism is capable of arousing a martial spirit among races who could not be induced to offer any resistance worth speaking of by any lower motive, and although this instrument will no doubt be freely used to oppose Russian progress, the check their advance will meet with from the newly-constituted Mussulman kingdom of Western China will be only temporary. If Bokhara, with all its prestige and associations as the seat and centre of Islam in Upper Asia, has failed to kindle a spirit capable of resisting the encroachments of a Christian power, we need not expect

any result but that of a speedy victory from a conflict between the Czar's troops and such a man as Yakoob Kooshbegee. There can be no question but that all who desire to see the extension of civilization and the expansion of trade will find matter for congratulation, rather than alarm, in the establishment of a Christian Government in the room of the crumbling and blood-stained dynasties of Central Asia.

Allusion has been made to M. Adolphe Schlagentweit. He was murdered at Kashgur. It was during the progress of one of the insurgent movements, the outline of whose progress has been just detailed, that the lamented traveller happened to visit the country. One of the bloodthirsty monsters who during that period alternately rose to power, Wulee Khan Turra by name, had gained temporary possession of Kashgur (and memorialized his short reign—for he was soon driven out by the Chinese) by erecting a pyramid of human skulls on the banks of the river. As one after the other the heads of Chinese and Mahommedans were brought to construct the hideous pile, the savage sat and watched its growth. The heads of some of the best and bravest of his own followers were cut off to gratify the whim of the monster, and the head of Adolphe Schlagentweit was taken to crown the apex of the pyramid.

The recent history of Affghanistan, since the death of Dost Mahommed, affords nothing more interesting to the general reader than a succession of internal feuds, battles, and sieges. The outline of events, however, may be thus briefly described. Dost Mahommed died in 1863, after nominating his son, Shere Ally Khan, as his successor. Shere Ally's seat on the throne, however, was insecure, owing to the jealousy of his two brothers: one, Afzul Khan, who was at the head of the Toorkistan army as it was called, that is, the troops quartered in the northern region of Affghanistan; and the other, Azim Khan, who governed the country to the south and east between Cabul and the British frontier. Against both these rivals Shere Ally was

at first successful, having gained possession of Afzul Khan's person by treachery, and driven Azim Khan out of the country. The latter repaired to Rawul Pindee, a town and British settlement in the north of the Punjab, where he resided with a few followers, till another revolution in the political wheel of Affghan affairs enabled him to return. Shere Ally carried his brother, Afzul Khan, a captive to Cabul. The latter, however, fortunately had a son, a chief of some genius and energy, and a favourite with the troops composing the Toorkistan garrison, which his father had for years commanded during the lifetime of Dost Mahommed. Putting himself at their head, he marched on Cabul, dethroned and drove away Shere Ally, liberated his father, and seated him on the vacant throne. Afzul Khan did not live to enjoy for long the royal honours; and on his death was succeeded by Azim Khan, Abdoolrahman Khan, the son of Afzul Khan, generously waiving his rights in favour of his uncle. The uncle and nephew now became fast friends. But Shere Ally was indefatigable in his efforts to regain the throne he had lost; and obtaining assistance—some say from Russia, others from Persia—or depending solely on his own resources, he managed to collect an army, and principally by the genius of his general-officer, Yakoob Ally Khan, fought his way back to Cabul and the throne, which he re-occupied in July 1868. Azim Khan, and his nephew Abdoolrahman, have still a strong party in their favour, and, it is said, the sympathy and secret assistance of Persia. But since the close of the year the Ameer Shere Ally has been received with every demonstration of respect by the Viceroy, Earl Mayo; and although the British Government have not pledged themselves to any line of policy in Central Asian affairs, yet the mere fact of a cordial reception having been given to the Ameer by the British Viceroy has so raised his prestige that, unless the rival claimants to the throne are powerfully aided from some external quarter, they are not likely to succeed in again

dispossessing Shere Ally, who is now both *de jure* and *de facto* sovereign of Affghanistan.

The year 1868 is remarkable for having witnessed, under the administration of Sir John Lawrence, the conclusion of a controversy which for the last century has divided Indian statesmen into two opposing schools. It may be briefly described as the Tenant-right controversy, although many rights, besides those of tenants, were involved in it. The outlines of this dispute are familiar to most readers who take an interest in the modern history of India. To enter fully into it, even to recapitulate, however briefly, the opinions and views which have been set forth by writers on both sides, would occupy volumes. The mass of opinions, in the shape of evidence taken before parliamentary committees, in minutes, and Indian blue-books, &c., which have accumulated upon this much-debated question, is enough to appal the most enthusiastic or most diligent inquirer.

The broad principles upon which land settlements are made in new provinces are laid down in Regulation VII. of 1822, and it is that settlement-officers are to inquire into and record existing rights as they find them. This has ever been the law and procedure. It is somewhat illustrative of Indian legislation, that in 1868 the question should be mooted in Council, as it was in the discussion on the Punjab Tenancy Bill on the 21st October, whether, after the period for which the first settlement was made has expired, the settlement-officers had or had not the power of revising the records of rights made at the first settlement. It is strange that a point so important, striking at the very root of our whole administrative revenue system, should have remained undetermined for forty-six years. The Punjab Tenancy Bill was passed on the 21st October, 1868, and the necessity for the interference of the Legislature with the tenant-right of that province arose in this way. The first settlement having expired—a settlement which Sir John Lawrence not unnaturally upholds as being as perfect

