

has any intention of attacking England in Asia." However unjust he was to the British, he saw some things clearly, and urged that the introduction of progressive and purely Western ideas into the social system of the natives would only be prejudicial to them, and to the prestige of their guardians. Again and again he denies that Russia has any designs upon the north-west frontier of India, in spite of England's cherished, deeply-rooted, though totally unfounded conviction on this point. "But what calls up a smile to Russian lips appears a real threat to Albion and is of some advantage to Russia." It is indeed a disadvantage to Indian finances, upon which an inroad is made, whenever a fresh attack of what used to be called nervousness seizes the British Government or the British people.

The Japanese already in 1890 seemed "very unconscious of the spiritual relationship of Russia with all the peoples of the East," but Ukhtomsky predicted "that they would soon doff the mask of friendship with the English. Russia alone could protect Corea and save China from dismemberment and there were no bounds to Russian dominions in Asia but the boundless sea."

While the Prince actually told the world the literal fact that China, and not the north-west frontier, was the Russian objective, and while, like all his countrymen, he erred as regards the future of Manchuria and Japan, he has probably told the truth regarding Russian designs upon the north-west frontier, and he certainly was right in saying that "all goes well in India when no one interferes with the life of the people, and the natural course of events is left to itself," babudom not being such natural course, but

the irregular flight of the product of ill digested university teaching. When he inquires whether our military charges are not too high, seeing that no one has any intention of attacking us in Asia, he asks a question that is being put by a great many Englishmen, who may say, *fas est et ab hoste doceri*, though the present situation in India does not lead prudent men to think that it would be safe to reduce the white garrison below the standard fixed after the Mutiny. But what has Russia's progress been in Central Asia? Ever since the Khan of Khiva placed himself under her protection in 1740, she has been marching towards India and Afghanistan, but it was upwards of a century later that her soldiers constructed Fort Perovsk, commenced hostilities with the Khan of Khokand, and seized Tashkent. In 1868 General Kaufman occupied Samarcand, the most famous city of Central Asia, and the valley of the Zarafshan, the gold scatterer, or Eastern Pactolus.

Prince Gortchakoff explained in 1864 that Russia in Central Asia was a civilised power, in contact with half-civilised tribes, over which it was compelled to exercise ascendancy; that expeditions thus became unavoidable, and if the Czar were content with chastising the freebooters, and then retiring, the lesson would be soon forgotten, retreat being ascribed to weakness, for Asiatics respect only visible and palpable force. This was the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, and it would have been better if we had realised it more fully ourselves. At the present moment we are paying allowances, which are regarded by the recipients as, and really are, blackmail, to practically every tribe dwelling on the Indian side of the Durand boundary line; and after every punitive

expedition, followed by a retreat, the allowances of the offending tribes are raised to encourage others to do likewise. We are responsible for all territory up to the Durand line, and we should sternly repress every rising upon our side of it, and in no case ever increase the allowances of any of the tribes. As lately as 1897 it took 60,000 of our best troops to re-establish order on the frontier, and we have no guarantee whatever that the tribes we subsidise with Indian gold would keep the march for us if they were offered better terms elsewhere. We do know something about "Afreedi, Hazara and Ghilzai who clamour for plunder or bribes," we know that we can never engage their affections, and we should frankly adopt as our motto, *oderint dum metuant*.

To return to the Russians. In 1873 Count Schouvaloff assured our Government that they had no intention of taking Khiva, which immediately afterwards was taken. The Central Asian Khanates were thus absorbed. The Russians realised the necessity of inspiring fear among the natives, and their ruthless conquest of the Tekke Turkomans probably caused less loss of life in the long run than our policy of butcher and bolt, for in every one of our punitive expeditions the women and children, who are sent up into the hills, suffer untold hardships. Nothing is so humane as severity leading to fear and peace, nothing so inhuman as weakness resulting in slaughter. When the frontiers of Russian Turkestan were bounded by Persia, Afghanistan, and Chinese Turkestan, that stage in the expansion of Russia was reached at which demarcation of boundaries became necessary. The determination of the Afghan frontier by a joint commission in 1885 proved a difficult business, the

Russians being determined to push down from Merv to the slopes of the Paropamisus, and the neighbourhood of Herat. It is probable that Britain has been, as she had so often been before, bluffed by Russia over the Panjdeh incident, but at any rate no serious differences have occurred since the settlement then effected. Nor, since we have again and again made remonstrances, without any intention of backing them up by arms, a practice no State is powerful enough to indulge in without falling into contempt, was it surprising that the Russians marched at will almost within sight of the holy Persian city of Mashad, of the key of Afghanistan, Herat, to the banks of the "broad and yellow Oxus," and right up to the roof of the world in the Pamir steppes, and into the most fertile valleys of Kashgaria.

