

LETTER V.

THE POLICY OF ANNEXATION.

WE have now taken a hasty survey of the real nature of the crisis through which we have passed, and I have pointed out that the aim and object of the rebels was a war of extermination, and that the attainment of that aim was far from being so chimerical or so impossible as I fear some people will now try to persuade us. Are we again to be exposed to such a danger? The surest way to guard against it is to estimate it correctly, not to underrate and not to exaggerate it. We have also endeavoured to calculate the forces which have enabled us to overcome and subdue the danger for this time; and if my views are accepted, an impression will have been produced that we should watch closely and foster the conservative interests of the country, and strive to obtain the highest talent and qualifications for its administration, especially encouraging the employment of natives, and steadily opposing the reckless intrusion from the mere lust of patronage of young Europeans into posts of authority and emolument without any special training or proved aptitude, and to the exclusion of well qualified natives.

And now we come at last by a natural transition to the point which I promised to elucidate—the

causes of the very general dislike to our rule and distrust of our intentions, which have for years been appraent to all who have succeeded in gaining the confidence and eliciting the undisguised sentiments of the better educated natives of India, the causes which have led to the general disaffection throughout India, of which the mutiny of the sepoys, and the rebellion of a vast area to the north of the Nerbudda, may be considered as merely premonitory and diagnostic symptoms.

This general disaffection throughout India has been rapidly increasing in bitterness and restlessness ever since Lord Dalhousie assumed the reins of Government at Calcutta in January, 1848. Where general disaffection and distrust prevail, the mere ostensible pretext or provocative to actual conflict is never long wanting. Anything will cause an excitement; anything will serve as a cry; anything will be caught at and exhibited by the designing leaders, and accepted by the angry multitude as the crowning injury and insult, the last intolerable infliction, which must be opposed and resisted, or endured for ever. Greased cartridges will do, fetters for refusing them will do, modern antique prophecies will do, anything will do for an exciting cause, when discontent, suspicion, and credulity reign. What excuse was there for the attack on the Tuileries in August, or the prison massacres in September, 1792?

Where an immense population is subjected to a foreign and alien race, and especially where the natives and the conquerors are of different colours, there must exist some amount of repugnance and heartburning; and nothing but the most scrupulous respect for ancient rights, and a thoroughly efficient administration on the part of the dominant race, can overcome the natural aversion to a foreign yoke, and secure permanent or even long-continued submission and peace. From want of sympathy with the natives, and our pride of superiority, and the ever-increasing lust of patronage, we have excluded the natives from all share and interest in the Government, and from almost all posts of dignity and high emolument; and we have done nothing to initiate that human fellowship between the races, without which our mission in the East must for ever remain dark and barren. It has gradually come to pass that there is *no* human relation between the English and the natives of India, neither that of master and slave, nor that of patron and client, nor until 1857 even that of open foes; but a hard misunderstanding and mutual distrust subsist, which but a few individuals on either side can break through. And within the last twenty years, but more particularly within the last ten years, from the extension of our territory, and the consequent employment in greater numbers of young and inexperienced men, the inefficiency, oppression,

and corruption of our judicial and magisterial establishments have been aggravated, and in some districts have become intolerable. And within the same period we have gradually shown more and more disregard for ancient rights, less and less consideration for the most legitimate and cherished feelings and predilections of the best-instructed and most influential classes of the natives. It was not always so ; we did not gain our immense possessions and power in India by such means. We cannot keep them so.

While the founders of our Indian Empire were maintaining and strengthening a precarious position, *controlling and conciliating allies, and contending* with powerful enemies, whom they could not but respect and admire in some degree, the English in India continued to place a high value on the good will and good opinion of the natives. While they were evoking peace and order out of a chaos of conflicting interests, they learned at every step to appreciate both the value of native tact in negotiation, and the powerful influence of our own reputation for honour and fair dealing. And as in all times of conquest, crisis, and real difficulty the work was done by a few heroes and statesmen, our most celebrated tasks of the pacification, settlement, and organization of large provinces were effected by one or two able and experienced English officers in each

province, by means of some special native agency and the existing local authorities. These able and experienced men—first-rate, second-rate, or third-rate soldiers or administrators—never make themselves offensive to the natives, never despise the inhabitants of the country, or think lightly of their ancient rights, privileges, customs, or prejudices. In fact, they understand the natives, and can make themselves understood and respected by them. Search the works, the official writings, and the official acts, of such men as Lord Metcalfe, Sir Thomas Munro, Frederick John Shore, Sir John Malcolm, Mountstuart Elphinstone, Sir Henry Russell, General Low, and Sir Robert Hamilton, for the proof of these allegations. But as our supremacy became every day more surely established and acknowledged, the immediate obvious necessity for reliance on native agency rapidly diminished, until the stream of home patronage, which grows with what it feeds upon, has at length filled the whole country with English gentlemen to be provided for, and with apparent functions to be performed. The mass of European idlers and nonentities in the civil and military services don't certainly add to the physical strength of England in India, while they detract from her moral strength, lower the native ideal standard of English ability and honour, and introduce an element of insolence, contempt, and tyranny, which is most

dangerous to our power, and derogatory to our national reputation. The same great vice pervades our entire system; an unnatural and degrading rule of exclusion is manifest in all our establishments; appointments for Englishmen are multiplied; and young Englishmen without any peculiar qualifications are placed in minor positions, the duties of which could be fulfilled in a much more efficient manner by natives, with the great advantage of their improvement in knowledge, in self-respect, and in attachment to British interests.

But our reputation has suffered of late years, by derelictions in a still more fatal direction. The Duke of Wellington made a well-known declaration in 1802: "I would rather sacrifice Gwalior, or any frontier, ten times over, in order to preserve our character for scrupulous good faith." We have *not* preserved our character for good faith. Within the last twelve years especially, we have made several summary extinctions of sovereignties and annexations of territory, most doubtful in their legality according to the strict letter of treaties and of the law of nations, and in their obvious spirit and tendency manifestly significant of our decreasing regard for the honour and interests of our native allies. Of course each of the cases alluded to must be judged upon its own merits; but that a great change has come over the spirit of our policy, since all powerful

opponents have disappeared from the scene, will be seen from a very cursory reference to historical facts. And it cannot be doubted that this change has spread great terror and dissatisfaction among all the classes interested in the stability of the native principalities.

During the stormy and busy period from 1800 to 1820, we respected all existing rights, rewarded liberally our own allies, and showed the fullest consideration for the dignity of our conquered enemies and the interests of their adherents.

