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THE COMPANY AND THE CROWN

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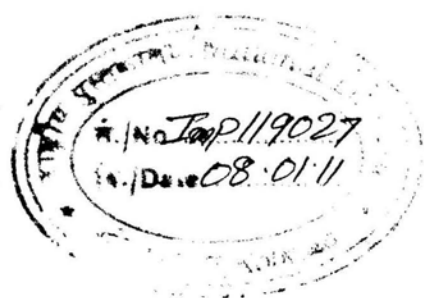
BY THE

HON^{BLE} T. J. HOVELL-THURLOW

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PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION.

MUCH as has been written respecting what was termed in India the "Company Bahadoor," and those events in consequence of which the soil of Hindostan has now become encircled by the British Crown, it is still matter for regret that so little should be generally known of the scope and spirit of current Anglo-Indian administration. Great men of wide experience, representing every shade of human thought, have recorded volumes of opinions and decisions on each question as it has been born ; while others, rich in the faculty of turning to account a rare research, have laboured at the almost hopeless task of teaching England how to know her Eastern Empire. Yet such of the results attained as are accessible to all, have rather tended to confuse than to enlighten general readers, while the openings for sensation writing, afforded by such thrilling themes as our trans-Indus wars, and the events of 1857, have too frequently been used as frames for highly-coloured pictures, drawn by able advo-

cates of different schools and services. Thus, while in the daily intercourse of life it has become the general practice to confess an ignorance concerning India, at which men would rightly blush on less important subjects, leading members of both Houses of our Legislature have frequently preferred to borrow doctrines of the hour advanced by public journals, rather than work out the sum of their own individual impressions. To endeavour to dispel the cloud of error which dulls the public eye on all regarding India has hence become a fair legitimate ambition; and in this aim the present author ventures to submit a few remarks upon that country as it is, or rather was, when his position there enabled him to know the truth.

It may be thought by many, and the writer once thought himself, that information bearing on the individuality of public life, obtained while holding any kind of office, should remain unwritten history; and no doubt some reticence is needed in discussing living men, while much responsibility attaches to each word so uttered. In the solution of such doubts the author was assisted by encouragement received from native friends in India; and the following extract from a private letter, not meant originally for publication, addressed to him by one of the earliest natives chosen to take part in mixed Imperial legislation, was not without its influence on his decision:—

“Above all I have been touched by the proof, which the main subject of your letter evinces, of the high confidence reposed in my humble self by an alien in creed,

in country, in manners, in race, and indeed in everything which distinguishes man from man, and my personal intercourse with whom was so suddenly cut short by the decree of Providence, and with the space of ten thousand miles between us at this moment. I only hope you may never have the slightest cause to regret this feeling. I very well approve of the idea of publishing your impressions of this country, and your observations on its politics and public characters; I always thought to myself you should do such a thing, specially remembering to what literary use another Private Secretary of Lord Elgin put his experiences with that nobleman in another part of the world. I can well appreciate your embarrassment at the manner of publication; that is a well-known puzzle with authors, and the puzzle increases to a tremendous extent when an author has to attend to the peculiarities of three different audiences, two in one country, and the third in another at the antipodes. Besides, a great deal of the success of a work depends on the manner of publication—indeed, the title of a book often leads to its popularity. I can understand your desire to bring your work well out before the Indian public, who alone can take the greatest interest in it, and who alone will heartily recognise the right which belongs to you from your antecedents to address them.”

The title chosen tells its story for itself, and needs but little comment. The transition of the Government of India from all but boundless wealth, and a far larger measure of independence than is enjoyed by most mem-

bers of the European family of nations, to utter bankruptcy and a struggle for existence all dependent on the mother country—this transition had come of dire necessity, and not of man's selection. The life of the East India Company had died out as a tale that is told, and nought remained but debt and disaster, in which England had a deep and national share. Succeeding to the darkness of rebellion, the transition dawned upon Lord Canning with the light of breaking day, and his last years of power were spent in healing wounds of awful magnitude. This task, still incomplete, he left a legacy to Lord Elgin, whose previous life, spent as it had been in the reconciliation of conflicting creeds and races, appeared to the public of that time to offer the most solid pledges for the future.

Counting Lord Dalhousie, three college friends were called to govern India in succession. The first, who entered youngest on his duties, ruled eight—the second, six eventful years; while the reign permitted to the third but embraced the space of two. Yet, although differing in duration, these three periods resemble one another, in that each received and bore the impress of a ruling mind. The first period was characterised by almost ceaseless warfare, and the wide spread of our dominion; the second, by alternate light and shade, the light occupying both foreground and far distance, the middle plane alone being bathed in shadow; the third was the calm that follows on a storm, affording time to the Indian people and their ruler to weigh the future in the balance

of the past, to sink their differences in the appreciation of order and good government, and finally to meet together, the Hindoo and the Mussulman, the Christian and the Jew, to manufacture laws adapted to their general use. This last period it is, to which, in these pages, most frequent reference will be found.

June 1866.

PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION.

IN meeting the demand for a Second Edition of 'The Company and the Crown,' the author has cheerfully availed himself of the opportunity offered, for correcting such errors as have been pointed out to him. Where these have been mere faults of typography, the result of hurried publication, the author has permitted himself to make the requisite alterations in the body of the work, without any marginal indication. In all other cases, however, where interpretations have been assigned by the hand of criticism, or passages have been construed, not strictly in accordance with the author's own convictions, a copious resort to notes and references has been adopted.

The result has been to encumber the publication with much that had previously been omitted as irrelevant or unnecessary, and a consequent departure from the uniform type that characterised the First Edition.

For greater facility of reference, a Map of India has been added to the present Edition.

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THE COMPANY AND THE CROWN



CHAPTER I.

THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA.

MAHOMEDAN history relates that, in the year 1611, Jehangeer, Emperor of Delhi, granted a spot to some Englishmen on which to build a factory in the city of Surat; and that His Majesty introduced this company of white adventurers to his subjects by a proclamation, wherein it was announced that the English had a separate king, independent of the King of Portugal, to whom they owed no allegiance, and that, on the contrary, these two nations put each other to death wheresoever they met. "At present," it was added, "owing to the good offices of Jehangeer, they are at peace with one another; though God only knows how long they will consent to have factories in the same town, and live on terms of amity and friendship."

The tale, however, of the rise of British India has been too often told to call for repetition at our hands. We shall not therefore trace the gradual development of our Eastern provinces and power, but shall at once proceed

to the consideration of some questions dictated by experience, and to the inquiry whether the existent state of things is merely the result of progressive energy and accident, demanding rearrangement rather than reform, or the success and full achievement of a settled policy pursued. In the course of these inquiries we shall see how, in early times, many of the greatest miseries of India—miseries affecting both the rulers and the ruled—were owing to the rapidly succeeding muster-roll of men and policies whereby her destinies were guided, to the full force of whose crotchets and ambition her whole resources were exposed ; and how, in later days of a more enlarged consciousness of the magnitude of the work intrusted to us, everything has been too often risked upon a vote of that great body of professional, hereditary, and dilettanti legislators who constitute our Parliament ; and thus it will, we trust, appear that, incomparable as have been the benefits conferred upon ourselves at home by the gradual perfection of the representative system and ministerial responsibility, the extension of Parliamentary control to the details of Indian administration and finance is a measure as fraught with ill, as proved, a hundred years ago, that similar assumption of power to impose the taxes and impede the commerce of our great western colonies, till then conspicuous for their loyalty.

Yet that was a lesson neither easily read nor likely soon to be forgotten ; and it behoves us, if we will not see its precepts lost, to study them by the light of our improved intelligence. Those who know India, and have had opportunities of appreciating her incomparable wealth and the industry of her people, will readily admit that conditions of government are alone required to enable her to reassert and justify her traditional position. Those to whom this confidence has become familiar will further

confess that the actual policy of England toward her greatest vassal is not the one best calculated to attain such ends. The rule of the great Company was marked by much that was ignoble. Under the wings of her protection, favourites sought paths to fortune unknown in other spheres of life; those whom birth or accidental causes entitled to support, often embraced a career distasteful to themselves, with the certainty, not of rendering good service, but of reaping pensions and promotion. Yet this was perhaps rather the exception than the rule; and it is customary in these days to cast reflection upon the sons of competition, and to reserve praise and approbation for their more happy predecessors. Under the East India Company certain families had won and retained consideration; and although the sons and nephews might not approach in excellence or zeal to the examples set them by their uncles or their fathers, yet it often happened that a youth of twenty-two or twenty-three was sent to rule a native state, whose name alone acted as a talisman more powerful with those he had to govern, than any renewed assurances of goodwill dictated by the Government of India.