Mr David Fraser, who has lately travelled along the marches of Hindustan, has collected some valuable statistics in regard to the population, acreage, and economic conditions of Russian Turkestan. He finds the population of the five provinces and the two native states, Bokhara and Khiva, to be in the aggregate 8,470,000, and the acreage under cultivation 7,400,000, of which 1,500,000 are under cotton, the growing of which, in Central Asia, Russia encourages, herself supplying from Orenburg grain, of which there is insufficient in Turkestan. Besides the 7,400,000 acres (or 11,000 square miles) under cultivation, there are 140,000 square miles of indifferent pasture land, and 700,000 square miles of irreclaimable desert. It is, therefore, economically speaking, a very poor country.

Mr Fraser also supplies the latest statistics of the military strength of Russia in Turkestan. He writes that Kushk, the most forward point of Russian terri-



tory, is equipped with a special transport corps and a siege train, and that the total of the Russian troops in Central Asia is a peace strength of 57,787, and a war strength of 99,247 men, consisting of infantry, cavalry, horse, field, and mountain artillery, sappers, fortress companies and field guns. But the size of the army maintained is not so much a matter for consideration as the strength of the army which Russia could send to, and maintain within, her territories in Central Asia. The railway from the Caspian Sea to the Persian frontier passes through an arid desert, but water is obtained by distillation from the Caspian, and after running along the frontier from Askabad to Kiakhta, the line passes over two streams before reaching Merv. The railway between Samarcand and Tashkent, and Tashkent and Orenburg also suffers from want of water supply. Without these railways the transport of troops in sufficient numbers to menace Afghanistan would be impossible. In existing circumstances, armies could be placed on the Afghan frontier, only limited by the carrying power of the line, which is estimated to be double that of the Siberian railways, by which hundreds of thousands of men were placed in the field in the war with Japan.

From Krasnovodsk on the Caspian to Orenburg the railway is 2300 miles long and a branch runs from Merv to the hills commanding Herat, as well as another branch to Andijan near the frontier of Chinese Kashgaria. A fourth branch has been surveyed, and it is believed can be laid down speedily and without difficulty, from Samarcand or Bokhara, to Termes on the Oxus, close to the Afghan provincial capital of Balkh. At Orenburg, the railway system is joined up with that of Russia, and with the trans-Siberian line,

while at Krasnovodsk it is in steamer communication with Baku, the Caucasian garrison, and the railway to Moscow. The new Orenburg-Tashkent line doubles the strategical strength of Russia in Central Asia, and, though the lines are single, all the stations, which are about fifteen miles apart, have double sidings, so that pairs of trains can be run. Mr Fraser estimates that as many as thirty-six trains per day could possibly be passed through from Krasnovodsk and Orenburg to the point of concentration if sufficient rolling stock were available. It would, however, be absolutely necessary, in order to send a large army to the Afghan frontier, to supplement the Merv-Kushk line by a railway such as that from Samarcand to Termes. The standard upon which depends the question of Imperial defence for Britain is practically decided by the number of men required for the protection of India, so that this problem is one which immediately affects Great Britain, though the fact is little appreciated by the people of this country, who regard, or affect to regard, problems of Indian defence as isolated and remote. Yet the Russo-Japanese War taught us no lesson of so much importance as this, that Russia, quite unexpectedly and without preparation, plunged into war, ten months after its commencement had upwards of 400,000 men in the field in the Far East, and that these troops had been transported and maintained, in practical efficiency, by one thin line of railway of enormous length. At the lowest computation, not less than 25,000 men, with the necessary stores, per month must have been despatched from Western Russia to the Far East, and no less than twelve pairs of trains every twenty-four hours were successfully forwarded over the line. Russia's offensive power on

the Afghan frontier would be at least double that which enabled her to maintain gigantic armies in the Far East, and the distance to the point of concentration would be about one-third of that which intervenes between the Ural Mountains and Manchuria. Evidently then, Russia could easily maintain an army of 400,000 men on what, after all, is practically the Indian, and not only the Afghan, frontier. She could take Herat whenever she pleased, and no man could safely prophesy what, in that contingency, would be the attitude of the Afghans and the frontier tribes, or even of some of our subjects in India.

The portfolio of the Foreign Department of the Government of India is always held by the Viceroy, and during Lord Curzon's practically double tenure of office many important events occurred in this domain. Lord Lansdowne had strengthened the defences of the north-west frontier, had encouraged the native chiefs to institute and maintain Imperial service corps, and he was able to maintain peace by skilful, tactful, and straightforward diplomacy. In Lord Curzon's term of office, the death took place of the Amir Abdul Rahman, which was followed by the peaceful succession of his son, Habibullah, and in his time the Seistan boundaries, and those of Aden hinterland were delimited. Lord Curzon frustrated the desire of France to obtain a coaling station at Muscat, and of the Porte to extend Turkish authority over the chiefs of the Hadramut, and over the Khan of Koweit, whose territory will become of great importance if the Baghdad railway ever becomes an accomplished fact. However Koweit and Mohammerah are now safe. Lord Curzon also recognised that various influences were undermining the British position in South Persia,

and he broke new ground by making a tour in that direction. Those who can see no good in him or his works allege that, had he not opened the Quetta-Nuskhi route to Seistan, Russia would have let the Gulf alone. However that may be, they despatched battleships to the Gulf, appointed consular agents, and drew up a new tariff with no friendly intent towards us, and no doubt they had a coaling station in view, notwithstanding Lord Lansdowne's spirited and satisfactory pronouncement, that such would be regarded as an unfriendly act.