When Tippoo Sultan's monarchy fell with Seringapatam, we took a third of the conquered dominions as our share, we made a good bargain with the Nizam for his third of the territory, but we erected the remainder, which was in fact nearly the whole of the original Mysore country, into a principality for the representative of the ancient Rajahs; and we agreed with the Nizam^{*} to make a handsome and becoming provision for Tippoo's large family. But of late years, although an ample share of land, yielding upwards of seven lakhs of rupees per annum, was conceded to us by the Nizam for this express purpose, the Supreme Government and the Home authorities have made several plans for the gradual reduction and ultimate extinction of the allowances

* By the Partition Treaty of Mysore in 1799

to Tippoo's descendants; and in a despatch on this subject from the Court of Directors, which was published in all the newspapers about a year ago, as if calculated to gain universal approval, it was plainly stated that the Mysore family must be prepared to "mingle with the people," that the stipends would all be gradually diminished, and after a certain number of lives, would be entirely withdrawn. Of the vicious nature of the system of hereditary stipends, so burdensome to the State, and so demoralizing to the recipient, there can be no question; it is most objectionable in principle and in practice. But why has the opportunity in this case, as in many others, been lost of introducing that powerful conservative element, private property in land? Thirty or forty years after Tippoo's death, and at a distance of fifteen hundred miles from Mysore, there could have been no necessity for keeping the princes, brought up from childhood under our tuition, in custody or in surveillance. In the possession of lauded estates, which might once for all have been conferred on the head of the family or of the several branches, the princes would have been attached to a safe locality, and established in an honourable and useful position, instead of being condemned to an idle and discontented existence in Calcutta. The family of Tippoo appears to be entitled to a permanent provision in some shape or other, by every dictate of compassion

and justice, for, as before mentioned, our Government accepted of a valuable consideration from its allies for the express purpose of undertaking this charge. Any plan for attenuating these stipends at each succession, and for ultimately extinguishing them, would be most iniquitous; and the recommendation that the princes should learn to "mingle with the people," sounds to the native ear like a cruel mockery. Nor is this so unreasonable. Do we in Europe expect the scions of a Royal line, however ephemeral its power may have been—a Murat, or a Beauharnais—to "mingle with the people?" Then is it to be supposed that in a country like India, in a very inferior state of civilization, such a recommendation will be received with complacency or recognised as considerate and honest advice? I do not doubt the intentions of the upright Home Government, but I do consider this case as one illustration of the change induced in our political views by forty years of supremacy, and of the scanty sympathy which the illustrious and unfortunate princes and nobles of India have received of late years.

Between 1800 and 1819, when the great general pacification of India took place, we were not ashamed to make compromises and concessions even in the midst of our greatest triumphs. After driving the most active and enterprising of the Mahratta chief-

tains, Holkar, out of every part of his dominions into the Punjab, where his army might have been completely destroyed with ease, we concluded peace with him in 1805, on moderate terms. This State having again become hostile in 1817, and its military power having been destroyed at the battle of Mahidpore, a treaty of peace was made with Mulhar Rao Holkar, restoring him his capital and the greater part of his territories, and leaving his honour and his independence undiminished. Ameer Khan of Tonk, a soldier of fortune and partisan of Holkar, with no hereditary pretensions or powerful connexions, whom we might have crushed, or set aside and pensioned, without exciting any extensive ill-feeling, was confirmed and secured in all his recently acquired possessions, yielding upwards of fifteen lakhs of rupces per annum, and some districts added as a mark of the good-will of the Honourable Company. By numerous similar settlements, evincing a generous and friendly consideration both for ancient rights and for the new interests which had sprung up on the ruins of the Mogul Empire, much influence was gained by the Company and much opposition disarmed.

When the last of the Peishwas, after the short war brought on by his own unexampled treachery, surrendered himself to Sir John Malcolm, a course was adopted, to spare, as much as possible, the pride of

the Mahrattās, and to leave the Sirdars of the Deccan a national centre for the preservation of their old customs and former dignity. A part of the immense territories lately under the sway of the Peishwas was erected into an independent principality for the Rajah of Sattara, the representative head of the Mahratta Empire. Lord Dalhousie took advantage of the failure of a direct heir, refused to acknowledge the Hindoo law of adoption, and extinguished this small but influential and friendly sovereignty. When Rajah Appah Sahib of Nagpore, having forfeited all claim to further forbearance by his continued hostile intrigues against our power, was deposed, the grandson of Rughojee, Bhonsla the Second, who fought against us at Assaye and Argaum, was placed on the Musnud of Nagpore, and thus all existing interests in that quarter were conciliated. On the death of this Rajah, our faithful and submissive ally, Lord Dalhousie, declined to recognise his grand-nephew and heir, and in total defiance of fact and law declared the Bhonsla family to be extinct. In all our treaties of peace we exacted ample indemnity for our war expenses, accessions of revenue to support our increased establishments, and guarantees for our future undivided supremacy; but, at the same time, the prudent and far-seeing policy was observed, of not driving the conquered princes and nobles of India to despair by

utter confiscation, or by such excessive reduction of their revenues as would render impossible the support of their accustomed and decent state, and of their relations and hereditary vassals, and impair the efficiency of their administrations. The native principalities were then regarded as forming a most valuable place of refuge for ambitious and warlike characters, and for those numerous families of hereditary official reputation, who, under our system of rule, must inevitably have sunk into obscurity, poverty, and discontent—have become either beggars or conspirators.

“I am decidedly of opinion,” said Sir John Malcolm, “that the tranquillity, not to say security, of our power will be hazarded in proportion as the territories of native princes and chiefs fall under our direct rule.” “It appears to me,” said Mountstuart Elphinstone, “to be our interest, as well as our duty, to use every means to preserve the allied Governments. The period of our downfall in India will probably be hastened by every increase of our territory and subjects.” “I consider the extinction of a native State,” said Sir Henry Russell, “as a nail driven into our own coffin.”

What a contrast to the counsel of these veteran Indian administrators and statesmen was the bold declaration of Lord Dalhousie, after one year's experience in the office of Governor-General:—“I take

this fitting opportunity of recording my strong and deliberate opinion, that in the exercise of a wise and sound policy the British Government is bound not to put aside or neglect such rightful opportunities of acquiring territory or revenue, as may from time to time present themselves." This is not the place to discuss the justice of the annexation of the Punjab, Sattara, Jhansi, Nagpore, and Oude, which all took place under Lord Dalhousie's tenure of office : we are concerned at present only with the *policy* of such acquisitions, with the effect thereby produced on the public opinion of India, and in particular with the share which these repeated "acquisitions of territory and revenue" have had in kindling the terrific conflagration of 1857.