and just a measure on the whole as could be effected—another became necessary; and it seems that the officers engaged upon it, acting of course under the orders of the local government, considered that they were called upon to take cognizance of claims to rights whether or not they superseded or set aside those recorded at the first settlement. "It appears," says Mr. Maine, in the debate on the bill, "that in the single division of Umritsur 60,000 heads of households were recorded at the first settlement of the Punjab as entitled to beneficial rights of occupancy. At the recent settlement 46,000 of these cultivators have been degraded to the status of tenants at will. If the same proportion be maintained for the whole province, these numbers denote some hundreds of thousands. It would appear, however, from a minute of the Chief Court of the Punjab, that though the settlement-officers employed the Settlement Regulation of 1822 to produce these formidable results, they did not think fit to follow the prescribed procedure, but have adopted a procedure of their own unknown to the law. The Chief Court states accordingly that all the settlement operations have effected is a superior description of registration. But this is not all. It seemed that the settlement-officers, from compassion or compunction, did not in all cases degrade the occupancy tenant at once to a tenant at will. They allowed him a period of years, during which he was to retain his rights of occupancy. The Chief Court has decided that they had no power to do anything of the kind, and that in such cases the higher status must continue indefinitely. This decision of the Chief Court in the division of Umritsur alone affected no less than 22,000 cases. In one division there have been 46,000 rulings on rights to land, of which 22,000 are bad in law. We are threatened with an agrarian revolution, to be immediately followed by an agrarian counter-revolution."[1]

[1] *Gazette of India* (official), debate on Punjab Tenancy Bill, October 26th, 1868.

We have seen in a former chapter[1] the disastrous effect of the crude settlement made in Oude in 1856, which of itself shows how little dependence is to be placed upon the supposed guarantee afforded by the regulation of 1822, that the settlement-officers will confine themselves to a faithful record of existing rights. Mr. Strachey has shown, in the passages from his speech quoted in the former chapter, what terrible havoc the civilians of the North-West Provinces committed with existing rights under the shelter of this regulation. And the fate of the two original settlements in Oude and the Punjab will not inaptly illustrate the nature of this controversy.

It appears most strange, when we come to reflect upon it, that for near a century the ablest men the Indian services have produced have been at issue upon a question of fact. The differences that separate contending parties of politicians, the disputes between opposing schools of science, philosophy, and theology, are matters of principle. It is scarcely conceivable that for half a century statesmen should be at issue upon facts. Yet it has been the case in India, and it is so unique and singular a phenomenon as to suggest an inquiry into its cause. No Indian administrator has ever desired, or would ever advocate, any interference with existing rights in land. To discover what was the species of tenure under which land was held when a province first came under British rule has always been the aim and intention of every successive government. Inquiries were always conducted on the spot, and generally by picked men, often by the ablest and best officers that could be employed. Yet it would be impossible to state two conclusions more diverse and irreconcilable than those at which the highest authorities have, with seemingly the same data to go upon, arrived, on the subject of Indian land-tenure.

The inquiry dates back even to a period anterior to 1796, when Lord Cornwallis introduced the Permanent

[1] Chapter II.

Settlement of Bengal; and in 1812, and again in 1832, an immense mass of most valuable evidence was recorded by the parliamentary committees that sat to investigate this point in both these years. We need not, however, dive into the depths of these bulky volumes for an instance in illustration of the singular error into which some of the highest authorities have fallen. It is now amply shown that the settlement of Oude in 1856, so far from recording existing rights, trampled them down on every side.

One would think, *à priori*, that it could not be possible for statesmen to be at issue for upwards of half a century upon the fact whether proprietary rights in lands belonged to the cultivator or to the superior landlord, zemindar, or talookdar, or raja, under whatever name he might happen to be specified in each different locality. Yet it is upon this point that the two schools of Indian politicians have been divided, one party contending that the cultivator held as tenant or tenant at will of the superior landlord; the other that the landlord had no proprietary right at all in the soil—in short, that there was no such thing as a landlord in our sense of the word, but that the peasantry were peasant-proprietors under other designations. In Bengal the zemindar, who, it is pretty clear now, was originally merely an official collector of revenue for the Crown, has been recognised under the Permanent Settlement of Lord Cornwallis as landlord, and thus he was confirmed in rights which may be said to have been created for him by law. At that time the tendency clearly was to recognise rights in superior tenure, even to the extent of creating them when they were not previously in existence. When the territory known as the North-West Provinces came into our possession, the inclination was altogether the other way. Then the proprietary right was recognised as vested in village coparcenaries. No one can come into frequent contact with the transactions of Government in the first ten or fifteen years of our rule in the Upper Provinces without feeling that their most prominent feature was the systematic

setting aside of farmers and talookdars, and the admission of village proprietors to direct engagements.[1]

This was the system often called, but erroneously so, the Thomasonian, for Messrs. Bird and Thomason, to whom the policy is popularly ascribed, acted merely as the executive, carrying out the policy of their superiors, and as channels to convey to subordinate officers the orders of the Supreme Government. But by whatever name it may be recognised, it was the system in vogue for many years, and formed the principle of revenue administration most warmly advocated by the school to which Sir John Lawrence was attached.

In Southern and Western India different principles prevailed. Throughout the greater part of Madras the normal state of the ryots is to hold immediately from the Crown; "and wherever he so holds without the intervention of any middleman, proprietary right is vested in the occupant of individual fields, or it has a tendency so to grow up, though often imperfectly, and shackled by special incidents."[2]

Throughout Bombay the tenure of land resembles that in Madras. There we mostly find villages with their municipal constitution complete, and their headman as their representative, who is called the "Potail." The entire cultivated area is owned by the ryots, each man's holding being his share. The same system prevails in Sind, and in the large tract of country called the assigned Berar district, belonging to the territory of the Nizam in the Deccan. And a tenure similar in its essentials was found to prevail generally over the southern and western portions of the continent.