The Middle Eastern question, to use Mr Chirols' now universally adopted designation, formerly concerned Afghanistan and the Central Asian Khanates. It now includes the contest for political supremacy over Tibet, and the integrity of Persia, as well as the everlasting question of the north-west frontier, for it is hardly possible for the Government of India without loss of respect supinely to ignore everything that happens immediately outside its own administrative boundary. The exigencies of the party system in England perhaps inevitably commit them to the policy of endeavouring to cultivate friendly relations with the tribes, however difficult of attainment this may be, and at any rate to the avoidance of all aggressive measures towards them, from which it follows that it is desirable as far as possible to police tribal territory with local levies, under the command of British officers.

Lord Elgin claimed to have followed a policy of non-annexation and non-interference, in order to avoid any extension of administrative control over independent tribal territory. In his time, the Government of India was committed to a policy involving a large outlay for

fortifications, and the extension of garrisons at forward stations, but Lord Curzon's Government adopted, with the approval of the India Office, a policy of which the three cardinal principles were to avoid locking up regular garrisons in costly fortified positions away from our base, to interest the inhabitants of each district or base, whence such garrisons were withdrawn, in their own defence, and to establish a lien on their loyalty by enrolling them as tribal forces for local garrison work, to maintain a movable column ready to march to the relief of the tribal garrisons, on or near the administrative frontier of India, and to connect the frontier cantonment with each Indian garrison, by light railways pushed forward from the existing railway systems. This policy, unpopular with the more ardent military spirits, but grateful to the taxpayer, was successfully followed, and intimately connected with it was the creation of the North-West Frontier Province. In describing his policy, Lord Curzon wrote: "It may be said that every change in the frontier of India subsequent to 1877 has been dictated, not by considerations affecting the Punjab Government, but by Imperial considerations, and by them alone." He no doubt used the word "imperial," in this instance, in its Indian, and not in its all-British aspect. The Indian and the British budgets are distinct, and the question will some day arise whether India is always to pay the bill, as frontiers are pushed farther and farther west, after so much of the Afghan Hills has been annexed, and Beluchistan added to the empire, when the flank has been turned, and the frontier appears still farther west in Seistan, in Fars, in Arabistan and in the Persian Gulf. What battleships, floating batteries, and repair-

ing docks might have been created with the money poured out uselessly, as might now be urged, in fortifying the already naturally fortified Quetta! What valuable aid has not been thrown away by the wanton insults unceasingly and causelessly hurled at Mahomedan sovereign and subjects in Turkey! Not only does our policy need definition, but our public men and Members of Parliament need disciplining, if we are to continue to hold our lofty position in the world. No nation can afford to wantonly alienate its neighbours, least of all a nation ruling over many races of many religions.

As to a Russian invasion through Afghanistan, the great Napoleon thought it impracticable, and the Duke of Wellington said that troops would force their way through this wild country, only to find the commencement of their difficulties. Sir Neville Chamberlain, Sir John Adye, and Sir Donald Stewart have expressed the same opinions. We have more reason to fear the economic invasion of Persia by Russia, which is stimulating the import of Russian goods by a system of bounties of 15 to 20 per cent. *ad valorem*; has conceded to them special rebates and railway rates, and has succeeded in ruining the promising trade by the Quetta-Nushki route to Seistan and Eastern Persia. In 1903 it was apparent that Russia already dominated Northern Persia, and had been steadily advancing while we were marking time, in some, and retrograding in other, quarters: that she was furnished with well-trained agents, and encouraged acquaintance with native languages, which the Government of India does not particularly favour: that Russia's commercial, was equal to her political, progress, and that each subserved the other; that it was hopeless that such measures as sufficed in the



past, would prove equal in the future, to safeguarding our interests, while European populations seeking an outlet increased in numbers, and naval states waxed strong and prospered; that Persia rather than Afghanistan was the danger point, that it was necessary to show that the south and east of that country were within our exclusive sphere of political influence; that the assertion of political predominance in south, south-west, and particularly south-eastern Persia was an object of Imperial significance, and a proper call upon Imperial funds, that our position in the East Indies, including the Gulf, required a larger squadron and repairing yard, that the maintenance of a supremely powerful navy was all important, since the defence of the coast and of the land frontier depends on the navy, which must keep open communication and bring reinforcements, and by which, in fact, and not by individual battles in India, as is generally represented, our eastern empire was won, and by which it must be retained.

It was in consequence of considerations such as these, or at any rate of some of them, that the Anglo-Russian Convention, if not the Anglo-Japanese Alliance, was effected. Russia was established on the glacis of the natural mountain fortifications, and on the bank of the river boundary of our Indian Empire and its protected neighbour. Persia, suffering from internal disorder, frontier disputes, and political unrest, might at any moment call for, or offer an opportunity for, armed intervention; the position of Russia in the north of that ancient kingdom was already assured, and it was our obvious interest to make an agreement recognising and prolonging existing conditions, while Russia, weakened by her reverses in the Far, had to call a halt in her progress in the Middle, East.

