

THE NINETEENTH CENTURY
SERIES

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PROGRESS OF INDIA, JAPAN.

AND

CHINA IN THE CENTURY

BY

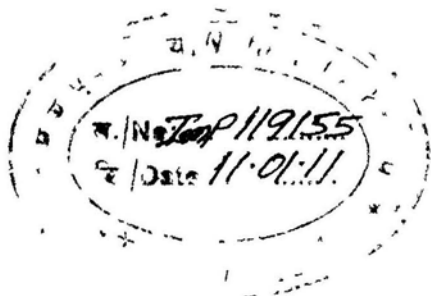
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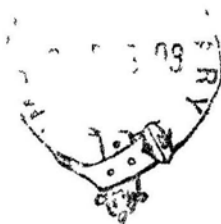
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PREFACE.

THIS work relates to two great Continents and one large group of Islands. Consequently it is divided into three Parts—namely, I., India; II., Japan; III., China. I have narrated in a succinct manner the progress during the nineteenth century of three peoples, the Indian with a population of about three hundred millions, the Japanese with a population of nearly forty-five millions, the Chinese with a population of over three hundred and fifty millions; or about seven hundred millions in all. Now if the usually accepted estimate of the population of all countries in the world put together—namely, fourteen hundred millions—approaches the truth, it follows that this work has to summarise the progress of half the human race for a century. The space of time, 1800 to 1899, has been borne in mind. The information in all cases has been brought up to date as nearly as possible, and in many cases up to the time of writing. Moreover these countries have during the century been the scenes of grave, and often complex, events. Each country, too, has undergone momentous changes. Thus the ground

covered is most diverse, and the details are enormous. Consequently much allowance is claimable for the summary character of the narrative, the condensation of facts, the omission of many particulars which might have been useful had space permitted. Further, I have endeavoured to present these Eastern affairs in a popular form to Western people, possessed indeed of general culture, but not having previously any acquaintance with the East. At the same time the case must be so presented as to obtain the approval of those men who have such acquaintance. I have striven to give the reader some insight into the mind, the feelings and thoughts of the Oriental races of to-day.

In each of the three countries the progress has been of the most diverse nature. In India it has taken place after a conquest by the British, who established there an administration as elaborate as could be formed with all the means of Western civilisation; it must therefore be attributed to the conquerors. In Japan the progress was brought about by events from without, yet it was afterwards voluntarily undertaken by the Japanese, and is being carried out by themselves, with a suddenness and a rapidity of which history furnishes no example. In China a movement which perhaps had been beginning before 1830 has proceeded since 1830, that is, for seven out of the ten decades of the century, so disastrously that each decade has been but a landmark of progress in a fatal direction. Thus the country

has been so reduced that no writer will venture to state more than this, that it exists up to the time of writing.

Consequently the arrangement of the subjects in the Chapters must differ essentially for each country, that is, for each Part. In one respect only has it been possible to preserve uniformity. Each Part begins with a brief Introduction or sketch of the land and the people. Then for each Part there follows a comparatively full description of the country and its inhabitants in 1800, which necessitates some slight historical retrospect. Lastly, each Part ends with a similar description of the conditions existing in 1899. But between the second and last Chapters in each Part, the subjects are different and so is their arrangement. In every one of the three countries the course of events has been essentially diverse. In India the century began with turmoil, bloodshed, confusion, dejection, which had long been going on. Promptly there came a conquest by the British, which ended in embracing the whole country. Then there followed an absolute Government by the conquerors, tempered by legislation and guided by the most enlightened principles. Indeed an administration has been set up, the finest and largest known to history. By the end of the century there was great progress of many sorts, though not all the progress that might have been hoped for. This progress, many-sided and pregnant with future changes, has been due mainly to the conquerors. A

comparatively lesser share has been borne by the people. The outlook seems to be one of peaceful development for the immediate future at least. For Japan the century began with ease, quietude and splendour, after a long peace with unbroken prosperity, with a spirit of self-satisfaction among the people and of rigid exclusiveness as against foreigners. The Government was that of an Emperor nominally reigning in one capital, with a Feudal Head really governing in another. The awakening from this luxurious slumber began soon after 1840, with Europeans knocking at the gates for permission to trade. Just midway in the century the Feudal Head was obliged to sign various commercial treaties in the presence of European warships, and literally at the cannon's mouth. The people of all classes were indignant and in a semi-barbarous fashion vainly tried to expel the foreigners, but only met with defeat and armed retaliation. Thus foiled, they turned and rent their own rulers, abolishing the Feudal System and restoring the rule of the Emperor alone, which rule had existed before Feudalism was set up many centuries previously. The ablest men and the best classes, having had this experience of the European method, resolved to imitate it. So they reformed their forces by sea and land and set up a constitutional monarchy which has had a short trial, but as yet seems to be successful. Here, then, is a revolution, not in the government, but in the national policy, which, though owing its origin to

external events, has yet been worked out by the people themselves. Thus, after an example unique in Asiatic history, Japan ends the century in patriotic hopefulness and buoyant aspirations. China began the century in the same way as Japan, amidst splendour, renown, glorious traditions, imperial prestige; with a similar self-complacency and exclusiveness towards foreigners. With her, too, the awakening began about the same time, but much more roughly. Before the middle of the century she had been beaten badly by Britain. Soon after that time she was beaten still worse owing to her disregard of commercial treaties. She suffered from internal disorders of the gravest kinds. Instead of being warned by these disasters she steadily set her face against putting her house in order. She, a very big nation, provoked a war with Japan, a little but well-prepared nation, and was disgracefully defeated. The peace negotiations which ensued had the effect of letting in all the great European Powers upon the Chinese Empire. The Imperial authority has been destroyed externally, and all men are wondering how long its internal vitality will last. Thus the century is ending for China in utter despair, owing to the fault of all classes from the Imperial Court downwards. So the close of the nineteenth century is viewed by the three countries with different feelings; by India with calm confidence, by Japan with ambitious patriotism, by China with blank hopelessness.

