dawn, we got within murderous distance of herd after herd, but spared them all save a young buck, for we were a week or more too late, and there was not a stag in the herd out of velvet.

Another morning the glades were deserted. A slight stir of wind from the land made us keep to the sand dunes. The sun had barely risen, but we saw by their fresh tracks that a great herd of cheetah had been stampeding across the marsh. Presently we came across the fresh spoor of a tiger, which explained the desolation. Then we learned in the school of a master stalker. We followed him up, keeping stealthily to the hollows as he had done, rounding every hummock, and only peering into the glade where the elephant grass was thickest. We soon came to the spot where he had sprung and missed his kill. The sand was churned up angrily, and beyond the scurrying deer had left a thin beaten path like a sheep-track. My friend, the Jungly Sahib, whispered to me a wager that the beast would break cover where B——, a dilettante who had come out "to eat the air," as Ram Bux says, was sitting in meditation a hundred yards from the Lascar who was carrying his gun. This was what actually happened. The two confronted each other. B—— stood his ground, and the tiger turned contemptuously away with unnecessary discretion. We followed him up to the edge of the sunless *goran* jungle, which he entered foiled of his prey after as fruitless a stalk as ours.

It is only through such casual encounters that tigers are shot in this part of the Sundarbans. The Jungly Sahib had shot many elsewhere, where he had had to work hard for them, and even B——, the Laodicean, had shot two or three in Burma. But in this jungle blind chance is the only shikari. My friend had been a year in the district, and many a night he had beaten silently along the *khals* (small channels) in his canoe watching every *chur* (silted sand bed) and promontory expectantly, but never in the *khals* or in the open glades, which, by the way, were far from his beat and seldom visited by him, had the moment been predestined in which he and a full-grown tiger should cross paths. He had shot one swimming across a broad channel, but it had sunk and did not appear again. And another time he had found three young tiger-cubs in a bush near the sand dunes, which paddled about and tumbled over one another in such an innocent and winning manner that he had not the heart, even if he had the opportunity, to leave them motherless. We saw the bush and the half-grown tracks that very morning. There was no spoor of the mother anywhere about, so we gathered that they had come to years of discretion.

But our turn was to come. We had bathed in the sea, breakfasted, and turned into

our bunks for a deserved rest after a five-hours' tramp in the sun, when we were awakened by the cry of "Bagh." The launch stopped, and we saw a dark object pacing among the *keora* trees on a spit of land where a *khal* ran into the main channel. A canoe was lowered at once, and we rowed to shore. We had no time to put on boots or any clothing more elaborate than is generally worn in a hot-weather siesta in the Sundarbans. Yet in spite of, perhaps because of, our informal costume the tiger seemed more curious than alarmed. He walked slowly away parallel with the tributary *khal*, and stopped every now and then to look behind. We were nearly level with him when the Jungly Sahib got his chance and put in a shot. The jungle hid the sequel, but we heard a groan, and landed cautiously where the tiger was last seen. We followed him up on our hands and knees in the soft mud. The undergrowth became so thick that we could not see farther in front of us than a tiger could spring; nor could we move our rifles quickly to left or right without entangling them, and so leaving ourselves exposed to a flank attack. It seemed wiser to turn back, but the blood everywhere, especially on the brushwood three feet from the ground, was profuse and continuous, and the great likelihood of finding him dead tempted us a little farther and a little farther. We had not gone far when we saw the dull glow of his coat a few yards ahead. We covered him simultaneously, but he was beyond offence, a bulk of inert strength lying as still as a stone, and as dead.

The Lascars bound his feet and carried him laboriously to the boat. His great head looked noble and untroubled. But as they lowered him to the ground the face rolled over towards us, and the paws, tied together with a feeble bit of string, fell by his jowl in a helpless and pathetic way, giving him the air of a suppliant, which he had never worn in life. A soft paw grazed one of the Lascars, and he leapt aside dramatically, then turned on the beast and struck him, not savagely, but with a studied irony and a pretence of surprise that one who had fallen so low should be so greatly daring. He followed the blow with a kick and the long-drawn exclamation, "Ahhyee! Brother. Would you dare!"

In that forest sixty woodcutters of his own faith fall to the tiger every year.

A SUBALTERN OF HORSE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF 'ON THE HEELS OF DE WET.'

BOOK I.—"THE BITTER END."

CHAPTER XI.—FORFEIT.

THE BUD was looking her best. Several people were coming to lunch, and amongst them Captain John Fox: The Bud had prepared herself, as she mentally put it, to be attractive to mankind in general, and the gallant Captain in particular. Fox, by arrangement, was early, and leaving her mother to receive the others, she had taken the dashing dragoon into a corner of the drawing-room.

"I very nearly didn't come, Miss Woodruff!" Fox volunteered by way of opening the conversation.

"My word, but how was that? You Britishers are not given to breaking faith, I hope?"

"No; am I not here? But I was nearly caught for a church parade."

"Church parade! — what's that? Anything like the parade of the Boston Artillery? That's fine: almost as great as a pink ball at a carnival!"

"No," answered Fox demurely, "I doubt if it much resembles what I have heard of the Massachusetts Artillery. It means that I was in orders to take 400 hulking dragoons to church."

"How lovely: and would you have worn your state uniform?"

"Alas! I should have."

"Red coatee, buttoned right up here?" intimating her fair neck.

Fox nodded, amused.

"How chubby; tin hat, long gloves?"

Again Fox nodded, surprised at the knowledge of detail displayed.

"Tight jim-jams, with bully yellow piping?" continued The Bud, sweeping her hands down the sides of her muslin skirt. Fox nodded, a little confused by this extreme knowledge.

"How perfectly lovely! and when would you wear that cunning little cap, all on one side of your face, like a wart on a Senator's temple? I should just love to see you then!"

Fox exploded. The fair San Franciscan was exploiting him.

"Have you been to a tailor's, Miss Woodruff, to acquire all this detail?"

"No; do be serious. I am not jollying. I am just crazy to see you in your uniform; also to hear about your manslaughter!"

"My what?" asked Fox aghast.

"Your manslaughter — you can't kid me. I've been around,

and I've heard all about your reputation for getting a lift on Boers in the Transvaal War. 'Say, how many Boers did you kill, Captain?"

Fox disentangled his long legs from under the chair and stood up.

"I would give sixpence, Miss Woodruff," he answered deliberately, his eyes sparkling, "to know where you get your authority for this information. It is very inaccurate."

"I guess you think that I am jollying you, Captain,—that's where you are wrong. I get my information right here in the house, and it says that you are quite a notorious person in this city for killing big game and Boers!"

The tall, handsome dragoon officer looked down in The Bud's pale, intent face: there was no doubt that she was in earnest—was admiring him for some qualities, either heaven-sent or reputed to have been acquired.

"Somebody has been jollying you, Miss Woodruff." Then, as the thought flashed through his mind, "By Jove! I believe it is that confounded Gasser,—I beg your pardon, Miss Woodruff. But some one has been taking my name in vain. I assure you that the only thing that is bloodthirsty about me is my profession. I am a lamb in wolf's clothing."

"Which means that you and your statements have to be taken with mint sauce, Captain, — but who is this Gasser, anyway? there is no one in this lean-to of that name."

"Perhaps one of your servants has been a soldier. That great lanky footman of yours who receives us at the door has the look of an ex-dragoon about him. I think I can recognise in him your instructor, Miss Woodruff. Don't you believe him: he has the air of a man discharged from the army with ignominy. All soldiers are liars; ex-soldiers are knaves as well as liars!"

"Well, don't you get taking our hired man's character away. Margi over there would make things rattle for you if she heard you cussing her lovely James, and that's a cinch. She's quite stuck on him, and thinks there's little to choose between him and George Washington."

"Then we are in agreement, Miss Woodruff. I only suggested that he might be a liar."

"I like your neck. Here, Margi, the Captain here insinuates that George Washington was a liar. That's pretty fresh from a Britisher, isn't it?"

At this point the conversation became general, as, all the guests having arrived, The Bud was summoned by her father to manufacture the pre-lunch dry Manhattan cocktail.

At the same moment the venerable Privit was engaged in rubbing his spectacles. He could scarce believe his eyes. They had overlooked giving him the letter which the messenger-boy had brought from Buckingham Gate until

just as he carried into the drawing-room the ingredients for the cocktail. He laid the letter down, and wiped his spectacles, having picked up the crisp five-pound note which had fluttered to the ground.

"DEAR MR PRIVIT," the letter ran, — "Private affairs have decided me to give up domestic service. Will you kindly inform Mr Woodruff of this decision, and hand him the enclosed five-pound note in lieu of the usual month's warning? Before leaving I must thank you, and all my colleagues at South Street, for the very pleasant time I have spent with you. You yourself I hope to meet again at the 'Acorn Club' or the 'Hearth and Home Society,' to which you so kindly introduced me.—With kind regards, yours sincerely,

"JAMES SMITH."

"Well, I'm d—d!" ejaculated Mr Privit, who had to be much moved to sink to profanity. "To go hoff like a thief in the night, and never to say good-bye to nobody."

The simile of a thief at once aroused the cautious citizen in the butler. He jammed the flimsy into his trouser-pocket and went down to the plate-room to see if anything was missing. By the time that he had satisfied himself that the plate was all right, and that no one had tampered with the small cash he kept in his sitting-room, Mrs Critchins was agitating for the luncheon-gong to be sounded. He would have sent Stevens off to inquire about the young ladies' jewellery, but at the moment it was more important that the lunch should not be spoiled. He therefore acquiesced in the cook's demands, ordered the gong, and, in a very agitated state of mind, threw open the doors of the dining-room.

The party of eight trooped downstairs and settled themselves round the table in the spacious dining-room. Privit, with an alacrity that would have been surprising even in a younger man, served them all with soup, and the subdued clatter of the spoons was added to the babel of light conversation.

But work as cunningly as he might, with only Hill to help him, the aged butler could not bridge the delay with the next course.

Poppa Woodruff, who was in the best of spirits, noticing the lacuna in the service, blurted out—

"Privit, where's James? We want more of a move-on."

"James is not coming, sir," came the ready answer of the well-schooled servant.

But the uninstructed host was not satisfied.

"Not coming! Why, what's he for?"

Inadvertently he had driven the butler into a corner, and as he persevered, the answer came bluntly enough—

"James has left your service, sir."

"High, low, and the Jack!

left my service! What's that for?"

"That I cannot say," replied the aged servitor with quiet dignity. "He left without seeing me. I have just received a note from him informing me that he does not desire to remain in your service."

"Je-rusalem! Well, you'd best hop around and carry on with this dinner. It won't be a quick-lunch nohow!"

It was indeed remarkable that an event of such a domestic character as the absence of a man-servant should have aroused so much interest. But besides the host, the news of the sudden desertion came as a considerable shock to half the party. Fox, who was really astonished at the butler's announcement, made some exclamation of surprise and looked across the table at the youngest Miss Woodruff. Marjorie, although the sudden news of the footman's secession came as a bolt from the blue, and sent the hot blood pumping through her veins, kept her eyes on her plate. It remained for an uninteresting, utterly innocent guest, seated on Mrs Woodruff's left, to clear the air.

"I hope the trusted henchman has not made off with the spoons!" he remarked inanely, as he toyed with a flake of grilled salmon.

Marjorie, who sat at his side, having recovered her equanimity, turned to him and said quietly—

"That's a poor innuendo of yours, Mr Lumley. Do you know, sir, that the man whom you mock was instrumental in saving my life this very morning?"

"What's that, Margi?" interpolated The Bud, who was quick to turn the conversation; "saved your life: how stunning!"

Marjorie was at once desired to relate the story of the incident; and in this recital the conversation drifted into more conventional lines than the discussion of an absconding man-servant. Maximilian Woodruff talked about rewards for gallantry, The Bud began again to rally Fox, and the unfortunate Mr Lumley, mentally defining "these Americans as queer cattle," confined himself strictly to the legitimate business of the meal.

When at last the house was rid of the guests, The Bud and her father put old Privit through a cross-examination. Marjorie retired at once to her own room, more or less expecting to find some news in the form of a written message awaiting her there. In this she was disappointed. Herries had seceded, and for the nonce had left no trail behind him that South Street could follow.

Captain Fox, after carefully handing over the tickets for Hurlingham for the Semi-Final of the Inter-Regimental Polo Tournament, made his way across St James's Park to Buckingham Gate. He owed it to Callagher that he should ascertain the reason of the Gasser's change of front. Herries was out, but the faithful Jones was about. He

grinned all over his face as he touched his cap to Fox.

"Mr Herries is out, sir; he's gone to Wembley Park to practise a bit, sir. He's been playing hard, mornings or evenings, near for a week. Yes, sir, he's left a letter for you which I was to have sent down to barracks by messenger this evening. Here you are, sir. You will be glad to hear, sir, that the tomfoolery is all over, sir; and after the tournament, sir, the master goes down to Brentley Burnham."

Fox opened the letter and read its contents, while Jones, evidently delighted beyond all bounds, droned on.

"Very good, Jones. Tell Mr Herries that I came, and that I will give Mr Callagher his message to-night or to-morrow morning. How's the new horse turned out?"

"The black, sir? He's a clinker! I've only just been round to the stables, and the man that's on him said he gave him a gallop in the Park this morning to stop a runaway. Went like the wind, sir!"

"Is he going down to Newmarket to join the others?"

"I haven't heard that he is. I hardly think he's a racehorse, sir. I think the master wants to hunt him. But it's a queer man he's got with him. He says as 'ow the horse is daft, and sees things, and never brought anybody anything but bad luck yet!"

"I know that kind of man, Jones: he probably sees more things than a sober man should. All right; give my message to Mr Herries."

John Fox took himself off to make some calls, inwardly communing that there would be one happy man in the Imperial Dragoon Guards when he handed over Herries's cheque in payment of the forfeit.

