but more plentifully besprinkled than to-day with English gentlemen, of that increasing education with its attendant results which have now taken definite shape in the concrete entity of our National Congress. (Loud cheers.) I have seen a Governor in the chair. (Cheers.) I trust we may all live to see repetition of such a phenomenon. (Laughter.) In the times of which I speak the Europeans of Madras seem to me to have been possessed of greater honesty in the expression of their opinions than are their successors of to-day. (Cheers.)

I am before you to-night, at the invitation of the Standing Committee of our Congress, and I am grieved to see that our worthy co-laborer, Sir Madhava Rao, has made himself conspicuous by his absence on this occasion (laughter and cheers) to give you some account of what I was enabled to do on your behalf in England in conjunction with Mr. Dadabhai Nowroji and Mr. Bonnerji. It was quite by accident that we three happened to be simultaneously in London. An accident which I think we contrived to turn to happy account on behalf of India. (Cheers.) I wish you to recollect the circumstances under which I ventured while at home to state your case to the public. On my arrival in London, I found awaiting me a number of letters from various Standing Committees throughout India, all of which asked me to avail myself of my visit to try and make the people in England understand something of the conditions under which the people of India live ; to endeavour, by a statement of the truth, to clear away the mists of ignorance which in England enshrond all things Indian ; and to attempt by an explanation of the ends at which we aim, and of the means which we have adopted, to arouse on behalf of those who live and labor here some sentiment of compassion and some promise of redress. (Loud cheers.) That was the mission entrusted to me. And I accepted it. I never pretended to represent a Congress which was *non est.* (Laughter.) I never posed as the mouth-piece of millions. (Laughter.) I did no more than I was told to do. I did no less. I was asked to tell my countrymen of the disadvantages under which you labor, of the political system under which your energies are cramped and your legitimate ambitions curtailed and smothered. I was not asked to convey this instruction as the accredited agent of the Congress, but as an ordinarily intelligent Englishman who, living among you, has had opportunities for personal observation, and who sympathising with the great awakening of thought and sentiment which even

in its infancy reveals to all well-balanced intelligences, the most hopeful promise of union of culture and of reform (cheers) is filled with an intense anxiety that that awakening should be under loyal and honest control, and should result not only to the benefit of India, but in a closer and more sympathetic acceptance of the rule of England. (Cheers.) It is for you to say whether I have done well. It is for you to express approval of my acts. The judgment of the Congress is free to act as it elects. I have not pledged, I have not hampered it. The Congress is not bound by any act of mine It may repudiate me, it may disavow my action. But I shall, indeed, have misread the indications of popular opinion, I shall, indeed, have misjudged the public wants if I do not find consolation for gross personal abuse and the most malicious mispresentation of motive, in the belief that the education and intelligence of Native India will unanimously ratify and approve my co-operation on its behalf. (Loud cheers.) I thank you for those cheers In London, as I have said, I met Mr. Nowroji and Mr. Bonnerji Few of the sons of India are better educated in the best sense of that term than your able and charming fellow-countrymen, once Standing Counsel to the Government of India. (Cheers) I know no one of a keener intellect, of a gentler, sweeter disposition. (Cheers.) I know no one who is more fitted than Mr Bonnerji to take rank, to be recognized, and to be amongst the highest and most cultivated leaders of your great national movement (Cheers.) He is rich not merely in gifts of brain which enable him to hold his own in the polished circles of English society. He is rich in gifts of heart (cheers) and in all those thousand-and-one little characteristics which go to make up the sum total of a true gentleman (Loud cheers) On your behalf he has made sacrifices which entitle him to your gratitude. He has devoted time, and labor, and energy, and talent to your cause. (Cheers) All the earnestness of a deep and sympathetic native he has placed at your disposal. (Cheers.) Above all, he has liberally opened his purse-strings to your call. (Cheers.) Such a man is worthy of your highest honor. Under such a man I am proud to serve. (Loud cheers.) I will say little as to Mr. Nowroji, for the simple reason that the name and character of that veteran champion of India's rights speak for themselves (cheers), and command the attention and respect they so well deserve. (Cheers) He is an old and trained gladiator in a service in which Mr. Bonnerji and I are comparatively recruits. (Cheers.) Surely it was a happy chance that permitted Calcutta, Bombay and Madras to be represented in London! Whatever may be said of ourselves, the sister

Presidences, at least, need feel no shame for the men who, in their behoof, have put their spears in rest. (Cheers.) Mr. Bonnerji, I found, had been in his own modest fashion (laughter) quietly laboring to diffuse something of his own knowledge of Indian affairs. On my arrival this quiet propagandism changed its character. I suppose I am more combustible (laughter), more full of gunpowder, and "go off" more easily (laughter), but I managed to drag Mr. Bonnerji from the mild amusement of his rural lectures into the fiercer glare of a public platform. (Laughter and cheers.) And I think you owe me some gratitude for that feat. (Laughter.) It is not everybody who goes home who can secure an audience. But we were able to get that initial introduction, after which the success of a cause depends chiefly upon its inherent virtues and the merit of its advocates. Now, I see it stated as matter for reproach, that we have allied ourselves with the Liberal, if not the Radical party. That association has been in some quarters condemned. It has been said that India and Indian questions ought to be treated on the broad united policy of both parties, Liberal and Conservative, and should not be dragged into the arena of a purely party-question. Gentlemen, there is great efficacy in that "ought." The criticism is admirable in the way of theory. But try to put it into practice. Go home, and endeavour for ourselves to appeal to both sides of the House of Commons to show an equal interest in Indian reform, and then come back and tell me the measure of your success. I agree thoroughly in the proposition that India should not be made a party question: and I trust that when our wants have been ventilated, and our petition known, Englishmen as Englishmen, irrespective of party politics, will unite to give us some sensible quantum of relief. (Cheers) But the problem is, how to reach the great mass of the people, who really control both parties. And I, within the period of my stay in England, saw not the faintest symptom in the Conservative party of taking any interest in Indian affairs, nor any desire to make itself acquainted with the philosophy of the movement, which shrewder heads than mine view with all the interest of a political *Renaissance*. I would as gladly have spoken on a Conservative as on a Liberal platform. I will take, and be grateful for, assistance from any party. (Laughter.) Concession will be just as sweet to you whether it comes from the Liberal or from the Conservative camp. But whatever the reason, though we had plenty of invitations from Liberal Clubs, no Conservative manifested the faintest desire to become acquainted with the wonderul problem, that is working itself out in India. We were,

therefore, driven to the Liberals. I do not say this by way of apology, but only by way of explanation. For I am Liberal myself: not like Sir Auckland Colvin in the official camp, whatever that may mean (laughter,) but a Liberal who, unlike that distinguished satrap trusts the people (cheers), whose gradual emancipation he affects to contemplate with satisfaction (cheers), and who not only sees no danger in permitting popular opinion to have its due weight in the Legislative Councils of this Empire (cheers), but regards, its introduction as an additional pledge for the continuity of English supremacy in India, (cheers), and its denial or delay as a refutation of the principles which the Liberal party avow; as a distinct violation of promises made by Queen and Parliament at home (cheers); and as the most pressing proof of the inability of the officials in this country to keep pace with the strides of growing thought and civilization, and to subordinate the interests of their service to the ever-increasing requirements of the country. (Loud cheers.) I am not ashamed, therefore, of the help which the Liberals of England are giving to the Liberals of India. But it is right that you should know how and why our connection has been brought about. (Hear, hear.) We have been twitted by Conservatives with dragging India into party polemics. Who first dethroned India from her pedestal of a National question? Why, the Conservative party themselves. (Cheers) And the person primarily responsible for this was Lord Randolph Churchill—a politician whose talents at this moment are obscured by a little cloud (Laughter). That versatile combination of democrat and Tory (laughter) finally broke down the barriers which fenced India from party assault when he introduced into the House of Commons as Secretary of State for India the financial statement for 1884-85 and the estimate for 1885-86 And this is how the *Saturday Review*, one of the organs of that party which asserts itself to monopolize all the honesty, all the purity, and all the ability of political life (laughter) comments upon Lord Randolph's action: "It is we know the fashion of Indian administrators to insist on the severance of Indian administrations from questions of party politics. . . . . Now that the pressure of constituencies is exerted before any question receives due consideration in the House" mark well that sentence, gentlemen, and ask yourselves whether it does not justify the lines upon which we are pushing your claims in England—"It is more than all requisite that India should be brought into the arena of party politics. . . . Lord Randolph Churchill was perfectly right in importing into his financial statement party and somewhat personal arguments." Let us hear no more

from this party of extreme self-righteousness of the impropriety of making India a party question. Let it be quite clear that I do not desire to do this. But also let it be equally clear that we will not refuse help from the Liberals and wait till the Conservatives are prepared to assist us, any more than we will allow matters of instant reform in India to be postponed till Mr. Beck shall have taught Sir Syed Ahmed to talk sense and the Rajah of Bhinga to write it. (Loud laughter and cheers.) Once our action was decided upon, the only difficulty was where to begin. We received many invitations to speak, and we finally opened the ball in Leicestershire. It was no fault of ours that we opened on a Liberal platform. We were most hospitably received by Mr. Ellis, a staunch Liberal, a Justice of the Peace, and cousin to the gentleman of the same name who sits in Parliament. Mr. Bonnerji and I were made free of Mr. Ellis's beautiful old house, and I was glad to see that English gentlemen in England extend to Native gentlemen of India a courtesy and a hospitality which is denied here. (Cheers.) I have never been able to understand why we practice a different method in England in our treatment of Native gentlemen to that which we practice here. At home, Mr. Bonnerji, who is a gentleman, was treated as such (Cheers.) In India we treat him and others like him as if they were leprous. (Laughter) But neither Mr. Ellis at Leicester, nor Dr. Spencer-Watson at Newcastle, were depressed by any idea that Mr. Bonnerji should be shut out from communion with themselves or the ladies of their family. (Cheers) And it was delightful to me to note how, like a moral tonic, the courtesies of gentle life invigorated the constitution of my kind and dear friend, Mr. Bonnerji. (Cheers.) I wish, with all my heart, we could see a similar experience in India. (Cheers.) It was, I admit, a novel sensation to me to speak, at a meeting convened for Mr. Logan, the Liberal candidate for the first time, to an audience, who, unlike yourselves, possessed the great power of a vote. They were struck by the statement that not the poorest, humblest among themselves, but possessed in the mighty engine of the ballot, a more direct influence upon the destinies of 250 millions of people in India than any of the people themselves, who send such an enormous annual contribution to England, or than I who live and labor here. (Cheers.) We were greeted there with kindly cheers; cheers which venture to place this interpretation upon that they meant more than the hospitable welcome of a host to his guest: that they meant that the intelligence of your condition was a revolution for the first time of a state of things never before believed to exist;

that they meant that the people of England will not turn a deaf ear to your just and temperate appeal for help. (Cheers.) The applause we elicited was the applause that comes from pity and conviction: pity that we have no share in the framing of our own laws, no voice in the adjustment of our own taxation: conviction that such a state of things is a standing reproach to the great nation, whose divine mission it is in all her territories to lift her people from a condition of serfdom into a condition of freedom · (cheers) : conviction that the time has come when reform must sweep away some of the old land-marks of prejudice, of selfishness and of ignorance. (Cheers.) I had always prophesied to you that you had but to tell the truth to the men of England to feel certain of a generous response. My prophecy has been more than vindicated even already by the interest displayed by those to whom we have gone for help, by the resolutions of sympathy which we have been commissioned to impart to you. (Cheers.)