For facility of reference it may be well to follow up this diversity in the Chapters of the several Parts.

In each Part, then, the divergence of arrangement begins after the second Chapter, that is, after the Introduction, and after the status of 1800.

For India, in Chapter III., the first matter is the formation of the Empire, that is, the advance of British conquest and power, till the entire country from sea to sea, from the border of Afghanistan to the border of China, is under British administration direct or under British suzerainty. Then follows, in Chapter IV., a sketch of the frontiers, which, though partly formed by the sea, do partly rest on the mountains. Indeed these land frontiers of India are geographically the most striking to be found anywhere on earth. For the vast territories thus combined in one Empire there follows an outline, in Chapters V. and VI., of the machinery of Government, Civil and Military, and, as arising out of the Military section, some account of the Mutinies in the Native army. After this account of the Empire, the territories, and the system of Government, there comes a statement, in Chapter VII., of the general principles of Imperial administration. A distinct point in the story of India is thus reached. There remains to be mentioned what is done by the State in each branch of national affairs, with this machinery of government and with these principles. Then the narrative groups itself, in Chapters VIII. to XIII., inclusive, into several headings. The first

of these relates to legislation, to law and justice, as being the bases for what is done in all other branches. Of the great interests in the country the first is that concerning the land, the agriculture and the landed classes from the highest to the humblest; and in reference to agriculture, the canals of irrigation, the finest in the world, are noticed. After this, the trade, especially the ocean-borne commerce, and communications, including railways, are brought forward. The changes in Municipal Reform are then introduced, including Sanitation and Local Government in the newest and technical sense of these terms. Next comes State Education after the Western model, and the Public Instruction of various kinds, also the efforts put forth by the Missions of the several Christian churches and communities. The narrative concludes with a summary of the revenues and finances; and amongst the revenues is included some analysis of the vexed questions about opium. The Part is closed with a summary, in Chapter XIV., of the state of the country and the people in 1899. In the material section some allusion is made to the enormous growth of the population, and to the recuperative power shown by the people after famine and to their large exportation of produce. In the moral section the effect of the Western education upon religious belief is alluded to, as are also the prospects of the Christian Missions, the growth of the new Vedic and Brahmoist faiths, the continued prevalence of the ancient relig-

ions, and the mental embarrassments of the educated men who reject each and all of these faiths. Lastly, analysis is afforded of the prevailing elements of Indian loyalty, acquiescence and contentment, over the unavoidable elements of disloyalty and discontent. Inasmuch as for Japan and China, the sovereigns are mentioned, so I have adduced the names of the illustrious line of Governors-General of India during the century, with a note of the great deeds of each.

Similarly in Part II. for Japan there is uniformity up to Chapter IV., that is, an Introduction is offered sketching the land and the people and a description of the status of 1800, with the Feudal System fully established and still flourishing, namely, the Feudal Head at his capital with his barons scattered all over the country. But in order to elucidate the status of 1800, it has been necessary to insert a brief Chapter, III., on the past of Roman Catholic Christianity in Japan under the Jesuits (including St. Francis Xavier), a story, which, if fully set forth, would prove to be one of the most romantic episodes in the history of Christendom. It is from Chapter IV. that a special arrangement begins. In that Chapter the working of the Feudal System is recounted from 1800 to 1853. Up to 1835 it ran a smooth course, many feudal classes liked its external splendour, the local barons ruled their fiefs with a certain sort of popularity. Despite their exclusiveness and self-isolation and the consequent want of foreign trade, the people were fairly prosperous, their famous art-

industries were maintained, and their patriotism was still aglow, though their armament was antiquated and their arms rusty from long disuse. After 1840 a fluttering in their dovecot began till the middle of the century, when a hurricane set in. The next Chapter, V., then indicates step by step the fall of the Feudal System between 1853 and 1868. This, however, would have been delayed for some time if the Japanese had been more temperate in their behaviour. They had not then learned the wisdom they have subsequently evinced. They vainly imagined that they by valour and patriotism alone could resist Europeans. But on finding that Western discipline and science prevailed, they straightway adopted these things for their own country, and contented themselves with destroying the Feudal System and reverting to their ancient and still surviving tradition of Imperial Rule under their Emperor. So the next Chapter, VI., relates to the reign of the Emperor, who is still on the throne. Having restored their Emperor to his proper place, the Japanese decided that he must be a constitutional monarch, with a Diet, formed after the model of a European Parliament, and with a reformation of the army and navy after the European pattern. The value of the new forces by sea and land was very soon tested by the war with China, which made Japan feel herself to be a nation, new-born in power though antique in tradition. The concluding Chapter VII., on the status of 1899, adverts to the present temper and disposition of the Japan-

ese, their religions, and the relation of the State to the prospects of the Christian Missions; to the national resources, the external trade, the civil administration, and the procedure of the Diet, and Parliament so far as that can be understood after a brief experience and the neighbourly disquietude in regard to the tottering position of China.