How, then, it will be asked, did it come to pass that throughout this long period, from 1796 to 1868, the best authorities on Indian revenue questions have been at issue

[1] *Vide* Memorandum by Sir William Muir on the investigation into tenant right in Oude, in the Second Blue Book, 1867, Appendix II.
[2] Ibid.

upon facts? There are two or three considerations which it appears to me will serve to throw some light on the matter. We all know how utterly impossible it is for any living man, no matter how able he may be, to arrive at a fair, just, and discriminating decision on any single point, when he comes to a consideration of it with a bias one way or the other. Take the most ordinary question that may present itself to our mind for solution, and let there be a bias one way or the other, and how forcibly facts, arguments, premises, and conclusions dovetail themselves so as to suit that view to which the mind was previously inclined! It may be doubted if it is possible for any man to enter on the consideration of any question with a mind quite evenly balanced. The scale may be turned one way or the other during the course of the investigation, but a preponderance one way or the other there will be from the first. This is why in all judicial questions, where facts are in issue, the decision should be entrusted to more than a single judge. To do justice absolutely and perfectly, the mind must be perfectly evenly balanced. But justice is an attribute not of man, but of God, and nothing short of a perfect nature can possess or exercise the attributes of perfection. Hence it is that no inquiry which requires an even balance of mind to elicit a just conclusion ought to be conducted by one man. There must at least be two, for one mind cannot divide itself so as to provide within itself a counterpoise and check. It is not easy to imagine any field for inquiry where the mind would be more readily warped by a leaning one way or the other than the Indian land question. The more evenly balanced the evidence on both sides, the more liable is the conclusion to be influenced by preconceived ideas. In this case there was every danger not only of evidence being forced to lead to a preconceived conclusion, but of its being absolutely created in accordance with that conclusion. Take an instance, selected almost at random from the thousands that might be cited out of the voluminous mass of records from the days of Holt Mackenzie to

Muir, a sentence out of Sir John Lawrence's speech on the Punjab Tenancy Bill in 1868: "When the Jalandhur Dooab was being settled," he says, "I remember asking the Hill rajas, To whom did the land belong? With one voice they answered, 'To us, the rajas.' Then when I asked the same question of the dominant section of the villagers, they said that the land belonged to a particular class or caste in the village, the Rajpoots, Brahmins, and the like. The cultivators, lastly, would affirm that while the wastes held by the village proprietors and the waste land certainly belonged to those parties, the lands in possession of the cultivators also belonged to that class. The real explanation of all this is simply that the land as a rule exclusively belonged to no one class."

Now this is a most instructive passage, as illustrating the foregoing remarks. The reader here sees a field for inquiry, where a preconceived conclusion would be quite sure to find something to support it.

A settlement-officer with an idea of a landed aristocracy foremost in his mind, would here find undoubted testimony of such a tenure. Another, with his mind prepossessed in favour of the cultivator's right in the land, would here find the condition of things he anticipated. A third, with a strong feeling that if there were no cultivating occupancy rights there ought to be, would adopt exactly the conclusion which Sir John Lawrence adopted, "The land belongs to no one—here is a *tabula rasa*, with which we can do what we like."

It would probably be impossible to have found anywhere a single settlement-officer, or any one else, who could if he had tried have gone into the inquiry without a leaning one side or the other. And Mr. Forsyth, the Commissioner of Jalandhur, struck the key-note of the whole question in a remark quoted by Sir William Mansfield in the debate on the Punjab Tenancy Bill: "I have not given," he says, "my assent, . . . because I consider that a commission of some kind should be first appointed to ascertain the general

feelings and wants of the people *before we create new rights which tend to perpetuate a double property in the soil.*"

But it is often more difficult to destroy than to create. It may be too late now, except as a matter of historical research, to decide the question whether it was right or wrong to create these rights. Assuming, as many do, that the rights were created on the first settlement of the Punjab, the question is, having created them, what is to be done with them? Shall we destroy the work of our own hands? Shall we break up the existing state of things, and seek to make a *tabula rasa*, as Lord Canning did when he confiscated all rights in the soil of Oude, in order that he might obliterate for once and for ever, not the iniquity of the old Nawabate, but the iniquity of our own settlement made in 1856? There is undoubtedly much in Mr. Maine's argument, that even if these beneficial rights of occupancy were really planted in the Punjab by the British Government, they have grown up and borne fruit under its shelter, and that it is not for its honour or interest to give them up to ruthless destruction now.

When, however, we recollect how long this subject has been a disputed one; how for near a century the best authorities have been at issue upon essentials; how upon Sir John Lawrence's own showing there was so much room for doubt; how of all questions that could come before successive governments, this one requires the most delicate handling and the most indefatigable and impartial research; we cannot fail to see the force of Mr. Forsyth's recommendation, that before the views of a majority of the small body composing the Legislative Council were stereotyped in the rigid garb of law, a commission consisting of men of both schools should have been appointed to give to the long-disputed point the benefit of a careful and sifting investigation.

This brief outline of the main points involved in the land tenure controversy will, with what has been said above[1]

[1] Chapter II.

regarding the previous policy in Oude, enable the reader to understand the position of the respective parties in the dispute about talookdary tenure and tenant right in Oude, which has formed so marked a feature in Sir John Lawrence's administration.