From Leicester we went to Newcastle, and if we were pleased with Leicester, were enraptured with Newcastle. I revelled in the sensation of unrestricted liberty which contact with Newcastle gives, Newcastle the great city which is proud to own as its representative the Right Honorable John Morely. The occasion there was the anniversary of Dr. and Mrs. Spencer-Watson's Silver wedding, and it would have done you good as it did me good to look upon the keen faces and stalwart frames of these children of the North. Thereupon the smooth expanse of a lovely English lawn, surrounded by an audience catholic enough to contain the Rector and the quarry-man, we tried to explain what it was you asked and why you asked it. Amid those who spoke was the Rector, who pushed home this unanswerable argument; that not only should England be proud that India was so fast assimilating those elementary principles of freedom which had made England what she was, but that there would be room for dismay and regret if after so long a connection between the two countries the pupil had learnt absolutely nothing from the master (cheers.) That is the wholesome view of the situation. What, I ask, has our Church done here? What advice, what sympathy what guidance have we received from the numerous chaplains in the Government service? None, absolutely none! But we have received support, suggestion, sympathy and friendly criticism to their eternal honour be it said—from other preachers of the Gospel who, more particularly in India, have enormous opportunities, and, therefore, enormous responsibilities of educating the masses in the funda-

mental truths of good government (cheers). We must be ever grateful to the Missionaries, and to those others who are none the less good that they hold no office in the State, for lending us their energies rightly to direct the budding aspirations of the people (cheers). There is room for reflection in the fact that just as Non-conformity is one of the strong-holds of Liberalism in England, so even in India we must look for support of a peoples' cause outside the narrow limits of our official Church (cheers). Do you want stronger evidence of the contracting influence of State service? (Cheers). The official world of India may do what it likes and can to arrest the development of popular principles, it may employ combination to thwart our aims, or come forward in the shape of a living Lieutenant-Governor to sneer at our requests (cheers). But England has, long ago, recognized that her hold upon India can only be justified by the moral good she does her subjects here: and I think you will find that she will agree with you that it is not moral that solemn promises solemnly made by Queen and Parliament should be broken, and in the language of Lord Lytton the people should be deliberately "cheated" of their hopes, and that it is not good either for themselves or for the people that about a thousand or fewer, English gentlemen should rule 200 millions of people without being called upon to render account for anything they do or say (cheers).

I will not go over our speeches in England. But I will tell you shortly the principles on which we agreed to speak. By concert we worked on certain broad intelligible lines. Those lines were to insure the interest of the English people by proclaiming four salient points First: that the system under which I quoted the high authority of Sir Auckland Colvin himself, whose memory is a little treacherous, I fear, or he would scarcely have attacked Mr. Hume as he did on that point (laughter). It is true that Sir Auckland qualifies his description with the word "benevolent." That is a question of opinion. The fact of the despotism remains (cheers). I make Sir Auckland a present of his adjective (laughter). Secondly, that the Government was grossly extravagant: thirdly that the people were terribly poor: fourthly that the Judicial system required radical change, (cheers). We, your friends in England, gladly and gratefully admitted on your behalf and our own that the connection between the two countries was one that India is proud of and wishes ever to retain (cheers). We admitted the great boons, the innumerable benefits which English rule had conferred in India (cheers). We pointed to all the material advantages of railways and canal to the postal and the telegraphic systems; to the

security for life and property: to the wonderful facilities for education, wonderfully availed of. All this and more we recognized with thanks. And we pointed out this as the reason why England should not now refuse the boon so long expected, arrest the work so long carried on (cheers). Here, in India, for reasons that I cannot understand, we are traduced as treasonable, (laughter). In England we were praised for our moderation (laughter). Wherever we went we repeated the same assurance that the gratitude of the peoples of India to England assumed a very practical turn inasmuch as they were the most loyal people on the face of God's earth (loud cheers), serving with a loyalty not of insincere lip-service, but with a loyalty which had regard for principles, not persons, and, therefore, outlasting the lives of kings (loud cheers). It may be, you have not the loyalty which Sir Auckland Colvin demands, a homage which seems in his opinion to be coterminous with your admiration of the order to which he belongs (laughter and cheers). I trust you never will have that, (cheers) even though you incur the wrath and displeasure of a potentate so powerful as a Lieutenant-Governor (cheers). I have never heard the Queen's name mentioned without a touching exhibition of respect (loud cheers). You are right to reverence the name of a good and pure lady who through a long and useful life has strictly adhered to the principles of that great Constitution of which she herself is the great Head (cheers). But behind your obeisance to the woman, there is your appreciation of those grand and glorious principles by her rigid adherence to which England ranks first in the long list of the nations of the world (cheers). Of those principles fixed and immutable which survive the death of ages, you are and ever will be, constant disciples, and your loyalty to England will be imperishable, because her sway is based on imperishable materials (loud cheers). That is true loyalty. And that you have (cheers). Were we not right in stating the strict truth that enormous contributions are levied upon the unfortunate ryot, upon whom, poor as he is, has now fallen the iniquitous increase in that most iniquitous tax—the Salt Tax (cheers). We are taunted with having alleged misrule. I repeat the charge (cheers). I say we are misruled, (cheers) and shall continue to be misruled till we are invested with the right to criticize the budget, (cheers) and with the right to speak with authority (cheers.) I do not say—I never have said—that the Government sit down with the intention deliberately, to misrule us. I am aware that we are governed by men of high character. It would require the assumption of another Rajah

of Bhinga to advance so foolish a statement (laughter). But none the less do the Government of this country see things going on which they do not attempt to check, and they are as morally liable as though they had initiated each misdeed (cheers). Enormous sums of money are lavished upon the demarcation of a frontier which so scientfiic that is no one can find it, (laughter) while the increasing annual deficit can only be met by increasing a hateful tax, (cheers). Is that misrule, or is it not? A special tribute is levied from the people as an insurance wasted upon war. (Shame, shame). Is that misrule? (Cheers). Upon a pretext that will not bear investigation, a fresh annexation is carried out in Burmah, against the outcry of intelligent India. Is that misrule or is it not? (Cheers.) I will waste no further time in proving what every one admits except the Government. If no one else will reply to Sir Auckland Colvin, I will. And though I do not wield the polished pen with which Sir Auckland excites the homage of "Patriotic Leader-lets" (laughter) nor possess that marvellous *repertoire* of "crushing" argument and scathing logic, which has put the whole Patriotic press in a frenzy of loud-tongued admiration, I have a few questions to put, to which I should like plain replies, (cheers). I like specific instances, with definite questions and definite answers. It is a cruel method possibly (laughter) and its application may be resented by those who admit that a cat may look at a king, but deny that any one may question a Lieutenant-Governor except a Rajah or a Knight (laughter). But it has its use, and is a sound, of a disgustingly legal way of looking at a matter (laughter). I have a word to say, in passing, about Sir Auckland Colvin's letter, which I will say here. There is one passage in it which makes me deeply regret its publication. It is, to put it mildy, remarkable that a gentleman holding the high position with all its attendant responsibilities of a Lieutenant-Governor, should have thought fit to proclaim aloud that the Government might check that liberty of organization which the Congress party have hitherto enjoyed (loud cheers). I would strongly recommend—this is not a threat but a warning—Sir Auckland Colvin not to make the attempt (loud cheers). India has progressed since the days when such a threat would terrify (loud cheers). Its pronunciation only shews me how right was the estimate of the Government which was made by those whose prudence on your behalf has prepared them for any such a contingency (cheers.) We have laid a train of gunpowder at home which will explode if we telegraph the news that

the authorities here are attempting to suppress the right of public meeting (cheers). And if Sir Auckland makes the vain attempt, he will accelerate the severance of his own and his service's connection with the further administration of this Empire (loud cheers). If Sir Auckland is watching us, we also are watching him (cheers). And though we do not shrink from it (cheers). We shall go on as we have begun, temperately constitutionally, loyally; and if a strained relation spring into existence between rulers and ruled, we shall know where chiefly to lay the blame (cheers). If in England there be one man who more than another has bravely fought out and won the long fight for freedom of thought and speech ; for liberty of action and expression ; for toleration of opinion, and the right to meet and discuss great public questions: if there be among many giants one giant greater than the rest in his marvellous capacity of reaching the hearts of the English people who pay him the tribute of their affection and admiration because they are personally acquainted with the persecution heroically endured for conscience-sake : if there be a man who by the perfect purity of his private life—so far as perfect purity can obtain in this world—defied the most scurrilous of his assailants to lay his finger on one spot that need bring a blush to the forehead of an honest man : if there be an orator who can move the rough but kindly sympathy of the huge mass of working men in England: if there be one to whom you can turn as to a friend for assistance, for guidance, and may be for protection—if there be such a man I say, then such a man we have found in Charles Bradlaugh. [Mr. Norton had to stop for some little time because of the vociforous and continued cheering]. Aye, my friends, you may well cheer. For Charles Bradlaugh is one of the men of the age whose name has been written on the pages of his country's history (cheers) and whose reputation will remain a sacred memory in many an Englishman's home for centuries after his little world has forgotten all about Sir Auckland Colvin (Loud cheers). If there is to be a fight, I know which hero I should like upon my side (cheers). Call Charles Bradlaugh what name you like, Atheist, Socialist, Malthusian. You cannot rob him of the glory which is that man's due, who by the force of his own great character has worked his way up from the humblest ranks of life till he stands and sees his reward for years of sacrifice and persecution written in indelible characters upon the statute-book of England (Loud cheers.) Only the other day he closed a speech at Nottingham, on Indian Reform with a sentence which epitomises the

history of his career: "I have put my hand to this plough, and I will break either wood or steel, or else I will drive it through." That is the class of man we need, (cheers). One who will not easily take up a cause, nor having taken one up, easily abandon it (cheers). Choose for yourself. The selection only is ours. The ratification lies with you. Will you have him? [Loud cheers and cries of yes, yes.]

Well, gentleman, you all know that after Newcastle, there was a great and splendid meeting at Northampton, the reports of which you have all read. Though I could not afford much time for other meetings, Mr. Bonnerjee, who is qualifying for a vote at Croydon so as to "heckle" the sitting member Mr. Sidney Herbert on Indian questions (laughter), made a tour through Lincolnshire in company with Dr. Aubrey, the Liberal candidate at the next election. Everywhere Mr. Bonnerjee repeating the same simple facts met with the same generous reception (cheers). He even faced the ladies (laughter). You may imagine how bold Mr. Bonnerjee has become (laughter). When I first went home, he used to insist at the meetings that as I was his "junior" I should open the pleadings (laughter). Before I had left Mr. Bonnerjee dared what I could not dare (laughter), and spoke to Ladies' Association, (laughter). At all times a lady is a formidable critic. But a whole bevy of intellectual ladies leaves a man little more to hope for but extinction (laughter). Even from them we obtained a cordial promise of support: and you may guess how the fair sex will use their artifices on behalf of poor old India (laughter).

I cannot conclude without mention of Mr. Digby, (loud cheers). He has worked indefatigably for you, (cheers). Without his help we could have done very little. But he threw a wonderful enthusiasm into our cause, a name I must ask Sir Auckland Colvin's pardon for using in connection with ourselves (laughter). He worked hard and deserves your warmest thanks (cheers). He deserves more. He deserves your money, (laughter and cheers) and mine (laughter). And he must have it. To my poor services or to Mr. Bonnerjee's you are entitled free. We give them you for whatever they may be worth with all our best wishes (cheers). But Mr. Digby has to make his bread, and you cannot expect him to work for nothing. We have estimated that we shall need £1,000 a year for salary, printing, postage, hiring of halls, and so on. Surely the patriotism of United India is sufficiently great to raise 15,000 rupees a year. (Cheers). We must all give. (Cheers). All determine to keep our agency working.