For China again, Part III., at the outset the same arrangement is preserved up to Chapter III., that is an Introductory sketch of the land and the people is offered, and then some account of the status in 1800, when the Chinese Empire was apparently, though perhaps not really, at its zenith. At all events it was a stately, grandiose, towering, imposing structure, and no Chinaman dreamt of the shaking and the battering to which within forty years it was to be subjected. It is from Chapter III. that a special arrangement begins. That Chapter, together with Chapters IV., V., VI. and VII., relates to the reigns of the five Chinese Emperors during the nineteenth century, one after another in due succession, a Chapter being devoted to each Emperor. It was found that in this way only could the course of China by herself be traced—the inner workings of Imperial policy be discerned—the idiosyncrasies of the Court, the Emperor and his family be understood. The national system was such that even the ablest Emperor would not have been all-powerful for good—still he counted for much. And these Emperors, instead of bettering things, intensified the evils of their

day, so far hastening the downfall of their Empire. It has often happened that historical works on China have quite naturally referred in the main to British trade-relations, British progress and prowess. Now with all deference to these considerations, of which indeed Britons may well be proud, the purpose of this work is to pourtray China as she has been and still is by herself, and to advert to foreign nations only so far as their conduct may have affected the condition of China. It is indeed the mad determination of the Chinese to shut their eyes to everything external and to look inwards only, their obstinate refusal after the most distressful experience, to improve themselves even at this eleventh hour, when the last sands from their hour-glass are falling, that reduce their best friends to despair.

Thus each one of the five reigns proves to be a step towards the brink of what looks like an abyss, and each step seems to be longer than the last in this fatal direction. In 1800 Chiaching, the successor of really great Emperors, was on the throne. Though he was relatively an inferior person, nothing happened except a general enfeeblement. In 1820 he was succeeded by his son Taokwang, a man of stronger character, in whose reign serious troubles began after the East India Company ceased to trade. These troubles ended in the first war with the British, the ratification of commercial treaties and the cession of Hong Kong. As Emperor he did what he could to make matters worse for his country. Internal dis-

tractions occurred, and among them the famous Taiping rebellion took its rise; so he died unhappy in 1850. The son and successor Hsienfeng was a headstrong youth, somewhat inclined to dissipation. The Taiping rebellion grew under him in a manner that brought shame on all Chinese institutions. His lieutenants broke the commercial treaties so overtly, that an Anglo-French force landed and marched on his capital Peking, which he deserted and fled to the mountains where he died. His dynasty would have perished then and there had it not been for the resolution and ability of Prince Kung. He was succeeded by an infant son Tunchih, who attained his majority in 1874 and died in 1875. The regency had consisted of the two Dowager Empresses with Prince Kung, and they soon resumed their functions, for again an infant was chosen to succeed, namely Kwanghsu, who attained his majority in 1887 and is still reigning. The Taiping rebellion, after attaining dreadful dimensions, was stamped out, three other revolts were subdued, one of them after great slaughter, the Great Plateau including Mongolia which had long broken away from Chinese authority was reconquered; so China was still standing. Some of her friends hoped that she might yet rise again, after having suffered two wars with European Powers, overcome four rebellions, and reoccupied her upland dominions after long campaigns. But nothing would induce her to reconstitute, reorganise, rearm herself. Unconscious of her own unpreparedness, she needlessly provoked

in 1894 a war with Japan that levelled her with the dust. This war and its consequences are described in Chapters VIII. and IX. It remained only to describe in Chapter X. the state of China in 1899. The principal points of the country are under the control of European Powers. The foreign trade is large and growing at all the commercial centres, still the foreign merchants are universally anxious lest the present Chinese Government should prove unable to protect the trade, lest such incapacity should cause a downfall, and lest such a downfall should throw China as a rich prey to be scrambled for by contending powers. As to the Chinese themselves, they have learnt nothing and forgotten nothing. Though the best individuals among them are acutely anxious, yet the toiling millions seem amenable to no influence save that of the learned and bigoted class.

The recent progress of European relations with China and Japan has caused an expansion of the old Oriental terms. The East now seems in English to mean India and nothing further. The Far East apparently signifies Cochin China, China and Japan. The unique position of the United Kingdom in the East, and the fact of its having been among the first comers of importance in China, will afford it a vast advantage in regard to all disputed positions in the Far East.

For Part I. and the largest, namely India, I am myself the witness for a great part of the century. For Parts II. and III. I have consulted the best and

newest authorities in England; and I gladly acknowledge my obligations to them. So the general correctness at least of these Parts may be depended upon. Though many points brought out in this work may be the result of recondite inquiry or prolonged experience, still as the purpose is a popular one, I have not cited any authorities comparatively inaccessible. But I have presented a list of books and publications, probably obtainable in any Oriental library, whereby most, if not all of the facts stated in this Volume can be easily verified. I also append a Chronological Table whereby the events of each year, for the three countries, India, Japan and China, can be simultaneously and synchronously perceived at a glance.