So long as we continued to be still only one of the powers of India, and were engaged in subduing fierce enemies, and conquering provinces, alliances with the native princes were sought, and we certainly drew our full share of advantages from such as we formed. For years we were celebrated as faithful and liberal friends, our generous restorations of the Mysore and Sattara Rajahs gained us golden opinions from all sorts of people ; our generous leniency after the treachery of Appah Sahib, the Rajah of Nagpore, in 1817, in placing another member of the family on the Musnud, was a strong proof of our moderation and regard for the illustrious families of the country. But with the dis-

appearance of the last vestige of an opposing power our moderation began to disappear; the lust of patronage, the swelling of our establishments, led to financial difficulties, and the imprudent and most unjust expedition to Affghanistan in 1839 was the commencement of a series of annual deficiencies, which appear to have stimulated our rulers to annexation, and to the more rapid and sweeping resumption of estates as a means of restoring a financial equilibrium. Lord' Ellenborough's equitable and considerate settlement of the Gwalior State after the Maharajpore campaign, had a most reassuring effect throughout India; but Lord Dalhousie carried the policy of annexation and resumption beyond all precedent; and enforced it against our most faithful and submissive allies. That this plan has signally and deplorably failed must be now sufficiently apparent. That it has led to a widely spread discontent among the most influential classes, whose ideas descend and penetrate through every rank of Indian society, is equally certain. In every mosque, in every bazaar, in every assemblage of the people, during the last ten years, loud and bitter have been the denunciations of the bad faith of our Government. Satara, Nagpore, and Oude have been the greatest sources of discontent.

LETTER VI.

SOCIAL EFFECTS OF ANNEXATION.

THE extensive distress and ruin among the most cultivated and influential classes of Indian society, the rage, mortification, and consternation produced by these repeated annexations, can neither be denied nor doubted by any one who has seen anything of life in India. Lord Dalhousie and his supporters have said, and will say again, that they never expected that the extension of British rule would be acceptable to the parasites of a Native Court, who fatten on its profusion and its corruption; and the claims of the native military and official aristocracy to a solid and permanent establishment under our revolutionary arrangements are usually dismissed, if they are ever taken into consideration at all, with a rhetorical and oburgatory tirade, of which the political economy is as shortsighted and unsound as the language is flippant and unfeeling. A life tenure of their emoluments to sinecurists is generally considered as a remarkably liberal settlement; while the titles to landed estates and to hereditary charges on the revenue are strictly and unrelentingly sifted. All prospects of employment in posts of high distinction and emolument are closed. All places

of authority are filled by English officers, many of whom (especially within the last ten years, from the increasing numbers required) are ignorant, inexperienced, and eminently unconciliatory in their manners. Our Government takes all that it can, resumes landed estates and allowances of money, whenever it can find a plausible excuse, even from the occasional arbitrary acts of the native princes, to do so; but grants nothing, gives nothing: so that the constant and certain tendency of our rule hitherto has been to level all social inequalities, till none are left between the dominant English and the peasantry, but a purely official class of upstart ministerial officers, trained in our courts, badly paid and corrupt, who in the eyes of the natives represent the character and spirit of our Government, and in the eyes of our Government represent the character and spirit of the natives in general. For there are comparatively few of the English officials in India who have any intercourse with any class of the natives except their own subordinates and the suitors in their courts and offices, and they form their opinion of the native character from what they hear and see.

A native sovereign, with his locally recruited army and personal attendants, his religious, national, and family ceremonies and processions, and progresses through the country, is a bountiful source of hereditary employment, of pride, amusement, and excite-

ment to all ranks and classes. All this ceases on an annexation, all public pomp, state, and general amusement cease, the sting and vivifying charm of life is gone, everything is doomed to settle down to a dead, dull, and uniform level. Too little thought has been given to this consequence of our interference; we have sneered and mocked at the notion of natives feeling loyalty and affection for their ancient chieftains, though in every page of history, and in every event of the present day, we may see that these sentiments have a most powerful influence, more powerful, perhaps, among Oriental nations than they ever lead among those of Europe. And, in a certain phase of civilization, in a certain stage of social development, these sentiments are powers which a wise Government should know how to evoke and how to wield. We have done nothing to encourage feelings of loyalty and devotion for our Queen or for our Government; we have grossly outraged those feelings by our treatment of friendly princes and their families, and we now see the results in the rebellion and attempted war of extermination of 1857.

Though despotic, the native Governments of India are truly patriarchal; they discourage, more or less, the accumulation of private property—at least among the personal followers of the sovereign—whose traditional policy it is to have even the most powerful

of his nobles dependent on him, and to retain complete control over their fortunes. For these reasons the native monarch, from immemorial custom, is heir-general to all his own relations, ministers, and courtiers; but, on the other hand, he never fails to provide for the families of his deceased servants, with a liberality proportionate to the amount of the realization from their estates or hoarded wealth, while all the great civil offices and military commands are filled from these favoured classes, who form, in fact, the native aristocracy. The native monarchs, doubtless, adopted this plan from jealousy of their nobles becoming too powerful, and for the same reason they frequently preferred to provide for their relations and courtiers by sinecure offices, annual money allowances, and occasional presents, to granting them jagheers or landed estates. We cannot, of course, continue this barbarous, irregular patriarchal system, but hitherto we have not sufficiently, in fact not at all, recognised the obligations imposed on us by its existence from time immemorial. In consequence of this system, an aristocracy has grown up, which we find in possession of all the power, wealth, and privileges of the annexed country, dependent on the will and favour of an absolute monarch, it is true, but protected by ancient custom, and by that universal public opinion, against which even an absolute monarch can seldom offend with impunity.

Private accumulations have been discouraged, and generally appropriated at each succession, but the right to a perpetual provision for the family, and to the recognition of their dignity and rank, has ever been held sacred. Our rule works a complete revolution in their position and prospects, effectually closing to them their former career in the public service, and allowing to the stipendiary and sinecurist merely his actual emoluments for life, or, as "a special case," for two or more lives, so that ruin and degradation are but postponed for a generation or two. Now, it appears to me, that the very fact of the obstacles offered to the accumulation of private property, serves to render the right to a perpetually hereditary stipend or sinecure much more powerful and indefeasible than it can ever be under a constitutional Government. And yet, in England, we have always given ample, frequently excessive, compensation on the abolition of sinecure offices and hereditary pensions. In India we have, as yet, offered no compensation to the higher classes, the most reflecting and most influential of the population, for the loss of rank, power, and wealth, for the utter ruin and desolation, in many cases, which the introduction of our system of Government brings upon them. Had we recognised the vested rights of all hereditary sinecurists and stipendiaries to a permanent provision under our rule, had we commuted their

stipends and charges on the revenue, according to some equitable scale, into *landed estates* held by a well-secured title, we should have introduced an element of harmony and conservatism into our provinces, instead of degrading and exasperating the most hopeful and advanced classes of the nation, and converting them into beggars and conspirators *

The annals of one such family would form a curious and painful social picture. We may conceive an old Sooba, Bukshee or Dewan carrying the wrecks of his fortune to some large city. He receives a pension from the British Government, which ceases at his death, or the half of which is continued to his son, "as a special case, not to be drawn into a precedent." For two or three generations their descendants cluster together and preserve a shadow of their former position in gradually increasing poverty and discontent. They pass their lives in killing time; they are ignorant, extravagant, and licentious; they are overwhelmed with mortgagers, usurers, and religious knaves. These *may* be proofs (they have often been adduced as such) of the innate and ineradicable baseness and frivolity and depravity of the Hindoo and Mussulman races; but perhaps other adequate causes for these notorious social phenomena are to be found. These people have been demoralized and pauperized by the total annihilation of their former power, influence, and circle of duties,

by the impossibility of action, or a business, or a career ; by the absence of a hope, an object, or a purpose in life. When the crisis of ruin has arrived, when the tribe has increased far beyond the means of support, family pride gives way before starvation, and some of the sons do enter the English service in subordinate situations ; but whether the Company's salt produces much modification in the feelings of any of the family with regard to the blessings of British rule, is perhaps rather doubtful.