Below-stairs at South Street the news of the footman's deliberate desertion caused considerable excitement, and was the sole topic of the Sunday meal. The benevolent Mrs Critchins was still as tolerant as ever; but the younger and less responsible faculty showed no mercy to his memory.

Hill, who had just exchanged from the neat uniform which suited her brand of ripe beauty so well into the extravagant walking-out dress which her class now affect, had no mercy.

"Of course 'e's found out. I knew it, as soon as I clapped eyes on him, that he was one of these 'ere Gentlemen Jacks. I 'specks he got the office to quit this morning, and Mr Privit is just a-covering of it up. Nasty, stuck-up feller, with 'is airs an' graces, an 'is grand way with the young ladies! I 'speck Miss Stevens here could tell a tale or two about him of upstairs. I know I could, if I was put to it."

Miss Stevens looked mysterious, and nodded her approval of the allegation.

"Fie! fie!" cried the fat housekeeper. "To hear you girls talk, one would never think that you had been making up to him all the

time. And to take the young ladies' characters away like that! I tell you he was a nice, civil-spoken young man; an' I agrees with Mr Privit that he will make 'is mark some day. Like as not, he's only lef' because of you hussies' unbecoming-like attentions."

"Me? Attentions!" cried the handsome Hill, tossing her much over-hatted head. "I wouldn't demean myself to show attentions to the likes of 'im. Why, when 'e pestered me to walk out with 'im on my evenings, I 'ad to tell im straight that I would not be seen dead alongside of 'im. 'E was a wrong 'un. Miss Stevens and me could tell a thing or two. Couldn't we, Bertha?"

"I daresay we might," the lady's-maid agreed; "but I discovered who the fellow was the first day he arrived. Of course I didn't tell any one except the mistress and the young ladies. It doesn't matter how I found out, either. But this man Smith—which, of course, wasn't his name—is a detective from Scotland Yard!"

An exclamation went round the table. This was certainly a development they had not anticipated. The superior Stevens, gratified at the sensation her *exposé* had caused, then proceeded to explain.

"You see, here in the West End, there are so many sharps and impostors that the police have to be very careful. They therefore keep a staff of trained detectives, whose business is to watch the households of any new people who come here and set up as being rich. I taxed the feller with 'it. He was very upset that I should have discovered it; but he made me promise that I would say nothing about it until he left. Of course I told the mistress; but, knowing the police, I kept mum down here. He was just a common detective, paid to spy on the hand that nourished 'im!"

"Well, I never—who'd 'ave thought it!" and Mrs Critchins sighed deeply as the lady's-maid finished.

"Just fancy!" echoed the saucy Hill, in genuine admiration of the lady's maid. "Isn't Bertha clever! and to think that you never said nothink to me neither."

While little Sally, as she carried the vegetables down the table, blushed scarlet up to the roots of her hair, to think that she had simpered for at least a minute on the breast of a real live detecti

CHAPTER XII.—HURLINGHAM.

"Captain, I think your colours are too dandy for words!"

The Bud was looking her best in a mass of chiffons, laces, and muslin. She was apostrophising the colours of the Imperial Dragoon Guards, which John Fox sported, and, by way of holding a larger

circle, she drew her sister's attention to the neckties which the officers of the regiment were wearing.

Marjorie, for the moment, was too entertained in a conversation with the Honourable James Callagher, whom Fox had just introduced to her, to do more than make a passing assent to her sister's inquiry. Marjorie had been very miserable the past few days, but from the moment she saw Callagher, when Fox brought him up, she felt inclined to laugh. She had seen many exquisites, both in her own country and in Piccadilly, but she had never before been brought in contact with the particular brand to which Callagher belonged. Like the rest of the world, she was at first sight, deceived as to the real character of the man. His immaculate dress, perfectly groomed yellow hair, highly cultivated moustaches, vacant and impassive expression, all betrayed the casual observer into the belief that the British officer of stageland was not all burlesque.

Callagher had settled down beside little Marjorie, with the grave air of studied boredom that exactly fitted the effeminacy of his toilette.

"It is a most instructive day, Miss Woodruff."

"Instructive? To me, a stranger, perhaps, but surely not to you. You must have a pile of these shows."

"Instructive to me also," said Callagher, looking gravely into Marjorie's face. "It has proved to me the truth of the couplet—

'Except wind stands as never it stood,
It is an ill wind turns none to good.'

That I call instruction."

"I call that a problem. I was never very bright at problems."

"Then I will interpret," and the Honourable James dropped into his deliberate inane monotone. "It is this way, Miss Woodruff; if I had not won a bet of £500 I should have been playing in this match, and should have been one-eighth of the principal attraction in this goodly throng and galaxy of beauty. But now, having reached a sudden wealth, which for me was beyond the dreams of avarice, I realise what I have lost."

Marjorie looked at him dubiously. For the first time for days she felt inclined to burst out laughing. "You still talk in problems. I don't understand in the least what your mark is. Is it the custom with you Britishers to jolly a girl as soon as you get to know her?"

"No, I assure you it is not. I never was more serious. But I will be more explicit. I noticed you and your sister walking with Fox down the line of ponies. I saw at a glance that you know a horse, and now that I know you, I wish that I were playing in the match. Up to ten days ago I believed that I should play for the regiment, because the man whose place I was taking had gone away to fulfil a bet he had made with me.

He, however, has paid forfeit and returned — and I have become a spectator instead of a principal!"

"But if your friend has paid forfeit you are the richer."

"True, and that is where the instruction comes in. I wanted the money badly enough, but at the present moment I am wanting more badly to play."

"Why?" Marjorie asked abstractedly.

"Because, Miss Woodruff, I know what is passing in your mind. You are unutterably bored because you are anxious to participate in the excitement of a really hard-fought game, and you have judged it a bore to be engaged at a moment like this in conversation with a man who is pleased to talk only about himself."

Callagher droned this without even the suspicion of a smile on his face. The quaint abnegation in the tone had the effect of recapturing Marjorie's attention. She laughed outright.

"They do say that a man is never interesting until he talks about himself. Mr Callagher, I am terribly interested; but I am just crazy to know when they will begin."

"Very soon now. They will ring a bell. But the man who has taken my place hasn't arrived yet. There are his ponies over there."

"Who are your team, Mr Callagher?"

"That little man talking to Fox and your sister is Mr Prendergast, — 'The Seraph,' we call him, because he looks so fresh and young. He is our No. 1. Down there, on the green, weighing sticks, is Major Vaughan-Lewes. He is No. 3—a magnificent player. Wait till you see him get away down the ground presently: he plays equally well on either side of his pony. The man over there by the ponies—you see the one with a sweater muffled round his neck—is our No. 2. That's 'Puck' Chesterton; he's hard to beat. Our No. 4 is the man who has taken my place, 'Gasser' Herries. He hasn't come yet—yes, there he is, the tall fellow coming from the changing-room. We haven't seen him for two months. Why, what the devil's the matter? I beg your pardon, Miss Woodruff; but the Gasser's shaved his moustache!"

There was quite a little flutter of excitement as Herries joined the men of his regiment.

"Why, Gasser, where have you been?"

"What have you done with your moustache?"

"Are you studying for the Bar?"

His friends crowded round him, so that he had no time to glance upwards to see those who were seated above. He barely had time to answer the first railleries of his brother officers when the umpire, having put some spare balls into his pockets, mounted his pony. Immediately the bell rang, and the eight players went off to their ponies.

John Fox had not moved from the side of The Bud, who

was prattling away for his benefit and for that of another man who had just been introduced to her on the "bully polo" that was played at Los Angeles. He had watched to see if either of the sisters would recognise in Herries their late footman. The Bud was far too engrossed in her immediate vicinity to notice any one down against the boards. But Fox saw that little Marjorie had started visibly when she caught sight of the tall, athletic figure of the Imperials' No. 4; but her self-control was such that Callagher, still pattering small talk at her side, noticed nothing. Marjorie turned to him.

"How did you say that tall man called himself?"

"Eh? Which one, Miss Woodruff? We run tall in the Imperials."

"The one that is just going up to that dandy little brown horse."

"Oh, that's the man who, I was telling you, has taken my place."

Marjorie, who felt hot and cold in turns, could have shaken the Honourable James to have made him more explicit. "But his name?"

"Didn't I tell you?—Osborn Herries. It looks well on a cheque!"

A new field of view suddenly opened up in Marjorie's mind. She turned to her companion with a show of interest in his conversation which hitherto had been completely lacking.

"I remember. The identical man you were wagering with. It's pie to me to hear about sportive wagers. What was it all about?"

Callagher was delighted. He believed that at last this dainty little American, with the violet eyes and wild gipsy hair, was about to take an interest in him. He answered, however, gravely enough.

"It was rather a foolish affair. I was prepared to wager that a great, handsome, popular, well-known fellow like Herries could not efface himself and remain in the West End of London without being discovered. For the sake of argument Herries said it would be possible, if he went out as a domestic servant. I laughed at the proposition, and then the silly fellow got cussed, and said he would back himself to prove me wrong."

"And did he?" It was as much as Marjorie could do to keep back the tears which unaccountably suffused her eyes. It seemed to her a moment of triumph.

"No, he lost; hence my epigram about the cheque."

"You don't follow. Did he go and hire himself out?"

"Yes; for two months he's been blacking boots, and keeping ladies' dresses off hansom wheels with the best of them."

"And where was this?" Marjorie could hardly restrain her eagerness. She felt inclined to cry and shout in turn.

"That I don't know. It is a secret between Captain Fox and Herries."

The tangle had practically unravelled itself.

"Do you intimate that Captain Fox was wise to his movements all the time?" Marjorie asked searchingly.

"Yes."

The suspense was ended, the triumph had come indeed. A bright smile lit up the little oval face.

"It occurs to me, Mr Callagher, that it is the most fascinating story I have ever heard. I shall be just crazy to hear how your friend found it. But I wouldn't wonder that he found it such a bum time that he would now be glad to cut it all out. But, anyhow, he must be a sport. I'm that interested that I am just dying for your side to win this polo game."

Even as she spoke the two teams had lined up opposite each other, and the umpire sent the ball daisy-cutting down the space between them.

To those who love a horse a good game of polo is a most fascinating event to watch. In London it is the pastime of the rich, and consequently the surroundings of a regimental tournament match add an almost exclusive charm from the spectator's point of view. Given that the day is fine, the seats and grounds will be filled with graceful women in beautiful attire. On every side one meets that finish in dress, pose, and feature which breeding and wealth alone can supply. Everything seems thoroughbred: the athletic players, in snowy breeches and nut-brown boots; the fair abettors of the sport, who charmingly mingle with the booted champions; the well-groomed ponies waiting placidly, or impatiently, as their disposition prompts them, for the ring of the bell that summons them to the game.

Although the game itself is fast and furious, often stirring the blood and the passions to a remarkable degree, yet the environment is extraordinarily peaceful. The soft carpet of green turf, the heavy summer foliage of the trees, the lengthening shadows of approaching eventide, are sedative in their influence upon the senses, unless one is actually in the throes of an exciting game.

The game itself is not boisterous, unless there should chance to be an accident. Perfectly trained ponies and perfectly trained players eliminate that noisy crudeness which is the measure of the inexpert. Save for the ringing echo of the true hit stroke, the subdued thud of the galloping hoofs, the directing voices of the captains, and the sonorous smack of the ball against the boards, polo, when played in deadly earnest, should be a silent game. For there is no pastime, search you ever so closely, that quite equally demands the full attention of the player. It is a man's game. If there is aught that is defective in the nerve, or a suspicion of the craven in the heart, it is discovered on the polo-ground. No matter how long a man's purse, how perfect his ponies, or skilful his control of the stick, there come moments, over and over again in fast games, when the true character of the player is

proved. After the stern test of war, polo proves the man as no other pastime can possibly test him.

In the present case great interest centred round the game. It was definitely believed that the ultimate winners of the tournament would be found in the result of this semi-final. The prospect of a stern hard fight between the teams of the opposing regiments had attracted an exceptionally large gathering of spectators. When it was realised that the Imperials had been obliged to substitute for their real back, who had recently met with an accident, an officer who had not been playing regularly with the team, their chances of success were generally discounted. But as soon as the ball was in play, and it was seen how well the substitute and his ponies were playing, the Imperials soon came back into favour.

It was a magnificent game. When the rivals took the field for the last chukker, the score stood at one goal all, and the spectators were held in a breathless state of expectation. Marjorie could not keep her eyes from the tall, muscular figure of the man who had proved a tower of strength to his side, and who saved the situation time after time when the Hussars were pushing the Imperials hard. Marjorie could almost have hugged the Honourable James, when, in his enthusiasm for some great effort Herries had made, he volunteered the information that mortal man could not have played better.

For the spectators it was a supreme moment when, within thirty seconds of the ball being thrown in, the Hussars hustled it down to the Imperials' line. The shot missed by a yard. Herries let Puck Chesterton hit the ball out again. He got away with a rush, but the Hussars' No. 4, before the Seraph could get on to him, skied it back with a pretty back-hander. Again the Hussar No. 2 picked up its line, and their No. 1, chipping in on to Herries's near side, fouled his stroke. The Hussar No. 2 came on apace: he took the white ball fair and true, and it went skimming over the goal-posts. A shout went up from the spectators, and Marjorie, who had learned to follow the game in California, felt her heart sink. The shout died away, and someone called out, "It was offside." The players did not change sides, the Hussars trotted back thirty yards, and Herries turned and took Sherry back to get impetus for his free hit. Herries had saved his side by using his head. By suddenly checking, he had put the Hussars' leech-like No. 1 half a head offside, just as the No. 2 made his shot. The umpire had seen it, and again the spectators settled down to watch a desperate finish. Little Sherry bent his strong little back, and the white ball simply flew.