RICHARD TEMPLE.

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PROGRESS OF INDIA, JAPAN AND CHINA IN THE CENTURY.

PART ONE.

INDIA.

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTION.

I AM about to trace succinctly the progress during the nineteenth century of the vast dominion now known as India. At the beginning of the century it often bore the title of the East Indies, as distinguished from the West Indies. But having grown to an importance enormously exceeding that of the West Indies, it acquired the name of India, by which it is still known both legally and officially. In 1877 the Queen of the United Kingdom was proclaimed Empress of India, which thus became an imperial dominion and is called in literature the Empire of India.

The area of this Empire may in some degree be diversely stated, according as certain dependencies

be included or not. In general terms it comprises one million and three-quarters, perhaps nearly two millions, of square miles. The population, as ascertainable by census, is over 285 millions of souls. The next decennial census will be taken soon after the year 1900. Each previous census has shown such an increase in numbers for each decade that some similar result is expected in the coming census. Thus the population may be reasonably believed to stand at about 300 millions of souls, perhaps a little less or very possibly somewhat more.

With this area and this population of coloured races, the Empire is governed by an absolute despotism. In it is set up by the British a Government with a full and, humanly speaking, a perfect organisation in all respects. This Indian Government is controlled and sustained by the British Government in London. The governance is in all matters determined by laws passed under regular legislation, and is conducted throughout by legal process. Next after the Chinese Empire, the Indian Empire is the largest and the most populous dominion in the world. In respect to its vastness, to the homogeneous rule under which it exists, to its distance, more than five thousand miles from London, the centre of authority, by the shortest route, to the power on sea and land by which it is preserved,—there has nothing like it been seen in ancient or in modern history, or in any quarter of the globe.

The magnitude of the phenomenon can best be

measured by some brief comparisons. The conquests of Alexander the Great were carried in nearly a straight line from Macedonia across Asia Minor, Persia, Afghanistan, through the passes into India, as far as the rivers Indus and Satlej. From this main line there were, so to speak, branches to northern Persia, to Mesopotamia, to Egypt. At the time of the conqueror's death, the area of his conquests and dominion was quite undeterminate; and it is doubtful whether he could have had as many subjects as the King-Emperor now has in India. The Roman Empire, at its height and breadth, comprised western, southern and south-eastern Europe, most of Asia Minor, Syria, parts of Persia, of Mesopotamia, of north-western Africa. The limits of that Empire were never determined, and were ever fluctuating. Many of the countries comprised in it were much more highly populated then than they are now. But it may be doubted whether any Roman Emperor had more subjects than the total of the Indian races who now own the sway of the King-Emperor. In the Macedonian and Roman Empires the authority exercised was casual and uncertain at many times and in many territories. Often it was ineffective, and in some regions almost nominal. In some places it extended but little beyond the reach of the camps and garrisons. But in the Indian Empire the wide-extending limits are securely set. Within them the authority is exercised without any exception in any quarter continuously and uninterruptedly, with system com-

4 PROGRESS OF INDIA, JAPAN AND CHINA.

plete in all parts and with discipline unbroken. The old prediction that the day must come when not a shot should be fired in anger from one end of the Empire to the other, without the permission of the British Government, has in this generation been literally fulfilled. India used to be styled the bright jewel of the British Crown; but nowadays, from its size and importance, from its wealth and resources, it is, so to speak, an enormous diamond or emerald or ruby in the imperial diadem.

Without attempting any geographical description it may be well to sketch the main features of this great and wondrous land. The area may be likened to a mighty triangle extending from northern base to the apex in the south, from the 35th to the 8th degree of North latitude, and in its width from West to East from the 64th to the 98th degree of East longitude. Its northern extremity consists of the Himâlaya, the old Sanskrit word for "abode of snow," which is now called by Europeans "the Himalayas." This mountain range runs west, from the Indian Caucasus of classic times, in a south-easterly direction for about two thousand miles, with an average breadth of from 300 to 500 miles. It is the largest, the grandest, the loftiest mountain range yet discovered in the world. Its highest summits rise from 28,000 to near 29,000 feet above sea level. Along the base of the Himalayas there stretches a plain, including the basins of the five historic rivers of the Panjâb, and the basin of the Indus

also, and the Gangetic plain. Eastwards this plain is joined by the basin of the Brahmaputra, and the two united turn southwards towards the Bay of Bengal, and the great Delta round about Calcutta. From the shore of this Bay right up to the river Jhelum not far from the Indus, this delta, this plain, and these basins form an area, some 2,500 miles in length and 500 miles in average breadth, of continuous cultivation with elaborate agriculture, teeming crops, and a dense population of several hundred souls to the square mile. This wonderful area, which may be termed the North Indian Plain, may indeed be matched in China. But excepting the Chinese Empire it is probably not equalled by any plain in the world. Many plains can be found elsewhere, but they will consist of steppe and prairie, or will be imperfectly cultivated and sparsely inhabited. It is the unfailing cultivation and habitation throughout the length and breadth of the North Indian Plain and Delta that constitute the magnificent characteristic.