In the summary settlement made with the talookdars under Lord Canning's order, there was a reservation either expressed or implied that any adjudication of proprietary rights then made might be subject to revision at a future and more regular settlement.[1] Sir Robert Montgomery, however, declined to sanction that reservation, partly because it was deemed unfair to the talookdars, and partly because it was considered that the inquiry had been sufficiently complete to render any reinvestigation at a future time unnecessary. This settlement, it would appear, was made by the officers who conducted it under the belief that it was to be subject to future revision; nevertheless, after it had been completed, it was declared to be final. Subsequently to this, the talookdars, feeling not altogether secure in face of the leaning which our Government had of late years shown to a recognition of village proprietorship, begged that "sunnuds," or title-deeds, might be accorded them which should confirm them in their rights. These title-deeds were accordingly granted in October 1859, accompanied by a stipulation introduced by Lord Canning to the following effect:—"It is a condition of this grant that you will so far as is in your power promote the agricultural prosperity of your estate, and that all holding under you shall be secured in the possession of all the subordinate rights they formerly enjoyed."

In addition to this, and with a view of rendering his meaning still more clear, Lord Canning wrote as follows in a letter accompanying the "sunnuds:"—

"The 'sunnuds' declare that while on the one hand the Government has conferred on the talookdars and on their heirs for ever the sole proprietary rights in their

[1] *Calcutta Review*, Feb. 1868.

respective estates, subject only to the payment of the annual revenue that may be imposed from time to time, and to certain conditions of loyalty and good service; on the other hand, all persons holding an interest in the land, under the talookdars, will be secured in the possession of the subordinate rights which they have heretofore enjoyed.

"The meaning of this is, that where a regular settlement of the province is made, whenever it is found the zemindars or other persons have held an interest in the soil intermediate between the ryots and the talookdars, the amount in proportion payable by the intermediate holder to the talookdar, and the net 'jumma' (revenue) payable by the talookdar to the Government, will be fixed and recorded after careful and detailed survey and inquiry into each case, and will remain unchanged during the currency of the settlement.

"The talookdars cannot, with any show of reason, complain if the Government take effectual steps to re-establish or maintain in subordination to them the former rights, as these existed in 1855, of other persons whose connexion with the soil is, in many cases, more intimate and more ancient than theirs; and it is obvious that the only effectual protection which the Government can extend to these inferior holders is to define and record their rights, and to limit the demand of the talookdars as against such persons during the currency of the settlement to the amount fixed by the Government on the basis of its own revenue demand. What proportion of the rent shall be allowed in each case to zemindars and talookdars is a question to be determined at the time of settlement."

It having been brought to the notice of Lord Elgin's Government that the rights of tenants, who held a somewhat higher status than that of mere tenants at will, were liable to be obliterated altogether from their being omitted from the settlement made, as well as from the fact that the talookdars themselves exercised certain

judicial powers, the Viceroy drew the attention of the Chief Commissioner of Oude to the position of this class, intimating a desire that they should be entered in the settlement papers, so that there might be some record extant of their existence.

The matter was in this position when Sir John Lawrence assumed the reins of government in 1864. The question, of all others, that was likely to interest him most, immediately attracted his attention, and he at once inquired what measures had been taken to preserve the rights of these tenants. He was informed in reply that no such rights as those referred to existed. Not satisfied with this the Viceroy directed further inquiry, and in order to secure its being conducted in a thorough and complete manner, appointed an officer upon whose co-operation he knew he could depend, Mr. Davies, Financial Commissioner, not, however, before the Chief Commissioner, Mr. Wingfield, had declined to carry out the investigation himself, feeling that it was in a measure a reversal of his policy, and inconsistent with the Report he had already made.

A full and searching inquiry then took place amid a storm of angry discussion in the papers, many of which pointed out that to institute for the second time a search after right of this kind was in India tantamount to offering a premium to fraud; for that if heretofore the rights had had no existence, as reported by Mr. Wingfield, the measure looked very like a determination, on Sir John Lawrence's part, to create them. Very much to the credit of the Oude peasantry, the investigation resulted in establishing the fact that such rights did not exist. The result was creditable to the Oude peasantry, because it might have been expected that they would have taken the opportunity of fraudulently setting up claims which it was clear the Supreme Government were then only too anxious to find established. What rights, or rather privileges, they did possess, were shown to be in reality no rights at all,

but privileges they enjoyed by favour of the landlord. These privileges the talookdars refused to convert into rights. What amount, or what kind, of pressure was brought to bear on them it is impossible to say, or whether the pressure was wholly imaginary on their part. Certain it is that they were in an excited state about it, and clamoured lustily that the British Government had committed a breach of faith; that the promise made by Lord Canning had been broken by his successors; and, as Mr. Strachey says, they appealed to the proclamation once so loudly condemned as an exceptionally harsh measure, as their Magna Charta.

Sir John Lawrence indeed, in Council, in July 1867, indignantly denied that any pressure had been put by him on the talookdars to induce them to agree to any terms they did not approve. But then his Excellency forgot that pressure may very easily be put upon people in the position of the talookdars without the direct authority or even knowledge of the Viceroy, when it is publicly known that he has identified himself with a particular party in a dispute.

It will be observed, that the class of tenants about whom all these dissensions had arisen were a class superior to the mere cultivators of the soil, who have been designated—and the term is not a very clear or intelligible one—sub-proprietors.

Both in the case of Oude and in that of the Punjab the breach has been patched up, and the long-continued controversy between the two schools of politicians plastered over by a compromise, to which in the former case the talookdars themselves were a party. The Bill which defines their rights and those of their tenants was not passed till the select committee reported that the talookdars were completely satisfied with the provisions of the Bill. Mr. Strachey, in the debate on the 22d July, stated that they had repeatedly declared that the Bill carried out faithfully all the engagements of the Government;

and they had also themselves confirmed to his Excellency in person the accuracy of this statement during the Viceroy's visit to Lucknow in November 1867. The essentials in this compromise were, on the part of the talookdars, an agreement to recognise the privileges of all cultivators who had been once proprietors of these lands, so that what they held by favour they should hereafter hold by right; on the part of the Government, that all the orders recognising a right of occupancy or preference in non-proprietary cultivators should be cancelled: while the important principle was established, that, under certain circumstances, tenants might claim compensation for unexhausted improvements.