A system of administration which long withstood the test of time, and rivalled sovereignty, could not be devoid of merit. For years and decades it was the custom to advance in argument the prosperity of India in proof of the advantages of commercial government; and into so great security had the rich men of Leadenhall Street suffered themselves to be lulled by Lord Dalhousie's eloquent success, that prudential measures of all kinds had been alike condemned. The result was inevitable. There had been no failure; the success had only been too manifest. In a vast peninsula, peopled by a hundred and eighty millions of inhabitants, teeming with caste

prejudices and innate jealousy of white rule, it was impossible such blind confidence should pass unnoticed. Private reasons were not wanting for discontent among all classes; many harsh rulings, bad in themselves, but still more dangerous as precedent, had fanned and fed the flame. Neither Oude nor cartridges were the paramount causes of rebellion;* unseen and unsuspected by us all, it came, the inevitable result of too rapid a convulsion of the native mind. Our armies had advanced, and kings had quietly been swept away, their kingdoms incorporated with our possessions, barely calling for geographical remark. Then came the Crimean War and the rise in money; and the Company, ever avowedly a mercantile community, bethought itself of gain.† The gain was its

* Criticism has brought to light that there are still some who believe that Oude or cartridges, or both together, *were* the causes of mutiny; and to such we would venture to recommend a perusal of the following Brief extract from the Rev. J. Cave-Browne's careful narrative of 'The Punjab and Delhi in 1857,' a work spoken of by Mr Kaye, in his 'History of the Sepoy War,' as a very interesting and trustworthy authority:—"Neither the greased cartridge nor the annexation of Oude was the *real* cause of the mutiny, though each in its own province gave a vast impetus to the movement: they furnished the fuel from within to feed the flame which was brought from without. The greased cartridge no more originated this mutiny than the new head-dress with the *leather poke*, and the prohibition of *caste-mark* on parade, had instigated that of Vellore in 1806. The restoration of the house of Tippoo Sultan to the throne of Mysore was the real object then, as it now was to revive the grandeur of the Mogul empire in the person of the *Roi Fainéant* whom we had allowed to play at being a sovereign at Delhi."

† "We deceive ourselves when we think that European politics make no impression on the Indian public. . . . That a number of very preposterous stories were industriously circulated, and greedily swallowed, during the Crimean War, and that these stories all pointed to the downfall of the British power, is not to be doubted. It was freely declared that Russia had conquered and annexed England, and that Queen Victoria had fled, and taken refuge with the Governor-General of India. The fact that the war was with Russia gave increased significance to these rumours; for there had long been a chronic belief that the Russ-
logue would some day or other contend with us for the mastery of India; that, coming down in immense hordes from the north, and carrying with them the intervening Mahomedan states, they would sweep us, broken

own, but it was of short duration. The clouds, long gathering, at length burst, and the Company, shortsighted in its unrivalled prosperity, shared the fate of those rulers it had dethroned.

"It was with strange feelings," we are told, "that men who had served the Company from boyhood, coming home after the mutiny, fresh from scenes of war and fire, razed forts and pillaged palaces, visited the East India House, and wandered through the gloomy corridors and deserted rooms, which they remembered to have seen thronged with soldiers and civilians, clerks and messengers, anxious and earnest on their several errands. And few could help lingering in the Council Chamber, and thinking of the men of bygone generations, who, by the sword or by the pen, had been instrumental in conquering India, and whose marble statues stood in their lofty niches, with the dingy gilt ceiling above, and the old-fashioned arm-chairs below, once occupied by successive generations of potentates, who, under the plain names of Chairman and Directors of

and humbled, into the sea . . . The idea broached in Parliament, said a native gentleman, of drawing troops from India for the Crimean War, took intelligent natives of India by surprise. They saw plainly the folly of thus revealing our weakness to the subject races; for we could not more loudly proclaim the inadequacy of our resources than by denuding ourselves in one quarter of the world in order that we might clothe ourselves more sufficiently in another."

The above extract from vol. i. of Mr Kaye's excellent 'Sepoy War' explains the reference in the text. Queen's troops served the Company on a mercenary footing, and the withdrawal of English regiments from India for service against Russia was tantamount to relieving the rich men of Leadenhall Street from the charge of maintaining so many thousand Queen's soldiers,—a condition of their charter that had been insisted on by the House of Commons. This occurred, moreover, at a time when Indian expenditure exceeded revenue, and when a European war had closed the hands of all loan-mongers to reasonable terms. No wonder, therefore, that a company of merchants, still dazzled by the brilliancy of Lord Dalhousie's administration, sought to turn the Russian War to some account by rash resort to long-neglected motives of economy.

a London Company, had exercised a degree of authority over millions of people, to which that of the Doge and Council of Venice in its palmy days was poor beyond comparison. Here the fate of emperors, kings, and governors-general had been decided upon; here the career of Clive and Warren Hastings had been watched and criticised step by step; here the subsidiary system of Lord Wellesley, and the social reforms of Lord William Bentinck, were discussed; and, lastly, here the annexations of Lord Dalhousie were suggested and applauded. Another turn of the wheel, and the arm-chairs of the Directors were left as vacant as the peacock throne of Delhi, and scores of other ivory thrones or jewelled cushions, the lumber of extinct power."

Such was that Company, whose greatness proved its ruin. The first blow at its independence had, indeed, been struck by Pitt in the days of our fathers; but since then it had gathered more than former wealth, and girt itself around with conquests. Magnificent at all times as a monument of English energy, it was still grand in its misfortunes, and grander in its fall; and not until its doom was sealed did the country become cognisant of the responsibilities incurred. Yet, impossible though it be now to call in question the justice and necessity of this change, it is equally impossible to contemplate it without much mingled feeling of regret.

Of the revolt to which that Company's fall is due, we will not here repeat the oft-told history. Its horrors rank, in their intensity, second to few of bygone times; and thus, while Englishmen are found to fully justify all other risings of a creed or people against oppression, the peculiar cruelties of the Sepoy War have trampled

under foot all sympathy and pity. So much, indeed, is this the case, that not only writers bidding for the public ear, but even some historians, have lost sight of the national character of the rebellion, and only treated it as mutiny. The struggle, though short, was long enough to prove the futility of all attempts to wrest our Indian dominion from us by force of native arms, and to show the stuff our men are made of. Some classes were, however, convulsed with fear—foremost among them the merchants of Calcutta. And so remarkable was this phenomenon of Englishmen trembling in inaction, as to call from the lips of Lord Elgin, who, at the time of India's need, came steaming up the Hoogly, the well-known words, "that all around stood blanched with fear save one, Lord Canning," he whose fate it was to govern India during those six long years, memorable of themselves, yet rendered more so by the calm deliberation and high courage by which so much has been averted.

The touching story of the personal attachment between those three successive rulers has been recorded by Miss Martineau in 'A British Friendship ;' * and we

* This paper was originally published in 'Once a Week' of April 18, 1863. It is here reprinted, with the permission of the writer, for the benefit of those readers who may not have had an opportunity of studying a page of contemporary history, so striking in its features and so vigorous in its treatment :—

"At this time thirty years ago there were three young men at Christ Church, Oxford,—almost of the same age, all good students, all interested in matters which lay outside their books, and all cordially respecting and admiring each other. Two of the three were of a reserved cast of character, while the third was frank and fluent, though perhaps as discreet at bottom as his prouder-looking friends. Each desired to do something to distinguish his name and benefit his generation : and each had high expectations of what the other two would do. In February last, some memorable observances took place which have brought back some moving old associations with those three youths.

"Thirty years ago James Bruce was two-and-twenty, and carried an

shall only seek to cast a clearer light on the part that each has played in Indian history. The antecedents of Lord Dalhousie had rather been commercial than political. Equally sound and brilliant in debate, his splendid

air of seniority over his comrades, who were but one-and-twenty. Yet he was the frank and fluent one, and they the shy and reserved. James Andrew Ramsay was Scotch, as Bruce was. The third, Charles John Canning, was, I need not say, English. Ramsay was the son of an earl; Bruce of an earl also,—the Earl of Elgin, who brought over the Marbles which visitors to the British Museum know so well: and Canning was no doubt prouder of the title of son of his father than his friends could be of their ancestral honours. We should be glad to know now the turn that conversation took between these youths when they anticipated their careers of active life: and there is something very solemn in looking back upon the unconsciousness in which they were living of the remarkable relation their three lives were to bear to each other. All three no doubt assumed that political service would occupy their years and their energies, and they might often imagine how they would act together, and what guidance their co-operation might impress upon events: but no speculations, plans, or dreams of their own could approach in singularity and gravity the actual developments which have been witnessed by some of us who were men when they were schoolboys, and who live to tell their story over two of their three graves.