To the south and south-east of this Plain there arise several ranges of hills, the chief of which is well known as the Vindhya. Beneath them runs the Nerbudda, famed for beauty from its source to its mouth, few rivers on earth presenting a greater number of lovely scenes. South again rises another range running from east to west and forming the backbone of the Indian continent. Below this, that is southwards, there begins a series of plateaux and uplands, with much of cultivation and habitation, also with

many isolated ranges, till the peninsula is reached. These plateaux are on the east flanked by a low mountain range running from north to south, overlooking the Bay of Bengal, and known to Europeans as the Eastern Ghauts. On the west they are flanked by a range known to Europeans as the Western Ghauts. This range has geological formations of marked character and striking aspect. It overlooks the coast of Bombay and the Arabian Sea or the Indian Ocean. From it there arise several rivers well known in Indian annals, which flow from west to east athwart the plateaux, burst through the Eastern Ghauts and enter the Bay of Bengal. On both sides of the continent and the peninsula there are coast districts, or littoral tracts between the two mountain ranges above mentioned and the sea, always exceedingly fertile and thickly inhabited.

The names of the many Indian rivers need not here be given; but among them several, the Indus, the Jhelum where Alexander the Great defeated King Porus, the Satlej where the Conqueror was compelled by his Macedonians to halt and turn back, the Jamna which flows past Delhi and Agra, the seats of the Great Mogul; the Ganges, the sacred water of the wide-spread Hindu faith, and the Brahmaputra whose source was for long as mysterious as that of Nile, and is still but imperfectly explored, have during all ages been known to the learned world in all climes.

In addition to India proper, as sketched above,

Burma has been included in the Indian Empire. It comprises the whole valley of the Irrawaddy from its source, so far as that has been explored, to its mouth near Rangoon. Here again is a far-reaching expanse of cultivation and a fertile delta. This basin, and the neighbouring regions adjacent to the Bay of Bengal, once formed the Empire of the Burmese Alompra. Bit by bit this dominion fell into the hands of the British, till the kingdom of Ava, in the upper valley of the Irrawaddy alone remained. The Burmese King might, if so minded, have remained there in safety as the ally of the British. But he was found to be secretly opening negotiations with the French. In consequence he forfeited his kingdom, which was annexed to the Indian Empire. This annexation brought the British dominion into immediate contact with south-western China.

The population, about three hundred millions as already stated, is largely but not entirely Aryan. It includes the entire Hindu race and all who follow the Hindu religion. The common faith may be said to combine in one nationality the descendants of the Vedic Hindus, immigrants from Central Asia in remote antiquity, and the aboriginal races, whom they found in India and on whom they imposed their religion. Outside these again are those aboriginal races who in the earlier ages escaped the Hindu yoke, some of whom have largely accepted it in a loose way, while many of them have never taken it at all. In round numbers there are over two hundred millions

of Hindus proper, divided into the four historic Castes. Their faith is named Hinduism in popular literature, but the correct name is Brahmanism, as contra-distinguished to Booddhism.* Then there are about thirty millions of aboriginal races, some of whom may be tinged with Hinduism, and are included in the census among Hindus. Among the Hindus are included three historic tribes or races, the Mahrattas, the Sikhs, and the Gurkhas, all famed in arms and in politics. The Jains, though probably of Hindu race, are separate in religion. There are about sixty millions of Moslems or Muham-madans. Of these a considerable number, scattered all over the land, are descendants of the Central Asian races, Mongols, Moguls, Bokharians, Persians, with some few Arabs, and these are regarded as the real Moslems. The remainder are people of humble Hindu or of aboriginal races who were during the Middle Ages converted, more or less forcibly, by Moslem rulers to Islam. They dwell chiefly in north-eastern India, and are fast increasing in numbers. Thus it comes to pass that the King-Emperor of India has more Moslem subjects than the Sultan of Turkey (including Arabia) or the Shah of Persia, or the Khedive of Egypt. Of Booddhists there are more than seven millions, because Burma is Booddhist. Otherwise Booddhism is hardly to be found any longer in India proper, save in the south-eastern corner of the Himalayas.

Such, in the briefest terms, is the land, such are

the inhabitants, of the Empire wherein the changes and the progress during the nineteenth century are to be summarised in the following chapters. There is not, there cannot be, any space for describing the glories, the wonders, the beauties of India—the chains of snowy peaks looking from the distant plains almost like a cyclopean wall of pearly white against the blue—the arid sun-baked plains, the rivers spreading with inundations, the jungles and morasses, the forests rich in timber, in leafage and in bloom—the majestic ruins, in number, in variety, in dimensions, hardly equalled by any other country in the world, and often constituting the sole record of extinct dynasties and mystic creeds long dead—the surging crowds of temple worshippers, the parti-colored costumes making the people seem like moving masses of rainbow hues—the entire panorama of the magic East—the industrial arts unrivalled among any lands, in design and colour, in variety of material, and in the number of subjects or objects artistically treated. These things are still to be seen to-day, though they were doubtless finer in 1800, when the story of change and progress begins, and must have been grander still in the preceding centuries. But nowadays to them are added many marvellous sights, the products of the nineteenth century, as will be hereafter shown.

CHAPTER II.