The charge of over-hasty legislation occasionally brought against the Indian Government, and not without cause, cannot with justice be laid to their door in the case of the Oude Tenancy Bill. Both in that and the Punjab Tenancy Bill, indeed, the subject underwent deep and prolonged discussion, so far as such subjects can be discussed by means of official inquiries, recorded opinions, minutes, and the like. The Oude Bill, as we have seen, was not passed till the matter had been before the public for a whole year, and reference had been made to the Talookdars, and conferences held by them. They have, since the passing of the Bill, declared themselves dissatisfied, and have once again raised the cry of breach of faith against Sir John Lawrence's Government. And they persistently deny, what has been so positively asserted by Mr Strachey, that they saw and approved of the draft of the Bill *as it now stands* before it was passed, and that it was not passed till they had given their assent to it.

With regard to the Punjab Tenancy Bill, much difference of opinion still exists, diametrically opposite accounts of what occurred at the debate having been published. Certain efforts were made, no doubt, to discover the views of the people through the medium of the Punjab officials, but the result of those efforts was negatived by the constitution of

the Council at the time the Bill was passed, which in the absence of Sir H. Durand left a majority on the side of the President. The draft of the Bill as it originally appeared was returned to Sir Donald McLeod, the Lieutenant-Governor, for reconstruction, and as a matter of course the two parties in the Punjab, one deprecating legislation at this period and the other advocating its interference as the only method of solving a great difficulty, expressed their respective views, which in the one case, for lack of valid support and efficient advocacy in Council, served little purpose besides recording an empty protest. But it is said that some very important papers bearing on the subject at issue had been received at Simla only a few days before the debate, and Sir William Mansfield, as the representative of the party opposed to the Bill, declared that they had not had time to read them. Mr. Cockerell, another opponent, pressed for a postponement, but Sir John Lawrence refused to accede to it, and after some sharp recrimination the Bill was passed through Council, Sir John Lawrence himself announcing a decided wish, equivalent in such a case to a command, that the Bill should become law that day.

Thus a Bill affecting the dearest interests of the whole population of an important province was passed in the face of a declaration from a very large body of experienced officials, that its provisions were ill calculated to secure the prosperity or contentment of the people. Nothing can show more effectually the defects of a machinery for legislation which can admit of such a procedure. It would be better to leave the Viceroy altogether unfettered, and force him to bear the whole responsibility of enactments passed in face of an opposition which, though ineffective, was entitled at any rate to a fair hearing.

It may appear to the English reader not a little strange that such a crisis as that which was put forward as justifying and necessitating the passing of this Bill should be allowed to arise in consequence of the procedure of officers who, it must be presumed, understood their work, or at any rate

were supervised by those who did, and who, especially in the Punjab, were known to be picked men. That there should be a difference of opinion as to the bearing of Regulation VII. of 1822—that throughout all this long period of time the essential point should never have been determined, whether or not the record of rights framed at the first settlement may be recast at the second—is indeed singular. But, as Mr. Maine remarks, "these older enactments were not intended to stand the test now applied to them; if they were carried out in a sense not intended by their framers, an executive order which in fact emanated from an authority identical in point of *personnel* with the Legislature corrected the error. But I believe, chiefly because the authors of the Regulation were great men and men of strong sense, that they intended nothing so preposterous as a periodical wholesale officious revision of the record."[1]

But the question will occur, how was it that these rights, recognised at the second settlement, were not put forward at the first? Why were rights allowed to remain dormant and claims to slumber for fifteen years, and then set up, when the difficulty of establishing them must have increased a hundredfold? The explanation is given by Sir John Lawrence. "Under the Sikh rule," he says, "the position of the hereditary cultivators was practically very much on a par with that of the proprietors in the same village. And although the Sikhs in their social relations to each other set a high value on proprietary rights in land, more particularly when these were ancestral, their rulers acted very differently, and cared little who held or who cultivated these lands, provided that the revenue was punctually paid."[2] When British rule supplanted the comparative state of anarchy which succeeded the death of Runjeet Singh, rights in land were practically of so little value that those who might have claimed them did not in all cases think it worth while to do so. Many may have thought they would obtain

[1] Debate on Punjab Bill, *Gazette of India*, Oct. 26th, 1868.
[2] *Gazette of India*, Oct. 26th, 1868.

easier terms if registered as hereditary cultivators instead of proprietors. "As years passed by," says Mr. Forsyth, the Commissioner of Jalandhur, "the people, ignorant and careless, continued in their old way, taking no heed, and probably unconscious of the" [effect of] "the erroneous entries. But now, as lapse of time gives a validity to titles otherwise untenable, we are frequently assailed by petitions to correct alleged errors." Another cause for the *insouciance* of the Punjab proprietors may be found in a doubt as to the permanency of our then newly-acquired dominion. As time went on, and they saw the British Government more and more firmly seated on the throne of the Moguls, this feeling would wear away; and as land rose in value, as it does rise every year in India, rights that at first were thought little of became too precious to be neglected any longer. And here the question will at once present itself to the reader's mind, how far are men entitled to a resuscitation of rights which they have allowed to remain dormant, either from neglect or a want of faith in the permanency of our rule, or because these rights were at first worth nothing, though they have since acquired value? Sir John Lawrence was of opinion that legislation on the subject was imperatively called for. It was not likely that his successor, or any successor who might follow him, would be able to bring to the consideration of the subject the vast information and experience which he undoubtedly possesses. It is to be regretted that the matter did not engage his attention at an earlier period of his five years' tenure of office, when there would have been time to have appointed a committee of inquiry composed of settlement-officers of both schools, who by a careful and searching investigation might have satisfactorily cleared up the difficulty. Still some concessions have been made even in the Punjab Tenancy Bill to the representatives of the old aristocracy, but not sufficient, it is to be feared, to allay discontent. As regards Oude, it is the general impression among those friendly to the cause of the talookdars that their interests have gained rather