“It was in 1833 that they took their honours at Oxford. In another ten years, Bruce, having succeeded to his father’s title, and been thereby removed from the House of Commons, was governing Jamaica. He ruled with sense and courage, but with a heavy heart; for on arriving with his young wife, they underwent a fearful shipwreck; and she escaped death at the moment only to die a year later in childbed. The surviving daughter of that marriage was the bridesmaid of the Princess of Wales last month. The other two friends were in the public service also. Ramsay had become the tenth Earl of Dalhousie; and he was now Vice-President of the Board of Trade, and a Privy Councillor. Canning was Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs in the Peel Ministry of that time. Thus far the duties of the three comrades lay wide apart, and there was no indication of any peculiar bond which was to unite their names for posterity. The time, however, was approaching.

“When the second ten years came to an end, Lord Elgin had made himself a sound and high reputation as Governor-General of Canada. His second wife, the eldest surviving daughter of Lord Durham, was living among the scenes she had known when her father was saving and regenerating Canada, and seeing her husband carrying out, with great energy and discretion, her father’s policy. Lord Canning was now at the Post-Office, relinquishing his patronage, and devoting his energies to carry to perfection a department of the public service which could never bring him any brilliant honours or rewards. Some of us may

talents had previously found scope in railway schemes and home administration. Yet, strange to say, once transplanted to Calcutta, his whole soul embraced by preference the paths of war and foreign policy. With

be able to recall some feelings of mortification on the one hand, or of amusement on the other, at the son of George Canning being known as the steady and diligent man of business, of moderate ability and languid ambition, satisfied to have something useful to do. Such was the common notion of the man. but he had two friends at least who could have told us that we did not know him yet.

"And where now was Lord Dalhousie? He seemed to stand as much higher than Elgin as Elgin stood higher than Canning. He was Governor-General of India.

"At first, the public wondered that a man should be taken from the Board of Trade to rule such an empire as India; but it was not very long before the world became occupied with him as a statesman far more than as an economist; and we heard a great deal of his policy. The Indian policy of Lord Dalhousie became one of the chief topics of public interest, and it was felt that there must be something remarkable about the man who was the youngest statesman ever appointed to a position of such responsibility. Great mistakes were made about his policy,—partly from the ignorance of Indian affairs then prevalent in England, and partly from his own excessive reserve. Because the Punjab came into our possession in his time, and then some smaller states, and at length Oude, it was assumed that Lord Dalhousie's policy was one of 'annexation.' It may be better seen elsewhere how untrue this was, and how much more earnestly the Governor-General desired many things than any extension of our Indian territory. In this place I can point out only two or three incidents which mark the spirit of his rule, and link his destiny with that of his early friends.

"He was, if not the father, the guardian, of the Great East Indian Railway; and when he stood to witness the departure of the first train, he was witnessing the doom of the hitherto invincible ignorance, prejudice, and superstition of India. Within a little while he saw the Hindoo priests, and teachers, and public, discussing the subject of pilgrimages,—the merits of which seemed to be largely affected by the ease with which the country could now be traversed by steam. He established in some regions a system of vernacular schools, and advanced the education of the people with as much zeal as any predecessor, and with far more wisdom than the wisest. While our Indian empire itself was growing, and while the minds and fortunes of the people within it were growing in full proportion, Lord Dalhousie had a heavy care on his mind. So many officers were withdrawn from military duty for other service—political, civil, engineering, and administrative in various ways—that he was alarmed about the military efficiency of the forces in the country. Again, those forces were declining in number, while the new

Lord Canning the opposite was true. Bearer of an illustrious name, with associations specially belonging to the period when England's foreign influence stood highest, he himself chose peace and commerce, and,

extensions of territory required an increase. He was anything but an alarmist; but he urged a strong reinforcement of officers, and also a distribution of the troops, by which the safety of the country might be better secured than it could be while European battalions were withdrawn from Bengal for service in the Crimea and in Pegu, and to garrison our new territories to the north-west. He said there must be three more battalions in Bengal, and the distribution of the troops must be rearranged. When he went from one to another of our military stations,—Cawnpore, no doubt, for one, whenever he passed between the seat of Government and the Upper Provinces,—he made the most penetrating inquiries into the state of mind and temper of the forces, native and European, and insisted with all his authority and influence on the vital importance of cultivating a frank and considerate intercourse with the native soldiery, of all races and persuasions. It was regarded as impossible to distribute the forces as he advised and desired. If his word had been taken for the probable consequences, the effort might have been found practicable; and, among other results, the lives of his two comrades would have been very different from what they have actually been.

“After seven years of tremendous work, during which he passed through the labours of all his lieutenants, so far as that his mind was always accessible to them, and his interest engaged in their duty, Lord Dalhousie was worn out; and in another year he came home.

“It must have been a remarkable day in his life, when he sat in Government House at Calcutta, hearing the salutes down the river, and the noise outside, which told of the arrival of his successor, and when he went to the door to meet and bring in that successor,—his old comrade Canning!

“We know how they met. The worn-out man handed to the fresh man a telegram just arrived, which announced that all was well in Oude—newly annexed.

“The consultations of the few following days must have been of the deepest interest,—far transcending anything they had imagined in their Christ-Church days, though there are romantic dreams in college of political friendships more potent than rivalries. The freshman had not everything to learn, for he had been a member of the Government which had co-operated with and guided the Governor-General. Their intercourse was not that of guide and disciple so much as that of statesmen in partnership, one of whom was now retiring. When the worn-out one was carried on board ship, he left his successor impressed with the sense of the constant danger of the Europeans in India, till the old terms of confidence with the native troops could be restored, the forces

when permitted, devoted the entire energies of his nature to the material progress of the land he ruled. Men more opposite in all respects could hardly have been found, though some delight to look for traces of

better officered, and the whole more prudently distributed. The new territories were far less dangerous in themselves than as abstracting the securities of the oldest districts : and one of the warnings delivered to Lord Canning by Lord Dalhousie was, that there was more peril in the region about Calcutta than beyond the Sutlej.

"We were disappointed of Lord Dalhousie's accounts of Indian affairs in Parliament. There was again much wonder that a Postmaster General, as before a Vice-President of the Board of Trade, should be sent out to rule hundreds of millions of men ; and there was no little vexation that Lord Dalhousie was neither seen nor heard. He was very ill ; and soon, when bad news began to arrive from India, he was bitterly blamed and wildly misjudged. His pride and his humility, his temperament and his judgment, co-operated to keep him silent. He would wait for justice. He would some day show that the mutiny was owing to other causes than any policy of his. He could not endure to thrust his own complaints on public attention at a time of national calamity ; and so he sank in dumb submission to misconception, and self-reliance as to the wisdom as well as the rectitude of his course. No doubt he was well aware that he would be justified by the faithful efforts of his friends, and especially of the successor who could best appreciate and explain his policy.

"While he was lying ill, and deprived, as he thought, of the honour due to his rule, there was a time when his sympathies must have been strongly with his two old friends. Lord Elgin was on his voyage as ambassador to China in 1857, when the news of the Indian mutiny reached him. After an hour of anxious meditation, he resolved on a step worthy of a patriotic statesman, and singularly graceful under the circumstances. He decided to suspend his own mission in order to give India the benefit of the whole force he carried with him and his personal presence. Many as had been the pleasant meetings he and Lord Canning had had in the course of their lives, none could have compared in satisfaction with that on the steps of the Government House at Calcutta, when Lord Elgin followed in person the wonderful and welcome news that he was coming up the Ganges with reinforcements, which could not have astonished the natives on the banks more if they had come up from the waters or down from the sky. During the weeks of Lord Elgin's detention in India, before the new batch of forces for China reached Calcutta, his presence and his counsel must have been infinitely supporting to his old friend. Nothing could be finer than the calm bearing of Lord and Lady Canning from the beginning of the season of horror, when it seemed probable that the last European in India might be slaughtered before any adequate help could arrive. The natives gazed in the great

resemblance. Both were young, and both had giant powers, which both bestowed ungrudgingly wherever duty called; both had wives who fell sacrifices to their country's cause not less truly than had they died on

man's face day by day, and they saw no change. Every evening Lady Canning was seen going out for her airing as if nothing was happening; and when another great man came up from the sea with ships and soldiers, the audacity of rebellion was cowed in Calcutta, and far beyond it.

"The horrors of the Cawnpore massacre were enough to have turned the brain of a woman of less calmness and devotedness than Lady Canning; and her husband and his friend must have felt more for her than she did for herself. The officers and their wives and children, whom the Cannings knew face to face, and some of whom they had visited in their cantonments at Cawnpore, were slaughtered like cattle; and the ladies and children cut to pieces and thrown into the well, which I need not describe. Here were realities of life, such as the young Bruce and Canning had little thought of encountering together, in the old college-days. Lady Elgin was safe at home, but she was not much the happier for that; and from no friend at home had Lady Canning a more cordial sympathy.