STATE OF INDIA IN 1800.

As a basis for the story of progress, the situation of India in 1800, the dawn of the century, must be reviewed.

At that moment the Mahratta Empire was the dominant power. It had been founded a century and a half previously by the Mahrattas, mountaineer Hindus of the Western Ghaut range under their national hero Sivaji. It had completed the overthrow of the Mogul Empire, which was from inherent feebleness falling to pieces. It had cooped up the heir of the Great Mogul as a puppet in the imperial palace at Delhi, with a shrunk authority over the city and its neighbourhood. It was unable to prevent two Moslem kingdoms springing out of the ruins of the Mogul dynasty, one in Oudh, a noble province at the base of the Himalayas, the other on the plateau of the Deccan in the heart of the Continent under the Nizam of Hyberabad. It had been stricken and injured by two Moslem inroads from beyond India, the one Persian, the other Afghan. It had never been anything better than a loose confederation of powerful Mahratta chiefs of low castes,

under a head styled the Peshwa, who was a Brahmin. Still there was nothing like an imperial authority prevailing in India except the Mahratta. In this limited sense it has been historically said that the Mahratta Empire succeeded the Mogul, to be in its turn succeeded by the British. In the year 1800, the Mahratta confederacy had come to be represented by the sovereign chiefs, Sindhia (originally a slipper-bearer), Holkar (a goatherd), the Gaekwar (a cowherd); all in western and south-western India; by the Bhonsla of Nagpore, and the Peishwa (Brahmin), both on the Indian Continent. These were confronting the young giant of British power. An upstart Moslem power had arisen amid the Mysore hills in the south-west part of India; but its head, Tippoo Sultan, had unbearably provoked the British, and had been slain when the breach in the walls of his capital at Seringapatam was stormed. This was one of the closing events of the eighteenth century and left the Indian peninsula at the disposal of the British in the beginning of the nineteenth.

The British Power in India had by this time quite expelled the French after a very severe contest, on sea and land, which did as much honour to the courage of the vanquished as to that of the victor. Of the Portuguese settlements along the western coast little remained except "souvenirs heroiques," as they phrased it. Rank jungle was overspreading the ruined edifices of ecclesiastical magnificence and civic luxury. Panjim, or New Goa, was but a feeble

replica of the mediæval Goa. Of the Dutch Establishments nothing appreciable remained.

Thus the British was in 1800 the only European Power facing all the Native Powers of India. Even then a thoughtful observer, European or Indian, could see that the British Power might, if so minded, make itself supreme. It had evinced maritime superiority, and the approaches to India from without were entirely by the sea, as the expectation of Moslem invasion from the north-west had quite ceased. It had three bases of power, Madras and Bombay on the coast, and Calcutta within the coast indeed, but having all the advantages of a seaport. It had in Calcutta a harbour for the largest ships in an unassailable position, commanding the mouth of the Ganges river-system and the entrance to the Gangetic Plain. In Bombay it possessed an indentation on the western coast, forming a harbour highly defensible, and in the first rank among the harbours of the world, being the only large harbour on the shores of India. It had no other similar positions to guard besides these two, inasmuch as the mouths of the Indus on the west were then harbourless, and as Kurrachi, now the port of the future in that quarter, had not then been discovered. It had at Madras no harbour indeed and only an open roadstead, but still a position excellently suited for the control of the Indian peninsula. It already owned the dominion in one-fifth of India, with Native Indian forces raised by itself under European Officers, and supported by King's

troops, horse and foot, sent out from England, and maintained in India at the cost of the Indian treasury. It had some territories near Madras and Bombay much exposed to attack and somewhat precarious in resources. But it had behind Calcutta the provinces of Bengal and Behar, with the district of Benares, the richest and most populous, the quietest and most easily governed territories in India, and from their north-easterly position the most inaccessible to the possible enemies of Britain, who lay chiefly in the west. Herein it possessed an inestimable advantage which was perceived then and has been felt throughout the nineteenth century. It drew, as it still draws, great financial resources from the rich and unwarlike population which it protected. It did, as it still does, all this quite easily and peaceably. Thus while trouble might rage in other parts of India, the pulse of supreme authority did then beat, as it still beats, steadily and quietly around the heart at Calcutta. The subjugation of the many Native Powers in India by the one British Power, which possessed but one-fifth of the whole country, would depend on two considerations, namely, on the daring, the ambition, the enterprise and the resourcefulness of the British on the spot in India, next on the foresight and the patriotism of the Government in England. That the British in India would evince all these qualities was to be assumed by every one who knew the national character. But there could not be the same certainty regarding the con-

duct of the Government in England. In the years immediately preceding this epoch that Government had supported its Officers in India far better than the French Ministry had theirs, and that was one of the reasons why the French flag had drooped to the British. It was at this moment in the throes of the contest with Napoleon; still, it contrived to support the Indian Government sufficiently well. But though it had the control of Indian affairs, it did not administer them. That administration was then vested in the Honourable East India Company.