than lost by the recent enactments, their result being to confirm them in their rights and privileges, and to protect them from any encroachments on the part of the ex-proprietary tenants. Both Bills are shorn of many of the more obnoxious and mischievous provisions of Act X. of 1859, the Rent Law in force in the older provinces. And both in the Punjab and in Oude it is to be hoped that the people will accommodate themselves to the conditions fixed by the Legislature, and that those whose interests are injuriously affected by the new laws will set against that the many palpable advantages which they derive from British rule, without which the rights in land now so highly esteemed would have been valueless whoever retained them.

The affairs of the Bank of Bombay continued to occupy a great share of public attention during 1868; indeed in the Western Presidency itself they may be said almost to have monopolized it. This disgraceful episode in Indian history has been briefly noticed in another chapter. It is only necessary to add here that during the year the new bank was opened with a capital of twenty-five lacs as a temporary arrangement, the old bank being put in liquidation. In May a commission was appointed under orders from home, consisting of Sir C. Jackson, Major McLeod Innes, R E V.C., and Mr. Maxwell Melville, of the Bombay Civil Service. They commenced their inquiry at Bombay on the 29th June, and concluded it, so far as the Indian evidence was concerned, on the 9th September. On the 25th they left for Europe, to continue the investigation there, several witnesses having to be examined in England. The evidence taken in India was such as to astonish all who heard or read it. In the history of bank failures, and careless, amounting to dishonest, management, it is to be feared that the episode of the Bank of Bombay will occupy a prominent position.

The administration of Sir John Lawrence has been marked by very considerable progress in public works of utility and permanence, which are destined to contribute

much towards the stability of our Indian Empire. One of the results of the great rebellion of 1857 was the recognition of the necessity for providing better and more extensive barrack accommodation for our European troops, and fortresses and posts of defence in localities important in a strategic point of view. These "military works," as they are sometimes called, were sketched out as far back as 1862-63, on a scale that was calculated to entail an expenditure of 10,000,000*l.* sterling. At the same time designs for irrigation works were added to the extent of 30,000,000*l.* more. We have seen in a previous chapter that the efforts of the Government to carry out irrigation works are necessarily limited by the extent of the means available—money and supervision. But the principle has now been fully admitted that the expenses of reproductive public works, such as canals and railways, may fairly be saddled upon posterity, and for the future the necessary funds for constructions of this nature will be raised by loans. In addition to the designs for irrigation works, on which 30,000,000*l.* are to be spent, there is a scheme for railway extension throughout India, generally calculated to cost 40,000,000*l.* more, so that the whole outlay which it is proposed to devote to these purposes amounts to no less than 80,000,000*l.* At the close of this year it is calculated that 5,000,000*l.*, or just one-half of the sum devoted to barracks and fortifications, will have been disbursed; the remainder will have been expended and the designs completed in 1872, after which it is proposed to devote the whole energies and resources of the department to those reproductive works upon which the wealth and progress of the country mainly depend. It is no doubt a wise policy to secure our hold upon India before proceeding with the investment of the enormous sums of money which it is intended to raise for the extension of railways and canals. The style of barrack which has been recently adopted is a vast improvement upon the old low thatched buildings in which our soldiers have been housed for the last half-century. In the minor

Presidencies these buildings have been commenced at Kirkee and Bangalore, but the main effort has naturally been confined to the Bengal Presidency, throughout which, in almost all the important cantonments, very considerable progress has been made. Altogether, six and three-quarters out of the whole ten millions are to be spent on the Bengal Presidency, the remainder being divided between the two minor presidencies of Bombay and Madras.

Fortified posts, consisting of an enclosure flanked by bastions and containing hospitals and barracks are to be erected at Sealkote, Jalandhur, and Umballa, in the Punjab; at Nowgong, in Central India; and Secundrabad, the military cantonment adjoining Hyderabad, in the Deccan; while at Peshawur a fortress on a more extended scale is being erected, to be supported by two others at Mooltan and Rawul Pindee. These fortresses will contain barracks for troops and protection for large arsenals.

Allusion has been made in a previous chapter to the slender extent to which the British Government has hitherto availed itself of the means within its reach of quartering soldiers in healthy situations in the hills, and it is a question whether it would not have been a wiser policy to have expended the money now laid out in the expensive barracks under construction, in carrying lines of railway to the foot of the mountain ranges, and locating the soldiers on their summits and slopes, where they might be kept in a condition of the utmost possible physical efficiency, and at the same time be within easy distance by rail of almost every part of the country where their presence is ever likely to be required to quell an *émeute* or resist aggression.

While about seven millions sterling have been or are to be expended in the construction of better accommodation for soldiers in the plains, but few hill-garrisons have been added to the scanty number already available as depôts for invalids.