The hour was propitious, and the Convention was signed on 31st August 1907. It contained arrangements on the subject of Persia, Afghanistan, and Tibet, important in each case, satisfactory in some, disappointing in other, respects, but on the whole proved to be a valuable instrument, and, provided it always has a sufficient backing of battalions and battleships, one which should conduce to peace and progress. Since it has been evident, as it has been for some years, that Russia's plan was to turn the flank of our north-west frontier by the peaceful penetration of Persia down to the Gulf, the Afghan Frontier has ceased to be the storm centre it was, and the provisions of the Convention regarding Persia must be regarded chiefly in the light of Indian frontier interests, though a trade of £4,000,000 sterling a year is affected, and by no means favourably affected, by the terms secured. It is characteristic of the prevailing extraordinary want of elementary comprehension of our position in the East that this aspect of the case has attracted least attention in England, and even well-informed and able critics like Colonel Yate and Mr Lynch appear to attach perhaps overdue weight to the Persian provisions, as if they were the terms of an isolated agreement, and not part of a whole. As an agreement regarding Persia only, it would be impossible to approve its provisions. The shores and hinterland of the Gulf, in which we are as well established as Russia is in Northern Persia, are not retained within our sphere of influence, nor the important trade routes which directly or indirectly serve Southern Persia, the Kermanshah-Hamadan and the Korun-Mohammerah approaches to the Tigris and the Gulf. Ispahan

should have been neutral, Shiraz ours, and a line from east to west should have given us what is south, as Russia has what lies north, of the salt desert. But we are by treaty assured of equal commercial opportunity, for what such a provision is worth, and it hardly appears that the delimitation of spheres leaves our trade at the mercy of Russia in neutral zones, wherein either power merely engages not to oppose the grant of concessions to the other's subjects. Nor as regards railway concessions can we be placed in a worse position than we already occupied. It is certainly unfortunate that our position in the Gulf is not a feature, and the chief feature, and in part the *raison d'être* of the Convention, though it is mentioned in the Parliamentary paper that the Russian Government in the course of the negotiations explicitly stated that they did not deny the special interests of Great Britain in the Persian Gulf, which were not mentioned only because the arrangement was limited to the regions of that country touching the respective frontiers of Great Britain and Russia in Asia. But by the Convention the integrity and independence of Persia are guaranteed and this in itself is a feature of paramount importance, and should stay the completion of the already far advanced Russification of the country, which we had found ourselves powerless to prevent. It is difficult to deal seriously with objections raised to this Convention by politicians, who claim for Great Britain a right to influence the internal administration of independent countries, or to determine that we should not enter into engagements with such countries, unless in their opinion they reach certain ideal standards of humanitarianism, or display a proper preference

for that form of Government which happens to suit ourselves, but as to the adaptability of which to Russia and Persia those acquainted with these countries entertain considerable doubts. At any rate it can hardly be gravely contended that empty solicitude and cheap sympathy are worth paying for by the loss of engagements making for the material benefit of ourselves and of the other parties to the bond. It makes no difference to us whether Persia and Russia are autocracies or democracies provided they keep the peace and do business, and it is not clear what we obtain except the hearty dislike of other nations by assuming that none of them are equal to the task of managing their own affairs, and that all of them are wanting in ordinary humanity. The great point is that Russia's march towards the Gulf through Seistan is stopped short, and so long as the spirit of the present agreement is observed, and the assurance regarding the Gulf itself remains effectual, the danger of having the flank of our north-west frontier turned is averted. It is a painful process to try to bring home to the British electorate that Eastern policy is not a matter of the pomp and circumstance of war, but of preserving in the Middle East and in India those markets upon which we are so dependent, and of keeping the peace, with which the amount of taxation we have to pay, is so closely connected.

As regards Afghanistan the Convention can hardly be attacked with success, for the country is recognised as outside the sphere of Russian influence, and a favourable verdict on this score must cover the Persian sub-issue. Objection has been taken to the grant of equality of commercial opportunity, which

certainly is the last thing we get from Russia, but neither political party could be expected to insist upon a reciprocity in Asia which does not exist in Europe. It is, of course, in some sense disappointing that we exact no better terms from Russia than we should have considered fair had her career of conquest continued, but all agreements must be construed in the light of existing facts, and she never relaxed a sinew in Central Asia, through the desperate and disastrous struggle with Japan. The inhabitants of Russian Turkestan have been let alone, not over-taxed, over-sanitised, or over-occidentalised, and they have shown their gratitude recently in an unconventional manner by offering to massacre an energetic minority of revolutionaries, which desires to force upon them the suffrage and autonomy. One of the latest, and by no means the least capable of writers, Mr Angus Hamilton roundly declared, in 1905, that Russia was already the supreme and dominating factor, not only along the northern, eastern, and western frontiers of, but throughout, Afghanistan, and that Russian trade, thanks to good roads, railways, protection, low customs, rebates, and special rail and steamer rates, had everywhere crushed out British competition. Surely, if this be only partially true, as it no doubt is, or was, the Convention concerning Afghanistan is eminently satisfactory, and it is impossible to agree with the Bombay press that we have lost much (in Persia) and gained nothing (elsewhere), though it must be admitted that the regions defined to lie within our sphere of influence in Persia are such, that few indeed are the concessions which are likely to be sought within their limits.