This Company was the greatest corporation that has ever existed. It was resolute to discharge the territorial responsibilities that had devolved, or had been forced, upon its care. It was anxious to do its duty with benevolence and justice to the people that might thus be brought under its rule. But it was actually a trading community, and its members were traders. They had all the enterprising spirit that has ever distinguished the merchant princes of Britain. So they looked to their growing trade as well as to their rising dominion. They naturally hesitated in respect to territorial conquests and annexations, which, however splendid politically, might not prove immediately profitable, while the heavy increase of expense was certain. It might well have been foreseen, then, that a tension would arise between the men in India, who thought of Empire and of politics rather than of trade, of future prospects rather than of present cost, and the men in London who

thought of trade and business as well as of empire and politics. This indeed is what actually occurred in the beginning of the nineteenth century.

In many, and large parts of India the condition of the people was worse than it had been at any time within historic memory. It had been declining towards the close of the seventeenth century from the decay and disruption of the Mogul Empire. It had been falling lower and lower all through the eighteenth century, as the Mahratta Empire was fit only for the rougher part of warlike policy and quite unfit for civil governance. It suffered further from the general unsettlement in most parts of India. In many territories it reached the climax of misery in the early part of the nineteenth century. In the best days of the Mogul Empire the civil arrangements in north-western India had been excellently good. These had been all broken up during the decadence of the Empire. The Gangetic plains were harried and overrun by armed parties. The Panjab plains, becoming the theatres of invasion, had so much become a prey to violence that every village was like a little fortress placed in a state of defence. Wherever the Mahrattas entered, all the benefits of permanent systems were effaced, and a rule quite crude, coarse and temporary was substituted. There was one dreadful feature in the contests between Moslem and Mahratta rulers, namely, this, that either would ravage the territory of the other according to opportunity. Thus it oft befel that the innocent villagers

were made the victims of the feuds between their respective rulers. To the evils arising from enfeebled administration, corruption, oppression, extortion and malpractices innumerable, there would be added rapine, ravaging, plundering, bloody affray, fire and sword. The roads were unsafe even in daytime. The mysterious method of strangling wayfarers, called Thuggee, was in full play. Robbery of villages by armed parties and by torchlight, called Dacoitee, was flagrant and frequent. It occurred but too often in British territories; how much worse must it have been elsewhere. So much did plundering come into vogue throughout the central part of India at this time that it was systematised and organised under a federation of chiefs called Pindâris. This federation had actually troops under its command, paid from the proceeds, not of revenue but of public robbery. It was strong enough to defy the efforts of the surrounding States and would have gone on extending, had not the British appeared in the field as will be seen hereafter. The Pindari movement is probably a unique phenomenon in national disorder, and sheds a livid light on the state of affairs at the opening of the nineteenth century.

In this picture of almost universal shadow at this epoch there are some comparatively bright spots. The large cluster of Rajput States in the western part of the continent, and adjoining the sandy desert of the river Indus, probably enjoyed immunity, for the most part at least, from the evils above described.

The Rajputs are descended from the warlike caste of the ancient Hindu immigrants. They have some of the best blood in Asia transmitted through generations unnumbered. They have always been held to represent the chivalry of India. Though they had some struggles with Moslems, marked by several successes and many heroic deeds on their part, they never submitted to the Mogul Emperor, who deemed it safer to have them as allies rather than as vassals. They gave to the Moslem Harem some of the princesses who afterwards became empresses. They held a hilly country behind Agra, one of the imperial capitals; their people, chiefs and princes were all homogeneous; and their positions were naturally defensible. They were impinged upon, and sometimes broken into, by the Mahratta, but their centres were never penetrated, and probably they held aloof from the troubles and the miseries which ushered in the nineteenth century.

•Further, it is probable that the southern peninsula, the tongue of rich country stretching down to Cape Comorin, near Ceylon, was not much affected by the circumstances which desolated most parts of India.

Though the people of India have always shown recuperative powers after misfortune, yet the various events, as mentioned above, must have greatly reduced the population, which was much less than what it probably had been in the flourishing days

of the Mogul Empire, or than what it has certainly become subsequently under British rule. Before the eighteenth century the stores of accumulated wealth in India, bullion, specie, ornaments, precious stones, rich stuffs and movables of value, had been enormous—to European nations quite fabulous. Much of all this must doubtless have disappeared during that hapless century. Still the Natives, with their secretive skill, fostered by sad experience, must have preserved much, especially of the bullion and specie. The Native bankers have ever formed an influential corporation in India. They have had ramifications extending to the remotest parts of the country and to every village. They probably fared better throughout these troubles than any other section of the community. They somehow held their own in the main, and their hoards were not reached. They contrived to transmit their messages and their remittances. They had intelligence of battles and other events sooner than the authorities. The danger for them would be the seizure of their persons; but this does not seem to have happened.

The external sea-borne trade conducted through Calcutta, Madras and Bombay, and lesser ports under British protection, went on without much injury from the troubles in the interior of the country. But the internal land-borne trade suffered grievously. The revenue from land was then the main resource for Native rulers. When this failed more or less by reason of the troubles—and it is always the

first to feel and bow before the storm—they would try to levy something from the traders. Then the transit dues on trade, and direct imposts on local industries, which might have been bearable in former days, were so raised as to become unbearable.