"Get back!" shouted Herries to Puck Chesterton, and he

followed the line of his stroke with an impetuosity that the Hussar forwards dared not infringe. It looked as if he would get a run and shot all to himself, but the Hussar back anticipated him, and cutting in, fed his own forwards. Their adroit No. 2 again picked up the line, but this time he galloped over the ball and missed his stroke. Puck Chesterton cleared it to Vaughan-Lewes, who nimbly drove it wide of the opposing back. It looked as if the Dragoon major must score. But "there's many a slip 'twixt cup and lip," and as the major centred up the ash head of his stick broke, and he was unable to reap the advantage of a really pretty piece of calculation. Broken stick in hand, he could do little, and the Hussar back getting round first, dribbled the ball on the curve until it was out of the ruck and drove it clear, shouting to his forwards to gallop. It was a magnificent rally; the Hussar No. 3 dropped back and, three abreast, the light-cavalry men tore down the ground. Herries, caught on the turn, was over-galloped, without even causing the Hussar No. 2 to deviate from the ball. The game was in the hollow of the Hussars' hands. No one could catch their No. 2: he steadied his pony for the final shot, yawed a little just to get the stroke fair on. People in the stands rose from their seats to see the shot, which would probably be the winning stroke in a game every second of which had been a contest. Then, as so often happens at crucial moments, the unexpected came to pass. The Hussar's pony refused the ball. Just as the rider swung his arm for the winning hit, his pony shied off. So intense was the excitement that a suppressed sigh went up from the spectators. Keen partisans, with their watches in their hands, knew that there was barely half a minute more to play. There were only three Dragoons on the ground: Vaughan-Lewes had galloped to the boards for a new stick.

"Turn," shouted the Hussar back.

But Herries was round first. His road was clear for the whole length of the ground. Only the Hussar back lay between him and the white gleaming goal-posts. Prendergast turned even with him.

"Ride him off, ride like h—l!" yelled Herries, as he took the ball full and true, as a ball should be taken.

The whole field was going again. But these three were away with a flying start. In their hands lay the issue of the day. The silence of deep suspense held the stand.

The Seraph knew that his orders were desperate. But his light weight saved him. He came in behind the Hussar back's saddle. His pony responded to his desperate effort, and he foiled the back-hander, leaving the ball clear again for Herries. Little Sherry knew the game. Herries drove the ball. But the pace was such

that it drove past the Seraph and the back. Again the Hussar got fairly on the line. Now he was ready for the feather-weight mosquito on his flank. And he braced his pony against the Seraph's. He would clear it. But no; divided attention ruined the stroke. Instead of flying clear to the forwards, it only slithered a dozen yards across Herries's front. There was just a chance. Herries bent Sherry over. The little hero changed his feet, Herries reached over on his near side—reached over until he was just hanging from the saddle. The pace, which was appalling, made it possible. Still on his near, the ball travelled on. Herries recovered himself, and picking it up on the move, drove it between the posts.

The umpire blew his whistle. The Imperials had won the tie.

A roar of approbation went up from the spectators. Even those who were partisans of the losing side could not restrain their appreciation of so sensational a finish.

The Bud, who had caught the excitement from her neighbours, was busy congratulating the little knot of officers of the Imperials who stood round her. Marjorie, still attended by Callagher, was less demonstrative. If there was one thing that she wanted at the moment, it was to be alone. Unlike her sister, she had recognised to whom the success of her new friends was due, and her heart was full.

As the players dismounted, a group of their friends surrounded the winning team. The Bud, who was almost clinging to Fox's arm, adjured him to "Fetch that lovely man up here!" With a little difficulty Fox succeeded in extricating Herries from his circle of friends, and brought him to Callagher and the two girls.

"Miss Woodruff, let me introduce Mr Osborn Herries of 'Ours' to you."

The Bud looked full into Herries's eyes. In a second the gush and *empressé* in her speech and manner were stifled.

"Gee!"

Little Marjorie threw herself into the breach. Stepping forward, she grasped Herries's great strong hand.

"I think we have met before, Mr Herries. We are just crazy to think that you fetched the game through. It was stunning!"

"In that case, Miss Woodruff, the match was indeed worth winning."

The Bud had recovered herself. She gave her hand freely to the young soldier.

"I've a hunch that this is the biggest game of spoof I've officiated in yet, Mr Herries. You have a nerve, and no mistake!" Then as Herries withdrew she caught sight of Fox's smiling face. The Bud turned on him hotly. "You were in this too. I like your neck. You'll have to pitch a tale to Pop. He's drawn on a man for less, out West! Come, Margi, let's get; we're the lobsters this hike. Captain Fox, will you please escort us to our carriage?"

"Not until you have had some tea," the tall Dragoon Guard captain answered penitently. "I am sure your sister wants some tea."

The Bud's attempt at righteous indignation could hold out no longer against Fox's humble abnegation.

"Gee. You Britishers just have a neck. That's a cinch I've an idea we will have some tea. Come along, Margi."

Marjorie joined her cheerily enough,—the world was very bright to the little Californian at that moment. It was just as bright to the big, clean-limbed Herries, changing out of his soiled riding kit in the pavilion. The magnetism of that first hand-shake remained with them both.

CHAPTER XIII.—THE SETTLEMENT.

It was not often that Evans favoured John Privit with a visit They met almost daily in the course of their service and exchanged all the compliments of the day and season. But for the most part their intercourse began and finished with their duties. There was nothing in common between the cultured butler and the simple officiating coachman. Mr Privit was therefore not a little astonished when Evans burst into his sanctum at South Street, and, without even a word of apology, threw himself down into an empty chair.

"Whatever is the matter with you, Mr Evans? Have you seen a ghost, or is the stable burnt down?"

"Strike me pink, Mr Privit," answered the little Welshman, "you could 'ave knocked me down with a feather. And I who knows a thing or two to 'ave been taken in like this, and never to 'ave dreamt that I was being hokeyed all the time."

The little man drew in a long breath, and Mr Privit, not feeling quite sure of his ground, gave an anxious look towards the door. Evans, quick as a ferret, caught the sidelong glance, and read its meaning.

"Oh no, Mr Privit, I'm not off my bloomin', but I might be, for just the strangest thing that ever you thought of 'as 'appened to me to-day."

"Well, out with it," said the butler, somewhat relieved by Evans's change to a rational tone.

"Well," said the little groom, planting both elbows on the table, "to tip you the yarn right off, it was this way: I was jest a-doing down the 'arness, when who should put 'is 'ead inside the coach-house door but a wee bit of a messenger-boy. 'Is it a Mr Evans that lives 'ere?' says 'is nibs. 'I am the bloke,' says I. He stuffs a bloomin' chittie into my 'and, and 'ere's the kite—read it for yourself, Mr Privit," and the groom took a crumpled piece of note-paper out of his pocket and

passed it across to the butler. With great deliberation Mr Privit placed his spectacles on his nose, and flattened the missive out on the table. He read the contents slowly:—

"Buckingham Gate, S.W.

"Mr O. F. Herries, of the Imperial Dragoon Guards, hears that Evans is looking out for service with hunters and polo-ponies. If this should be the case, Mr Herries will be glad if Evans will give him a call.

"Mr Herries will be at home until 12 o'clock."

"Well," said Mr Privit, looking up at his companion, "hit seems to me a very hordinary communication."

"Hordinary! you calls it hordinary, do you, Mr Privit? Do you know who this bloomin' toff is? This Mr 'Erries of the Imperial Guards is none other, so help me Bob, than our old friend Gentleman Jim." The butler controlled his feelings. It was evident that some new light was dawning upon him.

"By Gentleman Jim, Evans, I suppose you mean the late footman, Mr James Smith, who vacated his employment in this household under rather peculiar circumstances yesterday."

"Of 'hunder peculiar circumstances' I know nothin', but this I do know, Mr Privit, that the man who 'as been a-sitting on my box, and a-gargling beer with me at nights, who I 'ave at times given lip to as if he wer' no better nor a nevvie, ain't no bloomin' footman but a proper toff, to which the likes of you and I ain't fit to do more than touch our 'ats."

"Mr Evans, Mr Evans, you forget yourself. It is true that there may be many people to whom it is necessary for you to touch your hat, but with whom I should be able to converse upon terms of perhaps almost hequality; but we will not argue that point. It would interest me greatly if you would recount to me your interview with Mr Smith. But you seem a bit distressed; will you not have a little something to drink—say a glass of port?" and the butler waved his hand towards a side-table on which stood several decanters of the alcoholic adjuncts to the South Street dinner-table.

Evans helped himself, and then returning to his seat carried on the narrative of his strange discovery.

"Well, as there was no carriage hordered for the mornin', I just left word that I was a-goin' hout, and I nipped across the Park to Buckingham Gate."

"And had you no suspicion," queried the butler, "as to whom the writer of this letter might be?"

"I no more dreamt of the writer of that letter bein' my pal of the box than I dreamt of entering that old fat cow of a brougham mare for the Derby; but I was suspicious like, and I thought just to do a bit of jaw-wagging with the guy that kept the door of the flats. He

was an old soldier, and it don't take an old soldier long to get friendly with the man that puts up the beer. I just asked 'im to come round and do a wet, and 'e told me all 'e knew about this 'ere Mr 'Erries 'E said 'e 'ad been livin' in that flat, No. 18, for about three months, no one seemed to know much about 'im. 'Is man said as 'ow 'e was an officer in the harmy, but 'is man was a proper grouch, one of those stiff teetotler kind of quads: 'e was not givin' nothin' for nothin', and damned little for somethin'. The porter guy said as 'ow the gentleman was out all day, except twice a-week, when 'e came 'ome early to go a-playin' polo; that 'e was a queer, unsociable sort of a cuss, that took no interest in anybody about the place, except an old fossil of a stableman who was a-lookin' after 'is mokes. This was all I could get out of this bloomer, who had been in the Scots Guards, and was one of them sort noted rather for the good fit of their duds than for oil in their wits. So I climbed up to the third floor, and seed if I could get a word with the bloke's man, but the guy at the door was right: 'e *was* a proper grouch. 'Oh,' ses 'e, 'you are the man as what my master sent for?' I ses 'Yes, mister,' and looked haround, thinkin' that we might get a bit of a chat in the passage. 'Well, you come straight this way,' ses 'e; and ignoring, like, the sign I made, which is known to every soldier, 'e flew a door open and shot me clean into a sitting-room. And there, so 'elp me, sitting right down in a lot of cushions on a bloomin' couch was 'is nibs, the footman. Blimey! you could 'ave blown me down with a cough.

"'Good mornin', Evans,' ses 'e, smiling quite friendly like. 'Take a seat.' 'Good mornin', sir,' ses I, not quite knowin' 'ow to fix it up; 'I think, perhaps, I 'ad better stand.' 'No, for this once, Evans, sit down. We have sat together on the box long enough for you to continue sitting while we get to business.' 'Beg pardon, sir,' ses I, 'but I should like to know what it hall means before I takes any liberties.' 'Well, Evans, to cut a long story short,' ses 'e, 'it's this way. I had a bet with some of my brother-hofficers. Well, I took up the bet, Evans, and I have lost; and now I want to know what I can do for you?' I was that there flabust that I could not find a word in my bloomin' phonograph, and all I could do was to hapologise to 'im for bein' so familiar like, while all the time I was a-dyin' to kick myself in the breadbasket for 'avin' been such a bloomin' ninny as not to 'ave spotted it all along."

"Well," said Mr Privit, who in spite of his studied dignity could not disguise the interest which he took in this narrative, "and what was the hupshot?"

"The hupshot is this, Mr Privit," said Evans, jumping to his feet and seizing his cap, "that Gentleman Jim is just one of those blokes that lives in the top notch, and I will be obliged to you if you will tell the master that it would suit me, if it would suit 'imself, to

'ave another hunder coachman this day month."

Evans was out of the butler's sanctum almost as quickly as he entered it.

"What a strange occurrence," Privit mumbled to himself as he carefully folded up the letter from the late footman and put it in his pocket. "Scandalous" was his exclamation as he went straightway to Mr Woodruff's study to look up in the 'Landed Gentry' the antecedents of his late subordinate. He met Stevens on the stairway.

"Have you heard the news, Mr Privit?" queried the lady's-maid.

"You mean about Mr Smith?"

"Yes, Mr Privit; wasn't it mean of him, and to come and carry on in the house like that, and all the time to be an officer in the army?"

"Scandalous, Miss Stevens, scandalous! I was just going to the study to look him up in Burke to see if he really is anybody. I can hardly believe that it is true."

"You can save yourself that trouble, Mr Privit, because Miss Woodruff has got that volume in her boudoir."

"Oh! then they have discovered this deception also, have they?"

"Yes, Mr Privit, and The Bud is just furious. She says that they will be the laughing-stock of the whole of London."

"You might have told her, Miss Stevens, that London—that is, the real London—will never hear of the incident. It only discusses interesting people. But, by the way, have they discovered who he is?"

"Oh yes, Mr Privit. He is an officer from Aldershot, is the proprietor of iron-works and coal-mines, and I don't know what else: he has a place in the Midlands which is let, a house in St James's Square, and another place in Sussex. He is a proper toff."

"H'm," said the butler grimly, "that's what Evans said—'a proper toff.'"

The South Street household was as upset that morning upstairs as below the salt. At the very moment when Stevens was explaining her knowledge of the situation to the estimable Privit, Maximilian J. B. Woodruff was experiencing the unusual course of obeying a summons to appear before his daughter in her boudoir.

The Bud was aroused. There was a fire in her usually listless eyes and a colour in her cheeks which suited her admirably, but at the moment her personal appearance troubled her nothing. She had even forgotten to pose, and was striding up and down her room, totally oblivious to the fact that a Japanese kimono is quite unsuited to the irate stride of a Western wearer. Maximilian J. B. sat in the arm-chair by the window-sill and was content to let his daughter's indignation evaporate somewhat before he either joined issue in her grievance or attempted to check the flow of her vehemence.