(Cheers). All join to sustain the course of instruction to the English people which we have already inaugurated. Be true, be unselfish. We shall win if we persevere; and we cannot persevere without money. I plead to you for yourselves. (Cheers). You will get no redress out here, (cheers). You must look to Endland. (Cheers). More than ever now should you be united and alert. There are clouds gathering around you. There are dangers ahead. Sir Auckland Colvin is the worst. But you have to encounter the fury of the Patriot gang who I feel assured will not scruple to attack you in every way, both legitimate and the reverse. (Cheers). We have not at our command an inexhaustible exchequer like Patriots, laughter. We have no Nizam whom we can milch, (laughter). Nor are we fortunate enough to own an Abdul Huk, (loud laughter) whose breach of trust we could compound by the acceptance of a nuzzer (loud laughter). Such is a glimpse of the morality of some of those arrayed against us. (Cheers). We must combine, and trust to our own good character and capabilities of self-sacrifice to beat down the storm of opposition. (Cheers). Do not be dismayed by the rancour of the epithets that are hurled at us. Abuse is not argument, nor threats logic. (Cheers). The more ungovernable the patriots get the more calm and quiet must be our front (Cheers). I hail the filth that is so freely showered upon us as indications of our opponents' weakness. (Cheers). If we were not so plentifully abused, we should not be half as well advertised as we are. (Laughter). Therefore take heart from the array of illiterate knights and Rajahs (laughter) who atone for their defective education by the violence of their expletives. (Laughter). We will meet them with a cheery face, and following the hint in Sir Auckland Colvin's letter, we will recommend the other side to devote to self-culture and acquisition of knowledge, some portion—not all, for then we should be deprived of our advertisement (laughter) of that time which they now devote to be composition, by vicarious means. (Laughter) of monuments of astounding English. (Loud laugher). The alliance between Sir Auckland and the Rajahs cannot last. It is an unholy alliance. (Cheers). Can Liberalism, even if official, flourish side by side with sentiments such as those which move a Bhinga or a Syed Hossain? (Cheers). For the moment the array is imposing, and of course, the union possesses great capacity for mischief (laughter), finally, Mr. Jenkins in the *Overland Mail* is entreating the Patriots to open an agency in England to counteract the rising tide in our favour. This is another reason why we must put our agency on a firm pecuniary

basis to meet and refute all the falsehood which will inevitably be let loose upon us. [Cheers]. At first sight the forces against us look very imposing. If you abstain from action they may acquire a force they do not now possess. But if you are prudent you can face the present with absolute confidence and to look to a future where your sun will not be obscured.

Well roars the storm to those that hear
A louder voice across the storm,
Proclaiming social truth shall spread,
And justice win, tho' thrice again,
The red, fool fury of the Seine
Should fill her barricades with dead.
[Loud and long continued cheers.]

THE TRIPLICANE LITERARY SOCIETY'S RECEPTION.

A public meeting was held on 24th November 1888, in Pacheappah's Hall, at 5-30, for the reception of Mr. E. Norton by the members of the Triplicane Literary Society, with Raja Ram Row, ex-Member of Council, in the Chair. Mr. Eardley Norton said :—

MR. CHAIRMAN AND GENTLEMEN,—To meet any assembly of my native friends always gives me pleasure. To meet the Triplicane Literary Society peculiar pleasure. For it was under your auspices that I delivered myself of my first public utterance [cheers]; and I take it that you claim a sort of vested interest in myself and my sayings. [Laughter.] Unquestionably you assume a very serious responsibility. [Laughter.] But if you are not ashamed, I am not afraid [laughter] and I trust our partnership may long endure to the mutual good will and benefit of both [Cheers.] There is a peculiar appropriateness in the chair being taken to-night by my good friend Raja Rama Rao. For he first imbibed his legal knowledge in my father's chambers, and it is right and graceful that he who learnt from the father should impart to the son. [Cheers.] I am grateful for the protection of his name, for the advantages which I derive from his older head and wider experience. I rejoice in seeing the chair filled by a lawyer [Laughter.] To me it seems in keeping with the fitness of things that one of my own profession should in India, as so often elsewhere, take the lead in matters of all reform which are associated with the liberties of the people. [Cheers.] I welcome Rajah Rama Rao on his return to so congenial an atmosphere. [Cheers.] We want all the men of knowledge and of influence, all the men of enlightenment and progress. The people

should be led by one of the people [Cheers:] and Rajah Rama Rao is more in his proper element presiding over popular assemblies of his fellow, countrymen, and lending them the weight of his long intimacy with the affairs of the world, than in participating in the deliberations of a senate which is deliberative only in name. [Laughter.] If I may be allowed to say so, our Chairman, during his term of office, absented himself from our public meetings under a misapprehension both of his own obligations to ourselves, and of the view which the Government might take of his participation in our labours, [Cheers.] I say misapprehension ; for whatever may have been the opinions of the late Governor who, we are all agreed, left this country for this country's good, [Laughter and cheers] I feel quite certain that the present administration would not desire that promotion into the Legislative Council should be interpreted as fixing the limit of a gentleman's utility to his country, [Cheers]. I have no desire to flatter, I am not speaking for office. [Laughter.] It would be useless if I were : for I am told no one who is not a native reads what I say. [Laughter]. Again : there is no office for which I can speak. [Laughter.] You will not, therefore, accuse me of interested motives if I say I have noticed, with deep gratitude, a distinct departure for the better in many public matters in that period of time during which we have been ruled by His Excellency Lord Connemara [Cheers.] And I think you too should be grateful. [Cheers.] I will only quote one instance as an illustration. I congratulate the Government and their nominee on the selection for the Government Pleadership of our well-known friend, Mr. Subramania Iyer. [Cheers.] Gratifying as that selection must be personally to Mr. Subramania Iyer—and if you wish to learn how a Public Prosecutor should discharge his duties impartially to the Crown and prisoner alike, go and listen to our friend in Court [Cheers]—his nomination comes home to me with a deeper, wider significance. It means that the old exclusiveness of racial partiality is at an end [Cheers]. And that the prizes of the bar are no longer to be the exclusive perquisites at all costs of the Europeans. [Cheers]. It means that there is a promise hereafter of advancement to all professsional men alike : [cheers] that a wider field of ambition is opened out to Native as well as to Englishmen, which must ensure a corresponding increase in the amount and quality of legal talent [cheers] and that the reward hereafter will be to the best without distinction of caste or colour. [Cheers.] That is an innovation for which His Excellency and his Government are entitled to take credit. [Cheers.]

I know, of course, you expect me to speak to you on political matters. It would be strange if you did not, seeing how men's minds are running on the great awakening of public sentiment and aspiration. Most of you will have read what I said on Thursday last. I will not go over the old ground But there are a few old points I wish to touch upon before I pass to newer topics. There is nothing more true than that old heresies die hard. And none will die hader than the heresy that you and I are asking for some share in representative Government that you and I are seeking to wrest power from the hands of the authorities, that we are actuated by a desire to hamper and impede the freedom of the executive. [Laughter.] At the risk of wearying you, in the hope that some one of our critics will, by accident, read what I say [Laughter], let me plainly repeat what it is we want and why we want it. 'We ask for no share of the Executive [Cheers.] What we pray for is an extension of the already existing Legislative Councils—a very different thing—based upon a system of partial representation [cheers]. Now, for making that request we are called hard names : we are denounced as traitors, we are held up to public scorn as renegades : we are told we are keeping a hungry eye upon the loaves and fishes [laughter]: that we are impelled by a disloyal desire to terminate the Queen's Government [laughter]. You laugh, because you know what you want, and how you have formulated your want. And you are struck by this grotesque libel of your wishes. But your critics do not laugh. They look at the matter in a more solemn light [laughter] They are terribly in earnest in their abuse. Yet how many, or rather how few have read what we have had to say upon these questions, and of those who have read, how few understand. [laughter]. The army of our enemies is composed of two *classes of recruits : those who will not comprehend*, and those who cannot [Laughter]. It is not easy to say with which class rests the weight in numbers. [Laughter]. Let me tell you a few facts. To-day, in Madras, we are told that European sentiment is against us : that our resolution is disloyal : that the very integrity of the Empire is at stake because we ask for an extension of the Legislative Council. [Laughter]. Yet here in my hand I hold a printed requisition to the Sheriff of Madras, convening a public meeting in this very hall, which meeting—you will scarcely credit it!—passed a resolution by acclaim that the Crown should be petitioned to give us a representative Legislative Council. [Loud cheers]. And that was on the 25th March 1859! [Loud cheers]. Thirty years ago the citizens of Madras prayed for a reform upon the very point as to which Sir

Auckland Colvin tells us to-day we are still in *statu pupillari*, [loud cheers]. Fifty-five names are attached to that requisition, of which forty-four are the names of English gentlemen, [cheers] And among those names I find the following: John Vans Agnew of Messrs. Arbuthnot and Co., Chairman; H. E. Sullivan, since first Member of Council here [cheers]. William Arbuthnot, W. R. Arbuthnot, both of Arbuthnot and Co., and one for many years member of the Indian Council; W. J. Oakes, of Messrs. Oakes and Co., J. H Cox; T. L. R. Shand, head of one of the greatest of our former mercantile houses; F. Agnew; A. Tolputt of Messrs. Binny and Co., D. D. Dymes of Dymes and Co., A. Lowe; P. Orr; John Miller; H. E. Church; W. Barton Wright; Fitzgerald Church all three on the Madras Railway; John Bruce Norton; [loud cheers]; John Shaw, Registrar of the High Court; Robert Franck, and J. W. Gantz; [cheers]. Representative enough, surely, with indications of loyalty and common sense [cheers]. That was in 1859! Thirty years have lapsed. Since then education has spread, and great strides have been made in self-improvement and science of Government: yet when we venture to petition loyalty for that which our fathers asked unblamed, we arouse the derision of a Lieutenant-Governor, and the threat of suppression, [Cheers] I must be pardoned if I prefer the opinions of the men whose names I have quoted to the opinion of an official whose political affinities are circumscribed by the narrow influences of his official surroundings; and whose sympathies are so delicately organized that their internal economy are violently disarranged by a catechism and a dialogue [laughter and cheers]. Who have gone backward? The natives who are pressing for the reform our fathers asked for thirty years ago, [cheers], or the Europeans who oppose the instalment of political wisdom which their ancestors demanded in public meeting a quarter of a century back [cheers]. You have emancipated yourselves, from the thraldom of the school room. It is we who have merited Sir Auckland Colvin's sneer [cheers]. What good will the reformed Council do to the Government? I am asked. I reply that the reformation will introduce into their deliberation a new element of strength and information which, personally acquainted with the wants, the wishes and the superstitions of the people, will infuse a new life and a new vigour into the legislative enactments of the day. It will save the Government from error, and legislation will cease to be the farce it is at present [cheers]. What will be the gain to the people? If no other, this: that we shall be gradually training up a large body of educated natives to

act in harmony and with cohesion for common ends [cheers] : that we shall be educating the national intelligence under a system which opens up fresh fields, to national ambition [cheers] ; and that with new lease of dignity and responsibility, we shall be calling into existence a higher sense of self-respect, the very Alpha and Omega of morality [cheers]. I for one am satisfied with such a vista [cheers]. And for advocating this, we are stigmatized as traitors ? [Cheers]. The Negro of the West Indies is not thought too backward for representative institutions [cheers]. In Ceylon the planters are represented by a member whom they elect themselves. [Loud cheers]. Though the Governor retains the right of ultimate approval. The Singalese community is represented, so is the Burgher. [Cheers]. In Singapore the Chinese cooly sends a member to the Legislative Council [cheers]. Why are we, you and I, and the communities and interests we represent, to have no share in the legistation of this country ? [Cheers]. Is the Brahmin inferior in intelligence to the Singhalese, [laughter], the Sudra to the Chinese cooly [laughter], and the non-official European to both ? [Laughter]. Except upon that supposition our exclusion from legislative rights is indefensible.