The sepoys, therefore, for the last fifteen years, have heard loud execrations in every place of public resort against the grasping and greedy policy of their foreign rulers ; they were taunted with being themselves the cause of the ruin of the country : alternately flattered and reproached, they were told that their bayonets had alone enabled the Company to blot out the names of the most illustrious native monarchies, and to extinguish the last remains of Indian glory. The sepoys were told that but for their overwhelming numbers and discipline the military power of the Mahrattas of Gwahor, would never have been destroyed, that they had now broken the strength of the Sikhs, and that in a short time the Company would not have an opponent on the continent of India, that not a Nabol or Rajah would be left to be deposed and plundered, and that then the British Government would either discharge them all,

or send them across the sea to conquer the countries of Burmah, Persia, Arabia, and Russia. And the sepoys were reminded that, after all their fidelity and warlike exploits, not a man from their ranks, not a man of their caste or race, was admitted to any exalted rank, wealth, or dignity; that they were certainly paid regularly, but that in many points their little extra emoluments and allowances on active and foreign service had been cut down, and that while a few of them might expect to rise by seniority to the rank of jemadar or subadar, with about a quarter of the pay of an ensign just arrived from England, they could never hope to attain, or to see any man of their race attain, to the rank and authority even of the youngest English ensign. They were reminded that even the miserable pensions allowed to them when worn out with long service had been reduced of late years; that the native princes gave as good pay as the Company, that a man was never discharged for old age from their service, but was allowed to draw his pay and be excused from all duty, and that the sons of old servants were always enrolled on their father's death, even though too young to do any actual service, even though infants in arms. They were asked if, for such beggarly rewards as those offered by the Company, for such contemptuous treatment of their bravest and best comrades, they were for ever going

to aid in the enslavement and degradation of the whole Hindoo race. They were told that they were themselves mere slaves of the Feringhees, and that at last the Feringhees would destroy their caste and turn them into Feringhees, body and soul, so that they might no longer be able to make excuses against going on board ship to fight against the Russians and the Burmese. With the exception of a few "general service" or volunteer corps, none of the Bengal Infantry were engaged to embark on board ship or to serve out of India. No Brahmin or Rajpoot can preserve the strict rules of his caste on board ship.

For years had taunts and sarcasms of this description been bandied about in every bazaar, for years had these matters been seriously discussed by the sepoys themselves. They were left entirely to their own devices, and had a public opinion of their own, and aspirations, fears, jealousies, aims, and a national pride, totally unsuspected and totally un conjectured by their English officers, very few of whom had ever in their lives sought acquaintance with a native, or met with one with whom they were either able or willing to converse on terms of equality or familiarity. Year by year the general execrations increased, until at last their own country, the birthplace of nearly half of the Bengal sepoys, Oude, was annexed; the King, their chief, the representative, in their eyes,

of all the ancient renown of their native province, the faithful and devoted friend of the English Government, even he was condemned to be a mere pensioner, and departed as a suppliant for justice from the palace of his ancestors, while his elephants, his horses, even the contents of the state wardrobe, were sold by auction at Cawnpore for the benefit of the Company's Government.

But immediately following this climax of annexation, touching the very hearths and homes of the sepoys, came an order of Government, directing that for the future all recruits for the Bengal army should be engaged to serve in foreign parts, and to embark in ships whenever it should be necessary. It was true, then! All India had been conquered, and now the sepoys were to be sent to foreign countries. The order indeed was made to apply to recruits only, and not to sepoys already in the service; but who could believe that they would long be spared? The war with Russia was just concluded; then came the Persian war, and the expected war with China. The greased cartridges followed most opportunely; and there could not now be a doubt that the intention of Government was to qualify them all for ship-board and foreign service by loss of caste, by treacherous ceremonial defilement. They were ripe for revolt, they were ready to believe anything; a few active, ambitious Mahomedans now saw

the opportunity, took care to fan the flame, and to spread a hundred inspiring rumours of a general rising; the emissaries of the Lucknow nobles and officials did their best when the first mutinies took place, but I doubt if there ever was a regularly organized conspiracy. The struggle must have taken place within a very few years—could not have been deferred much longer. The sepoys were the first in the field, because they were the only organized, collected body of armed men; because they knew that no one would begin without them, and also because the last insult, and actually exciting cause of the outbreak, the supposed greased cartridge, forced them into the field. This has been no prætorian mutiny; the sepoys were led to expect that every native chief, and every man of the warlike castes, would join at their signal, and expel the cold, haughty, and grasping Europeans for ever from India. And throughout India, though all were taken by surprise—for the actual outbreak was not the result of a carefully arranged and premeditated conspiracy—there has been an almost universal sympathy for the rebels, and even those more enlightened natives, who well knew the hopelessness of the attempt, and the ruin which a local and temporary success would bring upon themselves, rejoiced at a check having at last been given to the overweening pride and self-complacency of the British Govern-

ment. In India, as in all other lands, the rich and prosperous are conservatives ; there are many sagacious and far-seeing persons in all classes except the very lowest, and there are many truly loyal subjects, especially among the educated natives of the Presidency cities ; but no one who has observed the signs of the times can doubt in what direction the hopes of the people at large pointed.

LETTER VII.

CONFISCATION OF LANDED ESTATES.

IN India we see an immense and populous Empire subject to an alien race, undeniably far superior to the natives in knowledge, skill, and energy, in veracity and justice. Divided and scattered by the fatal and mysterious customs of caste, half the people exalted above and the remainder degraded below hope, the occupations and rank of all fixed (according to strict principle) for life, and apathy and resignation encouraged by the spirit of their religion—the Hindoos for a thousand years have been the slaves and victims of a succession of conquerors. In many districts a state of chronic war has only ceased within the memory of men now living. Heroic deeds have often graced their annals, but united action under the hideous tyranny of caste has hitherto for ever been impossible. It has often been made a subject of reproach against the people of India that their civilization, if it has not retrograded, has been stationary for many years. Even granting to the full extent the justice of this reproach it cannot be denied that at that critical period when the presence of the English began to be felt in India, everything portended the approach

of great changes. The Mogul power was destroyed in all but name, all the more important viceroys had become virtually independent ; and the vast Mahratta armies were founding Hindoo states and upholding Hindoo nationality in every part of the peninsula. Holkar, Scindiah, the Bhonsla, and the Guicowar, all Sudras of low caste, had become powerful monarchs. The mass of Hindooism was moving. But it is useless to speculate on what *might* have been the issues of those revolutions, the enmities and divisions consequent on which contributed greatly to the establishment of British power. These revolutions were checked by our superior influence, and our supremacy is a great fact. For fifty years we have been the undoubted paramount power on the continent of India ; and no prince has dared to fire a shot or take a step without our permission. We have stopped the independent development of the Hindoo races by taking the management of affairs into our own hands, and condemning their best men to insignificance and inactivity. We have carried the system of class-government to the greatest extreme, retaining all the honours and high emoluments of government in the hands, not only of a class, but of foreigners—not only of foreigners, but to a great extent of inefficient and unqualified foreigners.