"It is just fierce, I tell you, Pop, to have had that Smith

dancing round here for the last three months making public lobsters of us. To think that we should have been hoodooed like that, and all his friends sizing us up as tenderfeet. I wouldn't have worried a ten-dollar bill if it hadn't been for that game of ball. If you could have seen the faces of all his friends and the other chaps who were playing, you would understand how bad I feel about it: just hoodooed by a whole crowd of people we've been mud keen to know, and now they are just tickled to death at the whole bunch of us for a lot of American lobsters. I tell you what it is, Pop, it's no use for us to stay round here long; we've just got to pack our grips and quit. What with your turn-up with the Ambassador, and now this little peep-show, we're just fit to be hired out for a Winter Garden, and don't you be forgetting it. Why! I am that mad. Poof! if I could see that sleek, pasty-faced Smith right here now as he came up after that game of ball, I would be into his hair before he knew it was daylight," and The Bud threw herself into a chair opposite her father, clasping her hands as if she were about to spring upon the Druggist from the West in default for his not producing his late footman to have his hair pulled.

This last vehement expression of feeling aroused Maximilian J. B. He thrust his hands deep into his pocket as he said—

"It's bully for you, Bud, but I guess this ain't the topple over of the Call building just yet. It stops just short of an earthquake; and if you will let me ring for a couple of dry Martignys you will find, on consideration, the situation is not quite so tough as you make it. You've figured it out that we've been the victims of a put-up job; that a bunch of these young soldier bloods have laid themselves out to run us as a sort of society fancy bazaar. That's where I think you're wrong, Bud, and a Western gal like you ought not to be so thin about the coat as to take it that we've been hoaxed by mean whites. Now, I have had a goodish experience of Britishers out West, and at the bottom I never found them any other colour but white. Yes! even the toughest in the tough old days were white at bottom. Now, I just tell you, Bud, what I propose to do. I am going right away from here to find out where this fellow John Smith was raised, and then as soon as I can find him I will tackle him and ask him what his pigeon is. If his answer is not satisfactory, then he has got to figure it out with Maximilian J. B. one way or the other."

The Bud shook her head despondently.

"It is just like you men, Pop; you are not able to figure it out the same way as we are. If you think that we are going to get quit of this story, of how we had a swell Englishman as a hired man, either in this country or out in 'Frisco, you have handed in the wrong

check. We're just never going to find the finish to this trail. Oh, it is a cruel proposition! Can't you see the scare-heads in 'The Chronicle' when we get back again, 'The London Lobsters return to Nob Hill'?"

Maximilian J. B. looked at his daughter gravely.

"Bud," he said, almost severely, "I have a hunch that there is more in your feeling on this subject than meets the eye."

The Bud flushed hotly, but whatever she was about to say was cut short by the entry of her sister. Marjorie, who was in her habit, evinced surprise at seeing her father in her sister's room, and she looked from him to The Bud to ascertain some clue as to the reason. Maximilian J. B. gave her the clue by saying—

"You've just come in time, Margi; we were discussing the situation created by Smith, the hired man."

"Oh, is that all?" said Marjorie, walking across the room and leaning against the mantelpiece. "From the look of Bud here I thought at least something serious had taken place."

For the last month or six weeks Marjorie had exercised anything but a soothing influence upon her sister. Bud flared up again.

"And don't you call it serious to have us hoodooed right in the centre of London town here? Don't you care what the folks will be saying?"

Although Marjorie could not help evincing a certain amount of surprise at the sudden and unusual heat in her sister's tone, and the, for her, extraordinary vehemence of manner, yet she was not to be drawn by this outward expression of feeling.

"What the folks say about us, or about our hired men," Marjorie answered quietly, "as far as I am concerned, doesn't cut any ice at all."

Bud gripped the two arms of her chair.

"You, of course, you won't care. In your present state any old coil will be non-conducting. But how will you like it when the folks say, and say it truly, mind, that a dandy British captain hired himself out to Maximilian J. B. Woodruff on purpose to get next to one of the Woodruff girls. Would that cut any ice, miss?"

The Bud fairly threw the last words at her sister. Marjorie looked at her blankly.

"Bud, you forget yourself: I don't know really what you mean."

"Forget myself! I like your neck; you can't jolly me," and here she half turned to her father. "Why, Pop, Marjorie here has known all about this hired man Smith for the last six weeks. It is simply fierce, and to think what the reporters will make of it."

Marjorie drew in her breath, and then, after a moment's pause, said with great dignity—

"Bud, there is no limit to your imagination, and I will leave you to your own unsavoury thoughts."

"Geewhiz! but you girls have dug up the hatchet over something," and the successful Californian millionaire showed

every evidence of the discomfort he felt in having been drawn into the present family discussion. But the situation became even more distasteful to him when, immediately Marjorie had left the room, Bud covered her face with her hands and burst into tears.

"My word!" ejaculated Maximilian J. B., "has everybody on this ranch closed down on their senses? Anyway, there is trouble to burn here with which I am not familiar. Cheer up, Bud, old girl—I will send up Stevens to you with a cocktail. It is bully for the nerves."

As Maximilian J. B. Woodruff arrived down at his own study, he met the butler.

"I beg your pardon, sir, but might I have a few minutes' conversation with you?"

"Certainly, Privit, certainly. Come right in here," and Maximilian J. B. led the way into his study, and selected a fat cigar from the box that stood upon his desk.

"What is the trouble now, Privit?"

"Well, sir, it's this way. As I told you last night, sir, Smith, the footman, left us without notice, leaving a Bank of England note, sir, in lieu of his services for one month, to which, as you may know, sir, by the English law you were entitled, not having been given notice."

"Oh, yes; a murrain on your darned English law! What is it you are driving at?"

"Well, sir, it's this way: I have made the discovery, sir, this morning, that this Smith, as he called himself, was no such person, but was an officer in the English Army." Privit, making this statement with emphasis, waited a moment to see the effect of it upon his master.

Maximilian J. B., although he was fairly subdued in the presence of The Bud, was absolutely in his element when it came to dealing in the way of business with his own sex. He continued munching the end of his cigar, and did not even deign to turn round from the window out of which he was looking as his factotum delivered himself of this weighty statement.

"Waal?" queried the drug magnate, without turning towards his henchman.

"Well, I thought as you might not have known the fact, sir," said Privit, somewhat nettled that his portentous statement should have fallen so flat, and a little upset by the business attitude which his master exhibited.

"You may take it from me, and straight at that, Mr Butler, that when I choose to use a British officer as my hired man, it is no business of yours to instruct me further than I request. Now, I want you to understand that it is a cinch that I knew that that flunkey with the big calves and the clean-shaved lip was not of the same class as you. That I didn't make a smoke about it is my business. Now, Mr Butler," and he turned sharply on his servitor, "who was this James Smith? I am interrogating now."

This unexpected and altogether novel change of demeanour in his master quite unnerved the pompous and naturally servile John Privit, who had been used, for the last generation, to exercising a judicious masculine control over the household of a dear, old, and confiding English lady. In the arrival of the new directorate in the house in South Street, over which he had exercised his influence so long, he had not as yet found any obstruction to his mode of carrying on the household. Matters had remained much the same as heretofore. The Woodruff family had been entirely new to English habits as exercised in Mayfair. Moreover, Maximilian J. B. had not given his mind to anything beyond pleasurable retirement: American-like, when he was doing business he was a business man; when he was holiday-making he was a pleasure-seeker. But the bomb that had fallen into the midst of his family circle, and the scene he had witnessed in his daughter's boudoir, had so upset him, that he immediately reverted to that mental attitude which, in his young days, had built for him the almost fabulous fortune which he now enjoyed. His change of front was so galvanic that the old butler, completely unprepared, was instantly reduced to a cinder: all he could do was to press the crumpled paper which Evans had left on his table into the millionaire's hand, while he himself subsided in the farthest and darkest corner of the room. Maximilian J. B. took the paper.

"Geewhiz!" he ejaculated, as he read the address. "So this, Mr Butler, is your late helpmate?"

Privit gurgled an affirmative. Mr Woodruff put the paper down on his desk and took two steps towards the corner in which Privit had effaced himself.

"Now, Mr Butler, I want you to stock what I am going to say right at the back of your thinking-pan. I am ready to wager that it would be worth five pounds to any bum reporter to get hold of this story. Now I am of this way of thinking, that if the War Department folk were to get hold of the story that one of their army officers had been jumping around this hutch doing buck nigger's work, there would be trouble to burn for one Osborn Herries, as he calls himself. Therefore it doesn't take a hundred-ton steam hammer to see that no part of this story will find its way into the filthy columns of your gutter rags through the officers of the Imperial Dragoon Guards. Do you follow? Waal, then, you take it from me that the only way that it could be known would be through this household. Anyway, that is the edge that I have got on this tool of mine, and I want you to stock it right straight from me that if a word of this fake appears in any newspaper within the next six months, I will dismiss without characters the whole of this household, and, Mr Butler, I will take

stock of your wine-cellar before I send you flitting. Good-day."

In the whole experience of his domestic life John Privit never remembered experiencing quite the same sensation as he felt during that brief interview with his master which followed upon the retirement of James Smith, footman. Of one thing at least the elderly butler was certain as he made his way back to his own room to collect his thoughts, and that was, if he had ever made a mistake, it was when for three months he had led himself to believe that he was the strong and moving influence in this particular residence in South Street.

"I guess I have banked that furnace," said Mr Woodruff to himself as he selected another cigar, the first one having gone out during the heat of his interview with his butler, and lighted it. In the few seconds which had intervened between the passage-of-arms betwixt his daughters and his meeting with John Privit, Maximilian J. B., in his own delightful phraseology, had figured out the situation. As had been his custom from his youth upwards, when, in the matter of business, he picked out a line, he wasted no time in tracing its course through to the essentials which were relevant to the objects in hand. Having lighted his cigar, Maximilian J. B. put Herries's letter into his pocket, passed into the hall, collected his panama hat, and turned out into the street. As soon as he reached Park Lane he summoned a hansom and directed the cabby to take him to Buckingham Gate.

The Honourable James Callagher had dropped into No. 18 Buckingham Gate, as he drily put it, "to talk over things." Herries had just been explaining to him that, at the Colonel's request, he was debating whether he would reconsider his decision to leave the service and take back his papers, or whether he would carry out his original design and take up a political career. The Hon. James was in the act of advising his brother officer to give the country a little further benefit of his military services, when John opened the door and announced "Maximilian J. B. Woodruff."

The bluff grey-headed Californian strolled into the centre of the room.

"I must make my apologies, gentlemen, for this intrusion." Then, inclining with courtly grace to the Hon. James, "My business is pressing, and it is with Mr Herries here."

Both the soldiers jumped to their feet, and Herries had given Callagher a knowing wink as soon as he realised who his visitor was.

"Delighted, I am sure, to welcome you here, Mr Woodruff," said Herries, holding out his hand and dropping at once easily into the suave unruffled ease of which he was an adept.

The druggist millionaire put his hands behind his back.

"Say, now, I am not looking for trouble, young man;

but up till forty-eight hours ago you were my hired man. I should just like to know, before I take your hand, the best cue in the gag; and, Mr Herries, I should like to see you alone. If there's to be any shooting, we will call the gentleman back."

Herries was not in the least abashed by the attitude which his visitor took up.

"Certainly, my dear sir, you have every right to demand an explanation, and I am just as ready to give it to you; but I should prefer that you would be seated first."

"That seems plum," answered Woodruff, "but I have a hunch that if there's dirty linen to be washed between us, it would be better if we had no witnesses. Perhaps you would not care for this gentleman here to know all that has been happening during the past three months."

Herries turned to the Hon. James, who, at the moment, was finding a bric-a-brac on the mantelpiece interesting. "I say, Jimmy, let me present you to my good friend and former master, Mr Woodruff, of South Street, Park Lane —The Hon. James Callagher. It is only fit that you two gentlemen should know each other, as you, sir, have been instrumental in Callagher winning £500 from me, while Callagher has been the means by which I have been able to be a member, however humble, of your household."

The Californian looked from one to the other; Herries was smiling good-naturedly, but the Hon. James's face was as impassive as ever. With his hands clasping his panama hat tightly behind his back, the millionaire turned again to Herries. "Now, sir, I must insist, this is a matter on which Maximilian J. B. is not to be jollied. Just tell me slick out from the main sluice. Is this just a game of spoof, or is it a plum straight business?"

"If you will sit down, Mr Woodruff, we will cease to speak in riddles, and I will do my best to explain to you why I have thus taken advantage of your confidence."

"I tell you, young man, that I will not curve a knee in this room until you have told me the story," answered the millionaire, planting his feet firmly on the carpet.

"So be it," Herries rejoined good-naturedly. "It was only for your own convenience that I suggested you should sit: if you prefer to hear the story standing, you must not accuse me of trifling with you."

"My comfort, or discomfort, cuts no ice anyway," replied Woodruff. "Now, let's on with the dance."

Herries then briefly outlined the whole of the story, and as he finished up he again held out his hand to his former master. "And now, sir, all that is left for me to do is to apologise, which I do most sincerely, for having caused you any inconvenience through this unfortunate bet of ours; and I feel sure that my good friend, James Callagher here, will join issue with me in

making the apology. This we can promise, at least, that, as far as we are concerned, only one other officer in our regiment knows the details of our bet, and, for reasons which I need not go into here, but which I feel, sir, you in your generosity will understand, there is not the smallest chance of any publicity being given to your name and to that of your residence."

It was evident that the narration of the story had touched the Californian's sporting instinct: his small eyes sparkled as the story was unfolded, and at the close of the peroration he seized his late footman by the hand and shook it warmly.

"Put your hand right here, bully, I say. I am right glad to know you, Mr Herries, and mighty proud that I am with a clear conscience able to take your hand and thank you for that little episode in the Park, of which I only heard yesterday. Right glad am I to meet you, Mr Callagher; and if you would ever like to have a bite of tarrapin, or a corner of pie, why, turn into our little lean-to in South Street."