It was anticipated as regards Tibet that the Con-

vention could and would only confirm the policy of Mr Balfour's Government, which decided to veto the appointment of a Resident at Lhasa, to recognise the suzerainty of China, and to pledge itself to the evacuation of the Chumbi Valley. Lord Curzon indeed has characterised as a novelty in international diplomacy the neutralising pledge made by two Powers, one of which is, and the other is not, contiguous with Tibet, which is not a buffer state between Great Britain and Russia. Russia is, however, contiguous with the Chinese Empire, of which Tibet is a vassal state, though it may readily be conceded that her interests are small compared with our own. The Convention gives away, however, as regards Tibet, nothing which had not previously been abandoned, in which are included most of the fruits of the expedition. That much-criticised operation had at least this justification, that Tibet refused to observe the provisions of a previous treaty granting certain trading facilities to British subjects, and it is common ground that the Dalai Lama, or the Junta of Buddhist monks, of which he is the nominal head, wished to cut the country clear from China, to have no communication with India, and to enter into closer friendly relations with Russia, the special mission to which, of 1901, was explained to have no political significance. When the Viceroy complained of the non-performance of the previous treaty the Dalai Lama returned his letters unopened, and refused to negotiate. Lord Curzon therefore despatched a mission to Khamba Jong across the border, and, as no satisfaction was offered, it advanced to Lhasa. Now that holy city is the very heart of the religious life of vast regions in Central Asia, and its rulers



possess in consequence a very great political influence notwithstanding the degraded and debased kind of Buddhism of which they are the official representatives. Nor is this influence confined to Central Asia. It is felt all through the Himalayan region, in Nepaul, Sikkim and Bhutan, states in which we are in varying degrees interested, and the first of which supplies us with 20,000 first-rate soldiers. Though the ruler of Nepaul is Hindoo, Buddhism is the traditional religion of the people, the tie with Tibet is strong, if sentimental, and our relations with this state forbid our being indifferent to what passes in the latter state, especially when a nation nominally Buddhist has become the most powerful in the East. Japan and China are hardly Buddhist nations, but they are Buddhist enough to feel some sense of solidarity with Lhasa. Nor was it by any means clear that the Russians were not establishing their influence in this hermit kingdom, in which all that is required is maintenance of British influence and prestige, a task which is not rendered easier by the pledge the late Government gave, and the present administration necessarily has repeated, not to send a representative to Lhasa, than which the maintenance of a trade agent at Gyantse is a matter of less political moment. Not that Tibet is by any means a despicable commercial asset. It is, rather, full of potentialities and possibilities, and with a better Government would inevitably take a very different place in the world of trade. The population was once greater than it now is; there is abundance of pasturage, and much business might be done in wool, cattle, hides, and minerals, and already the total trade with India is valued at £250,000 a year, and the Govern-

ment of the latter country is actively occupied in improving communications with its hitherto isolated neighbour. It was not to be expected that the present Government would undo that which the last administration had done, but the few facts above recorded will suffice at any rate to expose the folly of the accusation brought against the Indian Government, which was unanimous in approving the despatch of the mission, of having attacked Tibet in a spirit of wanton aggression or vain Imperialism.

The Convention was generally well received by the press of foreign countries, that of Germany holding that the commercial interests of their country are by it in no way prejudiced. Nevertheless, Great Britain was accused of endeavouring to convert the Gulf into a second Suez Canal, and Koweit, and the Euphrates region, with the Baghdad railway, into a second Egypt. The last-mentioned project is one of very great importance. The Germans having a concession for the construction of a line from the Taurus to the Persian Gulf, Great Britain had assented to an increase of three per cent. in the Turkish customs duties, most of which will fall on her own trade, for the ostensible benefit of Macedonia, the empty sympathy of the Powers with which province only serves to inflame the natural resentment the Turks feel at such interference, and to turn it upon the head of their subjects. There is no guarantee that the money thus raised will not liberate other funds so as to enable the Porte to give the desired kilometric guarantee, and to pay interest on the capital required for the construction of the next section of the line. In any case, if the money is found, German though the concession be, and, non-English as the capital may

prove, it should be a *sine quâ non* that England should have the control of the Baghdad-Gulf section, or that the whole line should be internationalised. The case is, in fact, political rather than commercial, and care has been taken in the concession to provide against the construction of the Gulf section except as a part of, and subject to the same conditions as, the rest of the railway which is to be taken up section by section in consecutive order. If once this line is made under German control, Germany might turn the flank of our north-west frontier defences, just as Russia contemplated doing before the execution of the recent Convention stopped further railway construction on her part towards the Gulf. Sir Edward Grey admitted last session that this was, or might become, a subject of considerable importance to all those Powers which have possessions in the Middle East, but he was not prepared to make any statement on the subject. For the present the project hangs fire, but it is one which will need constant watching, and the desire of Germany to develop and consolidate her already great influence in Asia Minor will not be in any way lessened by the agreement just concluded with Russia in respect of Persia, in which she has at present no such great interests as to justify her in taking any exception to an arrangement to which she is no party, but which may be regarded by her as in some measure excluding her future participation in Persian commerce and politics.