None know better than the more intelligent natives of India that life, property, and personal

liberty were never so secure under Emperor, Nabob, or Rajah, as they are under the British Government; that cruel, arbitrary, and capricious punishments are forbidden by the laws in force; and that fixed principle and the absence of passion and partiality are the characteristics of British rule. But with all this the higher and better class of natives have no attachment to our Government. A native of birth and education may in some degree admire and esteem the English, but if he possesses an atom of manly pride and self-respect, he must regard with dislike and indignation a system which, however favourable to the merchant, banker, and cultivator, ignores and threatens to destroy the ancient aristocracy and those of the higher classes who are not engaged in trade, shutting out from them all hope and prospect of retaining or regaining their place, position, and rank in society.

For not only does our system of administration tend to exclude all men of birth and station, and their children, from any honourable post, civil or military, under Government, but the policy of Calcutta, intensified within the last twenty years, and urged to excess under Lord Dalhousie, has ever been directed to diminish as much as possible the extent of land held rent-free, or by the tenure of a very light or nominal tribute, by the old families of the country. Except in Bengal Proper, where Lord Cornwallis's

perpetual settlement was carried fully into effect, and which is the most prosperous and contented province in the empire, there is no such institution as private property in land in India. Rules and precedents are formed, founded on rare and tyrannical acts of the despotic Monarchs of India—Tippoo Sultan, the Peishwa, and others—to extinguish private rights in land or hereditary charges on the revenue; but no respect is paid to ancient custom when it appears to secure a family in the permanent possession of an estate. On every succession the *sunnuds* or title-deeds are called for, and the slightest flaw, or the absence of express assurance by the granter of perpetual hereditary possession, even although the estate may have been enjoyed for more than one generation, will frequently be held sufficient to justify the confiscation of the estate, with the grant, perhaps, of a pension for one or two lives of half the income of the estate. Imagine such a commission of settlement and inquiry set to work by an absolute or a republican government in England or in France! It is in every respect, I maintain, an iniquitous, an impolitic, a destructive proceeding. It is true that a native monarch was absolute, and that his relations, nobles, and high officials had no regular or legal mode of enforcing their acknowledged rights against him if he chose to act in an arbitrary and grasping manner towards them; but

they not the less did possess clear, undisputed, recognised, acknowledged rights on his protection and support, and they were almost invariably held sacred. We seem to think ourselves justified in availing ourselves of the exceptional arbitrary power of refusing to recognise, or of extinguishing those rights, but not to conceive ourselves bound to their general observance. And it must also be remembered that if the absolute monarch confiscated estates sometimes, he also granted estates to others, and that from these privileged classes all the great civil offices and military commands were filled. So that every feature of our rule tends to the impoverishment, degradation, and exasperation of the most elevated and the most improvable classes of the country, those who ought to form our conservative classes, and who are conservative and attached to our rule, wherever from peculiar circumstances they have been allowed to exist undisturbed.

LETTER VIII.

REFORM : IN WHAT IT SHOULD CONSIST.

I SHOULD be sorry if any imperfections of expression in my former letters should have led the reader to suppose that I am an advocate for rapid and radical and sweeping changes in the government and administration of India. I object to our general policy of the last thirty years, especially during Lord Dalhousie's tenure of office, as having been essentially radical, revolutionary, and destructive, both in imperial acts of state, and in minor fiscal and administrative measures; as having tended to ruin and exasperate the most reflecting and influential classes, and with them to destroy elements of strength, stability, and harmony, which a stroke of the pen in a period of transition may efface, but which a century of the wisest government cannot create. I deprecate as destructive a policy which, instead of introducing and encouraging our own absolute security of property, and of its descent, has rendered the tenure of the proudest and most valued rights, possessions, and privileges, more precarious than it was under the despotic but patriarchal rule of the native princes. I do not regard as conserva-

tive that system which threatens to perpetuate the retention of all offices of dignity and high emolument in the hands of a chartered and "covenanted" guild of foreigners, and to exclude the most able and the best qualified natives from all possibility of an honourable and distinguished career, from all interest in our empire, and all fellowship with our race. But, although I certainly do consider that some acts of restitution and restoration might be appropriately and gracefully blended with those brilliant rewards for the fidelity and active aid of native chieftains, which are required no less for the support of our national honour than as an expression of our national gratitude; and although I consider that we must prepare to abandon the present most dangerous, inhuman, and insulting system of official hierarchy, monopoly, and exclusion, yet no one can be more convinced than I am of the necessity of caution and care. What I earnestly desire to see is rather some evidence of altered disposition, aims, and principles, than any striking and immediate change in our outward practice and policy. Let us lose no time, however. We can better afford to lay the foundations in the plenitude of our power and triumph, than in a period of discontent and agitation. Let us not present one more example of the neglect of "that wise lesson which experience teaches, that there is a time when to yield wins the affections,

another, when it only obtains the contempt of mankind.”*

The scrupulous conservation of rights and possessions, the extension by commutation, by new grants, and, I should add, by sale, of our English security of landed tenure, administrative and social reform, and vitalization of the empire, by the gradual association of distinguished natives in all grades and departments of the public service, and the gradual elimination and exclusion of unqualified Englishmen, should be the guiding principles of the new era. The absorption and decay of the old system will give ample time for the sure and solid growth of the new.