"Talking of lunch," said Herries, as the air cleared, "what do you say, Jimmy, to a stroll down to the Cavalry and giving Mr Woodruff a lunch?" Then, turning to the millionaire, he added, "It will give me great pleasure, sir, if you will come and lunch with me at my Club."

"I should be very happy. I knew I was right when I heard the story from the kids to-day."

With that lunch Herries made his peace with the titular head of the Woodruff *ménage*.

(*To be continued*)

MUSINGS WITHOUT METHOD.

THE HILARITY OF LONDON — MARK TWAIN'S MESSAGE OF MIRTH — THE LIMITATIONS OF HUMOUR—AN OBVIOUS INCONGRUITY—THE EXAMPLE OF THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY — COTTON AND BRIDGES — 'LIFE ON THE MISSISSIPPI' — THE TALENT OF MARK TWAIN — THE SIN OF EXAGGERATION—PAGEANTS AND SPORTS.

FOR the last month London has suffered from a violent attack of hilarity. Painfully she has held her poor sides. So fiercely has she rocked with noisy laughter that her public monuments have been in danger of destruction. For Mark Twain has been in her midst, and has transmitted, through the voices of obsequious journalists, his messages of mirth. And Mark Twain is a humourist, a simple truth which nobody is permitted to forget. He is a humourist who cannot open his mouth without provoking the wonder of the world, and, thanks to the industry of energetic reporters, we have not lost one single pearl of his speech.

It is not Mark's fault,—Mark they call him, to prove their familiarity, — nor the fault of the reporters, if a word spoken by the humourist has escaped us. All the world knows that the sublime heights of fun were climbed when Mark Twain referred happily to his own funeral. The compositors who set up this brilliant sally were so keenly conscious of their privilege that they fitted the master's incongruity with a bold series of misprints. Mark Twain designing his own funeral! Isn't it funny? Lives there a curmudgeon who will refrain from laughter when he hears of it? Still gayer was the phantasy which accused Mark Twain of stealing the Ascot Gold Cup. There's imagination for you! There's a pretty invention! Fleet Street accepted the joke as one man, and it will be surprising if the great man's luggage is not ransacked for the lost treasure by the Customs officers of his free and independent fatherland.

At last the humourist has left these shores. The echo of his last joke has died away, though the throats of his admirers are still husky with appreciative laughter. And so well did London play her part that if he rang his bell or asked for a lucifer match, the neighbourhood of Dover Street palpitated with excitement. Unhappily, upon this enthusiasm, as upon most others, time has and will have a chastening effect. Our exhausted capital is beginning to understand that it can have too much of a good joke, and that nothing stales so rapidly as the thing called "humour."

Humour as a solid quality and a lucrative trade is of modern invention. The ancients knew well that its effect was an effect of light and shade. They were humorous

in flashes, and their humour was infinitely enhanced, because it was set against a background of gravity. To be funny at all hours and in all places is as vile a sin against taste as it would be to dissolve in floods of tears before strangers. The great men who dared to laugh in an earlier age than ours laughed in moderation and with a wise purpose. Aristophanes and Lucian, Chaucer and Rabelais, Shakespeare and Fielding, are the true humourists of the world. They did not jest and jibe out of season. They held up folly to ridicule, not to amuse the groundlings, but to reveal, in a sudden blaze of light, the eternal truths of wisdom and justice. Their humour is precious on account of its parsimony. They do not at every turn slap their reader on the back and assure him that there is nothing congruous in the visible world. Of the irreverence that turns whatever is beautiful or noble into a stupid jest they knew nothing. They kept their humour in its proper place; they used it for a wise purpose; they did not degrade it to catch an easy round of applause; and, fortunately for them, they are to-day refused the august title of humourist, which sits so appositely upon the shoulders of Mark Twain.

The essence of humour is that it should be unexpected. The modern humourist is never unexpected. He beats the drum from the moment at which he appears upon the stage. He does not cease to beat it until he quits the stage for the last time. His mouth is always awry, as though he fed upon sour apples, and he demands that his auditors also should twist their lips. From morning till night he grins through a horse-collar, and is surprised if all the world does not applaud his grimaces. To the rash fellow who confesses that he does not understand his fun, the professional humourist has a ready answer. He tells the wretch, with a shrug of pity, that he has no sense of humour, and has no right to criticise wholesome ribaldry. The boot, of course, is on the other leg. The professional humourist is the one person to whom the proper exercise of humour is forbidden, and he does but add insult to injury when he dares to criticise his victim's understanding.

Yet the professional humourist to-day inherits the earth. He is the most popular of God's creatures. He has his own "organs," in which he makes a desperate attempt to look at all things from a ridiculous point of view. He assures you, with a sentimental leer, that his fun is always amiable, as though amiability were a sufficient atonement for an imbecile lack of taste. He is prepared to tickle you with his jokes from early morn to nightfall, and he has been so grossly flattered that he believes there is a positive virtue in his antics. He is perfectly convinced that he is doing good, and he needs very little persuasion to believe that he is the only regenerator of mankind. Gradually, too, he is encroaching upon all the professions which are not legiti-

mately his own. The pulpit knows him, and the senate. Worse still, he has invaded the Courts of Law, and sits grinning upon the bench at his own ineptitude, which appears to the obsequious barristers, who hope some day to wear his cap and bells, to sparkle with the brilliance of true Attic wit.

The secret of modern humour is revealed to all. Its basis is an obvious incongruity. Not the subtle *παρὰ προσδοκίαν* of the ancients, not a whimsical turn of phrase or twist of idea, which surprises us in the masters, but a coarse, crass confusion of past with present or of grave with gay. Its inventors, we regret to remind our readers, were Englishmen, aided and abetted by such Frenchmen as Motteux and D'Urfey, who were driven to these shores before or at the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, and whose native gaiety was not wholly extinguished by the persecutions endured by their fathers. Tom Brown the Facetious and the Inimitable Ned Ward were characteristic innovators. Inspired by joyousness and brandy, they laughed to scorn life and all its works. They were as cheerful a pair of ruffians as ever beat the pavement of a populous city since the infamous creatures of Petronius went splendidly upon the pad. They knew London as they knew their pockets, and they haunted the taverns with a zeal and an understanding worthy of their high purpose and higher spirits. They recall the beggar-students of an earlier age, or the poets who, in Elizabeth's time, brought their plays to the Bankside. Ned Ward, inn-keeper though he was, had still a regard for letters, and Tom Brown was a real scholar. His style was flippant; his muse was ever down at heel, and wore a dressing-gown; his prose was alive with the slang of the gutter and the quip of the street corner. But when he took up his pen his mind went back to Lucian and to Horace; he kept always in the great tradition; and though he was determined to laugh at all things, he had too quick a sense of his art to be a humourist and nothing more.

Nevertheless, he sowed the seeds of the easy incongruity which has debauched the humour of to-day. He delighted in such mock-heroic exercises as an "Oration in praise of Drunkenness," and he taught the world to believe that nothing was beyond the reach of jocularity. One of the earliest of our comic reporters, he wore the cap and bells with a light indifference, and, Ned Ward aiding him, he understood that the journal and pamphlet were a useful substitute for the generosity of patrons. Had they lived under the Tudors or early Stuarts, Brown and Ward would have been jesters at court or in a country house. They would have worn the livery of king or duke, and repaid the munificence of their masters with a licensed effrontery. The liberal age of Anne threw them upon the people, and they forced their note to suit the foolish

rufflers who bought their wares. Thus they showed the way, and their descendants in the world of humour have been only too ready to follow them.

Humour, in this baser sense, is a foolish travesty of life; and before Brown split the sides of Grub Street, Charles Cotton, fisherman and Cockney, had already converted travesty into a form of literature. If the poor humourists of to-day descend in one line from Tom Brown, in another they may trace their pedigree back to the admirable Cotton. Now Cotton, as became a gentleman of his education and pursuits, founded his humour upon the classics. He treated Virgil and Lucian precisely as the modern Yankee treats the older civilisation of Europe. He translated them into his own lingo, and asked you to laugh with him at them. He delighted to trick out the heroes of antiquity in his own poor fustian, and as his knowledge of slang was as great as his daring, the result is often ludicrous. A passage or two in illustration will make the purpose of the old travesties as clear as daylight. Here is Dido's address of farewell to Æneas in Cotton's version:—

"But I'll waste on thee no more Breath,
For whom the Wind, that fumes beneath,
Is far too sweet: Avaunt, thou Slave!
Thou lying coney-catching Knave,
Be moving, do as thou hast told me!
Nobody here intends to hold thee!
Go: seek thy Farm, I hope 'twill be
I' th' very bottom of the Sea:
But shd'st thou 'scape, and not in Dike lie
Drown'd like a Puppy, as 'tis likely,
Since in the Proverb old 'tis found,
Who's born to hang, will ne'er be drowned;
Yet shd'st thou not be much the nigher
I'll haunt thee like a going Fire,
As soon as I can turn to a Ghost,
Which will be in a week at most."

That is a fair specimen of Cotton's familiar style, and Cotton had many imitators. His contempt for grandeur, which is characteristic of the Cockney spirit, was emulated by many ingenious writers. The example which he set was followed for a century and more, and the best of his pupils handled the style with an even greater effrontery than his. Perhaps none of them, in ease of manner or bold anachronism, exceeded Bridges, whose burlesque translation of Homer is still ranked among "curiosities" in the catalogues. It is thus that in Bridges' version Agamemnon rates the angry Achilles:—

"The general gave him tit for tat,
And answer'd, cocking first his hat,
Go, and be hang'd, you blust'ring whelp,
Pray, who the murrain wants your help?
When you are gone, I know there are
Col'nels sufficient for the war,
Militia bucks that know no fears,
Brave fishmongers and auctioneers;
Besides, great Jove will fight for us,
What need we then this mighty fuss?
Thou lov'st to quarrel, fratch, and jangle,
To scold and swear, and fight and wrangle.
Great strength thou hast, and pray what then?
Art thou so stupid, canst not ken,
The gods that ev'ry thing can see
Give strength to bears as well as thee?"

There in its origin and in its purpose is the whole of modern humour. The same flippant impertinence which distresses us in the works of popular Americans is already alive and alert. The same confusion of

ancient and modern is already designed to evoke a hasty chuckle. We do not mean that the imitation is conscious; we do not suppose that Mark Twain or his predecessors ever heard the name of Charles Cotton; but when once the spirit of contempt for grave and reverend things was evoked, the worst enormities of contemporary humour were obvious and natural.

The end and aim of Mark Twain, then, are the end and aim of Cotton and Bridges. For him the art of Europe and the chivalry of King Arthur serve the purpose of Virgil and Homer. He travesties them with a kind of malignant joy. He brings whatever time has honoured down to the level of a Yankee drummer. In 'The Innocents Abroad' he sets a slur of commonness upon beauty and splendour. With the vanity of a crude civilisation he finds every custom ridiculous that does not conform with the standard of the United States. The restraints of honour are food for his mirth. He holds his sides when he thinks of the old masters. They are not brought down to this our date. Nor does he understand that there are certain institutions, certain manifestations of genius, which should be sacred even for the jester. Newness is not the only virtue known to the world, and he who laughs at what is old, merely because it is old, proves a lack of intelligence which no whimsicality can excuse.

In other words, Mark Twain the humourist is a bull in the china-shop of ideas. He attempts to destroy what he could never build up, and assumes that his experiment is eminently meritorious. When, as in 'A Yankee at the Court of King Arthur,' he gave full rein to his fancy, he achieved such a masterpiece of vulgarity as the world has never seen. His book gives you the same sort of impression which you might receive from a beautiful picture over which a poisonous slug had crawled. The hint of magnificence is there, pitilessly deformed and defaced. That Mark Twain is in perfect sympathy with his creature is perfectly evident. He frankly prefers Hartford, Conn., to Camelot. He believes that in all respects his native land is superior to the wisest and noblest society that the eye of Arthur saw or any other eye has seen. He is sure that refinement and "gentility" were unknown before his own time. The Knights of the Round Table, he declares, used words which would have made a Comanche blush. "Indelicacy is too mild a term to convey the idea." In our own nineteenth century, he informs us, "the earliest samples of the real lady and real gentleman discoverable in English history —or in European history, for that matter—may be said to have made their appearance." That is what it is to be a humourist. But even if we permit the humour we must still question the historical accuracy of the statement, and regret that Mark Twain ever thought it necessary to comment upon the ancients, against whom he cherishes a fierce antipathy.

His verbal humour, if less reckless than his history, is far more dismally deplorable. Here is his comment upon Merlin: "He is always blethering around in my way, everywhere I go; he makes me tired. He don't amount to shucks as a magician." Who can resist this amazing humour? And again, who, save a churl, would refuse the tribute of a laugh to the following exquisite criticism of the same wonder-worker? "Merlin's stock was flat," writes Mark Twain, "the King wanted to stop his wages: he even wanted to banish him; but I *interfered*. I said he would be useful to work the weather, and attend to small matters like that, and I would give him a lift now and then when his poor little parlour-magic soured on him." Isn't there a snigger in every word of it? And before this brilliancy must we not confess that humour, like delicacy and all the other virtues, made its first appearance in the nineteenth century and in America?