## CHAPTER VIII

### UNREST

Our System of Education the Chief Cause—The Defeat of Lord Curzon over the Army Question—The Appointment of the Police Commission—The Support of the Home Branch of the Congress and of Members of Parliament, and of certain British Newspapers—The Plague—Preventive Measures—Prohibition of Religious Fairs—Acquittal of Murderers of Mr Blomfield—The Partition of Bengal—*Svadeshi* and *Svaraj*—*Bande Mataram*—Mr O'Donnell—Sir H. Cotton—Mr Keir Hardie's Visit

OF all the causes of the unrest which has of late unhappily prevailed in India, the chief, of course, is the system of education, which we ourselves introduced—advisedly so far as the limited vision went of those responsible, blindly in view of the inevitable consequences. It is not too much to say that in our schools pupils imbibe sedition with their daily lessons: they are fed with Rousseau, Macaulay, and the works of philosophers, which even in Oxford tend to pervert the minds of students to socialistic and impractical dreams, and in India work with far greater force upon the naturally metaphysical minds of youths, generally quick to learn by rote, for the most part penniless, and thus rendered incapable of earning their living, except by taking service of a clerical character under rulers, whom they denounce as oppressors unless they receive a salary at their hands.

The malcontents created by this system have neither respect for, nor fear of, the Indian Government. Nor

is this surprising, for the literature upon which they are brought up in our schools is fulfilled with destructive criticism of any system of Government founded upon authority, and the encouragement given in many quarters to the Congress has necessarily confirmed them in their contempt for a system which fans a flame intended to burn it to ashes.

Happily, however, it is not the case that educated Indians, as such, are necessarily hostile to the British, though when subjected as they are, and all India is, to Brahminical influences they are liable to become, and too often do become, actively disloyal, the voice of the educated classes and of the Brahmins being practically one and the same thing.

Various other occurrences tended to intensify the feelings of disaffection engendered in the manner above described. For the first time in British-Indian history the Viceroy and Governor-General, hitherto regarded as the all-powerful agent of a sovereign ruling by divine right—for Indians recognise no mere parliamentary title—had engaged in a pitched battle with the Commander-in-Chief of the Forces, and had been beaten. More than that, his correspondence with the Secretary of State on this subject had, to the general astonishment, been published, so that all might know exactly what had occurred, and, incidentally, the administrative partition of Bengal had been mentioned in such wise as almost to justify those who resented this measure in thinking that the Home Government had sanctioned it, at least as much because Lord Curzon desired to bring it about, as because they were themselves persuaded of its necessity.

Then Lord Curzon's Government had, with the best

intentions, and perhaps upon sufficient grounds, taken a step which inevitably increased the prevailing disposition to disregard established authority. He had appointed a commission to overhaul the police, who are after all the outward and visible signs of authority, in vast areas, for instance in the greater part of Eastern Bengal, in which a British soldier is never, and a sepoy rarely, seen. The police are by no means an ideally perfect body. There must be among a large force, necessarily receiving small pay, some, perhaps many, black sheep. Still, they are probably on the whole by no means unsuitable for the work they have to perform, and their delinquencies have been grossly exaggerated by the classes, who have used them as a pawn in the game of disaffection. To appoint a commission was to publicly allow that in the eyes of the Government they needed radical reform, and did not possess the confidence of their masters. So another proof of law and order went by the board in popular estimation.

Nor were causes wanting in England. No sooner was the General Election of 1906 over, than a meeting was held at the instance of Sir William Wedderburn to reconstruct the Indian Parliamentary Committee, and to consider "what action might be taken in the new Parliament to advance the interests of the Indian people." Sir William spoke of their great dissatisfaction with their condition, and said the way to improve matters was to work upon the lines of the Indian National Congress. Sir Henry Cotton, not to be outdone in misrepresenting the position, said "the election of an overwhelming Liberal majority had roused in India hopes and aspirations, and the people were trembling in hope that due consideration would



now be given to their wishes." He advised his friends to go on agitating, but to adhere to constitutional methods. But the grave anxiety, which speeches such as those have not tended to alleviate, is lest these methods, whatever they may be, should pass into a dangerous phase of discontent and disaffection. The advice of Sir W. Wedderburn, the extra-parliamentary chief of the Congress party in England, has been taken, and a few members of Parliament who serve under this banner have left no opportunity unused in order to promote the aims and objects of the Congress.