And when an institution, a law, a ceremony, or an establishment has fallen into contempt and disuse, has become inadequate from the lapse of time, or has become corrupt, dangerous, and offensive, it is no true conservatism to endeavour, in defiance of every indication and warning, to prop it up once more, or to galvanize it into unnatural and mischievous life. Thus the Indian Regular Army has exploded in blood and fire, the Bengal Army has abolished itself effectually; the Bombay and Madras Armies have felt the contagion, and have indeed nothing in themselves so peculiar as should make the warning less significant with regard to them. Nothing has been

* Roebuck's 'History of the Whig Ministry.'

more distinctly manifested during the late period of rebellion and excitement, both in the Bengal and Bombay corps which mutinied, and in the Madras regiments that were tampered with, than the utter helplessness and want of influence of the European officers. It is painful, it is odious, to be compelled to write in this strain at a time when so many of these countrymen of ours have exhibited such glorious devotion, when so many have suffered and perished nobly, and so many more are doing good and gallant service; but, in truth, in many instances, the bloodshed and suffering were augmented by, and those very acts of daring and devotion were the offspring and consequence of, that very want of influence over the sepoys and insight into their true feelings, to which I have called attention. They are indeed doing good and gallant service, but not with their regiments. The regimental system was at fault, not the men; the system by which the delicate duty of commanding armed men of another race and colour was entrusted to unqualified officers, without experience, without interest in the work, and without authority; the system by which the ignorant and careless cadet could grow up by mere seniority to be the ignorant and careless commandant of a regiment or general of a division; *the system* was at fault, and its faults have now been blazoned in characters of blood and flame, so that all can see who are not wilfully blind.

I regret to see that three new "extra" regiments have been raised in the Madras Presidency, and that all the native battalions of that army have been recruited up to 1000 strong from their former strength of 700 sepoy each. But we will consider this as a mere measure of immediate and temporary emergency. The regular sepoy regiment system must be doomed for ever; it is condemned by its fruits; nor can we afford, financially or prudentially, to keep up so large a force of trained and formidably armed infantry, to do duties which could be better performed by an efficient police. We should lose nothing in real military strength by reducing our sepoy infantry to the lowest possible number of battalions, organized on the irregular plan, sufficient to furnish reliefs for Pegu, Aden, Singapore, and other foreign stations, and to form a valuable auxiliary to the British infantry in India, and in any Eastern campaign. Both for preserving the public peace in India, and for imperial and external warfare, for which sepoy infantry never could be relied on, we should foster the irregular cavalry, the arm in which the British army has always been deficient.

One absolute and conspicuous result of the rebellion of 1857, is therefore the spontaneous reduction of our regular sepoy army by upwards of fifty battalions; and it is to be hoped that the lesson to be drawn from this great fact will not be missed. It

may be remarked *en passant* that by universal admission the scpoys, both on our side, as the 31st at Saugor, and against us, everywhere, have fought quite as well without any European officers as they ever did on any occasion with them.

Another result is equally obvious and indisputable—a great increase of our financial difficulties, a loss and extra expense combined in one year which perhaps would not be much over-estimated if taken at ten crores of rupees, or ten millions sterling, the climax of a deficiency of a million and a half per annum during five years.* I can see no remedy for this but in a reduction of the army and other establishments, which must be in a great measure prospective. Although the permanent proportion of European troops in India must certainly be somewhat increased (*not* to any great extent), yet on the whole the army and other establishments, as may be explained in detail when required, could be rendered much more efficient at a much less expense than at present.

But the most important results, and the gravest lessons and warnings arising from the events of 1857 remain yet to be considered. Has such a result been produced as must in some degree modify our relative position, and our general tone and bearing for the

future, with the Native States of India? What effect has been produced on the public opinion of India? When all opposition has ceased, when every trace of the rebellion has disappeared, will the popular belief in our invincible power have been strengthened or diminished?

I believe that our relative position with the Native States has been materially altered by the occurrence and course of this rebellion, and that the native princes have morally and politically gained a higher and more independent standing than they enjoyed before the outbreak. I believe it, and I rejoice at it; I believe that this is no loss of power to us, but that on the contrary our paramount imperial power on the continent of India may now be consolidated and secured, openly avowed and distinctly acknowledged, in a manner that has not been hitherto attained,—if the lesson to be learned from the events of the year 1857 be duly appreciated and carried out. Our position towards the Native States, partly from the essentially faulty nature of the unlimited right of interference exercised by the British residents in conformity with treaties, partly by really unauthorized encroachments in the same direction, had become most anomalous and embarrassing to both parties, weakening and degrading the Native Sovereign and his ministers without adding in the least to our influence or dignity. The general tone and

bearing of our intercourse with the Native States, and of the consultative minutes of the Supreme Government, especially during Lord Dalhousie's tenure of office, with regard to them, appears to me to have been very bad, unfair, unfriendly, offensive, and threatening. I rejoice therefore at the inevitable change of their position and of our tone and bearing, and cannot regard the change as anything but a gain both for us and for them. At the same time I consider that it involves a striking contradiction and condemnation of Lord Dalhousie's foreign policy.

Lord Dalhousie, writing in 1851 to the Nizam of Hyderabad, on the subject of the balance of a debt due to our Government, recommends him to dismiss or reduce the number of his Arab troops, and reminds him that ours is "a great Government by whose friendship alone" he has "so long been sustained, whose resentment it is dangerous to provoke," "and whose power can crush" him "at its will." Now, granting all this to be true, where was the necessity, of this vulgar blustering in time of profound peace, and on a matter of finance? Could it be supposed that the Nizam was ignorant, or forgetful of the enormous power of the British Government? Surely such language might have been reserved until the Nizam had taken some unfriendly or treacherous

* Papers relative to territory ceded by the Nizam, p. 42. 1854.

course, which no member of his family has done during the last sixty years. In such a case, what terms more galling, what threat more unequivocal, could be used towards him? But these unstatesmanlike and unseemly phrases, though I doubt not sincerely employed by Lord Dalhousie, were not even reasonable or true. Able at all times to command the resources of that State, to control its acts, and to dictate its policy, it is not true that we could have "crushed it" at our will," at least not with safety or impunity. There are many Indian statesmen who would have told Lord Dalhousie (probably *have* told him) that the existence of the Hyderabad State is a most valuable guarantee of the peace of Southern and Western India. All the most experienced officers of the Hyderabad Contingent, long before any extensive disaffection in our Native Army was dreaded, were well aware that their men could not be relied on to fight cheerfully against the Nizam himself. One distinguished officer, the lamented Brigadier William Mayne, whose opinions on military affairs were not despised by Lord Dalhousie, used to say that an open war between the Company and the Nizam would be quite as difficult and bloody a business as the Punjab campaign of 1849 was. But could Lord Dalhousie have crushed the Nizam at his will in 1857? Or if he had crushed him at his will in 1854, 1855, or 1856, what would have been

the state of the Deccan during the rebellion of 1857 ?

I allow that Lord Dalhousie was justified in enforcing, was bound in duty to enforce, by all legitimate means, the payment of the debt due by the Hyderabad State ; I know that in his minute of the 27th May, 1851, which immediately precedes in the Blue Book the letter from which I have just quoted, he expressly disavows all intention or wish to interfere in the Nizam's affairs, or forcibly to assume the administration of his dominions, as had been recommended by the Resident, General Fraser ; and yet the sole object of this threatening letter, and of the negotiations which followed it, was to obtain from the Nizam the cession in full sovereignty of nearly one-third of his territory ; and the result was that the desired districts were assigned and transferred to our management for the support of the Hyderabad Contingent, and the payment of the interest of our debt. Here is an apparent inconsistency between professions and practice. But those transactions are not at present under discussion ; it is solely against this overbearing tone, and against this language, so irritating and so alarming to a friendly power, that I protest.