It is asserted over and over again that the movement is hostile to the Government. I think that the quite orderliness of our meetings [cheers], the intentions of the speakers as translated by their speeches, and, above all, the character of our delegates and of those who lead us in our demands should have protected us from so foolish an imputation [cheers]. Are men like Rajah Rama Rao likely to foment rebellion ? [Cheers]. Does Mr. Bonnerjee meditate separation [cheers] or Mr. Budr-ud-din Tyabjee revolt ? [Cheers]. Why should the best natives and the best of the non-official Europeans combine to thwart the Government under which both live and to assist and reform which is the loyal wish of both ? [Cheers]. Surely it is more generous, if not more prudent to credit us with good intent, and to believe that in the assemblies for which we are working we should unite to make the Government of the country more acceptable because more popular [cheers], and combine to place at the disposal of the authorities capacities and abilities not inferior to their own [cheers]. It is one of the gravest errors which can be fairly laid to the charge of England, that she does not always appreciate aright the true moral of her own independence; and that strong in her belief in her own honesty of purpose, she is apt to encourage the delusion that no one is fit to govern but herself [cheers]. To what straits, persistence in such error can lead is exemplified by the unhappy condition of Ireland to-day.

Opposition in certain quarters is evoked by the belief that we have not stated truly all our demands, that we are keeping back our true intent, that we are labouring to insert the "thin end of the wedge," in order hereafter to benefit by the leverage of the thicker part [Laughter]. What does the metaphor mean? This that progress and reform are gradual; that the intangible portions of a people as represented by their hopes and ambitions solidify just as their buildings become old with time and their bodies are transformed by age [cheers]. Education and experience day by day augment and consolidate the political aspirations of all men [cheers]. That is a law of nature which not even Sir Auckland Colvin can check, though he may deny it [cheers and laughter]. And is it not right that as you are more fit for greater power you should get it? [Cheers]. It is propounded to me as a situation full of the most terrible portents that our real aims is in the hereafter to acquire some control over the expenditure of the nation. And I answer, why not? [Loud cheers.] I see nothing to frighten me in that contingency [cheers]. For I regard a check upon the gross extravagance of the Indian Government both here and in England the surest, if not the only, solution to the problem. "How is the financial condition of India to be remedied?" [Loud cheers]. And if in the fulness of time you qualify yourselves for executive office, I, for one, not only see no reasen why you should not have it [cheers,] but I see every reason why you should [loud cheers]. And, finally, if in that remote future which can be pictured, if at all, only by an exertion of our poetical faculties, you shall have so discarded your many prejudices of race, and caste, and creed, as to be able to combine as one nation for the Government of this country, if you shall have become so homogeneous, as to be able not merely to administer your own internal affairs for the common benefit of your various races with prudence and with impartiality, but to stand united as one large family against foreign aggression; [cheers] if, I say, such a day should arrive, and you were to demand from us the complete government of this country uncontrolled by England's supervision, I for one would contemplate your unfettered accession to the awful responsibility of empire under such circumstances with a pride it would be impossible to exaggerate, for I should recognize that the history of the world contained no record of any achievement which could compare with the marvellous accomplishment by my country of a labour so wonderful in its origin, so stupendous in its execution, and so divine in its fruition as this [loud cheers]. Such a picture has no terrors for me [cheers]. But

let us leave the land of dreams, and come back to the land of troubles [laughter]. We are told we ought not to assert that there is any misrule in India [laughter]. Why not, if it exist? Is the Government of this country to be the only one in the world exempted from criticism? Are we to ask for reform without making good our case for reform? [Cheers]. I, at any rate, will not sue, as a matter of grace, for that to which I am entitled as of right [cheers]. And when the necessity for reform is denied, I am free to justify my petition by proving the facts upon which its prayer for relief is founded [cheers]. Let us first of all clearly understand what we mean by misrule. I mean, and I believe you are one with me, acts whether executive or legislative, which, however well intentioned, are not in truth for the public benefit, carried into effect as a rule without previous consultation of the people whom they will most closely touch, and very often against the loudly declared opinion of those whose opinions are entitled to consideration and to weight [cheers]. By misrule I mean the continuance of a system which, by whatever name you choose to call it, is in fact despotism [cheers]. By misrule, I mean the failure to give to the Councils' Act the full effect of that Statute. By misrule, I mean the system of legislation which is a shame [cheers], and the absurd selection of nominees to the Legislative Councils which excludes independent intellect, and converts those assemblies into mere offices for registering the decrees of the executive [loud cheers]. Let me be content with these illustrations. It is not considered disloyal in England to point out their defects to the Government. I do not know why it should be considered disloyal here [cheers]. Disloyal or not, it must be done, for it is upon the truth and strength of any facts that I rest my right to redress [cheers]. I want no eleemosynary concession [cheers]. If I am wrong, I deserve nothing. But if I am right, I will not take from pity what I claim from justice [cheers]. I charge it to the Government that they have been, and are, grossly extravagant with the revenues of India. In some instances the application of those revenues, I regret to say, has been absolutely dishonest [shame]. I allege also that this extravagance verging at times on dishonesty, is due to the simple fact that the tax-payers of this country have no one to represent them here or in England are not consulted before their contributions are squandered with a recklessness which is criminal [loud cheers]. Is that misrule if I can prove the fact? [Cheers]. Or does Sir Auckland Colvin gloss this over with some euphemism extracted from that long glossary of euphemisms with which every apologist of the Governments of this country must be

provided? [Loud cheers]. We have been challenged to prove misrule. I accept the challenge [cheers]. And I will prove it by instalments [cheers]. To-night let me prove it by a few instances I have not time for many—extracted from the accounts with which the Indian Government furnish the Secretary of State in England. And I will confine myself to-night to some of the "Home Charges." Amongst the permanent buildings erected in England for India's purposes at Indian's cost, the India office alone costs £540,000 which considering the amount and the quality of work done there, is a generous provision for housing the gentlemen who called themselves the Indian Council [laughter]. For the salaries of the officials in England from that of the Secretary of State to the wages of the thirty-two house maids and charwomen who, I take it, help to enliven the lassitude of the Members of Council [laughter] India pays £220,906 [shame]. For furlough and absentee allowances; she pays £269,961: for military furlough allowances £267,101. At a cost of £1,118,787 five ships were built for India. To work these we are annually debited with £277,072 [shame]. You will be surprised to hear that if India happens to use the services of an officer who has earned a "distinguished service" annuity for duty performed, say in Ashantee or New Zealand, India has to bear the cost of such annuity [shame]. In addition to the ships I have referred to India pays for the Queen's ships employed in Indian seas £44,237, and we support establishments in China, a Mission to the Court of Persia, and a Consulate at Jeddah, with none of which have we any concern, at an annual expenditure of £25,366. In 1883, India was called upon to contribute £5,113,171 to England for charges of which the foregoing are merely specimens. Compare the estimates presented to Parliament for the Colonies. The total vote was for £2,156,263, and towards this sum the Colonies were expected to give only £185,700! Is it a strained inference to draw that the reason for this difference of treatment lies in the fact that the Colonies are not, like India, at the mercy of the House of Commons? [Shame]. If India is rightly taxed for English ships and men, how comes it, I should like to know, that the British tax-payer provides nearly 25,000 men and a number of war-ships at his own expense for the protection of people's properties, other than his Indian fellow-subjects? [Cheers]. Moreover, among the institutions built and furnished in England by the ryots of India, is an Engineering College which cost £100,000, worked at an annual loss of £5,000 which India has to meet That College was erected for the use of gentlemen who desired to enter the Punjab Works Department in

India. Yet the benefits of that institution are open to all the world, and men who never intend to go to India can, by the payment of the usual fees, participate in this enforced contribution from the natives of India [shame, shame]. Yet, again, let me give you another instance England has built at Ealing, near London, a Lunatic Asylum for which she has charged India £38,000 ! [Laughter]. That institution is also worked at an annual deficit of £5,000 which is debited to us [shame]. Why, I want to know, should India be compelled to maintain for English lunatics, an institution which in her own instance England throws the cost of upon the parish or the friends of the unfortunates ? [Cheers]. If ever I have charged the Government of India with want of provision and foresight I humbly withdraw the allegation in the face of an establishment which may yet afford shelter for some of those who are responsible for the waste and extravagance of our finances [loud laughter, and cheers]. A few minor instances, and I have done. Why should we pay for a portrait of a Prince and a Viceroy at the cost of £812 for the adornment of the Council Chamber at Calcutta ? [Cheers]. The munificence of each might have made the monuments more precious by investing it with the grateful associations of a gift [cheers] and not with the recollection that an impoverished people are taxed for a folly [cheers]. The extention of the Order of the Star of India, bestowed with a nice discrimination which includes a man like Abdul Huq as a recipient [laughter and cheers] has cost this country £13,907 [shame]. A passage by the P. and O. costs £67. Yes it was thought necessary to send Lord Lytton home at a cost to this country of £5,827-10-1 ! [Laughter]. With a liberality which does not mark the proceedings of the Houses of Parliament, the Government of India pay, not out of their pocket but the pocket of Indian tax-payers, £335 to Surgeon-General Moore for a " Manual of Family Medicine for India" [laughter ; £2,626 to a Mr. Wardle for " investigating the dyes and wild silks of India ;" [laughter and 'shame'] ; £695-8-2 to Mr. Colquhoun for his account of " Overland journey from Canton to Rangoon " [laughter] ; and £1,066-19-8 in one year and £992-10-8 in another year to a nameless officer for—what ! " Indian pendulum observations." [Loud laughter]. Have I not quoted instances of shameless extravagance ? [Cheers]. Is not extravagance misrule ? [Cheers]. If it be not, I know not what interpretation plain, sensible, men will place upon the meaning of the word [cheers]. And if it be, what becomes of the reiterated statement that we who desire to see a wise economy substituted for the reckless improvidence of Indian finance, have

never been able, in the language of Sir Auckland Colvin, to make, "some serious effort to dispose" of the charge that the Government of India is responsible for "existence of misrule" [loud cheers]. Serious efforts, forsooth! The efforts have been seriously made by serious people in serious pamphlets over and over again in England. [Cheers]. It is possible that Sir Auckland, like Sir Monstuart Elphinstone Grant Duff, consigns the criticisms of those who differ from him unread to the depths of a bottomless waste paper basket [cheers and laughter]. I should be sorry to believe it, and I will not, till Sir Auckland Colvin tells us so himself: and when he does I will retort it upon him especifically as a concrete instance of "misrule" under his own "benevolent" administration [cheers and laughter]. On some other occasion, or in some other form I will continue my narration of financial burthens unfairly laid upon our backs [cheers]. For to-night I have said enough to afford you food for thought. Go home and study the figures I have given you, and ask far and wide among the circle of your friends and relatives here and in the Mofussil, whether there is untruth or recklessness in our constantly reiterated complaint that we are labouring, voiceless and unpitied, amid a sea of wilful and unpardonable extravagance [loud cheers].

I have been asked more than once why I identify myself with a movement which carries so little European sympathy in India, and which tends to make its advocates unpopular in certain circles, why I have allied myself with one who holds the religious opinions of Mr. Bradlaugh (cheers). The very question shows how far away from English standards of political morality my questioners have fallen. Let me give them here my answer, once for all. I am proud of Mr. Bradlaugh's co-operation, because I am proud to be associated with an honest and a fearless man (loud cheers). I am proud te work, no matter, how humbly, with one who has never swerved a hair's breadth from allegiance to the people's cause. (Cheers). Of him I have already spoken on a previous occasion. I will only add to-night of his religious convictions what Tennyson has so aptly said—

> There is more faith in honest doubt,
> Believe me, than in half the creeds. [Loud cheers].

I advocate the people's cause—yours and my own, for I have never disassociated the European from the Native in a reform which I believe to be essential to both (cheers)—because I believe it to be the only right and true one, because experience has taught me what expediency also supports, that thirty years is a long period of probation, even in the life time of a

nation, and that it is best and wisest to yield gracefully what must be acquired eventually at all cost. I will answer also in the words with which Robert Browning answered question—

"Why am I a Liberal?"
"Why?" "Because all I happily can or do,
All that I am now, all hope to be—
Whence comes it save from fortune setting free
Body and soul the purpose to pursue,
God traced for both? If fetters, not a few,
Of prejudice, convention, fall from me,
These shall I bid men—each in his degree
Also God-guided—bear and gaily too?
But little do or can the best of us:
That little is achieved through Liberty.
Who then does hold, emancipated thus,
His fellow shall continue bound? Not I,
Who live, love, labour freely nor discuss
A brother's right to freedom. That is?
'Why?'"