"Lord Elgin proceeded to his great work in China, thinking of anything rather than that he should again be welcomed by his friend Canning on those steps of Government House, and taken into council over the same desk, about the affairs of the same empire. There had been great changes in less than five years. Lord Elgin had established the new relations between China and our country, and Lord Canning had saved our Indian empire. Their old friend had sunk into his grave, interested to the last in their achievements when his own were over, and were apparently misjudged and almost rejected.

"There were other changes, as both painfully felt.

"Lady Canning's face and voice were absent. She had sunk under the climate, and partly perhaps from the consequences of the suspense and agony of the year of the rebellion. Her husband was not like the same man. His spirit was broken when he lost her; and Lord Elgin saw this in his face at their meeting.

"Once more, knowing that it was for the last time, the friends exchanged confidence. They spent many hours in discussing the interests of the hundreds of millions of human beings whom the one was turning over to the rule of the other. Lord Elgin's hope was that his friend would still be, for a time, an effectual aid to India and to him in Parliament; and though they would hardly meet again, they might yet work together at the same great task. Still, he must have had misgivings that all was over, when he looked upon the haggard face and wasted form which sanguine people said would be restored by the voyage.

"It was a great and memorable administration, that of Lord Canning. Many of us were fully aware of it; and it was generally appreciated

fields of battle; both worked in the same vineyard, pursuing each his path of honour, each ending in an early grave;—but here resemblance ceases. The outlines are the same, the lights and shades contrasting

much less imperfectly than that of Lord Dalhousie. Not only was public attention more earnestly directed to India than ever before, but India, having come under parliamentary government, had converted an anomalous and external kind of interest into a national one. No expectations were too high of the honours that would be awarded to the first Viceroy of India, as soon as he should have recruited enough from the fatigues of his return to appear in public. But while his friend in India was looking for the news of Lord Canning's reception, and of the beginning of his services to India in Parliament, and while we were waiting to see him come out into our streets and parks, he was slipping away. Before he could receive the first instalments of the national acknowledgments, he was dead. When his friend at Calcutta was hoping for some revival of his strength, however temporary, the news came of a funeral in Westminster Abbey, and of the long and noble train of great citizens who were eager to follow the son of George Canning to his grave.

"Amidst the overwhelming cares and pressing business of his Indian rule, Lord Canning had lost nothing of the keenness of feeling with which he thought of the Englishwomen and their young daughters who filled the horrible tomb at Cawnpore. He took a deep interest in the plans for laying out the grounds round the well by which the graves of the soldiers who perished were to be enclosed with the hideous one of the ladies and children, and the whole made a monument of the year of tribulation. It was reserved for the friend who had mourned over the calamity with him to fill his place at the consecration of this monument; and this was done by Lord Elgin on the 11th of February last.

"Each friend has always been worthy of the other in the thorough devotedness to duty and the national service which gives heroic composure to the statesman in office, as well as to the general in command. As Lord Elgin stood 'like a statue' on the upper pavement of the well, in the sight of all the people, his countenance and bearing were as calm as Lord Canning's were in his daily rides in 1857, when the people looked in his face for a reflection of the news from the upper country, and always saw grave composure. But there was sorrow in the heart of the survivor, as there had been in his who was gone. There was sorrow in all hearts, no doubt—in all within the enclosure, and, we are assured, in those of the natives outside. But Lord and Lady Elgin were mourning others than those who were buried there. They were thinking of the brave-hearted and unselfish woman who lay in her grave at Calcutta, and of her husband under the pavement of Westminster Abbey. To them at such a moment it must have seemed as if they had had more to do with death than with life. Something of this is dis-

strangely. Lord Dalhousie carved an empire with the sword for Lord Canning to cement with clemency.*

Few reigns have dawned more brightly than Lord Elgin's. The sun, so long obscured, shone lovingly again on all throughout that broad peninsula. The

closed in the address of Lord Elgin on the evening of the great day of the opening of the East Indian Railway line to Benares, when he remarked on Lord Canning having proposed the health of Lord Dalhousie at the opening of a former portion of the line. He referred briefly, and evidently because he could not help it, to the relations which had existed between the three friends of a lifetime. 'It is a singular coincidence,' he said, 'that three successive Governors-General should have stood towards each other in this relationship of age and intimacy.' The singular condition of welfare at which India is evidently arriving shows that the circumstance is as happy as it is remarkable.

"Amidst the brightest times to come, and the most blessed fortunes that can be in store for India, there will always be, as there ought always to be, a strain of melancholy mingled with the rejoicing. The address of the Bishop of Calcutta, delivered from the monument, will probably be the best and longest remembered sermon of the age. Lord Elgin appears to the people now as the survivor of a series of regenerating rulers of India, who have sacrificed themselves to their work: and when his monument is reared (long hence may it be!) it will be remembered how it was that he was in India during the summer of the mutiny, and that he presided at the dedication of the sacred enclosure at Cawnpore. In all time to come the spirit of the inscription on the monument will hang round the statesmanship and the statesmen of the period of the mutiny, as well as round the memory of the sufferers under its agonies. 'These are they which came out of great tribulation,' says the monument; and the sentiment of a future day, happier even than the present, may include under the description many more of the contemporaries of the transition stage of India than those whose bones lie there.

"In the midst of the great moving picture of Indian history, during the middle period of our century, we may have a moment's attention to spare for the friendship of the three rulers of the time; and some sympathy for them under the discovery so clearly appointed to them, that the fulfilment of the highest and most lawful dreams of youthful ambition involves a very full experience of the mournfulness of human life."

* "Clemency Canning" was the name bestowed upon Lord Canning, in 1857, by the Mercantile Society of Calcutta, in would-be derision of a ruler whose recall they petitioned of the Home Government; but we deem that the title will adhere to his memory in history with a widely different signification to that intended by the "blanched" community who first gave it utterance.

theory of our sword-rule had been reduced to bloody practice, and the last years of Lord Canning's government had served to heal, though not to hide, the scars the sword had made. A feeling not unlike contrition had replaced fierce hatred. The last demand for vengeance on the Indian people for the crimes of 1857, had been hushed by the cry of famine that rose up from the North-West in 1860. To that appeal Great Britain and her colonies had responded by a million of rupees; and Colonel Baird Smith, to whose unflinching zeal the stupendous task of distribution had been intrusted, had fallen a noble sacrifice in a noble cause. Finally, with railways, seventy thousand British troops, and unmatched artillery in European hands, we could at length afford to adopt a less crushing policy towards the natives. This opportunity had been not only seized, but made the most of. Shaking off his early bad advisers, Lord Canning had selected men of far different stamp, who, less prejudiced, soon became the skilful tools of a still more skilful master. To the disposal of accumulations Lord Canning's last year's toil had been devoted; and to Lord Elgin was confided, one March morning, a machine of government more perfect and harmonious than Asia yet had seen. But the echoes of Lord Canning's last salute had hardly died away when difficulties arose. Sir Bartle Frere became Governor of Bombay;* Mr Ritchie died; Mr Laing fell ill; Mr Grey promoted to the Council, Colonel H. M. Durand showed some slight symptoms of dissatisfaction; while the Home Department, intrusted to Mr E. C. Bayley, was overridden by Bengal. In a

* Indian officials of every rank succeed each other so rapidly, that it is difficult to present to the public a picture in which each figure is a portrait. Thus, Sir Bartle Frere has now become a member of the Indian Council at home, and has been succeeded in the government of Bombay by Mr Seymour Fitzgerald.

word, the reins of Indian government are so numerous, and each horse becomes so well acquainted with the driver's will, that any change of hand is fraught at first with danger. The transfer to Lord Elgin had been accompanied by every favourable combination. The former policy, a proved success, fell to one to whom it had been specially indebted; and the author of our colonial constitutions was a fitting instrument to carry out the Queen's command, and call in native rulers to the administration of her Eastern empire. The basis of good government consists in insight into human hearts and tact in dealing with human weaknesses. Both these qualities Lord Elgin possessed to an extent by few surpassed; and with the knowledge that India would not take his character for granted, he sought the readiest mode of becoming familiar with its people. In this spirit was undertaken that brilliant progress so fatal to himself. At Benares, Cawnpore, Agra, Meerut, Umballa, Simla, he had addressed assembled chiefs in words of easy comprehension, and after that his voice was heard no more. Then in virtue of the Indian Council's Act, Sir William Denison, the senior Governor, assumed Vice-royalty. His rule was short, and mainly remarkable for studied inaction; and if we except a cricket-match, to fight which a Madras eleven was ordered up post haste, no measure of importance marks this period.*

* Shortly after the first appearance of this book, "D," writing to the Times, drew up the following bill of indictment against "Mr Thurlow's contemptuous dismissal of the short reign of Sir William Denison as Acting Governor-General of India."—"In your review of Mr Thurlow's book you observe.—'The brief interval between Lord Elgin's death and Sir John Lawrence's arrival, the author appropriately dismisses in a word. Sir W. Denison, who temporarily filled the office, got up a cricket-match and held a reception at Calcutta, and these were the only events of his reign.' Mr Thurlow in this instance has failed to avail himself of his opportunities for obtaining correct information. When Sir William Denison arrived at Calcutta he found everything in confusion. The

Then came Sir John Lawrence; the selection hardly calls for observation. The first civilian Viceroy inherited his office by an accident, and whether the experiment will merit repetition must depend entirely on the measure of its success.