But this seems to be one of Lord Dalhousie's favourite formulas ; he appears to have considered its application to our most faithful allies peculiarly

appropriate and impressive. We meet with these very words, embellished by a little bad grammar, in the seventh paragraph of his farewell minute reviewing his eight years' administration, applied to the present Rajah Runbeer Sing of Cashmere, son of Ghoolab Sing, who was then in a declining state of health. "And when, as must soon be, the Maharajah shall pass away, his son, Meean Runbeer Sing, will have enough to do to maintain his ground against rivals of his own blood, without giving any cause of offence to a powerful neighbour which he well knows can crush him at his will."

In July, 1857, Rajah Ghoolab Sing did pass away, and Runbeer Sing, instead of wasting his resources in fighting any rivals, managed somehow or other to advance fifty lakhs of rupees (500,000/.) to Sir John Lawrence, and to send 3500 of his own troops to assist in the siege of Delhi.

At Hyderabad also, in the same critical period, the usual agitation and disorder of a succession occurred—Nasirood-dowlah, the late Nizam, having died in July, 1857—yet the firmness of the present young Prince restrained the warlike and turbulent population of his dominions, and facilitated every movement of the Madras Army; while more than one-half of that Hyderabad Contingent, which Lord Dalhousie considerably and politely informed the Nizam's father, in the letter already quoted, was

"the main support on which depended the stability of his throne," was pushed forward beyond the Nizam's frontiers into our own provinces, to uphold the stability of *our* empire against our own mutinous troops and our own rebellious subjects.

Seindiah, Holkar, the Guicowar, the Rajah of Rewah, and others, have resisted all attacks and temptations, and the persuasions of their own relations and vassals, and have remained faithful to us; the Rajahs of Puttiala, Jheend, and Blurtpore have given us timely and zealous assistance in men and money. The despised dependents, the useless incumbents, have proved our best friends in the hour of need; and we must be truly blind if we have failed to remark how formidable they would have been as enemies. They themselves cannot have lost sight of the moral advantage they have gained by the events of 1857, and by the part that they have played therein.

We have hitherto placed ourselves in all sorts of anomalous and confused relations with the Native States; we have originally treated with some of them as equal and independent powers, and have gradually depressed them into tributaries, and virtual though not acknowledged feudatories. And this state of things has not brought with it the genial patriarchal ties and mutual sympathy of lord and

vassal ; but, on the contrary, we have taken everything that we could get—cessions of territory, tribute, loans, contingent troops—and have given nothing in return except that general military protection provided for by treaties, and for the expenses of which we have always exacted a full equivalent ; while during the last thirty years they have seen us watching to take advantage of any excuse or pretext for exercising our assumed right of general succession and of deposition.

Now I think this state of things must cease ; the relations of the paramount power and of the minor sovereignties of India must be placed on a more definite and a more equitable basis ; and the bonds of federal amity and mutual obligation must be drawn more closely. The native princes must be taught no longer to regard us with alarm and suspicion, as a haughty, inscrutable race, whose interests and objects are totally incompatible with their own, and who, however long the evil day may be deferred, are their destined and determined spoilers and successors ; and we, on our part, must learn to recognise the native monarchies as forming an essential condition and a main security in the development of the full power, resources, and wealth of our Eastern Empire.

But for the inauguration of our imperial status among this congeries of princes, and chieftains, and

nations, a name more significant and more imposing than that of the Honourable Company is required. The Queen's name would be indeed a tower of strength in India. For loyalty, and wonder, and child-like confidence, and all the "cheap defence of nations," remain available in that excitable and productive stage of civilization through which India must pass to be replaced by other, and, as we think, higher sentiments and motives, in a more advanced and deliberate social state. It will be very long before any important number of the hundred and fifty millions attain to that independence of thought and will on which we pride ourselves in England. And, in the meantime, complicated interests will have sprung up, closer ties will have been formed between the two countries, and will be maintained and strengthened by every dictate of inclination and reason. We have not hitherto appreciated the sources of power that lie in the peculiar phase of civilization and social life in India. We have hitherto neglected to guide, to mould, or to encourage the political sentiments of the natives, which are thoroughly monarchical and conservative, but have left them to feed on the memories and glories of bygone days and fallen dynasties. It is our fault that they have continued to gaze for the centre of their national existence, interests, and honour, anywhere but towards the British Sovereign, nothing

has tended to impress them with the grandeur of forming an important part of the British Empire. There never was a more favourable time than the present for inaugurating a nobler, a more consistent, and a truly imperial policy.

LETTER IX.

BRITISH PRESTIGE.

THE King of Delhi, the supreme idea of legitimate sovereignty among both Hindoos and Mahomedans, the popular *de jure* Emperor of India, has been struck down in an open and formidable conflict with the *de facto* rulers of the country. He has leagued himself with mutinous traitors, and whether that league and that conflict were planned, or accidental, or forced upon him by the rebels, they were not provoked by any actual breach of faith on our part towards the Delhi family. The house of Timour, even if not literally annihilated, has for ever lost that calm and lofty position of acknowledged legitimacy, whose power alone, and not its right or its dignity, is in abeyance. No member of the family who survives, after having been dragged through the bloody mire of Delhi, can be an object for the pride, respect, or hope of any section of the Indian population. The political importance of this change, produced without any aggression or breach of faith on our part, must be very great in such a country and amid such a people as those of India, and if duly appropriated and improved by us, may be the golden opportunity of our empire.

The wonderful rise of the territorial power and influence of the East India Company is a just source of national pride. Its progress in India was natural, defensive, and founded on no fixed design or treacherous combination; and perhaps its early and unwilling conquests could have been effected so justly and so prudently by no other machinery and by no other motives than those of a trading company, more anxious for solid profits than for glory. But the abolition of its commercial privileges, and at last of its commercial functions, virtually extinguished its independent existence as a power in the State. The Company has become a mere name. The authority and specific duties of the Court of Directors have been gradually so curtailed and hampered by the Board of Control, that it has sunk into a very cumbersome and not much respected Board for consultation and registry, whose members are substantially remunerated by patronage. The patronage so created, so fostered, and so justified, has grown, as I have endeavoured to show, into the greatest burden and scourge of India, and the greatest danger and weakness to its rulers. The East India Company is now a mere obstruction, a veil between the Sovereign and her Indian subjects, between the people of Great Britain and that of India. Its decay as a ruling power followed its decay as a trading company; its part had then been played out, its possessions had

swelled into an empire, its vast affairs and interests required imperial guidance, the control not of a single Minister, carried on almost in secret, but of all the balanced forces and all the healthy publicity of our free constitution.