[Loud and continued cheering]

THE AFGHAN DILEMMA.

By "Historicus."

It has often been observed that, while the English people keep a watchful and jealous eye on the internal administration of the Kingdom, and exercise no small control over taxation and State expenditure, they allow themselves to be almost entirely excluded from the conduct of their foreign affairs; whereby a few Cabinet Ministers have had it in their power, by embarking on speculative schemes of foreign policy, to involve the nation in serious disputes with other countries and render war inevitable, before the English people were acquainted with the true nature and aim of the policy pursued. In such cases the House of Commons may of course refuse supplies; but by the time Parliament and the people are informed of the full circumstances of the dispute, it is often too late to reverse the action of the Government, and the nation thus finds itself committed to war, without any clear knowledge of its necessity or justice.

This evil assumes greater proportions still, and becomes a danger to the British Constitution, when the Cabinet has the means of raising war supplies without applying for them to Parliament—when, for instance, the Indian treasury may be put into requisition and our Indian fellow-subjects be taxed, for giving effect to schemes of conquest secretly devised by the British Cabinet and entered upon without the consent of Parliament. It was through such means that the nation was twice drawn into disastrous wars with the Afghans; and it is the same unconstitutional device that is now practised for defraying extravagant preparations for a third invasion of Afghánistán.

The plea for our aggressive action in 1838 and 1878 was that the military occupation of Afghánistán was necessary for the safety of India from a Russian attack. The hollowness of that plea has been exposed by our highest authorities.

The Duke of Wellington, at the time of the first Afghán war, characterized the Russian scare as "a political nightmare"; and in later years, Lord Lawrence, Lord Napier of Magdala, Sir William Mansfield (afterwards Lord Sandhurst) and General (now Lord) Roberts deprecated our occupying advanced posts in Afghánistán for the protection of India, and condemned that policy as being calculated, on the contrary, to weaken our means of defence against an enemy who should advance through that country. Lord Beaconsfield himself, who was responsible for the war of 1878-80, and who sought to justify it on the mystic ground of a "scientific frontier," admitted that so far as the invasion of India in that quarter was concerned, it was the opinion of Her Majesty's Government, that it was hardly practicable. "The base of operations of any possible foe was so remote, the communications were so difficult, the aspect of the country so forbidding, that the Government had long arrived at the opinion that an invasion of the Indian Empire, by passing the mountains which form our North Western frontier, was one which we need not dread." *Speech on Lord Mayor's Day*, 1878.

On the other hand, every circumstance of the late war and of our subsequent expeditions against the border-tribes of Afghánistán, shows that the conquest of that proverbially difficult country, the subjugation of its hitherto indomitable occupants, and the military glory expected to accrue from such deeds, were the real aim and motive of the policy pursued on those occasions; and that the safety of India was a mere plea resorted to for justifying the appropriation of Indian revenue in the prosecution of Imperial schemes of conquest.

Military success invariably evokes popular applause, regardless alike of moral considerations and of the material value of a conquest; and had the late war been successful, the nation would doubtless have overlooked the fact, that no real glory can be gained by a great country when it attacks, from a selfish motive, an unoffending and avowedly

could expect to raise in Afghánistán would not defray a twentieth part of the cost of holding that barren country. But the late war was not successful; its authors had entirely failed to apprehend the difficulties of the task they had undertaken, and seemed to have expected their enterprise to resolve in a military promenade, a shower of stars and ribbons and some substantial rewards for the favoured few. Events soon dispelled those visions and, after two years of warfare spent chiefly in foraging for supplies and marked by two signal defeats—namely, our hasty retreat into Sherpur before Mahomed Ján's fanatical hordes, and the disastrous battle of Maiwand lost near Kandahar—our armies evacuated Afghánistán, not only without having gained the smallest advantage to compensate for the blood and treasure expended in that war, but under conditions particularly mortifying to our national pride.

The policy which proved so disastrous, is again being pursued on the questionable argument that Russia's persistent advance towards India, calls for a corresponding movement on our part; while the arguments of the above-mentioned authorities, showing that India can be better defended on her own frontier, than by an encounter with the enemy in a difficult and hostile country like Afghánistán, far from our reserves and general resources, remain unanswered and are entirely ignored.

The revival of the "forward policy" may, in a great measure, be ascribed to the hope entertained by its promoters, of obliterating, by military success in a future campaign, the humiliating recollections of the late war. Let us see how far such an expectation is warranted, either by the costly preparations we have made, or by our achievements in recent years.

We have constructed military roads and railways which may facilitate the advance of our troops into Afghánistán; but they would not lessen the difficulties which caused our failure in the late war, seeing that these were met with only after we had penetrated into the interior of the

country, and that they arose from causes which are as powerful now as they were in 1840 and 1880—namely, the configuration and barrenness of the land, the severity of the climate in winter and summer, and the fanaticism of the inhabitants. Our preparations have also consisted of military expeditions and the distribution of money, for enforcing the submission or purchasing the neutrality of the border-tribes during the march of our troops through their mountains. The progress of all these preparations, however, has been most insignificant in comparison with the vast and complicated plan upon which they were designed. Some details of that plan will be found in Hon. G. Curzon's Chapter on the North Western Frontier of India, 1890.

Of the projected railways only one has been made, namely, the Scind-Pishin line which was afterwards extended to near Chaman. This line is now found to be quite unsuitable for military purposes in time of war, seeing that important sections of it are liable, from floods and landslips, to frequent and prolonged interruptions. In March this year the Royal Dublin Fusiliers proceeding on relief to Quetta, were detained at Sibi, in consequence of a series of landslips in the Hurnai section; and Quetta was then, as it had frequently been before, deprived of railway communication with India.*

The construction of the other projected railways has hitherto been effectually opposed by the neighbouring tribesmen; and as to our military roads, some were destroyed by the villagers, as soon as the troops sent to protect our working parties had retired, while the construction of others was interrupted, through our road-makers and their escorts being overpowered by tribal gatherings.

* Parts in the big cutting in the Hurnai line have been absolutely obliterated again and again, and every expedient failed to keep it in shape. Rails have been laid down only to disappear, and by the time one slip had been mastered, another came to destroy the work done. The Engineering Committee have now come to the conclusion that no permanent remedy can be applied which will make the railway secure from landslips. See *Pioneer*, 27 and 28 April, 1893.

Nor have our frontier expeditions been more successful: the earliest marched from Kohát in 1877 with orders "to occupy the country of the Jowákis [a section of the Adam Khel Afridis who had molested our working parties] until they tendered their absolute submission."—*Govt. Proclamation. Foreign Dept., Nov.* 5, 1877. We demanded at first 70,000 Rupees as compensation, 10,000 Rupees as a fine, and the surrender of four of their Chiefs. Our terms were rejected, even after we had abandoned the claim for compensation and reduced the fine to half its original amount. Fighting ensued and, at the end of three months, we retired on receiving a verbal promise that the four Chiefs, whose surrender had been refused, would be sent away from the tribal territory. In short the expedition proved a complete failure, and similar results characterized all our subsequent frontier expeditions.

In 1878 a column under Major Cavagnari made a night attack on the Othmán Khel villages, in retaliation of the maltreatment inflicted on our road-makers; and the following year we sent troops to subjugate the Zamushts and a section of the Orakzai tribe. In 1880, 1881 and 1882 expeditions were sent against the Momands, the Mahsud Waziris and the Kabul Khel Waziris; while a considerable force under General Wilkinson attempted the reduction of the Bozdars. In 1883 an expedition fought its way into the country of the Shiránis on the pretext of surveying the Takht-in-Sulimán mountain. In 1884 and 1885 we invaded the territories of the Chigarzais, Akazais and Parári Syads in the North, and of the Kaker and Musá Khel tribes in Southern Afghánistán. In 1886 and 1887 operations were resumed against the Akazais, the Shiránis and the Bozdars who had remained defiant, and an expedition was sent to reduce the Bunerwals. In June 1888 a column under Major Battye and Captain Urmston marched into the Black Mountain country, when both officers were killed in a skirmish, and our troops had to retire. The unsatisfactory result of this long series of operations induced the Government to employ larger bodies of troops; and in October

1888 an army of 8,000 fighting men under General M'Queen, accompanied by 5,000 baggage mules and the usual complement of grooms, water carriers, ambulance porters and other camp-followers, was despatched for reducing the Black Mountain country. This force encountered very little opposition and, on its return, the General stated in his farewell orders that "the Hasanzais, Akazais and other tribes had tendered their submission, and that roads had been constructed, which would afford ample scope for the advance of our troops." The tribesmen, it was said, had promised that we should in future be free to march through their country, and construct and maintain roads. But when we attempted to avail ourselves of those promises, they were at once repudiated, and the troops and working parties we sent in 1890 had to return. Thereupon a large force was despatched in 1891 for the complete subjugation of the Black Mountain country and the capture of Hasan Ali, the Chief who had led the tribes against our men. This expedition not succeeding in its mission, an offer was made by us to Hasan Ali, that if he surrendered, he should simply be interned with an ample allowance suitable to his rank. Eventually the expedition returned without the person of the Chief; but it was said that "he was sure to come in"; and later that "if he did not come in, his actions were of little consequence, as he had lost all prestige among the mountaineers." *Pioneer, September*, 1892. Nevertheless a third expedition was sent, in 1892, to hunt down and capture the Chief. Failure was again the result, and the further intentions of the Government in the matter have not transpired.

While these unsuccessful operations were taking place in the North, we invaded the Miranzai country where our road-makers had been dispersed: we also sent expeditions to occupy the Gumal Pass and the Zhob country beyond it, in pursuance of a project to construct a railway from our frontier station of Dehra-Ismail-Khan to Pishin, as an alternative line to the defective Scind-Pishin railway.

The first Miranzai expedition left Kohát on the 26th January 1891, arriving the next day at Gwáda, the residence of Makhmudin, the Chief who had attacked our working parties. The village had been deserted, and a party was ordered in pursuit of the Chief, but could not start until the 4th of February, as frost-bite and pneumonia had attacked our soldiers, and a convoy of sick had to be escorted back to India. The pursuit after Makhmudin proved fruitless, and on the 10th a column marched through the Zara pass. The Sappers and Miners worked hard at making a road; but snow fell from noon till dark, and the march, though only five miles, occupied from 11.30 a.m. to 5 a.m. the next day, the rear-guard and commissariat stores arriving only at 1.30 p.m. The country was covered with snow, and no opposition being offered by the enemy, the expedition returned on the 1st March, leaving a garrison at Gwáda.

On the 4th April our Gwáda garrison was overpowered and beat a precipitate retreat, pursued by the tribesmen as far as the low hills near our frontier. Another force, composed of three columns, was organised forthwith and marched on the 17th April, taking the village of Tsalai on the same day. We had then to bivouac, as our men were completely knocked up by the intense heat and the want of water. The next morning we carried the village of Sartop, and were obliged afterwards to halt at a spring to enable our troops to get water; many had been without it for twenty-four hours and were exhausted; the young soldiers of the King's Royal Rifles, fresh to the country, suffered specially from heat and thirst. (*See Sir W. Lockhart's Despatch 8th June*, 1891.) On the 19th April our third column was attacked, but reinforcements came to its relief the next day from Sangar. In the night of the 22nd our post at Chilibágh was fired into, and on the 23rd our convoy was attacked, losing a number of men and mules. In retaliation of these attacks, our troops blew up a number of villages, when some of the Chiefs consented to our

making a road up the Samana mountain. Thereupon the Miranzai Field Force was withdrawn and broken up on the 15th May, the casualties during the four weeks having amounted to 101.