'little war' on the north west frontier was then in active prosecution, and a sharp check had been administered by the enemy to our troops. The affair looked serious, and Lord Elgin, conscious of his approaching end, exhibited his anxiety by frequent telegrams to his official successor, the Governor of Madras. When Sir W. Denison reached Calcutta, he found that the Governor-General's Council, led, I believe, by Sir Charles Trevelyan, then Finance Minister, had actually ordered the little army on the frontier to retire into the plains, and wait for a more favourable opportunity to resume active operations. The Council, like all 'councils of war,' had decided not to fight. Sir William Denison saw at once the danger of retreat. He considered, with the solid common-sense for which he is distinguished, that an exhibition of weakness on our part would encourage the enemy, and most likely turn into a mountain what was then only a molehill. He accordingly accepted the very grave responsibility of countermanding the orders of the Council, telegraphed to Sir Hugh Rose to go in and win; and Sir Hugh, who only wanted the 'hookum,' did go in, and did win. The frontier war was thus finished in a few weeks, as the Bhotan war would have been if it had been similarly treated. Pluck and promptitude always succeed in India. I know from those who were in intimate intercourse with Sir W. Denison, what great anxiety reigned at Government House at the period, until the happy news of a favourable result turned the anxiety into rejoicing. This is 'an event' which I venture to think Mr Thurlow might have fairly added to the 'Cricket match and the reception at Calcutta.'

Now, first, it must be clearly stated that the Sitana trouble was never properly appreciated in England. It resembled the Bhotan campaign in one respect only—in that both owed their origin to the overweening self-confidence of a subordinate administration: in the case of Bhotan, of the Lieutenant Government of Bengal; and in the case of Sitana, of the "Lieutenant-Government of the Punjab and its Dependencies"—a vague term, well suited to invite the presiding genius to poach upon the broad preserves of the Government Supreme in outstanding points of border supervision. What really happened at the last periodical outbreak of the Sitana fanatics against their constituted rulers was as follows:—The Punjab Government, then administered by Sir Robert Montgomery, was, at the outset, loud in expressing its competence to deal with the disorder, and some six weeks were needed to falsify its statements. Then what was termed the "Yusofzei field-force" was brought together, which, under the able guidance of Brigadier Neville Chamberlain, Major-General Garcock, and four such colonels as Salusbury, Probyn, Wilde, and Turner, put a speedy termination to this "little war." The six weeks

Any attempt to describe the nature and the attributes of the society over which Sir John Lawrence was thus called to reign must almost of necessity fail to render to the general reader a fair conception of the reality. More than twenty different and distinct classes enter into its elementary composition, and each of these is so varied and intensified by the peculiar circumstances attending any change in persons and in things, as to baffle every effort at an ordered classification. There are officials, and the crowd of non-officials. The former are divided into members of the covenanted and uncovenanted civil, military, naval, clerical, and legal services; the latter counts within its ranks bankers, merchants, planters, missionaries, travellers, and adventurers, and all these put

above referred to were indeed the cause of some delay and vacillation both in the giving and the carrying-out of the orders of the Government of India, and during that period the position of the Punjab Government and the Government Supreme resembled that depicted in the well known lines.—

“ The Earl of Chatham, all forlorn,
Was waiting for Sir Richard Strachan;
Sir Richard, longing to be at 'em,
Was waiting for the Earl of Chatham ”

This was the state of things to which the mere fact of the succession of Sir William Denison to the Acting Governor-Generalship put a necessary conclusion. The six weeks were spent, the Punjab Government had tried and failed, the machine of Government was again complete in all its parts, the wheels of office once more revolved, and the Council of War, which, in the absence of a responsible head, “ had decided not to fight,” had very properly been requested to reconsider its decision.

Without, however, wishing to enter into the controversial point sought to be raised by “D.,” and, above all, without desiring to detract in any way from the merit due to the vigour and ability of Sir William Denison, who, suddenly called to the highest administrative office under the British Crown, deemed it his duty to abstain as much as possible from all official action pending the receipt of orders from the India Office, it behoves us to state these facts, as showing that the “dismissal in a word” of the short reign of Sir William Denison, as Acting Governor-General of India, though “appropriate,” as stated by the ‘Times,’ was not “contemptuous,” as stated by their correspondent “D.”

together form but one tint in the social rainbow of Calcutta; for, in addition, high-capped Parsees, turbaned representatives of both prevailing native creeds, mixed Eurasians of every shade, deposed dynasties, whose object seems to be to sink the little that remains to them of Oriental noble blood in the vices of our importation—these almost countless particles meet together each day on the Maidan* of Fort William. The Viceroy of the hour is the axis on which they all revolve, and by the precedent which he establishes are decided the claims of this or that colour or religion to intimacy in their dealings with ourselves. The deposed royal family of Mysore, being in practice renegades from their ancestral faith, accept of European dinners. Their royal brethren from Oude, who pollute with their numerous presence the fair retreat of Garden Reach, now vainly strive to attain to a like pre-eminence in degradation. The young ex-King of Oude indeed, and his wily ex-Wuzeer, Ali Nucki Khan, are seen at times at evening parties in Calcutta, and sometimes condescend to ride or drive in Eden Gardens with a white acquaintance; but the memory of their family crimes is still too recent to admit of much good-fellowship. The question of the admission of natives into English drawing-rooms is surrounded with much that is difficult and much that is obscure. In the eyes of Eastern princes, our dances, our dresses, our conversation, and all that constitutes the intercourse between the sexes, is so strangely at variance with their own notions of propriety, as to render it impossible to present to them a picture of European life at which they would not cavil. From the time of Lord William Bentinck it has been attempted to educate them in our ideas, and the mutiny with its sorrows did not obliterate this practice. No

doubt the system received a rude shock by the conduct of the favoured Azimoolah and of his brutal master of Bithoor; but the ladies of Burdwan did not on that account absent themselves from the picnics and parties on the lake to which they were invited by the Croesus Maharaja of the place; neither did Lord Canning thenceforth on that account withhold his invitations from those entitled by immemorial usage to attendance at the Viceroy's balls; and, strange to say, it remained for one of Indian antecedents and of known philanthropy, of cast-iron faith in native virtue and the deepest sympathy with missionary enterprise—in a word, to Sir John Lawrence—to trace a line and say, Thus far shall the native come in contact with ourselves, and no farther.

The step thus taken by Sir John Lawrence at the outset of his viceroyalty, whether right or wrong, was retrograde, and as such affords cause for great regret. It was a blow struck at the native social character, in such a manner as to go home to those most intimate with Europeans, and most partial to the aspect of a white man's court. And in every eye it assumed the more significance as coming from a friendly quarter, from one whom natives deemed allied to them by every instinct engendered by the daily commerce of more than thirty years. Still, though the pride of the dominant race might be flattered by watching the shadows as they formed on the downcast faces of highborn natives, excluded from their presence, and turned away from Government House, somewhat roughly perchance, by a white policeman,* who took a coarse pleasure in his ungrateful task; yet the reflecting element could but regard with sorrow as an evil omen society thus officially divided, and recast ac-

* This is not a poetical licence, as criticism has suggested, but the simple record of a simple fact.

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according to its primitive colours, by the fiat of a former servant of the Company.

Thus such is the condition of Indian affairs that, in great things as in small, all depends upon the nature of the men in power. The present system of subservience to Westminster* that clogs each wheel of ponderous Government machinery with reference and delay, has only tended to enhance this truism. A Governor-General, to do aught to-day, must have a taste for opposition, and an almost total disregard of what they say at home. Yet the manly and consistent attitude maintained by Sir Charles Wood† throughout the course of the last few years,

* The dawn of this era may probably be traced back to 1856, when Lord Dalhousie, sick and weary of his government, so far departed from his own convictions as to consent to promulgate, at the reiterated demand of Leadenhall Street, the annexation of Oude. The small end of the wedge of "subservience," thus inserted, was not easily to be expelled by Lord Canning at a time when our Raj in India was dependent for its bare existence on the sacrifices that England deemed it worth while to make for the suppression of a mutiny from which the East India Company was not destined to emerge with life.