This monstrous incongruity demands two qualities for its indulgence: a perfect self-esteem, and an exaggerated common-sense. No one who is not confident that he engrosses the graces can affect to find pleasure in thus insulting the past. No one whose sense is not common in all respects can apply all the resources of a vulgar logic to the creations of fancy and emotion. That Mark Twain is fully equipped for his purpose is only too clear. His humour and his talk alike proclaim it. And it is the more pitiful, because he has a talent which stands in need of no folly for its embellishment. Had he never cut a joke, had he refrained always from grinning at grave and beautiful things, how brilliant a fame would have been his! When you are tired of his irreverence, when you have deplored his noisy jibes, when his funeral and his theft of the cup alike pall upon your spirit, take down his 'Life on the Mississippi,' and see what perfect sincerity and a fine sympathy can accomplish. Mark Twain writes of the noble river as one who knows its every change and chance. Yet he writes of it with an austere restraint and without any desire to humanise it out of its proper character. And there is humour, too, in his descriptions,—not the tortured humour of a later day, but humour sufficient to play, like light upon shade, in the grave places of his history. As he says himself, he loved the pilot's profession far better than any he has followed since, and his love and understanding shine in every page of his masterpiece. As the river kept no secrets from him, so his quick memory enabled him to recover the impressions of his youth. To cite his own expressive words, "The face of the water, in time, became a wonderful book—a book which was a dead language to the uneducated passenger, but which told its mind to me without reserve, delivering its most cherished secrets as clearly as if it uttered them with a voice. And it was not a book to be read once and thrown aside, for it had a new story to tell

every day. . . . There was never so wonderful a book written by man." In this passage Mark Twain strikes the real note of his life and experience. With equal truth he tells us at what cost he acquired this deep knowledge of the river and its moods. "Now, when I had mastered the language of this water," says he, "and had come to know every trifling feature that bordered the great river as familiarly as I knew the letters of the alphabet, I had made a valuable acquisition. But I had lost something, too. I had lost something which could never be restored to me while I lived. All the grace, the beauty, the poetry had gone out of the majestic river. I still keep in mind a certain wonderful sunset which I witnessed when steamboating was new to me. . . . But, as I have said, a day came when I began to cease from noting the glories and the charms which the moon and the sun and the twilight wrought upon the river's face: another day came, when I ceased altogether to note them." Yet the very fact that Mark Twain recognised the change which had come over his vision is the best proof that he submitted willingly to the marvellous spell of the river. His mental process was the reverse of Wordsworth's. Wordsworth learned

"To look on nature, not as in the hour
Of thoughtless youth; but hearing oftentimes
The still, sad music of humanity,
Not harsh nor grating, though of ample power
To chasten and subdue."

Mark Twain, on the other hand, heard "the still, sad music of humanity" when he but half knew the river. A profounder knowledge silenced the music, and persuaded him to own, with sincerity, that he gazed upon the sunset scene without rapture, but with the understanding of an intimate.

The author of 'Life on the Mississippi' was also the creator of Tom Sawyer and Huck Finn, two boys who will survive to cast shame upon all the humour of America. And it is for the sake of a genuine talent that we deplore Mark Twain's studied antics. It should not have been for him to light the thorns which crackle under the pot. It should not have been for him to encourage the gross stupidity of his fellows. The moderation of one who has known men and rivers should have been revealed to all the world. But Mark Twain, in submitting to the common demand, shares the general love of exaggeration. "Govern a great country as you would cook a small fish," said the Chinese philosopher; "that is, do not overdo it." The tendency of to-day is to overdo all things. Humour, which should be a relief, and nothing more, is now an end in itself. No experiment is made in any art or science but it must become a custom. Some years since an ingenious stage-manager invented what he was pleased to term a pageant. It was an attempt to reconstruct the life of an ancient town, to recover from the past the parti-coloured trappings and the forgotten background of history. Then

every town, every village, must enjoy the pomp of the Middle Age. Peasants grow learned in costume and babble of "colour - schemes," whatever those may be. Even an ancient and honoured university has fallen so far beneath the level of its dignity as to connive at the creation of a vast circus, and to provide a book of the words for a trifling performance. And the pageant, which might have served a useful end if handled with restraint and discretion, is plainly destined to be killed by ridicule.

And above all, the folly of exaggeration may be noted in our sports. If an English eight or an English eleven suffer defeat, it is proclaimed far and wide that England is in decay. The newspapers howl inappositely, and ask the groaners to explain the ruin of their country. They forget that the sports upon which we pride ourselves are worth pursuing for their own sakes, and that it is only the professional who believes that victory alone justifies his exertion. A few weeks ago a Belgian crew carried off the Grand Challenge Cup from Henley. Its most dangerous opponent was the Leander Club, whose eight was composed of oarsmen from Oxford and Cambridge. The race was as good as conflicting courage and energy could make it, and the mere fact that the better crew won after a closely contested struggle has suggested to an idle press a mournful commentary, which is a clear negation of sportsmanship. In the first place, it is a regatta which is held at Henley, not an international meeting. The honour and enterprise of nations are not there put to a final test. If England and Belgium are to try conclusions, they must not meet in a sprint at Henley; they must fight it out, after due training, between Putney and Mortlake. And if the course at Henley is ill fitted for an international battle, so also are the conditions of the meeting. The eight men, who represented not England but the Leander Club, had so little thought of their national responsibility that they rowed for their colleges or for themselves both before and after their race with the Belgians. They went to Henley not to defend their country against all comers, but to get what enjoyment they could from the sport of rowing. But a simple understanding is not enough for this age. Exaggeration rules in sport, as it rules in humour. The amateur is blamed if he do not cultivate the vices of the specialist. The American critic assures us that the sole object of a game is to win, and our journals agree with the American critic. Some day there will be a reaction, and then it will be recognised that pleasure counts in life as much as success, and that solid blocks of humour are as blatant an outrage upon good sense as a daily pageant, or as games played with no other aim than by hook or by crook to snatch a victory.

DISAFFECTION IN INDIA.

BY SIR EDWARD FITZGERALD LAW, K.C.S.I., K.C.M.G.

THE spread of disturbance in India need not cause any immediate alarm as regards the possibility of maintaining order in the affected provinces. The forces at the disposal of the Government of India, if used with discretion and firmness, are fully sufficient to check anything in the nature of sporadic risings of a people among whom but few firearms are to be found, and whose grievances, where not purely imaginary and the invention of unscrupulous agitators, are not serious or of a kind to induce men to run personal risks. The arrest of the principal agitators and a sufficient display of force should be sufficient to maintain order in present circumstances. The really disquieting feature is the fact that the widespread spirit of unrest and discontent which has been manifested proves that there must be certain serious defects in our system of government; whilst the existence of a large class of professional agitators, the wide circulation of an inflammatory press, and the development of communications, are all factors which daily increase the facilities for the spread of sedition.

I propose to discuss what appear to me to be the more serious causes of disaffection, and the possibility of applying suitable remedies. I believe that a faulty system of education, the licence admitted to a 'gutter press, the lowering of British prestige by a series of untoward incidents, and the want of touch between officials and the people, have been the principal causes of the spread and manifestation of a regrettable spirit of disaffection.

As regards education, there is an Educational Department, one of numerous subordinate departments under the Indian Home Department, which is represented in the Government of India by the Member of Council for the Home Department. This officer, commonly called the "Home Member," is an Indian civilian selected for his experience and capacity in provincial administration; and, whilst generally an excellent administrator, he rarely has any special interest in education, or the particular qualifications desirable in the man responsible for the education of the youth of India. Under the Indian Home Member are the secretary and assistant secretaries in his department, and all matters to be dealt with filter through the usual bureaucratic channels to the secretary, who submits them with his own views to his chief. If the chief has no particular interest in a question, the opinion of the secretary prevails, unless a strong and interested Viceroy takes a line of his own and carries the other members of the Coun-

cil with him in a question of large importance which comes before the Government of India in Council. But there is no guarantee for either the secretary or the Viceroy being more interested in educational matters or better qualified to deal with them than the Home Member, and it is certain that the time and energy of all high officials are always so fully taken up with numerous pressing and responsible duties that, failing special interest, educational questions are likely to be decided by minor officials from the purely bureaucratic point of view, which is frequently obstructive to innovation, and displays a deep-rooted faith in the religious observance of regulations and precedents and keeping down expenditure.

But these are not the only circumstances which place obstacles in the way of improvement in the educational system. No part of India is under the direct authority of the central government. The country is divided up into provinces, each of which is directly administered by a local government. The administrative machinery of a local government includes a superior educational officer; and if, for reasons which have been pointed out, the central government is unlikely to be very keen about educational questions, such questions are, as a rule, likely to interest local governments still less,—with the result that the views put forward as those of the local government concerned may be simply those of the provincial education officer, and these may possibly be more or less biassed by a feeling of opposition to any intervention by the central authority. In any case, the education officers have, until recently, been recruited from a class which, too frequently, possessed neither the scholastic nor other qualifications desirable in those who were to form and guide the youth of India. And this is not surprising, considering the inferiority of the positions they were invited to fill. Of the directors of public instruction, the heads of education in their respective provinces, only three can reach a maximum fixed pay of Rs. 2500 a-month; whilst among civilians, a collector of the first grade receives Rs. 2250, a commissioner Rs. 2900, and a chief secretary to Government in Bengal Rs. 3333,—with every possibility for really superior men to reach much higher posts and emoluments. A director of public instruction, as educational adviser to the provincial government, fulfils the same class of duties as the provincial chief engineer who advises in the Public Works Department, or as an inspector-general of police, but both of these officials are paid considerably more than the education officer.

The fact is that the education officers have been, with intent, kept in a distinctly subordinate position. The director has no direct access to the governor of the province, and can only address the local government through a chief secretary who is overburdened with other business, and who, as I have already pointed out,

may feel no personal interest in educational questions. It is true that latterly a new system has been adopted for the recruitment of education officers, and some very promising young men have joined the junior ranks, but, when they realise their position as regards official and consequent social standing, it is to be feared that the echo of their inevitable disappointment will deter others of similar qualifications from joining the service. I cannot believe in any permanent improvement until the directors have direct access to the chief executive officer in their respective provinces and a sensible increase of salary in the higher ranks.

These are the difficulties in the situation which affect the control of education and the introduction of suitable reforms. Lord Curzon, with characteristic energy, endeavoured to forestall the probable objections of the provincial governments to proposed changes by summoning representatives from the various provinces to a great educational conference in Simla, and presiding himself over prolonged meetings, attended by more than twenty officials and others connected with education. The unavoidable prolixity of the discussions, and the numerous other urgent calls on the time of the Viceroy, resulted, however, in the practical abandonment of any serious attempt to deal with the all-important branches of primary and technical education, and the labours of the Conference, and of the committee subsequently appointed to travel through the country and formulate proposals, led to nothing more important than the production of the much-criticised Universities Bill. I would not venture a personal opinion on the merits of this Bill, but it raised a storm of opposition among educated Indians interested in the question, and also much local ill-feeling against what was considered an unnecessary endeavour to force the various universities in different provinces to adopt one and the same system as regards their governing bodies. One thing the University Bill did not do —it did not provide for the selection of youths fitted to profit by such education as the universities give; and, moreover, it did not provide for the giving of a practical education suited to fit the student to earn his living after leaving the university. I am strongly of opinion that the absence of such provision is a radical defect in the Indian university system, and that this defect has induced the gravest and most prejudicial political consequences.

The question should be seriously considered whether the time has not arrived for abandoning the policy of imparting only a liberal education in favour of the development of more technical education, which in present economic circumstances would be more useful than the university course now followed.

The Indian university system has been devised and modelled, and even its latest modifi-

cations have been adopted, under the guidance of English university men, sometimes of great distinction as scholars, and all deeply convinced of the merits of the system in which they have been brought up, and faithful to the traditions of their English universities, of which they are so justly proud. But there is no resemblance between the class of men who enter Oxford and Cambridge and the candidates for admission, say, to the Calcutta University; neither is there any resemblance between the motives and aspirations which respectively induce the young Indian and the young Englishman to seek a university education. It may safely be said that the object of the young Indian, in the great majority of cases, has been to qualify for admission to Government service, coupled at times with an ill-defined though laudable ambition to acquire knowledge and to rise superior to his natural surroundings. None of these considerations are likely to influence the ordinary Oxford or Cambridge undergraduate. They are, however, on all fours with those which send young Russians to their universities. What is suitable for the Englishman is not necessarily suitable for the Indian or Russian; and the system devised to meet the requirements of the Englishman is in nearly every respect unsuited to the Indian and Russian. In Russia it produced the nihilist; in India it has produced his Indian counterpart, the ill-informed and dangerously loquacious political agitator.

As in Russia, so in India, the great employer of educated labour is the Government, and the youth who seeks employment in any but the very lowest grades of Government service must have a university diploma. The Indian Government thus not only encourages but practically forces the young man who desires to improve his position to endeavour to enter a university; and, whilst the university course can fit him for no other walk in life than Government service, in my opinion it fails to properly prepare him for even that. In these circumstances the disappointed young man who fails to obtain a qualifying diploma at the university, and the still more disappointed one, who, having obtained the diploma, is unable to secure a Government post, becomes a discontented and often dangerous member of society. He considers himself greatly superior to his fellows, and attributes to the wrong-headedness or malevolence of the Government his failure to establish that superiority in a practical—*i.e.*, in a lucrative manner.

The native of India, and particularly the Bengali Hindoo, is not trained to reason or to think for himself. He has a marvellous memory, he is industrious in learning anything and everything by heart, and he has a certain smartness in preparing himself for an examination on specially defined and limited subjects; but if he is asked a question which cannot be answered otherwise than by a more or less literal

quotation from a text-book, he is very frequently nonplussed. A good story illustrating this defective training is that of the teacher who, being asked how far his pupils were advanced in Euclid, said with pride that many of them had learned several books, and that the only mistakes they sometimes made were in forgetting where one problem ended and the next one began. But this is not the only kind of defect in the English education of the native. At an early stage of acquaintance with Western ideas, the Indian generally breaks away from the traditions of his forefathers and all the steadying principles of respect for parents and authority which they inculcate. He frequently adopts Herbert Spencer and Stuart Mill as his prophets, without the counterpoise of the precepts of the Christian religion teaching submission to Cæsar, reciprocal obligations to the neighbour, and the fulfilment of duty in that state of life to which God may be pleased to call him. Without this counterpoise or that of his abandoned Indian conservative tradition, his studies of the great modern writers disturb the balance of his untrained mind, and too often all that he is capable of learning from his favourite authors is an exaggerated spirit of individualism and negation of authority which are the immediate stepping-stones to Nihilism.