As regards the invasion of the Zhob valley alluded to in a preceding page, an expedition was sent in 1888 to survey the Gumal pass, but its mission being frustrated by the opposition of the Makhind tribe, a considerable force, accompanied by Sir R. Sandeman as Political officer, was despatched the following year through Baluchistán, with orders to occupy the Zhob country as far as the Western extremity of the Gumal pass. This force was arrested in its march by the Kidarzais; but our Agent, who subsidised certain Chiefs in the Zhob country, succeeded in 1890 in establishing, with their consent, a British post at Apozai; and afterwards in obtaining promises from the Mahsud Waziris, the Shiránis and the Derwesh Khel of Wána, that they would keep the Gumal pass open, in consideration of certain sums of money being annually paid to them by the British Government.

The subsidised Chiefs appear so far to have maintained a friendly demeanour; but their tribesmen all along manifested their strong objection to our presence, by night-firing into the British Agent's camp, by raiding for fire-arms and by cutting off our soldiers, when they ventured a few hundred yards from their lines. These insults increased and became so intolerable in 1892, that we threatened to send a force for punishing the tribesmen, unless the Amir withdrew an officer whom he had stationed among them, and to whose influence we ascribed their increased hostility. The Amir replied that, in compliance with our wishes, he had ordered his officer to retire, pending the result of the conference we had proposed, and at which he hoped that a clear understanding would be arrived at, regarding the boundary of our Empire. This reply, conciliatory as it looks, was resented nevertheless as evasive, and was responded to by a loud threat, in the

Times of November the 2nd, that the British Government would not be lightly turned from its settled policy, and that, unless the Amir fell in with that policy, Afghánistán as a kingdom would disappear.

Now, to understand the irritation thus manifested at the Amir's reply, it is necessary to remember that the "settled policy" referred to in the *Times*, is our "forward policy" aiming at the military occupation of Afghánistán—a policy which we communicated to Abdur-Rahman substantially in the following terms:—"To preserve the integrity of your dominions, you must co-operate with us in repelling Russian attacks, and assist us meanwhile in bringing under complete and permanent control, the Afghán tribes who dwell along our frontier." In this communication we omitted defining the territories we purposed to subjugate; but our advance to New Chaman and Apozai and our reference to repelling attacks on the Northern confines of the Amir's dominions, made it clear that the best part of Afghánistán was included in our intended sphere of action. Under these circumstances, the Amir's reference to a delimitation of our boundary obviously implied a protest against our encroachments which at once accounts for the menace published in the *Times*.

Of that menace the Amir seems to have taken no direct notice; but in one of the two letters he sent by Mr. Pyne, so far as its contents have transpired, he said, regarding his dealings with the frontier tribes, something to the effect that his conduct in the matter would be ruled by the Sacred Law which commands the respect of both parties. Now, the sacred law in independent Mahomedan communities enjoins the expulsion of the "infidel," except he be a guest or a servant—an article of faith in obedience to which our "forward policy" has met with the most fanatical opposition from the Afghán tribes. The Amir's letter may therefore be construed as a disguised defiance of our threat, an interpretation which does not appear unreasonable, when we consider that, if he were to assent to our policy, his

action would certainly be repudiated by the tribes, and would involve the loss of his power and his throne, and perhaps also of his life.

Meanwhile, our threat to destroy the Kingdom of Afghánistán has drawn the attention of the world to our relations with Abdur-Rahman—a subject which had been much obscured by strategic and political controversies, but which has now assumed a definite form; and the public mind is doubtless exercised to know whether the British Government will act up to its threat, or recede from the dominative position it has taken up. To recede would of course lower its dignity and prestige in the eyes of its Indian subjects and of Asiatic nations in general; while to execute its menace would involve the British nation in a third Afghán war, with no greater justification or better chance of success, than we had in our previous Afghán wars.

In estimating the issue of a third invasion it may be useful to bear in mind that sixteen years of uninterrupted warfare against the border-tribes of Afghánistán, has not enabled us to advance our frontier a single day's march from the line it occupied in 1876; and that all we have to show for the appalling amount of blood and treasure expended during that period, consists of a defective military railway, a number of unfinished and partly-destroyed military roads, and the precarious and contested positions we have taken up at Apozai and New Chaman. It is true that we have assurances of friendship and support from tribesmen whom we enlisted in our service or subsidised on other pleas, and on whom we profess to rely as on an irregular frontier guard of our Indian Empire. (*See Hon. G. Curzon's Chapter on the N.W. Frontier of India*, 1890.) But Sir L. Griffin, than whom no man has perhaps had more opportunities of judging the Afghán character, is far from sharing Mr. Curzon's faith in the affection and trustiness of our Afghán adherents. "The Afghán," says Sir L. Griffin in the *Fortnightly* for January last, "has a very

tenacious memory for injuries, and he never fails to avenge them, should an opportunity occur. The Afgháns are fierce, bloodthirsty, fanatical and *treacherous*." This judgment is strongly confirmed by the annals of the late war; and the many injuries inflicted by us in our frontier expeditions, have no doubt remained deeply impressed in the memory of the frontier tribes, for future settlement.

An element of particular weight in the present conjuncture is the critical financial position in India, where retrenchment and additional taxation are declared to be most urgently needed, and where the situation is further aggravated by the continued decline in the value of silver, the metal in which the Indian revenue is collected. To look, in this state of things, to the Indian treasury for the means of carrying on war, would certainly be the height of imprudence.

On the other hand, to remain in our present situation in Afghánistán and await opportunities for executing the "forward policy," while a hostile population surrounds our isolated garrison at Apozai, and Afghán forces assemble in front of our railway terminus at New Chaman, may be endurable for a short time, but must eventually result in war.

The name of Lord Roberts has been mentioned in a preceding page as that of one of the great authorities who condemned the policy of 1876, involving the establishment of British garrisons in Afghánistán for meeting an eventual Russian advance through that country. An impression prevails in some circles that, whatever opinion General Roberts may have held regarding that policy at the close of the late war, his views on the subject have since been entirely modified. It becomes important, therefore, to ascertain how far such an impression is well founded, and what are his lordship's present views on the subject.

On the eve of his retirement from the command of Her Majesty's forces in India, Lord Roberts spoke in eulogistic terms of the frontier defences in India which have been constructed of late years. Before considering his remarks

on the subject, it may be well to bear in mind that the works officially designated as "frontier defences" in Northern India, belong to two distinct classes—namely, to railways and fortified posts calculated to facilitate the concentration of troops on our frontier; and to military roads and railways constructed beyond our frontier, and adapted only to the conveyance of troops into Afghánistán. The latter, it will be seen from the following quotations, are not, in Lord Roberts's opinion, necessary for the protection of India. "These defences," said his lordship at Bombay on the 7th April last, "contract the front open to an attack in the direction of Afghánistán, secure our frontier arsenals and are the main line of communications with the rear; and, in the event of our being engaged in operations on a large scale across the border, will furnish advanced bases for our field army." . . . "A multiplicity of defences beyond a certain point is a source of danger as well as a sign of weakness and timidity; and I hold that a mobile and well-equipped field army is an infinitely more important factor than the most powerful system of defences."

Nothing in these passages or in the rest of his lordship's speech expresses or implies approval of the policy requiring the settlement of British garrisons in Afghánistán, for meeting an eventual attack from Russia That policy, therefore, remains emphatically condemned in the terms of General Roberts's despatch of May 1880, in which he said:—"The longer and more difficult the line of communication is, the more numerous and greater the obstacles which Russia would have to overcome; and far from shortening one mile of the road, I would let the web of difficulties extend to the very mouth of the Khyber."

This opinion is confirmed by the last sentences quoted from the speech at Bombay, and it moreover coincides, in a remarkable manner, with Earl Grey's opinion,* "that by creating the means of rapidly moving an overwhelming force to any point of our frontier which may be the object of attack we might have an assurance of being able speedily

* Letter published in *Times*, March, 1887.

to destroy any hostile force that might be brought against us; and that, if the money which has been spent in needless wars, had, on the contrary, been used in making railways along our frontiers, with two or three fortified posts where a force could be assembled in readiness to attack an enemy as soon as he appeared on our borders, perfect security might have been obtained against any attack that could possibly be made on our dominions, either by Russian troops or by Asiatics assisted and directed by Russians."

Since his return home Lord Roberts has spoken on several public occasions, and his speech at the Mansion House on the 12th June is remarkable for its significance. Referring to the organisation of the Indian Army, he said that the views he had formed during the Afghán campaign had not been materially modified by his more recent experience as Commander-in-Chief; and his opinion on the policy best calculated to secure India against Russian aggression, seems likewise to have remained the same as it was in 1880. He accordingly urged that "the first thing was to have an efficient army, and the next, to develop a system of communication for concentrating forces along our frontier." Of our recent advance into Afghán territory, at New Chaman, Apozai, Kajuri-Kach and Bulandkhel, he refrained from expressing any approval, while his silence on the very subject whence our present differences with Abdur-Rahman have chiefly arisen, seems rather to imply an adverse opinion. Referring to our general policy towards the Afgháns, his lordship said:—"The object of the Government of India has been to enter into really cordial relations with the ruler and people of Afghánistán." A similar declaration has been made in various semi-official, *i.e.* irresponsible organs; but coming from an officer who was, three months ago, a member of the Government of India, it cannot fail to cause surprise, when it is remembered that, only in November last, the insulting threat already mentioned was published in the *Times*. Moreover, our frontier expeditions have revealed a policy entirely at

variance with the professed desire of maintaining "really cordial relations with the people of Afghánistán."

The practical element in Lord Roberts's speech appears in its concluding sentences, where the attention of the British public is powerfully drawn to the importance of providing for "the very considerable number of soldiers which would be needed in India, in the event of a serious struggle with a civilised Power." In short, the speech is an urgent appeal to the patriotism of the British Constituencies to bear additional taxation, in order that the ever-increasing military expenditure of the Government of India, which the Indian revenue can no longer defray, may be borne by the British taxpayer.

We have also received the following letter on the above subject, so ably dealt with by "Historicus":

The advocacy for encroachments in Lord Roberts's speech, if any, is so veiled that, if it were pointed out, the answer of Lord Roberts might be that he "advocated the extension of our influence among the tribes, not by the forcible occupation of their territory, but only by measures of conciliation and friendliness." This certainly would show a change of policy from the one recently pursued of shooting down the Hunza-Nagyris and the Chilásis, sowing discord in every direction among the Afghán and other tribes, and constructing by force military roads through their territories.

Nor is it easy to explain our, practically, converting Chitrál into a British dependency, for that country has, in point of fact, always been independent, though its late ruler, Mihtar Aman-ul-Mulk, formally *offered* allegiance to the Amir in 1874, and paid an annual tribute to Badakhshan, which has been admitted by Russia to be a province of Afghánistán. Then as regards our supposed right of forcibly occupying the Amir's territory, no stipulation to that effect exists between us. Lord Roberts says that the Amir has a right to demand such action on our part, but, far from demanding it, he opposes it, and the text of the only written engagement existing between him and our Government merely

relates to the subsidy which we pay him. This will show the vicious arguments by which that engagement is now construed into a right on our part of occupying the Amir's country against his will. An exposure of these tactics would occupy considerable space and might divert public attention from the main question, namely—whether India can best be defended against Russian aggression by our awaiting her attack on our frontier, or by our fighting the enemy amidst the rugged mountains and hostile tribes of Afghánistán. POLITICAL.

It seems to us to be obvious from Lord Roberts's speech at the Mansion House that he advises that the tribes beyond the Frontier should be put under our protection, even if they do not like it, and that we should recruit among them. They are further to be civilized and enriched, processes which involve considerable interference on our part. He also urges our compelling the Amir to permit the occupation by us of his northern frontier, though we will not interfere with the internal administration of his kingdom; in other words, Lord Roberts is in favour of all that is included under "a forward policy." We quote his *ipsissima verba* on the subject as reported in the *Times* of the 13th June.—ED.