The most superficial acquaintance with India is sufficient to show that the only danger to which our empire in the

East is at all likely to be exposed—except, of course, from internal disaffection, which need not of itself be feared so long as a European garrison of the present strength is maintained—lies in the chance of invasion from the north and north-west. Nor is there any danger here, except from a European power. I have purposely avoided entering on the much-debated question of Central Asian policy; but so long as ordinary prudence and foresight guide the counsels of our rulers, no rash attempt to provoke or accelerate a conflict by putting ourselves in a false position will ever endanger the safety of British India. No more unsound policy was ever advocated than that of interfering with the affairs of Affghanistan with the view of strengthening our hold upon India, or—as it is the fashion to express it—to meet Russia on the Oxus now in order that we may not have to meet her on the Indus hereafter. If ever the two Powers are destined to come into hostile contact in Asia, it is sufficiently obvious that that Power will fight at a disadvantage which is the furthest removed from its resources. To go to the Oxus, therefore, to meet Russia, would be to abandon in her favour an advantage we now hold. Every hundred miles that we march northwards to meet the invader will be so much gain to him and loss to us. And as to immediate interference with Affghanistan, while it is certain that the possession or the military occupation of that country, at any rate, must precede any attempt by Russia upon the Indian frontier, it is clear that whichever of the two—England or Russia—first occupies Cabul will be exposed, in the event of war, to the danger of internal disaffection aided by all the resources of the rival European power. In case of our interfering with Affghan politics again, let it be for the purpose of delivering or aiding the people to deliver themselves from the hated yoke of the foreigner. If Russia has any definite designs upon India, those writers and politicians are her best allies who advocate British interference with Affghan affairs. Should Russia attack

us, let it be on our ground, not hers; upon the banks of the Indus, the point the furthest removed from her resources and nearest to our own. With good railway communication between Kurrachee and Peshawur—and on strategic grounds this line ought to be completed without delay by the extension of the lines from Kotree on the Indus to Mooltan, and from Lahore to Peshawur—the field of action would be far nearer the fountain-head of our resources than that of our rival: while, with her communications to keep up between the Caspian Sea and the Hindoo Koosh, through a country peopled by turbulent races, held in subjection at the best of times with difficulty and not without great expenditure of means—any break in which line of communications would be fatal to her—Russia must be indeed bent on her own destruction if she ventures to assail our position on the Indus within the next century.

It remains to notice very briefly two great public works, the one wholly, and the other partially, dependent for its success on private enterprise. On the 15th November, the section of the Delhi railway connecting Delhi and the East Indian line with Umballa, a city thirty-five miles from the foot of the Himalayas, on the high road to Simla, was completed and opened with much *éclat*, the Viceroy himself being present at a great public breakfast. As many as 500 or 600 guests assembled to do honour to the occasion, which was especially interesting as being the last opportunity that offered itself for Sir John Lawrence's old Punjab associates to gather round their chief on the eve of his departure. And, viewed in this light, some of the speeches made on the occasion are almost worthy of a place in history. Sir John Lawrence, in returning thanks, alluded with much feeling—his voice faltering with ill-disguised emotion—to his brother Sir Henry, and the other distinguished men with whom he had been so long connected. The section of the line then opened is especially valuable, because it connects Calcutta and the intermediate cities by rail (an interval of thirty-five miles only,

at the foot of the mountains, intervening) with the hill-settlements of Kussowlie, Dugshai, Subathoo, and Simla.

No such *éclat* has attended the other public work alluded to, the East Indian Irrigation scheme, designed to construct an extensive canal system in Orissa. At the close of 1868 it was finally determined to abandon this scheme so far as it is a work of private enterprise, and to make it over to the Government. It would be tedious and uninteresting to trace the causes which have led to these results. Suffice it to say that the company declares the main cause to be the want of encouragement afforded by Government. Whether there is any real ground for this allegation or not—and it is not very easy to see how, if the company were in a position to carry on their work to completion, it could have been affected either by official encouragement or the reverse—the result is lamentable, as showing how, with the best prospects of success, with great resources and long-sustained efforts, the attempt to carry out the scheme by independent capital has failed. The shareholders will suffer no loss, for the Government undertakes to purchase the works for a sum equal to the whole paid-up capital, with five per cent. interest, and a bonus of 50,000*l.* besides.

Before the year 1868 had quite ended, Earl Mayo landed at Bombay, and Sir John Lawrence prepared to make over to his successor the cares of office. In any estimate that is formed of Sir John Lawrence's character as a public man, his career previous to his elevation to the Viceroyship, and that subsequent to it, should be ever carefully distinguished. There are many who think that his name would have held a higher place in the estimation of posterity had he not been called upon to assume the government of India. It is certain, however, that his policy as Viceroy was conducted on the same principles as those on which he acted as Chief Commissioner of the Punjab. Whether that policy is to be approved or condemned, will depend upon the view which those who criticise or review

his public career hold upon the subject of Indian land-tenures. No reputation is so dear to the Bengal civilian of the old school, to which Sir John essentially belonged, as that of success in revenue administration. This principle is plainly marked throughout the whole system of Indian government. In every single instance all other branches of the administration are subordinated to the revenue. A young civilian who acquires a reputation as an efficient collector or subordinate revenue officer is sure of a rapid promotion, which no legal attainments, no diplomatic ability, no talent for organization, no genius for executive, magisterial, and police work, however brilliant, can ensure. After the grade of collector has been reached, or that which is equivalent to it, though it may be called by different names in different parts of India, an efficient officer is promoted in the revenue branch to a commissionership; an inefficient, or an indolent, or incompetent one is made a judge. And there can be no doubt that Sir John Lawrence, in taking on himself to settle the two most important revenue questions of the day, the land tenure in Oude and the Punjab—though I do not mean that he was actuated solely, or even mainly, by so low a motive—aimed at that which is calculated more than anything else to stimulate the ambition of a civilian, the reputation of being a great revenue authority. Beyond these two measures, he cannot be said to have initiated and carried through any policy peculiarly his own. During his tenure of office, the country happily enjoyed almost perfect immunity from those political troubles which usually monopolize the attention of the writer or the student of Indian history. That much of this immunity is due to the weight of his name, and the awe in which he is held by all natives of India, as well the independent sovereigns of Hindustan as the rulers of surrounding states, no one who is acquainted with the general feelings of the people can doubt. When he was first appointed, there was a general ferment of disaffection at work under the surface