In India, the mystery which formerly enveloped the name of the Company has quite faded away, and it is now very generally regarded as a body of farmers or contractors, standing between the nations of India and the Queen of England, and it is credited with the usual attributes of farmers and contractors. This impression, although essentially false, is *in its terms* so near the truth, and it is so difficult to define the exact nature and the actual cause of the continued anomalous relations of the Crown and the Company, that only the best educated and best informed natives can ever be brought to a clear and correct view of the case. And even then they are universally of opinion that this apparent contract is really injurious to the interests of both countries, and to the honour of England. The time has obviously come for this fiction to disappear, and for true imperial relations to be established and avowed.

There still remains one question proposed for our consideration in this letter, which I think may be answered in a very few words. What effect, we asked, has been produced on the public opinion of India? When all opposition has ceased, when every

trace of the rebellion has disappeared, will the popular belief in our invincible power have been strengthened or diminished? The question is not an agreeable one to face; but it would be the blindest and most short-sighted policy for the present rulers of India to try to flatter themselves or the people of England into a state of self-satisfied security by a hasty and superficial reply. We may at least be certain that we have lost nothing in reputation; the numerous successful combats of our troops against tremendous odds have taught the natives that the old stories of the prowess and determination of the Feringhees were no exaggerations. The strongest and best disciplined assemblages of the rebels, such as those who opposed Havelock's first advance towards Lucknow, and the Gwalior mutineers near Cawnpore, have had their guns taken from them by much smaller numbers of Europeans, with those daring bayonet charges which convince a beaten enemy of their inability and inferiority more than any other description of defeat. It will be long before that conviction wears off. A long familiarity with the appearance of British soldiers in our peaceful cantonments had perhaps begun to breed contempt; but there will be new and fresh accounts sent abroad now of his stern though buoyant courage, his physical strength, and his ever cheerful energy and devotion. And when the full tide of the reinforcements from

England begins to flow through Hindostan, the crushing destruction and punishment of all resistance will be so rapid and so exemplary, and the demonstration of force, both during the advance and the subsequent triumphant disposal of the troops in their quarters, will be so striking, that a much higher estimate of British resources in men and military power in general will be formed than perhaps ever existed before in the East.*

But on the other hand, it must be remembered that a great part of our prestige depended on the popular belief in the indissoluble cohesion of our establishments, our rules were so elaborately definite and distinct, our payments so regular and punctual; there was so little scope under our administration for the efforts of ambitious intriguers who might attain to high office with a view to the subversion of our power; all went on so calmly, obediently, and noiselessly, without any appearance of passion or caprice, forming such a contrast when compared with the procrastination, irregularity, and arbitrary commands, frequently disobeyed, observable in so many of the Native States; and the main springs of our power were worked at such a distance, and by such unattainable personages, that all despaired of seeing

* The effect of our reinforcements has not been nearly so rapidly and strikingly triumphant as was expected when this letter was written in December, 1857

any great convulsion or disturbance in our provinces or among our own servants. But now they—and here I allude chiefly to our doubtful friends or well-known enemies in the Native States of India—have seen, at once the lowest and most liberally paid of our servants, our own disciplined troops, spontaneously throw off their allegiance and commence a war of extermination against us. This is a lesson the full significance of which they cannot have failed to learn, and which they will never forget.

The rebels, the disaffected, and the ambitious have also learned two other lessons, they have learned that two maxims, very commonly, indeed universally current in India, are in a great measure true. First, that the enormous number of the warlike inhabitants constitute a vast and overwhelming power, which, were they but unanimous and true to themselves, not even all our military science and resources, and all the bravery of our European troops, could subdue. The second is, that England is far away, and that we require many months in order to procure reinforcements from thence.

It is a proverb in India, that if every man were to throw a stone, the English rulers would be buried beneath the shower. And they have seen the rebels, by sheer dint of superior numbers, for four months hold Delhi against all the forces that our Government could collect against them. They know that

day by day they sallied forth to harass and annoy the besiegers, and that though the quality, and spirit, and tactics of the troops of Government were incomparably better than those of the rebels, still their numbers enabled the latter to hold the city for four months, and after the assault to defend successive positions until they were enabled to withdraw leisurely with a large quantity of stores and plunder. They know that the defenders of Delhi did not meet with the support and co-operation from outside that they had a right to expect ; they know that if, for instance, the ten or twelve battalions, with cavalry and guns, who mutinied in the Gwalior territory, had promptly come into the field, instead of allowing themselves to be kept idle by the Maharajah Scindiah, and had attacked the Delhi besieging force in the rear, the siege must have been raised at the least, even if by this combination the complete destruction of the army of Government had not been effected. Let it be observed, that I do not answer for the absolute soundness of these calculations and suppositions ; but many calculations of this sort have been made, and they are very far from being absurd or ridiculous.

They know that by the mere pressure of overwhelming numbers Havelock's victorious little band was compelled to retire from the Oude territory without effecting the relief of Lucknow ; that again a still larger victorious force under Outram and

Havelock was, by a similar pressure of hostile numbers, prevented from relieving the garrison, and was in fact compelled to seek protection within the same walls, so long defended by the gallant handful of soldiers they came to save from a fate that could not have been much longer delayed. And finally, they know that Sir Colin Campbell, when the rebellion had lasted for eight months, with a still larger force and a superb train of heavy guns, after signally and repeatedly defeating the rebels and rescuing the British garrison, was compelled, by sheer pressure of overwhelming numbers, to evacuate the city of Lucknow, and to withdraw the greater part of his troops from the Oude territory, leaving only a garrison in the Alumbagh to form a basis for his future operations when reinforced.

And it must not be imagined that the rebels have no exploits or successes to boast of, to remember, and to record. Like all beaten forces, and especially like all ignorant and half-civilized people after a defeat, they will never overrate their own numerical strength on particular occasions of battle, and will always magnify ours; and, in short, always endeavour to save their own credit and fame. And their partial successes will be swelled by report, and rumour, and frequent narration, into glorious victories. They will not, in short, have a worse opinion of their national prowess after the cessation of all resistance

than they had before the mutinies commenced. In all probability they and the people at large will have a much higher opinion of their capabilities than they ever had before. The very fact of their having dared to oppose, and for a year* to combat against, the great English Company Bahadoor, will be a new and memorable possibility that few would have dreamed of twenty years ago.

On the whole, I must arrive at the conclusion that we shall have gained nothing in prestige, even if we have not lost, at the termination of this tremendous crisis; and I must repeat once more, that we must not think of garrisoning India, but of governing her. A continent held against its unwilling and awakened inhabitants by the physical force of foreign soldiers, even if the notion were not indeed the bloodiest of chimeras, could never be anything but a source of weakness and expense to the dominant nation. In England we cannot afford to recruit, in India we cannot afford to pay, a *much* larger force of English soldiers than that which was in India when the mutinies commenced.

* Nearly two years now.