To reassert the dignity of the Government of India in its intercourse with Westminster thus devolved upon Lord Elgin, who was the better qualified to cope with the necessity, both from past experience of representative and responsible government, and from an intimate acquaintance with the Crown's desire that similar institutions should be introduced in Hindostan. From the execution of this paramount duty Lord Elgin never flinched during his two years' tenure of the Viceregal office. The hanging of Rudd (for almost a new crime in India, that of native homicide committed by white hands); the abolition of the "licence tax on trades," of which more hereafter,—these, and a thousand other instances of independent action on the part of the Government of India, might be recorded by those familiar with the Indian history of 1862 and 1863. It is not too much to say, that each day that the Indian administration of Lord Elgin was prolonged, conduced to the readjustment of the balance of power between the Viceroy and the Secretary of State for India—between the Parliament and the Crown; and it was only upon the premature removal of Lord Elgin from the arena of this constitutional struggle, that the system of "subservience to Westminster" attained, not unnaturally, its greatest growth, under the sway of Sir John Lawrence, who was promoted by Sir Charles Wood, from the Council-Board of Sir Charles Wood, to the Viceroyalty of India.

† Now Lord Halifax.

in meeting Parliamentary clamour for Indian Reform, has not received sufficient recognition. Power must remain with some, and perhaps, pending the complete development of the Indian Council's system, it was in good keeping in his hands. However this may be, one can but admire the firmness and ability with which he has succeeded, against the determined opposition of the services and Parliament, in constituting himself, as Secretary of State, sole exponent of the Royal pleasure where India is concerned. The history of the world affords but few examples of such mass of power being given to one man. For years the map of Hindostan lay prostrate at his feet; and though, in the interest of truth, one must confess that kicks, when wanting, have not been spared, it is equally incumbent on us to record our fixed belief; that, at least in Native questions, his policy ever has been such as to sow the priceless seed of restored confidence in England's loyalty; and this alone is a service of no common order. The vast powers thus centred in a single human will, cause the question of who may, or who may not, be Sir Charles Wood's successors, to be fraught with anxiety to millions of our fellow-subjects. Will they cancel certain military measures—will they permit to the so-called Supreme and Local Governments under them any independent action, and if so, how much? These are indeed weighty considerations, the true importance of which can only be appreciated by those possessed of personal acquaintance with the interests at stake.

The fact is, that Sir Charles Wood's measures have been of three classes totally distinct, and the success of two has been so signal as to stifle criticism of the third. An English member of the House of Commons, rich indeed in home experience, but wanting in all local know-

ledge, had undertaken to dictate the laws, restore the finances, and gather up the fragments of the army, of our Indian empire. The result we deem a wonder of our days. The laws prescribed are daily gathering strength and popularity. The finances have acquired an elasticity unrivalled in our times, and the fragments, to all appearance neatly swept together, have so deceived the eyes of Parliament as to pass for a construction perfect in proportion and design. Yet to those who know the truth in military matters, the melancholy patchwork is self-evident, and it but remains for time to scatter broadcast, and remodel on a sound and healthy footing, those martial institutions whose best interests have been so rashly dealt with.*

In India the so-called legal question had always been one of unusually difficult decision. Under the Company, might too often took the place of right, and the doctrine that the country had been got, and must continue to be held, by the sword, never lacked supporters. In the opinion of those indeed who knew the country best, there was much truth in this assertion. The native mind is strangely fitted to evade our justice. The weapon of false witness is especially its own. Each Vakeel or native pleader has at his beck and call a well-trained

* This prophecy has since received its practical fulfilment by two decisions of Lord Cranborne, when Conservative Secretary of State for India. By the first decision, all officers belonging to the Indian army before amalgamation were allowed to join the Staff Corps without any condition or test whatsoever. By the second, measures were taken for compensating officers who could prove that they had not received an equivalent for the sum which they had contributed from time to time to purchase the retirement of their regimental superiors; and now that all just cause for grievance is thus removed, we can heartily acquiesce with Lord Cranborne in the hope that "all who have taken up this cause will use their influence to stay an agitation most mischievous to the Indian service, and inconsistent with the attitude that officers should assume towards their Government."

phalanx of professional perjurers. In native cases of importance the mass of oral and spurious documentary evidence adduced in court, would utterly bewilder an English judge and jury; and the relative value of the oath of men of different shades of creed and colour has ever been much canvassed. The Company went no doubt too far in favour of white evidence; and in those days an Englishman could practically ill-treat natives with impunity. Now, if we err, it is on the other side, and the white are often at the mercy of their native plunderers. Hindoos and Mahomedans, possessing their own social codes and notions of what is right or wrong, care little for our forms of swearing witnesses; and though in remote Mofussil districts, where natives and white men dispense the laws and justice of the land upon an equal footing, one meets with more regard for truth than in the Presidency towns, yet even there corruption thrives to an extent incredible.

Many Indian statesmen have devoted great talents and research to the framing of one law for British India; and all attempts as yet have failed. The most successful efforts are unquestionably those of Sir Charles Wood's reign. The establishment of the High Court, and the introduction of the circuit system, are great experiments, both of which seem likely to succeed. These measures found an earnest advocate and zealous executor in Mr Henry Sumner Maine, who was appointed Legal Member of Council after the death of the lamented Mr Ritchie. Mr Maine was a man of feeble constitution, but most refined and cultivated intellect. His home career had been more occupied with literary labours than the active branches of his profession. His contributions to the 'Saturday Review' and other critical papers were always masterpieces of taste and style, and his well-known work

on ancient law had finally secured to him an honourable and lasting place in the literature of his country. Mr Ritchie had risen gradually to the summit of his aspirations, through the long and crooked, though profitable, paths of the Indian bar, while Mr Maine's first experience of the East dated from his appointment to the Council. He lost not a moment, however, in mastering the intricacies of native law, and at Lord Elgin's instigation became associated with Mr H. B. Harington in the revision of our Indian Procedure Code—a colossal undertaking, well worthy of the energies of two such untiring jurists. Moreover, at that time the conditions of Hindoo polygamy, and the establishment of a Divorce Court in India, were eagerly discussed, and, in addition to his other labours, the consideration of these subjects devolved on Mr Maine. To the solution of such problems he brought great talents, with zeal of no common order; and in all confidence the Indian public watched these complicated tasks intrusted to his care.

The new High Court was constituted under principles most calculated to render it a popular institution. Its ranks absorbed civilians like Messrs Seton Karr and Campbell, of tried and eminent ability, for whom executive appointments equal to their claims could not at the time be found. Its doors were also open to barristers from home, and on its bench two new and startling precedents had been adopted. Natives were to be appointed to this high tribunal, with power to judge our countrymen in criminal as well as civil cases; and, for the first time, natives of high rank became entitled to the same emoluments as their English colleagues. The effect of this was quite electrical, and throughout Bengal the native public prints teemed with praise at the happy omen. It was clear, however, that as regards the native

question, the chances of success or failure depended on the men selected. The statutes of the court had been thus liberally framed, bearing in view a man of proved integrity and parts. Ramapersad Roy was a name, at the very sound of which corrupt vakeels or pleaders quitted court. He was without price, and the office had been made for him ; but ere the letters-patent reached Calcutta he had died. Sumbhoonath Pundit Roy Bahadur indeed was found to reap the honours invented for another ; but the new High Court went forth shorn of its greatest ornament.

Thus strictly following in the track prescribed to him, Sir Charles Wood's best endeavours have been directed towards reconciliation. The wounds were so deep and recent that all his skill was needed ; but the result has been that Indians, great and small, regard the "Maharaja Wood of Westminster" as a certain cure for all political disorders. Yet this triumph, incomparable as it is, has been dearly bought—bought at the cost of much native prestige in our local institutions, previously regarded with the respect due to tribunals from whose decision there practically existed no appeal.

His conduct of finance was not less bold or happy. Not sharing in the ill-timed fear of humiliating our Anglo-Indian services, a special man was found for a very special duty, and Mr Wilson went to India. What has since happened is well known. Mr Wilson lived just long enough to invent machinery for other hands to work. Those then at Calcutta will not have forgotten the feeling of despair that took possession of their minds, when, one evening of unusual heat and dust, the enfeebled society of that capital, issuing from their airtight houses to take their short hour's drive, learnt the worst they long had feared. Never strong, and always

overworked, Mr Wilson had gone forth, at an advancing age, to act a part whose grandeur he alone could properly appreciate. He soon broke down, and shortly after died—a fresh instalment of that mortality so fatal to the interests of India in England.