For instance, they voted against Mr Morley and the Government on Mr Keir Hardie's motion that the salary of the Secretary of State should be brought upon the estimates, and persistently questioned Mr Morley regarding the deportation of Lajpat Rai to which of course, they objected, asked for the repeal of the Regulation of 1818, as inconsistent with the principles of Liberalism, and for the appointment of a royal commission. The Regulation was denounced as wholly unparalleled in the British Empire. As a fact, however, in the East Africa Protectorate an order in Council authorises the deportation of any person who, in the opinion of the administration, conducts himself so as to be dangerous to the peace, and good order of British East Africa. In native states in India such power is always taken, and not infrequently exercised, an instance having occurred quite recently in Hyderabad. The brothers Natu were, moreover, dealt with under this Regulation not many years since in the Bombay Presidency, and it will probably be found that in the agency tracts of the Madras Presidency instances of its use have recurred at irregular intervals to the close of last century.

Strong attacks were also made on Reuter's Agency, which the agitators in India were unable to muzzle, and which has done good public service by faithfully reporting events from Calcutta. Mr Morley refused to depart from the attitude he had taken up regarding Lala Lajpat Rai, and said that he saw no cause for apology in the use made of the Regulation of 1818, though he would be the first to rejoice when its application would no longer be necessary, and as a fact he released the two agitators, Lala Lajpat Rai and Ajit Singh, when they had been detained for about six months.

Nor were the anti-British agitators without support in England other than that afforded by the British branch of the Congress, and their supporters in and out of Parliament.

At Oxford a University India Society has been formed, one of the objects of which is the discussion of the advisability of introducing representative government. At its meeting, addresses were delivered by Sir W. Wedderburn and Mr Gokhale, when the latter said that "if the Indians had to choose between gratitude for the past and duty to their own people there could only be one choice." This was mild for the speaker, but it would do him good to try the effect of a speech on similar lines at a Russian university. At Cambridge also there is an Indian Club, which is believed to be none too loyal, and the same may be said of Edinburgh, where till now Indian students have been left like lost dogs to wander at will, a state of affairs which an influential committee now seeks to amend, by providing a club under responsible and respectable management.

In Dublin and elsewhere violent attacks were

published upon the Government of India, which in September prohibited the introduction into that country of *Justice*, *The Gaelic American*, and *The Indian Sociologist*, the last-named organ at any rate richly deserving to be excluded, whatever may be the character of the other two. The editor, an M.A. of Oxford, is described as the President of the Indian Home Rule Society, which is no doubt some association designed to tamper with the loyalty of young Indians in this country. Inasmuch as this person has, of course falsely, described himself, because he is a subject of a native state, as owing no allegiance to Britain, it is to be regretted that he is not deprived of the hospitality he abuses, by being expelled as an undesirable alien.

Mr Morley has appointed a committee to consider what can be done to afford to Indian students protection from agitators, who lie in wait for them, and provide them with lodgings, the atmosphere of which reeks with disloyalty to the British Crown.

Among other causes of the unrest must also be reckoned the measures taken to stamp out plague in Bombay Presidency and the prohibition of the holding of great assemblages of pilgrims at religious shrines during the prevalence of cholera. It is not the case that the salt-tax, lately twice reduced, provoked opposition, for it is no new thing, but was an important source of revenue under the Moguls. Its levy therefore is not resented and illicit manufacture and smuggling have declined, while consumption has increased, so that the tax evidently does not press hardly upon the people, though the Deccani Brahmin, and the Bengali Babu naturally say it does, in order to discredit the British Government, who get little else

by way of revenue from many millions, who profit by its existence.

Among the agricultural population there is as yet no serious discontent ; it is among the town dwellers and the artisans that the seditious speakers and writers find support, and only among Hindoos in the towns. There is, however, and must always be, a certain solidarity of Indians against Europeans, which Brahmins can easily divert towards disaffection, and though they are the natural and intellectual leaders of the people they have now joined hands with anti-Brahminical societies, such as the Arya Samaj, which was at the root of the agitation in the Punjaub. This sect or society accepts the Vedas as the only, and when rightly interpreted the infallible, revelation, but rejects all the accretions and additions to the sacred texts and all the corpus of rites and ceremonies, which now forms the actual working religion. The Brahmins once in supreme power, would, however, make short work of the innovators and heterodox sects by whose help they had reached their goal.

It is the fashion to speak of want of sympathy as one of the causes of the unrest. Sympathy without sentiment is indeed a great gift, though ill-regulated sentiment is necessarily either foolish or mischievous, or deserving of both epithets. It is easy to prescribe the treatment, not so easy to apply it, when sympathy with one exposes the sympathiser to the suspicion of another race, caste, class, tribe, sect, or religion. Rigid impartiality does not make for effusive sympathy—the two things are hardly compatible, and the first is essential.

No doubt, however, the rank and file of the European industrial army are often guilty of arrogance, and

generally of ignorance, in their life and conversation among the natives, though, as their numbers are not large, they may be dismissed as other than a serious factor in the situation. The planters, on the other hand, are an important and a wholly beneficial element. Behar, alongside Bengal, and well in touch with Calcutta, the capital of Babudom and India, is prosperous, contented, and without a particle of sympathy with the agitators. This is due in a great degree to the fact that it is, and has been for over eighty years, the home of large numbers of European planters, who are respected and beloved by those whom they employ, for whom they care, as it is feared few Indian employers of labour care. A similar state of things may be observed in other planting districts, with many of which I am intimately acquainted, and the planter keeps touch with the people, not with the English-speaking upper castes and classes, with whom, and not by accident, the official is almost exclusively associated.