The agricultural interest in India was then, as it always had been, and it has since continued to be, the greatest of all interests, so great indeed as to exceed all other things in importance. At this time, owing to the troubles, the cultivation had shrunk in all villages, while in many villages there was blank desolation. As cattle-lifting had become well-nigh universal, the flocks and herds on a thousand hills had been carried off. The rights in the property and in the occupancy of land are to Indian people the most precious of all possessions. They had existed from the beginning of time, when the plough first invaded the forest and the waste. They had brokenly lived on through many revolutions before the Mogul Empire. Under that Empire they had been fairly well recognised and preserved. After that they had been blotted and blurred but never effaced, deluged by oppression but never extinguished, trampled on but never stamped out. In northern India they were kept alive by the historic Village Communities of which the constitution has since been the subject of inquiry in Europe. At the opening of the nineteenth century, though latent in the popular mind, they were non-apparent, and, in so far as they existed, were rendered valueless by

over-taxation or extortion, almost everywhere save in the British territories. In Bengal and Behar, indeed, towards the close of the eighteenth century there had been a recognition and determination by law of the landlord's property in land, called *Zemin-dari*. This was rendered effective and absolutely valuable by the perpetual limitation of the Government demand for the land revenue. This demand was settled then and there for ever, under the orders of the Marquess Cornwallis, then the Governor-General. It has since been known to history as the Permanent Settlement of Bengal and Behar. This was the only settlement made in the eighteenth century, and no such settlement had been made in any previous century. It affected the landlords only, and made no provision for the subordinate rights of tenancy or of occupancy which, according to Indian custom, must have existed in these two provinces as in all other parts of India.

The horrid rites or practices, well known to literature, Sati or widow burning, female infanticide, human sacrifices, were in full force at this time. Nothing could, amidst the convulsions of the body politic, be done for public improvement either moral or material. Many Moslem colleges stood in ruins. Among the Hindu youth the voice of the schoolmaster was unheard, save within the precincts or the recesses of the temples.

There may be difficulty in describing the condition in 1800 of those industrial arts which had for

ages caused India to be a bright image in the thoughts of the civilised world. But at the best it must have been much depressed. Take her all in all and from the beginning to the present time, India is believed by her friends to hold the first place among the nations in industrial arts, as apart from pictorial art and from classic sculpture, in which she holds no place at all. The only countries which could be seriously compared with her are China and Japan. But though China surpasses her in splendour of colour, in boldness of design, in richness of material; though Japan excels her in accuracy of handiwork, in exquisite fancy, in harmonious quality, and though both enjoy the supremacy in pottery and ceramic art, still in extent and variety of beautiful fabrics and manufactures India has more than equalled both these countries. For this superiority of hers in comprehensiveness there is a particular reason, namely this, that each of those two countries has had but one civilisation, derived from one stock of ideas, whereas India has had two civilisations, one Hindu-Booddhist, the other Moslem, and for her each of these civilisations has contributed to the magnificent result. It is the matchless variety of Indian art-works that establishes the claim to superiority on the sum total of achievement; the textile fabrics of silk and cotton, the muslins, the embroideries and brocades, the shawl-making from the softest wool, the needlework, the enamelling, the metal-work generally and the brass-work especially,

the armoury, the ornamental leather, the carving and the inlaid woods, the marble inlaid with many coloured stones, the miniatures, the work in ivory and in horns, the feathers and plumage, the silver filigree, the gold stamping and chasing, the gold and silver tissue, and other things of beauty derived from every material that nature supplies. India, too, did this with an elegance, a delicacy, a pure brightness of colour, all peculiarly her own. The springtime of this widespread art was in the last centuries after the Christian era when the Brahmanism (now called Hinduism) had finally expelled Booddhism and acquired universal dominion throughout India. The full summertide was under the Mogul Empire when Moslem art had been added to the old Hindu arts. After that came the chill autumn and the dark days which have just been described. The ancient frescoes and vast stone sculptures of the Booddhists and of the Brahmanists in the early days of their success had long become things of the elder past. The Moslem architecture was still standing as a monument ennobling the land and as a wonder for all observers who might come in future from other climes. But it, too, had become only a marked vestige of the more recent past. One unrivalled Moslem art had already perished, apparently never to be resuscitated, namely, the imparting fixed colours of the finest hues to earthenware, because it was carried on by a very few families who perished in the revolutions, and their matchless art became extinct with them. The Mahrattas were

generally an inartistic people, but they had one superb art, namely, wood-carving, of which they left many of the finest examples ever seen anywhere, but of precarious permanency because of the risks from fire.

Nevertheless, though some arts had gone irrevocably, and though art-industry in general must have lost much of the patronage which it had previously, and must have been somewhat shrunk or even may have languished, yet it was too strongly rooted in the national habits to die or even to decay. It still lived awaiting the advent of happier times.

Thus it had come to pass that just when the British rule in India began to be developed in the beginning of the nineteenth century there was more of misfortune and of misrule than had been known for several, perhaps even for many, centuries. So there were elements in the social and political atmosphere which produced darkness before dawn.

In justice to the British this position of affairs ought to be appreciated. They were now coming into an immense heritage which was largely desolate, and which had to be laboriously restored. But such restoration, and the reduction of disorder to order, would occupy at least one generation. The urgent work of pacification must necessarily precede all attempts at civilised improvement. Thus due allowance must be made for all these circumstances if the progress during the first half of the century shall be found much slower than that of the latter half.