"When Abdur Rahman was placed upon the throne, an engagement was entered into by her Majesty's Government to protect Afghanistan against unprovoked foreign aggression, provided that the Amir was entirely guided by us in his foreign relations. Under this engagement it is obvious that circumstances might occur which would necessitate our affording his Highness that armed assistance which he would be within his rights in demanding, and in order that such assistance should be prompt and effective it is of the utmost importance that the population of the countries through which and in which we should have to operate should be well-disposed towards us. (Cheers.) A mountainous region inhabited by warlike and independent tribes, numbering, according to the best information we have got, not less than 200,000 fighting men, separates the valley of the Indus from the Afghan tableland, and if these tribes were to oppose *our advance into Afghanistan*, a large portion of our all too-small field army would be absorbed in holding them in check, and in guarding our lines of communication. Although these tribes are troublesome and fanatical, they delight in military service, make admirable soldiers, and in many cases have shown a devoted attachment to the British officers with whom they have been associated. The present policy of the Government of India towards these tribes is to extend our influence amongst them without menacing their independence, and, *by trying to civilize them and increase their prosperity*, to induce them to look upon us as their friends, who will protect their interests and insure them being left in undisturbed possession of the territory they occupy. (Cheers.) As regards Afghanistan, the object of the Government of India of late years has been to enter into really cordial relations with the ruler and people of that country, and to convince Abdur-Rahman that the maintenance of an attitude of reserve and isolation on his part *is incompatible with the fulfilment of our engagement with him*. It is even more to his advantage than to ours that Afghanistan should be strong and independent, but it cannot be either one or the other without our assistance, an assistance which it is impossible to render *without the Amir's co-operation*. I much regret that the proposed mission to Abdur-Rahman did not take place, as I hoped to have been able to satisfy his Highness that, in *taking such precautions as might be necessary to guard his northern frontier*, the Government of India had no intention of interfering in the internal administration of his kingdom." [The italics are ours.]

M. PAUL GAULT

ON

RUSSIAN TURKISTAN.

We have received the manuscript of this *magnum opus* on Russian Turkistan, the first chapter of which on the author's journey in Khwarezm filled two lengthy and interesting papers in the issues of the *Revue des deux Mondes* of August and September last. The remaining unpublished seven chapters extend over a thousand pages and follow the traveller through the regions of Tashkand, Samarcand, Bokhara and Ferghana and are succeeded by a History of the conquest of the Kirghiz Steppes and of their administration. They are illustrated by numerous photographs and drawings. Their importance consists not only in a piquant recital of travels, but also, and mainly, in the author's account and opinions of what the Russians significantly call their "Colony of Turkistan." The work has an immediate interest to the comparative student of the respective Russian and British systems of administration in Asia and, as M. Gault avoids politics, its publication could be undertaken with equal grace by either of the two Governments as a work of reference whether to the Russian local official or to the Indian Collector or Settlement Officer. It is certainly a conscientious study of the judicial administration, the social and religious life, the agriculture, the commerce and history of the Turkistan "Colony," truly so called, if "by this term a region is described in which the conqueror does not find either the climate or the modes of cultivation and the economic conditions of the mother-country." We will confine ourselves, at present, to translating some of the passages from M. Gault's manuscript and to rendering the general tenor of the author's observations.

One immense steppe, in which sedentary and agricultural populations are installed wherever the soil is, or can be irrigated, surrounded by other steppes traversed by

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LES
INDES ANGLAISES
ET
LEUR INFLUENCE
SUR
LA GRANDEUR DE L'ANGLETERRE

Plus que tout autre pays de l'Extrême Orient, l'Inde a eu le privilége de passionner l'Europe.

Nulle contrée asiatique n'a suscité plus de courageuses entreprises, nulle n'a plus que l'Inde fait armer des navires à la recherche de routes nouvelles, faisant ainsi découvrir des continents nouveaux; nulle contrée n'a soulevé plus de jalousies et de rivalités entre ses conquérants ni plus contribué qu'elle ne le fit au développement de la vieille Europe.

Pendant trois siècles la politique aux Indes occupa les chancelleries avec la même attention qu'elles consacrent depuis près de cent ans à la question d'Orient — une de ses conséquences — et les mouvements se dessinant à l'heure actuelle en Chine ramèneront forcément sur les Indes anglaises cette attention des puissances que d'autres événements en avaient momentanément distraite.

La possession des Indes a fait et défait des nations, apportant à la carte politique de l'Europe des changements considérables et donnant aux peuples qui l'ont exercée victorieusement l'hégémonie des mers.

C'est pour s'assurer le monopole du grand commerce des Indes que l'Égypte, l'Assyrie et la Perse cherchèrent tour à tour à avoir la haute main sur la Judée et la Phénicie.

Ce n'est pas dans un autre but qu'Alexandre le Grand jeta les fondements de la puissante ville à laquelle il légua son nom, et les Sarrazins ne font que suivre sa politique quand ils établissent en Bassore et Bagdad les citadelles de la route orientale.

Mais, tandis que la puissance mauresque recule, Gênes et Venise qui avaient déjà recueilli son héritage artistique s'enrichissent bientôt de son commerce, auquel on les avait depuis peu initiées.

Les bassins de la mer Rouge et de la Méditerranée sont les grandes voies par où l'opulence des Indes se déverse en Europe, amenant les épices, les mousselines et les soies les plus merveilleusement tenues jusque sur les marchés de Bruges et les plages de la Baltique.

Et c'est précisément à l'heure où l'Occident recueille ainsi les fruits d'un trafic séculaire, que les Turcs ottomans commencent leur conquête dévastatrice. Ennemis de tous les arts, c'est sans pitié comme sans respect qu'ils envahissent la Syrie et l'Égypte et qu'ils s'emparent de Constantinople, bloquant de la sorte la route des caravanes où les marchands n'osent plus s'aventurer.

Les voiles qui poussaient jadis les riches trésors de l'Inde vers les ports du golfe persique ou de la mer Rouge se replient désormais inutiles, car les villes ne retentissent plus du chant joyeux des trafiquants d'Europe, et les caravanes ne relient plus les mers.

Sur toutes ces contrées le cimeterre ottoman projette son ombre annihilante, et leur opulence rapidement s'effondre avec leur puissance politique, rentrant dans le silence des villes mortes dont de Lesseps devait seul les tirer un jour.

Les peuples de l'Europe méridionale dont la fortune reposait presque exclusivement sur le commerce des caravanes ne purent se résoudre à accepter passivement la situation nouvelle. Après avoir en vain essayé de renouer par voie de terre les relations avec l'Orient, quelques hardis navigateurs s'offrirent pour chercher à atteindre par mer ces contrées de l'Inde, sources de si grandes richesses.

Et l'histoire de l'Europe moderne ne commence réellement qu'avec ces audacieuses recherches de la route des Indes aux XV^e^ et XVI^e^ siècles, avec la rivalité des puissances pour s'en assurer le monopole. La découverte de Vasco de Gama changea la face de l'Europe de l'Atlantique à la Méditerranée amenant tour à tour sur le pavois, le Portugal, l'Espagne, les Provinces-Unies et l'Angleterre.

Les Portugais furent les premiers à introduire l'influence occidentale aux Indes. Mais leur intolérance et la cruauté de leurs gouverneurs — dont il faut excepter Albukerke — empêchèrent cette influence de porter des fruits heureux et finirent par soulever des émeutes parmi les Indiens.

La réunion du Portugal à l'Espagne en 1580 sous Philippe II fut le coup de grâce pour la suprématie portugaise dans l'archipel indien en subordonnant, comme le fait remarquer Hünter, les intérêts du Portugal en Asie aux intérêts de l'Espagne en Europe.

Quand en 1640 le Portugal redevint une nation indépendante, les Provinces-Unies et l'Angleterre avaient déjà acquis aux Indes trop de puissance pour qu'on pût les leur disputer avec succès.

Longtemps les Anglais étaient restés ignorants des richesses que le Portugal et les Hollandais retiraient des Indes et ne songeaient nullement à entrer dans la lice. Mais soudain, en 1587, Dracke capturait le Saint-Philippe, navire battant pavillon portugais et trouvait dans les papiers de bord des renseignements si concluants sur la richesse orientale qu'aussitôt il communiqua à ses compatriotes le désir de mettre l'Angleterre en communication avec les ports de l'Inde.

John Cabot, Sir Hugh Willougby, Hudson et Baffin avaient en vain tenté de les atteindre par voie de terre au Nord.

Les Anglais se décidèrent donc pour la voie maritime et ils se mirent à l'ouvrage avec d'autant plus d'énergie que les Hollandais venaient de hausser le prix des épices si considérablement que l'Angleterre était désormais à la merci des Pays-Bas si ses bateaux tardaient à partir.

Les Hollandais étaient depuis quelque temps déjà solidement ancrés aux Indes. Eux aussi avaient d'abord essayé la voie de terre, tentative qui rendit célèbre le nom de Barents, mais l'avaient bientôt abandonnée pour suivre Houtman autour du Cap de Bonne-Espérance.

En quelques années, de puissantes compagnies s'étaient montées. Bruges, Anvers et Amsterdam étaient les grands entrepôts des produits indiens importés d'abord par le Portugal, puis sous pavillon hollandais. S'étant ainsi peu à peu émancipés, et grâce à l'accroissement constant de leur marine se voyant pour ainsi dire les maîtres de la mer, les Pays-Bas crurent pouvoir régler à leur fantaisie le prix des denrées orientales. De 3 sh. ils élevèrent soudain à 6 et 8 sh. le prix du poivre indien.

C'est ce fait, insignifiant en apparence, qui détermina le déclin de leur puissance coloniale en leur suscitant un adversaire de gigantesque taille : l'Angleterre.

Les négociants anglais, en effet, ne purent se résoudre à passer par toutes les exigences hollandaises. Instruits par les documents saisis sur le Saint-Philippe et encouragés par la destruction de l'Armada qui leur donna confiance en leur marine, ces négociants se décidèrent à fonder, eux aussi, une Compagnie des Indes.

Au nombre de 125, ils se réunissent à Founders Hall à Londres, en 1599, et fondent la première compagnie, incorporée, l'an d'après, sous la Reine Elisabeth sous le nom de « Governor and Company merchants of London trading in the Great Indies » au capital de liv. 30,133.6 8 environ 800,000 francs

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Avant de commencer l'examen des deux périodes de l'histoire commerciale indienne qui, seules, nous occuperont, le point de départ et la situation actuelle, il me faut remplir un devoir de reconnaissance. Grâce à l'appui si obligeant de Sir Francis Plunkett, Envoyé extraordinaire et Ministre plénipotentiaire de S. M. Britannique, à Bruxelles, on m'a gracieusement ouvert les portes des archives à l'India Office, une des annexes des Affaires étrangères de Londres; Sir George Birdwood, l'un de ses directeurs, a bien voulu m'aider à y trouver tous les renseignements intéressant la question. C'est à leur haute intervention que je dois les notes inédites et les documents officiels de cette étude et ce m'est un devoir bien doux de les en remercier. Les autres renseignements ont été puisés, pour la plupart, dans l'Imperial Gazetteer de Hunter et dans les « Records of Court » dont Sir G. Birdwood a rassemblé un catalogue extrêmement érudit et complet.

II.

Quand on compare le début et le résultat de cette vaste entreprise, la colonisation des Indes, ce n'est pas sans émotion et sans respect que l'on lit dans les registres de la première compagnie reposant à l'India Office, les signatures originales de ces 125 négociants jetant les fondements du futur empire des Indes.