In common justice I must here state that, notwithstanding my severe criticisms on the ordinary results of the class of education now offered to young Indians desirous of entering Government service, I have had the pleasure of finding among several of the Indian officials of the Indian Finance Department excellent solid brains and capacity. There are now men, including Bengalis, serving the Government of India who are thoroughly fitted to take a high place in any European administration, and who need not fear Western competition. I must, however, add the qualification that nearly all such men whom I have met have belonged to old families of recognised standing in the native community. I am not sure that men of this class always receive the full measure of promotion which, in my opinion, is advisable and is their due.

It is with considerable diffidence that I venture to suggest some possible remedies for the unfortunate situation I have described; but it is a barren labour to confine oneself entirely to criticism. The first remedy is, I believe, to select the classes from which university students should be drawn. I think that university education can be safely given to all young men of means, and that special facilities for obtaining it should be given to all those whose intellectual capacity appears to offer some reasonable guarantee that they would profit by higher education, but who cannot afford the expense. The social standing of young men of independent fortune will as a rule prevent their suffering from what I may call "university intoxication"; that is,

the idea, readily acquired, that they are both immensely superior to their non-university fellow-countrymen, and that they have fitted themselves to hold the highest places in the Administration. Relatively few of the wealthier classes seek employment in the Government service, and they are therefore not disappointed at the inevitable failure of Government to provide posts answering to the ambitions of all who are theoretically qualified. But the free admission to the universities of all young men of the upper classes who may be ready to pay fees which would prove prohibitive to the poorer mass would by no means satisfy all requirements; the universities should be open to all alike, rich or poor, if the result of the education to be received can make them more useful and therefore better citizens. I would deprecate nothing more strongly than the exclusion of the struggling but capable young men. There are excellent brains in India, and it is an imperative duty to discover them and to afford them every opportunity for useful development.

The question is how the superior intellects are to be discovered and how utilised, and this is a difficult problem. I fear that the first step must necessarily be the selection, on the special recommendation of their teachers, of the most promising lads in the different provinces; but as such selection, in spite of all the instructions which might be given, would almost certainly be mainly based on capacity to pass examinations of the competitive type, it would, I think, be necessary to appoint a very special board, having larger and more practical ideas than the ordinary examiner, who should test as far as possible the general qualifications of the candidates recommended by provincial authorities. Further, it would be desirable that those whom this special board might select should, under their general supervision, undergo a year's probationary course of training as a further test of their general fitness, on the understanding that should they, at any time during the year, fail to satisfy their instructors, they would be dismissed, whilst those who continued to give satisfaction would finally enter the universities at the expense of the State. I attach the greatest importance to a probationary period, because it would permit of sifting and rejection before youths had reached an age at which it becomes difficult to make an altogether fresh start.

It will probably be objected to my proposal that the result of admitting to the universities, free of charge, all those who might desire to enter and be approved as fitted to profit by higher education, would be to create a too heavy charge on Government revenues, and to overcrowd the universities. I cannot for a moment admit such objections. The advantages of a university course should be offered free of charge to all Indians capable of profiting thereby, but unable to pay the fees, and if the universities became overcrowded they should be

extended or additional ones founded. As to the cost to the State, I would point out that out of the Indian annual budget, amounting to approximately £74,000,000, only some £2,000,000 are devoted to education, whilst out of a budget of about £144,000,000 in the United Kingdom, very nearly £17,000,000 are spent on education.

Assuming that a lad recommended from the provinces, and accepted by the special board, continued to show promise throughout his year's probation, it is of the highest importance that the university course provided at the expense of the State should fully fit him for a future career, useful to his fellow-citizens and profitable to himself. To secure this, it must once for all be recognised by the educational authorities that a university course is a means to an end, and not an end in itself, whilst to-day they appear to hold an exactly contrary opinion. Incredible as the following story may seem, I can vouch for its authenticity. Not very long ago, a member of the Government having observed that the young men entering his department with the usual university diplomas appeared to be very poorly qualified by their education for the special work they were called upon to perform, inquired carefully into the system of examination under which they had been selected for employment, and discovered that it included no test of capacity in the practical subjects dealt with in his department; he therefore, with great care, elaborated a curriculum for examination which, in the opinion of the chief officers of the department, would fairly meet requirements. It was difficult to suppose that any other authority could understand better than the department concerned what was required; but the would-be reformer found that, according to precedent, no such change as he proposed could be made without consulting the education department, and on the matter being submitted to these guides of the youth of India they condemned the proposed innovation root and branch, on the ground that the university course could not possibly qualify a young man to pass an examination on the lines suggested. It would seem that in the opinion of the education authorities, if the university course was only adapted to prepare lawyers, a youth who desired to become a physician must study law to prepare himself to practise medicine.

I cannot insist too strongly that the first reform required in the universities is to adapt the courses of education to the requirements for such careers as are likely to be suitable to young Indians desirous of advancement and of earning their livelihood in a useful manner. I believe that there are many careers outside Government service in which young Indians might excel, and I would instance scientific agriculture, medicine, the law, engineering, mining, chemistry, electricity. As regards botany, forestry,

and scientific agriculture, there is an old established and useful school of forestry at Dehra, and it may be hoped that the new Agricultural College at Poosa and other similar establishments will soon afford the education and training necessary to produce agricultural experts, for whom there is a great field in India. In engineering, mining, chemistry, and electricity, the field for Indians is not at present very large, and the Indian community outside Calcutta and Bombay is not so far in sufficient touch with industrial employers to be able easily to secure employment. The field in these branches is steadily increasing, and for the future there are excellent prospects; but meanwhile it is most desirable that Government should make an earnest endeavour to secure openings for qualified youths where it controls a demand for their services.

It seems reasonable that the course of preparation for each and every important career should be thought out and decided by committees of experts in the different branches, and that the care of the University Governing Boards should be directed towards the preparation of youths to meet the requirements indicated by the experience of competent experts. The loyal acceptance of this simple principle would, I believe, prove a most valuable reform in the Indian university system.

I have dealt in the first place with education in the universities, because it is the universities which, unfortunately I think, occupy the first place in the attention of both official and non-official circles in India, and because it is the universities and colleges which are to-day the nurseries of discontent and therefore of disloyalty. But important as is the question of the reform of the universities on sound lines, that of primary education is no less important. The boy whose education consists in the development of the faculty of memory, acquires little worth having by his schooling; nevertheless little else is acquired in the great majority of Indian schools — where everything is learned from text-books, often exceedingly ill-chosen, and in some cases inculcating highly undesirable ideas verging even on disloyalty. I am glad to admit that there are certain noteworthy exceptions to the general rule, and I have myself seen in the Central Provinces, where the general standard of primary education is higher than elsewhere, a primary school where boys and children were not only taught to think, but where the general tone of the school seemed excellent, and the scholars interested in and delighted with their simple but well-devised studies. And here I may remark that having noticed the superiority of the Central Provinces in this respect, I inquired the reason, and was informed that it was attributable to the relative smallness of these Provinces, resulting in the Chief Commissioner and other high officials being able to devote more time to such details as education, and also probably to the fact that these

Provinces had been exceptionally fortunate in having a succession of capable and practical chief commissioners. I am bound to add that it was also observed that the Central Provinces had been considered so relatively unimportant and backward that they had in great measure mercifully escaped the attention of the central educational authorities. I do not give this view as my own, but that it should be seriously held is certainly a strong indication of the deficiencies of these authorities.

Although I have only skimmed the surface of this great question of education, I fear that I have already exceeded the limits of space in a short article in which so many important points must be noticed, but before turning to other subjects I must mention that Lord Curzon's creation of the new post of Director of Education with the Government of India gave an opening for valuable reform. The gentleman appointed to the post would appear to have many excellent qualifications for his work, but the bureaucratic system keeps him in a very subordinate position, on a level with the heads of the veterinary and other similar minor departments; he cannot take the smallest action except through the usual bureaucratic channels of the Home Department, and at every step he requires to exercise the greatest tact to avoid friction with the local governments. His opportunities for usefulness are therefore in present circumstances extremely limited.

I will now turn to the very difficult question of the native press and its proper treatment. It is not easy for people accustomed to the moderation of the European and particularly of the English press to realise the constant wild extravagances of Indian journalists, and I regret to add the frequent scurrilous, vindictive, and disloyal tendencies of many of their articles. Nobody was so badly treated by the Indian press as Lord Curzon during the latter part of his Viceroyalty, but I will not offer to the authors of the scandalous attacks made upon the late Viceroy the pleasure of giving additional publicity to any of their scurrilous paragraphs.

My personal opinion is that much too little attention is paid in India to the influence of the Indian press. It is commonly remarked that whilst so few of the people can read, the vapourings and vituperations of the press can do but little harm; it appears not to be remembered that when a single journal reaches a village its contents are read aloud by some member of the community and eagerly devoured with that astonishing credulity which is a remarkable feature in the East; when a whole countryside is prepared to believe that the Government is poisoning the wells and is responsible for the spread of the plague, there are no limits to credulity, and the fact must be reckoned with, more especially when a host of university-bred agitators are trading thereon to excite hostility to the Government.

There is no use in allowing the principles which are the guide in such matters in Western Europe to influence decisions with regard to the proper course to be pursued in India; the moral restraints on journalists in Western Europe are non-existent in the East, the public appealed to is a totally different one, and the journalists themselves are as a rule men of quite inferior ability, according to European standards, and without the smallest sense of responsibility to the public.

I am very strongly of opinion that a constant wholesome control over the press in India is an absolute necessity, and a useful measure would probably be to prohibit the issue of any journal the proprietors of which did not contribute annually to Government a certain minimum sum under the head of income-tax. The better class of journals would not be affected by a reasonable minimum, as they already pay income-tax on their profits; but many of the worst class would speedily disappear, as these are generally produced by impecunious failures in other careers, and are sometimes printed in backyards by discharged Government printers, and even, it is said, with type stolen from Government. I believe it to be highly desirable that the cost of producing a newspaper should not be lower than that already incurred in the production of the better class of journals, and in this view it appears to me a grievous mistake to tax the public to pay for the heavy loss on unremunerative press telegrams, and to carry newspapers at rates unremunerative to the Post Office; and yet of recent years this has been done without the smallest result as regards conciliating the press.

It is perhaps not generally remembered that until 1881 there existed a Press Commissionership in India which worked with excellent results, and, as far as can be ascertained, with the perfect goodwill of the editors, European and Indian. The Press Commissioner's duty was to establish confidential relations with editors, to issue communiqués, and, with a staff of translators, to watch the Press and to keep Government closely informed of the tone and tendency of the different journals. He had no authority to act in any way without the sanction of the executive authorities, but with such authority he could seize the plant of any recalcitrant seditious journal. A remarkable thing is that it was never found necessary to resort to this measure. The existence of the office of the Commissioner was a sufficient restraint; and, moreover, the guidance and help offered to editors by a tactful Commissioner was so much appreciated that, when the abolition of the office had been decided, a memorial was presented to the Viceroy, signed by nearly every vernacular editor in India, praying for the retention of the Press Commissionership. This fact, besides being very gratifying to Sir Roper Lethbridge, the Press Commissioner, showed clearly that control could be

exercised without in any way interfering with the proper independence of journalists.

I now come to the very delicate subject which I have indicated as "the lowering of British prestige by recent untoward incidents." The native of India appreciates a just ruler, and he loves a master who is at once strong, just, and sympathetic; but he sees through all speeches to the gallery about "our coloured brothers," and he despises the man whom he suspects (and he is a good judge) of insincerity, and who fails to display the essential qualities of a ruler—firmness, disinterestedness, and devotion to the task of seeking to promote the welfare of those over whom he rules. Justice for the native is properly a popular cry in England, but it is often used in a mistaken manner by sincere men who, from want of experience with Orientals, fail to understand their ideas on the subject; and it is easy for popularity-hunters to use the cry with regrettable disregard to the consequences of the manner in which it may be used. Justice to the British servant of the Indian public is quite as legitimate a cry; and the fact that the servant is paid for his services never deprives him, in this country at all events, of his claim to justice at the hands of those whom he serves. Nowhere on this globe are the conditions of service more strenuous than are those cheerfully accepted, at times even at the cost of life, by the British official, the servant of the Indian peoples; and yet, in the last few years an uncomfortable feeling has arisen in India that should an Englishman, however unwillingly, be involved in a disturbance with natives, he is by no means sure of justice. The result is that evilly-disposed natives, when not actually violent, assume a truculent and provocative attitude towards Europeans, which the latter are forced to accept, with the consequent development of racial antipathy and fatal loss of prestige to the whole white population.

Assaults by natives on Europeans, and particularly on soldiers, have become of frequent occurrence. But incriminated natives often appear to be but lightly punished; whilst, as in the case of Mr Bain, the tea-planter, when a European has been acquitted by a local tribunal, which is generally the most competent in such cases, retrial by a superior court may be, and has been, executively ordered. In the case of Mr Bain, the High Court dismissed the case referred by the Executive Government, with some very strong remarks as to the want of evidence against the defendant.

To return to the question of the constant assaults on British soldiers. Can any one believe that the soldier of to-day is rougher or in any way more likely to ill-treat natives than the soldier of thirty-five years ago? We all know that he is not; and yet, when I served as a soldier in India thirty-five years ago, the relations between the soldiers and natives were excellent, and complaints

on the subject were practically unknown. Tommy Atkins, as I knew him, was a thoroughly good-natured if somewhat rough fellow. He was not always very gentle with the natives, and he asserted himself as their superior; but there was no racial antipathy between him and them. He was sufficiently kindly in his general attitude to win their goodwill, and their appreciation was fully proved by such instances as the native cooks daily carrying Tommy's dinners under heavy fire on the ridge at Delhi. I know that it is said that thirty-five years ago the native would accept what he will not to-day, as he has now conceived more independent ideas and a greater sense of personal dignity. In reply I may, however, point out that practically all the serious cases of assault have occurred not in towns, but in the country, where the only new ideas have been derived, not from improved education or moral progress, but from the reading aloud of seditious newspapers, which have related stories of assaults on white men and the escape of the assailants with impunity, and suggested emulation of such exploits. The spirit of emulation has been aroused, with the accompanying result of loss of prestige to the white man and particularly to the British soldier. And prestige is everything in the East.