of Mahommedan society, which might very possibly have been developed into overt acts of insubordination. The moment he landed it ceased; or at all events, if it went on at all, it went on so silently as to escape notice. And were the same thing to recur, were even organized disaffection to show itself, so much is Sir John Lawrence feared all over India, that his return to the country would of itself intimidate the conspirators into an abandonment of their design—provided, of course, they were not acting under any external political influence. The Bhotan *imbroglio* was a legacy left him by his predecessor. Under Sir John's administration the unhappy business was brought to as speedy and satisfactory a conclusion as was possible. The only other warlike operation he had to conduct was the Black Mountain campaign. The policy in this campaign, as well as on the frontier generally, acquired for him much unpopularity. That policy has been discussed elsewhere: here it is sufficient to say, that future history will approve of it as sound and statesmanlike. The interest Sir John Lawrence has always taken in the welfare of the European soldier has also elsewhere been noticed; indeed that class of his countrymen shared with the members of his own service the regard which seemed to be denied to every other section of the European community. As to the non-official portion of that community, Sir John scarce took the pains to disguise the sentiments which are engrained in every civilian of the old school, and in too many of the new—a tendency to discourage European enterprise, and to make English residents in India feel that they are in a false position there. With every mile of railway that is constructed in India there is a proportionate increase of the European element, whether in the shape of capital, of skilled labour, or of executive control. This is the secret of the obstacles which independent chiefs invariably throw in the way of railway extension through their territories. Nor can it be wondered at, for the class of Englishmen with whom the railway brings them and their subjects into

contact is just the class which the native of India holds in the utmost dread and abhorrence. In this feeling the civilian sympathises to a degree that is actually ludicrous. And the majority of them (possibly Sir John himself, could he be brought to confess his real feelings) would aver that the enormous advantage which railways are conferring upon India, and the rapid reformation which they are working out in the habits and character of the natives, is but dearly purchased by the introduction into the country of so many Englishmen. For a long while Sir John successfully opposed the extension of railways in Upper India, and only yielded at last under pressure to sanction the Lahore and Peshawur line, a line which but for his opposition would have been far advanced towards completion by this time, and which when completed will add the strength of fifty thousand men to our northern frontier

From the non-official European population Sir John could scarcely have looked for popularity. By his own service, whose interests he keenly watched, he was undeservedly disliked. The feeling is unaccountable except on the score of jealousy, for his warmest eulogists will not deny that the Civil Service derived to the fullest extent the benefits a close corporation might expect from one of their own number being raised to the post of authority and endowed with the enormous patronage that falls to the lot of an Indian Viceroy. By the native aristocracy, with whom as a class Sir John had little sympathy, he was detested; not with the passive dislike of Oriental temperament, but with an actual hate, the more intense because accompanied by fear. By the cultivator class, for whom he did or intended to do so much, he was not known, nor have they yet learnt, to value the privileges and rights he struggled to obtain, and did obtain, for them. Among the mass of the Anglo-Indian community, which consists chiefly of military men, officers of various branches and departments, and their families, he was unpopular; but this arose mainly from his

manner and behaviour to them when guests at Government House, or waiting on the dreary ceremonial of an Indian Viceregal levee.

If unpopularity be the test of the success or failure of an Indian Viceroy, there can be no doubt as to the judgment that history must pass on Sir John Lawrence's viceregal career. But there is probably no position in the world where popularity is less the test of success, or where a ruler, if he chooses to disregard public opinion, can do so with more complete impunity. The Indian Government is a despotic one, as despotic as that of Russia, more so than that of France. An official, in a recent debate in Council, not incorrectly described it as a despotism tempered by right of petition, which means a despotism pure and simple. In Russia or in France the will of the ruling power is a good deal under the influence of public opinion, but the despotism of the Indian Government is only tempered by the action of the Secretary of State, who may be, but very seldom is, swayed by public opinion in England It is this that makes English residents in India so dissatisfied with the system They go out there carrying with them their favourite notions of constitutional government and political freedom, and imagine that in a dependency of the British Crown they are to enjoy all the rights and privileges of their native land. They very soon find out their mistake, the right even of trial by jury of their countrymen being denied to them; but they never cease to chafe against the iron collar of despotic rule, so distasteful to every man that has once lived under a representative constitution. To administer successfully such a government as this, so long as it is what it is, there is obviously no necessity to canvass popularity. A despot with an iron will, a long head, and no heart, will be found the best man for the post. I use the word "despot" in no bad sense. There may be good and conscientious despots, as well as wicked ones, and Sir John Lawrence essentially belonged to the first, not the last. As he said in his fare-

well speech at Calcutta, he had laboured conscientiously before God and man to do his duty, and so no doubt he had, and he carried away from the shores of India the consciousness of having exerted himself to the utmost to do what he thought right. But he was none the less a despot, and as such eminently suited for the government of India as it is. Were that dependency endangered to-morrow, either by political disturbance within, or threatenings from without, or both, Sir John's presence in India would be worth an army. If England's object is simply to hold the country, a Viceroy of Sir John Lawrence's stamp is the best man for the post; if her object is progress—the moral and social elevation of the people—if it is her wish to encourage trade and promote commerce, to introduce European capital, and by the example of European to awaken and stimulate native enterprise, to instil into the native mind some idea of those political principles which have made England what she is, then she must select her Viceroys and her Governors from some other quarter than the ranks of the Civil Service.

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