(1) « Ceci — dit le document daté du 22 septembre 1599 — sont les noms des personnes qui ont signé de leur propre main pour s'intéresser dans le voyage projeté vers les Indes orientales (voyage qu'il daigne complaire au Seigneur de rendre prospère) et les sommes que les dites personnes veulent aventurer. »

Ils élisent un comité de 15 personnes, nous apprennent les nombreuses démarches faites pour amener le projet à un résultat heureux et donnent dans leur registre les détails les plus circonstanciés quant au choix des navires, de l'équipage et de la cargaison.

Puis, pratiques, ils demandent à la Reine l'exemption du droit de douane et, pour l'obtenir s'appuient sur un précédent hollandais.

(2) « Que l'exemption de douane, écrivent-ils, soit humblement demandée pour tous les biens qui seront transportés pendant six voyages parce qu'il faudra beaucoup d'expériences avant que la contrée ne soit munie de marchandises vendables là, et c'est pourquoi les marchands hollandais furent aussi pour leur meilleur encouragement exemptés de droits tant en exportant qu'en important (droits de douane et de sortie). »

Le même registre nous apprend — le monde n'a guère changé! — que quelques souscripteurs pris de peur ont refusé de verser leur cote-part, mais y ont été contraints par un ordre de la Reine.

Tous les frais de cette première expédition devaient être supportés en commun et l'intégralité des bénéfices revenir aux souscripteurs.

Et dès le premier voyage, la Compagnie ayant été incorporée en 1600 par la Reine Élisabeth qui lui donna sa première charte, les bénéfices dépassèrent 100 p. c. atteignant près de 200 p. c. à chacun des onze voyages suivants, le quatrième excepté.

Le capital exposé dans ces douze voyages fut de liv.	464,411
soit par voyage	38,690
Capital chaque fois représenté en moyenne par des marchandises pour . . . . . liv.	62,411
Par de la monnaie . . . . . liv.	138,127
Par l'armement . . . . . liv.	263,746

(1) « The names of suche persones as have writtin withe there owne handes, to venter in the pretended voiage to the East-Indies (the wiche it maie please the Lorde to psper) and the somes that they will adventure, the xxij septembr 1599. »

(2) « That freedome of custome be humblie required for all suche goodes as are carried out in 6 viages the rather for that many experiment are to be made before the country shalbe fitted with marchandize vendible ther, and for that als the Duche mchants for the better encouragement are freed for divers yeres bothe of custom outward and inward.

Le succès de l'entreprise amena en 1617 les négociants de Londres à donner à leur Association le caractère de Société « Joint Stock ».

Son capital fut alors porté à liv. 1,620,040 souscrit par 954 personnes parmi lesquelles nous trouvons 313 marchands, 214 courtiers, 25 marchands étrangers, 15 ducs, 82 chevaliers, 26 docteurs « en divinité et médecine », 13 dames titrées et 18 « veuves et vierges. »

Le succès appelant la concurrence, une société rivale se fonde, rivalité qui devient un danger public en 1660 et finit après des discussions parlementaires des plus orageuses par la fusion des deux compagnies en une association unique : « The united company of merchants of England trading in the East Indies ».

L'influence de ces premiers voyages de 1600 à 1623, bien que ce ne fussent que des entreprises relativement minimes, eut cependant pour effet de créer en Angleterre un courant d'affaires considérable.

Josia Child dans ses « discourses on trade » publiés en 1670 relève déjà les nombreux avantages que sa patrie y a trouvés : « Ce commerce nous a donné une excellente marine et nous a fait avoir ainsi de première main le poivre, les épices, le salpêtre, l'indigo, les toiles et les mousselines que nous ne pouvions jusqu'ici obtenir que de la Flandre. Nous avons même un excédent de poivre et d'épices nous permettant d'en exporter en France, en Espagne et en Italie pour la valeur de 300,000 livres.

Les entreprises de la Compagnie des Indes firent faire de grands progrès à l'art de la navigation et mirent à la disposition de l'Angleterre une flotte bien équipée et bien armée de plus de 90 vaisseaux dont 30 étaient les premiers vaisseaux à trois bords qu'on vit dans les mers anglaises portant 30 canons avec un équipage de 60 à 100 hommes.

L'industrie commença à s'animer et se développa rapidement non seulement pour fournir aux vaisseaux en partance l'armement mais aussi les marchandises d'échange que la Compagnie écoulait aux Indes avec un gros profit. L'impulsion générale qu'en reçoivent les affaires améliore la situation moyenne des classes et stimule ces controverses commerciales et industrielles sur lesquelles reposent les premiers fondements de la philosophie économique recueillis par Adam Shmith.

Les voyages élargissaient l'horizon intellectuel et moral de l'Angleterre, leurs aventures versaient dans le sang anglais cette énergie et ce goût des pays lointains favorisant une émigration

devenue indispensable, alors que les narrations des voyageurs venant de l'Inde inspiraient le génie de Shakespeare et de Milton.

La science coloniale se développait à même, et les instructions reposant à l'India Office nous montrent avec quelle patience les directeurs de la Compagnie des Indes étudiaient la politique colonisatrice des Provinces-Unies et du Portugal, et avec quelle initiative, quelle clarté, quelle précision ils traduisaient en ordres à leurs subordonnés les résultats de leur expérience.

Ayez grand soin, écrivent-ils, que tel lot de marchandises ne soit pas mouillé, car vous lui feriez perdre la moitié de sa valeur. Ne jetez pas l'ancre dans tel port, de crainte des insulaires. Méfiez-vous de tels et tels pilotes et n'ajoutez qu'une demi-croyance à tels autres qui pourraient amener votre perte pour piller la cargaison.

La Compagnie des Indes ne s'ingéra guère dans les opinions religieuses des indigènes et laissa librement se charger de ce soin les jésuites que les Portugais avaient amenés aux Indes. Ces prêtres, disent les rapports du temps, vivent très pauvrement, ils n'ont pas tout le confort que les Européens croient indispensable et se mêlent à la vie journalière des Indiens, tâchant d'améliorer leur situation matérielle et morale.

Mais jamais les Anglais ne supportèrent que la plus légère contrainte fût exercée; les lois actuelles défendent même tout outrage aux religions existantes et à leur culte, quel qu'il soit.

La Compagnie des Indes ne s'immisça dans l'organisation des castes que juste autant qu'il le fallait et ne tenta jamais de faire de la philanthropie aux dépens d'autrui. Elle ne songa pas à abaisser l'orgueil des chefs mais fit les plus grands efforts pour se les rendre favorables ou tout au moins les neutraliser quand ils ne consentaient pas à devenir les instruments de son intérêt colonial. Innombrables sont les instructions données à ce sujet aux fonctionnaires de la Compagnie.

C'est dans la clarté, la précision et la minutie de ces instructions et dans la ponctualité, la discipline et l'énergie avec lesquelles elles furent exécutées que nous trouvons le secret du succès de la Compagnie des Indes dont l'empire allait sans cesse grandissant, étendant jusqu'à la Chine l'influence de son commerce.

Alors, commencent les intrigues et les luttes avec le Portugal et la Hollande, campagnes dont le détail nous entrainerait trop loin, et qui aboutissent à la victoire des Anglais.

Il est intéressant cependant de noter qu'en 1689, alors que le

Portugal ne songeait qu'à convertir les indigènes et que les hollandais visaient surtout aux gros profits, la Compagnie des Indes visait plus loin et plus juste :

« L'augmentation de nos revenus coloniaux, politiquement parlant, est autant notre souci que l'augmentation de notre commerce, » et quand vingt accidents viennent interrompre celui-ci, ceux-là » doivent être maintenus. C'est notre organisation fiscale qui fera de » nous une nation aux Indes, sans cela celle-ci ne sera jamais qu'un » grand nombre « d'interlopers » réunis par la charte royale, et » aptes seulement à trafiquer là où aucune autre puissance ne croit » avoir intérêt à nous le défendre ».

Les Hollandais, les Portugais, les Français, les Danois, les Espagnols, les Ostendais, les Prussiens et les Suédois ont disputé à l'Angleterre la suprématie aux Indes. Mais comme le fait avec raison remarquer W. W. Hunter, chacune de ces entreprises avait en elle-même le germe de son futur insuccès, ou fut arrêtée dans sa marche par de malheureuses nécessités de la politique continentale de la mère-patrie.

Les *Portugais* succombèrent parce qu'ils entreprirent une tâche au dessus de leur force : la conquête et la conversion des Indes.

La *Hollande* y fut défaite, bien qu'elle y eut laissé des leçons pour les peuples à venir, parce que son commerce reposait sur un monopole impossible à maintenir si ce n'est au moyen d'armements considérables et ruineux. Mais c'est néanmoins à l'organisation civile et militaire des Hollandais que la Compagnie anglaise emprunta la plupart de ses instructions et même la hiérarchie et les titres de ses fonctionnaires.

Les *Français* ne purent y maintenir victorieux leur ascendant, malgré la bravoure de leurs armées et le génie de leurs généraux, par manque de soutien en Europe et par la rivalité personnelle et de parti pris de deux administrations ou de deux chefs qui, tels La Bourdonnaie abandonnant Dupleix, sacrifièrent l'intérêt national à leurs rancunes particulières.

Les *Prussiens*, les *Ostendais*, les *Suédois* virent sacrifier leurs entreprises déjà florissantes parfois dans les Indes aux visées politiques, à la diplomatie de leur patrie en Europe.

J'ai nommé *la Compagnie d'Ostende*, et devant-elle on me permettra de m'arrêter un instant. Elle a succombé, c'est vrai, et en deux mots je viens d'en donner la raison, mais cela a toujours été une belle et grande entreprise, et rien qu'à lire aux archives à

Londres, les mémoires parlant d'elle pour la faire écarter, on devine, on est à la fois ravi et fier de sentir qu'elle eut été aujourd'hui pour la Belgique une source de gloire et de revenus immenses si le cabinet autrichien n'avait dicté sa mort pour rester fidèle à sa diplomatie.

Mais qui donc a dit que nous n'étions pas une nation colonisatrice? Qui donc a dit que l'esprit d'entreprise était tout entier à créer en Belgique? A ces affirmations gratuites, il suffirait d'opposer le témoignage vivant de nos vaillants Belges au Congo, où sur l'inspiration clairvoyante de notre Souverain, ils préparent « a greater Belgium » une plus grande Belgique, ainsi que l'exemple de la Compagnie ostendaise.

La Compagnie ostendaise fut fondée en 1722, et autorisée le 17 décembre, par l'empereur d'Autriche pour prendre part au partage commercial des Indes. Au capital de 25,000,000 de francs, elle équipa de nombreux navires, et établit à Coblum, à Covelacq et à Bankipoor ou Bankibazaar, sur le fleuve Hugli, deux comptoirs si bien organisés qu'ils menacèrent bientôt le commerce des anciennes compagnies de l'Europe. Les Hollandais, les Anglais et surtout les Français dont les comptoirs de Chandernagor sur l'Hugli, étaient plus directement menacés, voyaient avec un regret mal dissimulé l'énergie et l'habileté des Ostendais battre en brèche leurs intérêts les plus chers.

Jaloux aussi de voir la charte de 1722 accorder à la Compagnie ostendaise plus d'avantages que ne leur octroyait la leur, ils ne tardèrent pas à élever des plaintes nombreuses et à pousser des clameurs dont la diplomatie des divers pays intéressés se fit le complaisant écho en Europe.

Il en fut surtout ainsi quand les puissances devinèrent que les visées de Charles VI, bien conseillé par le prince Eugène, n'étaient pas moins politiques que commerciales, et que la Compagnie d'Ostende n'était sans doute qu'un noyau autour duquel peu à peu se serait créée une flotte sérieuse avec plusieurs ports d'attache, Ostende et Fiume ou Trieste.

Une pareille flotte, rendant l'empire indépendant des Pays-Bas et de l'Angleterre, et en faisant une puissance maritime de premier ordre pour peu qu'on mit en état les ports de la Baltique et de l'Adriatique, une pareille flotte, il fallait à tout prix en empêcher la création.

Et la pauvre Compagnie ostendaise, pendant cinq années fut le