In ordinary circumstances the prestige and influence of the better class of Englishmen who, without talking about "equality," is genuinely sympathetic in his dealings with Indians, is perfectly extraordinary; and from such men the Indian, as a rule, will accept much which he would bitterly resent if supposed to be the outcome of a malevolent disposition or racial antipathy. I have known of a case where a high official, remarking the particularly respectful salaam of a prisoner whom he thought he recognised, asked if he had seen him before; and the prisoner replied cheerfully, "Yes, sahib. It was you who condemned me, although I was quite innocent; but you believed me guilty." That, if not attributable to a general spirit of antipathy, occasional severity of treatment is not seriously resented, is proved by the well-known fact that Indian masters are much more severe with their servants than any European now ventures to be, and yet we never hear of a native master being summoned for ill-treatment. This, surely, disposes of the theory that moral progress has rendered ordinary Indians of the present generation so much more susceptible than the preceding generation. Moreover, let it be noted that in the States under Indian rulers there are no agitators, no seditious press, and no discontent of the nature which has recently disturbed Bengal and the Punjab. Is, then, native rule, with all its shortcomings, better suited after all to the peoples of India than the British Raj, with its constant tendency to force Western ideas and systems on an Oriental population? I fear

that in many respects it is; and the causes lie in bureaucratic methods, centralisation, and insufficient touch and sympathy between the ruled and their Western rulers.

Amusing chapters might be written on the methods and proceedings of the bureaucracy in India, but it is not here desirable to dwell on the subject more than is necessary. To account for the extraordinary development of the bureaucratic system, it must be remembered that whereas in nearly every other country the highest executive authorities—such as Ministers of the Crown—are, as a rule, drawn from outside the ranks of the official hierarchy, in India the members of the Executive Government are, with few exceptions, selected from among the permanent officials, of whom it has been said that their god is "precedent," and their sacred writings, minutes, despatches, and official notes; and there is no counteracting outside influence. The Indian official who runs counter to the prevailing sentiment is labelled dangerous, and seldom advanced to a position where his opinions could exercise an important influence. The few members of the Government who may be appointed from without the ranks of Indian officialdom are sympathised with in a kindly spirit for their unavoidable but unfortunate ignorance of the blessings of a heaven-sent government by bureaucracy; but their voices, if raised in protest, are as of those crying in the wilderness. There never will be any reform from within; and, if it is to be secured, it must be by the appointment of a very strong Commission from England, composed of members versed in both official and business methods, and thus competent not only to master the intricacies of the existing system, but also to suggest practical reform. Some of the members should of course have had Indian experience.

It must be admitted that the Indian, and particularly the Bengali, once admitted into the official hierarchy, speedily develops a remarkable devotion to bureaucratic procedure, and his marvellous memory tempts him to revel in "precedent"; but, from the point of view of the causes of discontent in India, the important question is, How are the general public affected by the existing system, with its necessarily accompanying delays and uncertainties? To answer this question we must consider the system adopted by the oriental if left to himself, and we must remember that if he will accept a ten per cent improvement with satisfaction, he will probably fail to appreciate twenty per cent, and if forced to accept a complete, radical change, he will hate its authors. The oriental system of administration, in its primitive form, is represented by the ruler sitting in the gateway, accessible to all, and relying on his knowledge of mankind of his own race, to accept or refuse petitions, and to administer justice summarily and expeditiously. Can there be a greater contrast between such a system and the

bureaucratic one which we have forced on India? Indians marvel at our system, but they do not begin to understand it from our point of view, whilst they take note that it results in exasperating delays, and offers a wider scope for intrigue and greater temptations to the false witness than their own more summary methods. It is not, perhaps, too objectionable to the rich, for they can generally afford to wait the law's delays: their money will purchase either information or evidence, and they are often able to adapt their methods to our system. But for the masses it often constitutes a serious grievance. Peter the Great forced his subjects to shave, but practically every Russian peasant to-day wears a beard. Such is the force of traditional habits.

To illustrate the unsuitability of European procedure in oriental affairs, I will cite an incident in recent political history in Turkey. A certain Kurdish chief, Moosa, had acquired notoriety by his ruthless oppression of the Armenians in his district. The Consuls continually complained of his misdeeds to the Ambassadors in Constantinople, and these gentlemen in their turn addressed their complaints to the Ottoman Government. At last the scandal became so great that the Sultan realised that some satisfaction must be given. Moosa had many friends in the Palace, and an ingenious suggestion was made by which Moosa should be saved, and the Ambassadors at the same time satisfied. The Ambassadors were informed that, to give them complete satisfaction, not only should Moosa be brought to justice but he should be tried at Constantinople in the presence of the representatives of the Embassies. The trial was held, and the hostile witnesses, for the most part Armenians, were encouraged to speak with a freedom which they would not have ventured in the provinces, and as a result they swore to the committal of every kind of possible and impossible atrocity, contradicted one another on what purported to be statements of fact, and obliged a Court proceeding on Western principles to discredit all their evidence. Moosa was acquitted. His friends had known how to protect him. The Ambassadors' complaints were silenced. And yet, without the intervention of Western procedure, Moosa could, and would, if it had pleased the Government, have been justly executed in the provinces without any further trial than a recitation of well-known facts.

The questions of centralisation and want of touch with the native population are in many ways intimately connected. Centralisation is nearly always considered from the point of view of the relations of the central government of India with the various local governments; and serious as is this question, it is, in my opinion, entirely overshadowed in importance by the comparatively unnoticed, though most prejudicial, centralisation in every local government, and also, in a

lesser degree, in the administrative machinery of the central government and in its relations with the India Office. With regard to the internal working of the central government, it is sufficient here to note that it has developed into a system which would appear to be based on a principle of mistrust rather than on that of devolution of responsibility; whilst as regards the relations of the India Office with the Government of India, the only fully competent advisers of the Secretary of State, whose advice must be accepted in the great majority of important cases, they cannot grant a pension exceeding Rs. 10 per mensem without the express sanction of the Secretary of State. I will not pursue this part of the subject farther, as I am convinced that centralisation in the local governments is a much more serious defect.

The development of communications by rail and telegraph, which has been the making of India from the economic point of view, has surely been a curse as regards efficient administration. In days gone by, when administrative requirements were of a much simpler nature, and when the absence of communications obliged lieutenant-governors to repose confidence in their senior district officers, and the latter in their turn to confide in their juniors, there was a necessary devolution of responsibility. In all urgent cases the district official, having no means of immediate communication with his superiors, acted according to his own lights. He generally took pride in his district as his own special domain, he remained for years at a time in the same neighbourhood, and both circumstances and policy led him to establish intimate relations with the better classes of the natives who surrounded him. But all this is changed now. Until somewhat reduced by the recent separation of portions of Eastern Bengal, the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal was responsible for the administration of a province over 150,000 square miles in extent, inhabited by a population of approximately eighty-six million souls. How could the most energetic of men establish and maintain during his short five years of office those personal relations with his European officers, and with the leaders of a native community of eighty-six millions, which are so essential in the East? It may be admitted that the great majority of lieutenant-governors have been men of exceptional ability and energy, and generally not wanting in sympathy with the population under their rule, but how in the circumstances of their position could they make their personal influence and sympathy duly felt? The task is beyond human possibilities.

If this has been the case with lieutenant-governors, the situation of district officers has, if possible, become still more difficult. The causes are numerous. The development of the bureaucratic system now forces the officer to devote most of his time to his desk, prepar-

ing reports and returns, asking for instructions on questions of detail which might often be left to his own discretion, and giving explanations if he has, either inadvertently or from necessity, failed to fulfil the letter of the law as laid down in some volume of regulations. Tied to his desk, he cannot give the time to that personal intercourse with the people which is the necessary foundation of close and sympathetic relations. The district officer is, moreover, constantly moved from one district to another. Under an unfortunate system, whenever a senior vacates his post temporarily, the next senior in an inferior grade, in whatever part of the province he may be, replaces him, to the prejudice of his immediate local junior, who, by his acquaintance with the district and with the ideas of his natural chief, is (unless exceptionally incompetent) best qualified to fill his place. Further, the great improvement of communications with Europe tempts the civilian to take leave far more frequently and for shorter periods than was formerly customary; and when he returns to his service in India he is very liable to be posted to a new district. The result is, that men sometimes change posts even three or four times in a single year, and all-important continuity of method and system is impossible. The official is too often a stranger to the people, who, if they knew and trusted him, would, with the fullest goodwill, accept his rule as autocrat.

Is it astonishing, in such circumstances, that a strong agitation has arisen against the British Raj? The danger was foreseen during my last residence in India by many serious and far-sighted officers of Government, and still more by British officers in native regiments, by petty officials, and by merchants, who are necessarily in closer contact with the people. No one, I imagine, anticipated an outburst quite so soon; but after all the wonder is, perhaps, that it did not come sooner and stronger. If further and more serious trouble is to be averted, drastic reforms must be introduced while there is yet time. One, which is simple, is the absolute prohibition of unnecessary constant changes of post amongst district officers, district magistrates, and police officers. Another, much more complex, is to do away with the crushing and exasperating centralisation in unwieldy provincial governments.

When centralisation is discussed, the Indian general idea of an antidote is to augment the importance and to increase the prestige of the local governments. But this is all wrong. It is these very governments which have become organised bureaucratic systems of centralised despotism. Compare the administration of a large province with that of a chief commissionership. The governor or lieutenant-governor is worked to death, and knows personally but relatively few of his officers, and still fewer of the influential natives in his province. He can only visit a limited number of his districts in any given year, and direct access to him is almost impos-

sible, hedged in as he is by provincial councils, boards of revenue, and other costly paraphernalia standing between him and his charge, and, in existing circumstances, necessary to give him some relief and maintain some movement in the administrative machine. On the other hand, in a moderately sized chief commissionership, the chief commissioner can personally visit each of his districts, and see all his district officials at their work, at least once a-year, and during the hot weather he can invite each of them in turn to stay a few days with him at the provincial government house. Moreover, he will with his secretaries deal directly with every class of question, without the intervention of councils or boards of revenue. He can know and be known by the more important men of all classes, and it depends only on his personal tact and sympathy with the native community for him to be in close touch with them.

In my opinion governorships and lieutenant-governorships, with all their paraphernalia, are to-day a huge mistake, a relic of times when nearly all conditions and circumstances were different. What is required is a large number of chief commissionerships of moderate size, and to any one who knows India there are some, the desirability of the creation of which appears clearly indicated. In the first rank stand a chief commissionership of Scinde and the settled parts of Beloochistan, a chief commissionership of Oudh, separated from the North-West Provinces, and a chief commissionership of Orissa and Behar. Others may be more difficult to decide, and in all cases great caution should be exercised in making changes, and care should be taken to secure the concurrence of leading Indian local opinion. And this can be secured by frankness, tact, and sympathy.

The lesson of the agitation, spurious in the first instance, over the partition of Bengal must not be forgotten. It has shown how necessary measures, devised solely in the interest of good administration, and therefore in that of the Indian community, can be successfully misinterpreted to the masses by unscrupulous agitators. If Government is not in sufficiently close touch with the native community to guide it aright, through the influence of its natural leaders, such misunderstandings and troubles will be of frequent recurrence.

Respect for authority is natural to oriental conservatism, but authority must be presented in a form congenial to oriental ideas. We have heard much of the boycotting of British goods in the bazaars of Bengal as a serious feature in the recent anti-partition movement. The provincial bazaars are dominated by the Calcutta bazaar, and the question naturally arises, What has been done to favour the prestige of the British Raj in the Calcutta bazaar? Unfortunately, it must be admitted that less than nothing has been done. The political importance of the Calcutta bazaar, with its Indian mer-

chant princes, was formerly recognised, but of late years it appears to have been lost sight of. The Maharajah Sir Narenda Krishna Deb, the Maharajah Durga Churn Law, and the Maharajah Sir Jotendro Mohun Tagore, all merchant princes, were all formerly recognised as such, and consulted by Government authorities; and partly as a result of such recognition, and partly on account of their social position, they influenced and practically controlled public opinion in the bazaar. But the two first-named are dead, the third has passed the age of possible activity, and none of them has been replaced. Government has lost touch with the important Calcutta bazaar, as in many other directions. Without such leading as was secured by the tact of Lord Lansdowne and other sympathetic chiefs, the Calcutta bazaar was doomed to fall under the influence of the agitating seditious journalist who, ten years ago, would not have obtained a hearing. And let it be noted that what has come to pass has not been without warning from anxious Europeans who did know and understand the situation.

There is much more to say on this subject, but the limits of a magazine article have, I fear, been already exceeded. I must conclude: in doing so I would urge before all things the necessity of reforms, well thought out in detail, which should enable and encourage the British official to live more among the people and with the people in sentiment and sympathy. Well-turned phrases on justice to the native are of no avail with Orientals. The kindly heart and just nature are perhaps better appreciated in India than in most lands, but a fair field must be found for their influence under favouring conditions. The Indian civilian of to-day is, as a rule, unfortunately, but certainly, less in sympathy with the natives than was his predecessor. Is this solely the fault of an unsuitable administrative system, or is the result also due to the difference between the two classes of men? It is hard to believe that the first cause is alone sufficient to account entirely for the unfortunate change in relations between the official and the people. If it is not the sole cause, is it not time to consider whether youthful proficiency in classics and mathematics is any guarantee that the proficient possesses the essential qualities for success as a ruler? In the East personality is everything. Is it not possible to nominate to the Indian Civil Service by selection from among those who can prove that they have attained a required standard of education? Has any great empire been founded or maintained by scholars alone?

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