Mr Samuel Laing was his successor; and though neither the equal nor the prototype of Mr Wilson, this is a name Indian history should not utter without praise. Vast abilities, and home-bred fundamental knowledge of finance, enabled him to hold his own against all comers, and his short term of office was singularly prosperous. Cautious in manner, distinguished for readiness in argument and writing, much was his that an Indian statesman needs. One great quality he lacked—forgetfulness of self; and as successor to a man like Mr Wilson this want was the more conspicuous. Mr Laing was a man whom all commercial undertakings do wisely to employ. He could speak, defeat adversaries, record minutes of unusual length and force, and challenge opposition with unvarying success. To him it mattered little whether chemistry or his Aryan brothers formed the subject of an evening lecture; his powers were flexible, and, equally at home in finance or poetry, he never failed to please. Whether such versatility of thought, and, we may add, of action, fitted him to the same extent for the performance of State offices, may remain question for remark. All we know is, that during his tenure of his post he gave at least local satisfaction. The circumstances under which he quitted India never to return have been long and largely discussed, and of that controversy more than enough has seen the light. Faults there were on both sides; Sir Charles Wood and Mr Laing both forgot that each had pride; neither made concessions, and the weaker fell. By submission Mr Laing might have

served his adopted country longer, but by independence he really served it most.

And then it was that even Sir Charles Wood hesitated. The powers in part given, part assumed, by the Finance Department had grown so rapidly, that an autocrat in England might well begin to deem the sacrifice too great. In his council there were, however, many who, though Bengal civilians, fully recognised the value of outsiders ; and to others, who were loath blindly to admit this principle, public opinion had found means to whisper the well-known name, Trevelyan. Smarting, perhaps, still under the lash of his recall, official idleness had become intolerable to him ; the place was offered and accepted ; and one of the greatest Secretaries our Treasury has seen, one whose familiarity with India dated from his childhood's first ambitions, was duly named Financial Member of the Viceroy's Council. His experience of Madras, no doubt, enabled him to avoid more readily the rocks on which his predecessor split ; and the spirit in which his duties were undertaken left nothing to be desired so far as Westminster was concerned. With the Government of India, properly so called, the case was different ; and all the tact and wisdom of his local master were needed to restrain his accumulated zeal. Tall and worn, but of iron frame, he landed in Calcutta to replace Mr Laing's shadow of his former self. Such was his energy, that barely had Fort William's guns announced his advent, ere he sought and found an opportunity to lay before his colleagues schemes for all kinds of radical improvements. With each branch of home and foreign administration he was all familiar : some hobbies were indeed his own, and those he rode to the death. Such was the immediate removal of the seat of Government to some unknown region situate in Central India, watered by some as yet

unnavigable river, on whose banks, according to Lord Canning, all grew that white men want, and beneath whose soil both coal and marble should abound to an extent unknown.* His arguments and eloquence were such that the Council, fully acquainted with the evils of Calcutta, remained dumbfounded, all save its President, Lord Elgin, who, at all times eager to arrive at knowledge, naturally solicited more accurate details before consenting to transplant to a mythical land the whole machinery of Government. Such an exodus for a site but vaguely dreamt of could only have embarrassed all, and most of all Sir Charles Trevelyan, the very existence of whose department was dependent on Bengal. Neither were schemes for education wanting; and here, again, Madras experience came into play. In short, his energy and reputation, always great, and certainly the former greater since his fall, rendered him singularly calculated to embarrass a superior. The scope of his labours could not be confined even within the pliant limits of Finance :

This question had lately been much discussed. The only point about which there existed no controversy at the time, was that Calcutta was a channel house, and had long ceased to fulfil the requirements of the Government of India.

Now Sir Charles Trevelyan's mission was twofold. First, to raise the money needed by the Government of India; and, secondly, to exercise a general supervision over its expenditure. In his first capacity he was practically absolute. In his second capacity of supervisor he was liable to be met at every turn with technical, military, and engineering arguments, to which a man of less ability, and, above all, of less tenacious confidence in himself, must have often given way.

The shape in which the question of a change of the seat of Government first came officially before Sir Charles Trevelyan, belonged to the second category of his duties. An expensive estimate for new public buildings for the Government Supreme at Calcutta had been prepared, and was one of the first papers to be put into his hands on arrival at his post. Here then was an opportunity for "eloquence and argument" on which the pent-up energy of a sea-voyage might be well expended; and little wonder if his colleagues at the council-table, who had borne the heat and burthen of the day, "remained dumbfounded" for a while.

no passing mention of his measures can form an outline of his aims, and we can only deal with the most prominent as they may occur.

While touching on finance, it may not be amiss to contemplate a moment the class of local men intrusted with it. In the Company's days its special character had not been ignored, but rather the reverse; and the conservative nature of directors' patronage had almost gone so far as to constitute the conduct of accounts an office for which hereditary claims were deemed the fittest qualification. Thus it was that when a vacancy occurred, a member of the house of Lushington was sought; and if one could be found of decent antecedents, he was generally pitchforked into power. At the demise of the Company many Lushingtons were thus bequeathed to us, and with them their supposed facility for figures; and though it is true that, upon the departure, superannuated, of one member of this happy family, justice was done by Lord Elgin to a singularly able, zealous public servant, who for long years had played an up-hill game in this exclusive walk; yet shortly after, strange to say, the old tradition re-asserted its prerogative, and upon Mr Drummond's appointment to the Lieutenant-Governorship of the North-West Provinces, a Lushington was his successor as Financial Secretary to the Government of India.

Sir Charles Trevelyan, among his Treasury predilections, appears to have harboured a pet project for a system of exchanges between India and Whitehall; and no doubt the plan possesses many merits. Yet the rules of the Civil Service proper retain so much of their exclusive character, that a so-called "uncovenanted officer" of junior grade still occupies a place well-educated Englishmen object to. An instance of this recently occurred,

when a well-bred scholar, after trial, finding all doors to advancement shut against him, and he himself condemned to the work, and much of the society, of a class of writers known as "native Christians," neither remarkable for talent nor morality, reluctantly exchanged his Indian prospects for such work as he could get at home, with smaller pay, but the position of a gentleman.

The third class of Sir Charles Wood's measures demands more careful scrutiny. His military policy has failed, to an extent the more apparent when compared with his successes in other branches of the public service. The misfortunes of our Indian army, during the years it has been helpless in the hands of home authorities and Horse Guards prejudice, have attained to a pitch only rendered possible by a fatal war resulting in the utter bankruptcy of India's proper share of independence. Thenceforth all not personally interested welcomed any change, however fraught with wrong, that promised to relieve the land we live in from enhanced financial burdens, without neglecting the integrity, or, we might more truly say, recovery, of our Eastern rule.

The night of mutiny was long and pitifully dark. During its continuance it had been barely possible to watch the fortunes of the few on whom we all depended; and when morning dimly broke—the storm yet raging with increasing fury, the waves of war still lashing our frail bark, and the rollers of rebellion surging past to melt in foam upon the rugged Punjab strand, that, acting as a breakwater, was at once our greatest danger and sole chance of safety, and beyond which the waters, thick and turbid still, were calm enough to allow of rest to the exhausted and diminished crew who had fought with death and conquered,—then, indeed, all who could appreciate the past did dread the future. Cadres of British officers

were all remaining of our native army. So long as actual fighting lasted, their value had been priceless; with the energy of despair they had formed themselves in bands of heroes, against whose prowess all attacks proved vain; outnumbered many times, they had cut their bloody way through countless hosts of enemies; and now that all was over, England felt they had done well their country's work, and honours and rewards were freely showered on them. It was not long, however, before all became aware of their anomalous position. The army-list showed rolls of names to whom death had dealt promotion, and who for a time found occupation in stamping out in far-off districts the last embers of revolt. Then suddenly arose the cry of bankruptcy, and each rupee was watched in circulation and grudged to our defenders: yet a little, and was born that word "amalgamation:" offspring of economy and wrongs, it proved the parent of embarrassments untold, a fruitful source of misery to many, of jealousy to all.

In those days India was in everybody's mouth, and two men's names were paramount. Both were abused, each in the country of his residence, and both, abroad, were prophets. Lord Canning, who at the earliest moment had stayed the hand of butchery, had reaped the reward of those who interpose between soldiers and success; the very merchants, recovering their colour, now clamoured for revenge; and the natives, crushed in their turn by our heavy heel, not unnaturally regarded the head of Government as the source of their misfortunes. With Sir Charles Wood the case was different: not strictly popular at home, enough had happened to heap odium upon one so singularly well placed to prove the scapegoat of a nation's crimes; whilst in India, his consistent care of native interests had placed him on the

pinnacle of their hopes for future favours. The demand for amalgamation had been very general. Having fought and bled together, there arose between the Queen's and Company's armies a feeling that each was not unworthy of the other: neither was this feeling purely sentimental; each saw, or thought he saw, a positive advantage in such union. To English officers who had devoted time and opportunities to the study of native languages and character, the broad preserves of Indian administration should at length be opened; and Indian officers were not loath to serve the Queen and wear her lace, with the prospect of improved position when circumstances should call them home; neither were they blind to the advantages implied in changes and exchanges from India's dusty camps to Aldershot or Chobham. Thus, in a way and for a time, the scheme was positively popular, and only more inquiring minds read the mutual sacrifices such a measure must entail. Among the endless difficulties besetting its consideration, ranked primarily pensions, funds, and local service claims. Then there was the fact of the commission money, by means of which our English pay could only be compared to interest on capital invested; and the purchase system, though indeed existing in both armies, was conducted in so different a manner as practically to preclude comparison. With the special arms, or branches of our services, the question appeared to offer more ready promise of solution. Original gratuitous cadetships might be held of equal value, whether received from Crown or Company; and conditions as to special training for an Indian or a home career might easily have been dictated. However this may be, the means employed seemed such as to baffle opposition; and, armed with a royal warrant, Sir Charles Wood went forth, ostensibly to shower royal favours

with a lavish hand upon distinguished men, himself most ignorant of what lay before him. The position was one really forced upon him, and not of his selection. It was a task which fell to him as an item of his daily labours : great as it was, to have hesitated might have displayed cowardice or want of confidence in the powers that God had given him. Neither of these feelings was likely to deter Sir Charles Wood ; and he commenced with characteristic energy to call together men, and establish data for his guidance.

Among the men so called together was one whose name can hardly be too prominently recorded. As adjutant of his regiment, not many years before, young Norman had become remarkable for bearing, zeal, and knowledge of his work. Selected by Lord Clyde, he had served in offices never previously committed to one so young in years. Called by the rapidly-succeeding deaths of three superiors to act as Adjutant-General to our army before Delhi, General Nicholson and he together had grappled with and overcome the greatness of that crisis. Although his honours had been reaped on others' graves, both pen and sword were ever in his hand ; and to those who knew him then and fought beside him, his name will be inseparably connected with Metcalfe's ruined house, and that intrenched position on the heights commanding Delhi where Hindoo Rao once dwelt.

Indeed, all who could shed light on the obscure questions to be dealt with were earnestly addressed, and all responded by reports embodying their private hopes and fears, and breathing opposite advice. Sir James Outram and Sir William Mansfield, with junior officers like Colonel Baker, each had his say, and all the doctors differed. Commission sat upon Commission, and the work advanced but little. The patience of the Horse

Guards had been sorely tried—action of some kind had become essential ; and at length in despair some ready pens put certain figures down on paper which, aiming at a compromise with all, eventually pleased none. A basis thus established, much was hurried over, and still more omitted altogether. Then came the Staff Corps, which, with its painful changes and uncertainty, has wrought more wrong and deceived more minds than aught else we know of. The establishment of a Staff Corps originated in a known necessity*—the only question was the mode of execution. The knot was so entangled, and had been tied by such countless hands, that cutting seemed the only remedy. Time pressed, moreover, so the sharpest sword was sought. That sword was Colonel Norman's. The blow was bold, and dealt with skill ; the tangled skein parted at its centre, and for a time all hoped a conjuror had done it, and that the threads, proving of equal length, might all be worked up without waste. This hope, like many others, was doomed to bitter disappointment. The immediate pressure was indeed removed—amid whispered approbation the expectant crowds had vanished—but the real difficulties of the situation had practically increased tenfold.

It happened that most of the heads of the Indian army had profited in some measure by amalgamation, and that rewards for recent service had reached the higher grades of officers, and won their silence for a time at least ; hence the junior captains and subalterns were those who really suffered most, and it was exactly they who naturally were least consulted, and whose opinions, when expressed, received least consideration. Thus it is also, that as these grew from boys to men, they awoke to a

* To afford employment, and make a provision for the officers of mutinied and disbanded corps.

consciousness of wrongs that now are uttered and repeated each year with increasing force. Neither can it be lost sight of, that in practically endeavouring to obliterate all former service claims and regimental pride, the Government has been guilty of a policy as unwise, and calculated to estrange the army, as those measures of the Restoration, when the tricolor, with the names and numbers of distinguished corps, gave place to the Bourbon flag, and to a series, perfect, indeed, in arithmetical progression, but wanting in those 'grand associations upon whose wings the eagles had been borne to Moscow and Madrid.

Thus it was with the "Bengal Engineers," who had ever been conspicuous for talent and distinction. Thrice weeded, those who withstood the test of such a crucible might well boast of merit. The merit was theirs, and they were duly proud of it. No service had produced a greater number of brilliant representatives. In peace and war her sons had sought and found a field of action worthy of themselves. Equally great in practice and in theory, many of the highest administrative offices of India had almost become hereditary to them. They possessed a powerful identity not easy to erase; they were ripe, at least, in glory; so their doom was sealed: the scythe went forth, they were gathered into the royal ranks, and since have been forgotten.

Of military measures two more only call for immediate remark. First, the oft-quoted breach of faith in the want of observation by the Indian Government of the gracious terms of the amalgamation warrant; and, secondly, the establishment of the Military Finance Department, to whose tender care was handed over all that remained of our former Indian army. The first has been so much discussed and fully proved, that few lines will

serve to record our deep conviction that the royal word has not been kept. Quite recently, and with perhaps the best intentions, a Royal Commission sat on this inquiry ; some evidence was taken, and the matter was dismissed with certain unimportant observations. In such questions all depends upon the composition of the Commission, and the one to which reference is made was singularly calculated to defeat the objects aimed at by its authors.

The Military Finance Department had its origin in economy. Its childhood had been passed in those days when, as has been said, each rupee was watched in circulation ; and even later, when fortune smiled again, its object was not so much to check excess in some departments as to reduce the estimates of all without reference to obligation or utility. For the sole control of this machine, under the personal authority of Lord Canning, a man of obstinate ability had been selected ; and, armed to the teeth with power and promise of support, Colonel Balfour appeared upon the stage of past extravagance. For some two years he conducted the work of pruning with a knowledge of detail only exceeded by his zeal in execution. To him succeeded Major Malleon. The writer of 'The Red Pamphlet'* was not likely to shut his eyes to facts, and his conduct of military finance proved worthy of his name and reputation. Lord Elgin wrote, on Colonel Balfour's resignation, that "a man who, right or wrong, saved his country several millions, well merited some reward." And thus it was with Major Malleon, who, in the discharge of duties specially unpopular, ever sought to reconcile the support of the finances with the interests at stake.

* A work published at Calcutta at the outbreak of the mutiny, in which the conduct of every department of the Government of India, and especially of the Military Department, was severely criticised.

CHAPTER II.

THE MINOR PRESIDENCIES.

THE relations between the Government of India and the Minor Presidencies of Madras and Bombay have never been very clearly traced. Many efforts have indeed been made to obtain from home a definition of their respective authority and independence ; but the wisdom of leaving each separate question to be decided upon its own merits, and of maintaining the general responsibility of every one concerned, is so apparent, that such demands have been ever met with silence or evasion. In matters of prerogative, a person whose position is uncertain is naturally most susceptible ; and thus, though this system has no doubt produced great public benefits, it has also been the cause of much personal hostility. In former days, when Indian mails went round the Cape, the fact of a Hastings or Cornwallis watching, for aught he knew, an early opportunity of meddling, might often tend to keep a sleepy Governor awake ; and it must at all times be a comfort for a Governor-General to have it in his power to turn his weary eyes from the contemplation of his own measures to the more pleasant occupation of criticising others. Again, whenever it so occurred that a really happy understanding existed between supreme and local governors, each did his work

the better for a little constitutional encouragement. Fortunately this was the case when Lord Harris ruled Madras and Lord Canning was in India. Their friendship dated from their school-days; each occupied the place for which his talents fitted him; both had a modest unspoken consciousness of this, and all went well. The antecedents of Lord Harris were colonial, and in Madras he found a field more ready for the seed he had been used to sow than would have been the case in any other part of India. The people of his kingdom were more industrious and agricultural than Hindoostanees properly so called, and not even the events of 1857 could rouse them from their apathy in things political. Moreover, many causes had conduced to render the Madras troops the most stanch in their allegiance. Not only were they of lower caste, and less open to religious impulse, than the Sepoys of the other Presidencies—not only had they known us longest, and watched with envy our successive conquests over the warlike races of more northern India, to whose hard terms they had so often bent—but they, and they alone, had, owing to their maritime position, full opportunities of judging of our vast resources. Yet the fact that the nature of this people is not prone to mutiny, does not detract from the credit due to Lord Harris, who, knowing them as a ruler should his subjects, turned his knowledge to the best account, and, by dismantling his own Presidency of both guns and men, enabled Lord Canning and Lord Clyde to reconquer Northern India.

Lord Harris was succeeded by Sir Charles Trevelyan. Much has been already said of him, but more remains to tell. Bred to the Indian Civil Service, he had mastered young the elements of native thought, and to the perfection of this study he had since devoted such