The European planter is a most useful auxiliary and a most valuable adviser to the administration, to whom he can impart information by which the latter can otherwise hardly come. It is difficult here to avoid reference to the recent judgment of Mr Justice Mitra, in regard to the murder of Mr Blomfield by a gang of coolies, which has given rise to natural apprehension amongst the planters of Behar. To the lay mind it appears that the learned judge laid it down that a sufficiently large number of men may, without committing murder, kill a solitary victim, provided no one blow dealt by any one of the gang was sufficient in itself to cause death. It is not surprising that the planters have memorialised the Secretary of State, and, though

it is difficult to see what he can do, the effect of such a judgment cannot be other than disastrous, and it may be permitted to hope, at any rate, that in no long time it may as a precedent be superseded by another in which equity may subsist alongside law.

Such are some of the chief causes which have enabled disaffected Bengali Babus, with the aid of a licentious press, to work up anti-British feeling in Bengal. Upon this or upon any question, however, it is well to see ourselves as others see us, and a representative critic is M. Raymond Recouly, the well-known French publicist. Writing in the *Revue Politique*, he admits that the English, wherever they go, take with them peace, justice, and material prosperity, born of commercial and industrial development, but holds that they do not understand how it is precisely this material prosperity which gives rise to new aspirations and desires. In proportion as people acquire material well-being so do they exact more liberty. Then, to point the moral, the writer adds that Lord Curzon was too stiff and unbending, too full of Cæsarism in his external and internal policy. It is not clear what the writer would have us do. Should we cease to bring about material prosperity, or should we regard it, when created, as an extinguisher of the benevolent power which gave it birth?—and in that event what becomes of the masses, who have profited by this regeneration? Are they to be handed over to the classes, whose sole aptitude is for destructive criticism, and whose wish is to govern the masses in the stead of the creators of prosperity at whose success they carp, whose methods they criticise, and whose success they, for their part, deny.

The so-called partition of Bengal was, of course, one



of the chief causes of the unrest, though it rather focussed disaffection which had previously existed among the Bengali Babus, than was itself the cause of the agitation.

The whole movement originated, to a great extent, with a small society of the literary, or, as they are called in Russia, the intelligent, classes, who desire to retain a monopoly of the Government appointments, which, with the exception of those enjoyed exclusively by the Imperial Civil Service, they had hitherto enjoyed in the undivided province of Bengal, and who saw in the partition an attempt to break Hindoo predominance. The members of this small society control the native press, by means of which they established at once a paper boycott, a paper national fund, a paper national unity, and a paper home industries association, as a result of which no English goods were to be imported into India. Although the latter, commonly called *Svadeshi*, has upon the whole failed, not without, however, having inflicted great loss and suffering upon innocent people—chiefly Mahomedans—it is yet capable of mischief, for the party which promotes it now asserts that imported British goods are tainted like the greased cartridges, that European salt is purified with blood, and sugar with bones, and that European piece-goods are sized with the fat of cows and pigs. Moreover, *Svadeshi* was merged into *Svaraj*, or independence, and denunciation of British goods eventuated in the condemnation of British rulers. Unchecked by Government, as for a long time they were, the agitators next endeavoured in vain to undermine the loyalty of the army, but it gives occasion for thought that this agitation, which only began in the middle of 1904, has been spread

throughout India, by means of the vernacular journals, with a success which an electioneering agency in England might well envy.

Lord Minto, following upon utterances by his predecessors to the same effect, said in one of his speeches that a genuine *Svadeshi* movement would always have the support of the Government of India. The word itself means "own country," and it in no way connotes a boycott of foreign goods, fomentation of labour troubles, and seditious disorder. Agitators had induced large numbers of people to make a vow to purchase only home-manufactured fabrics, but no effort was made in Bengal to initiate or develop industrial enterprise, in respect of which this province has been surpassed by most other provinces. Its jute mills are controlled by Europeans, while the cotton spinning and weaving industries of Nagpur, Ahmedabad, and Bombay have been chiefly carried on with Indian capital. It is in Bombay at present that real efforts are being made to develop a true *Svadeshi* policy, and an Iron and Steel Company with a large capital has recently been floated there by the sons of the late Mr Tata, who founded the Institute of Science at Bangalore. This new company will be financed by Indians, managed by Indians, and the iron ore used will be Indian. Great preparations are being made for the works, which will be situated on the Bengal-Nagpur Railway at Sini, and the plant to be erected will have a minimum capacity for the annual output of 120,000 tons of pig-iron, two-thirds of which will be converted into finished steel. The Government of India is giving this great enterprise very practical assistance.

Another great scheme projected is the utilisation of

the rainfall of the Western Ghats for the generation of electric power to work the cotton mills of Bombay city. These schemes illustrate what Lord Minto describes as the true *Svadeshi* movement, and Bengal will be searched in vain for any proof of the existence of this spirit.

The policy of *Svadeshi* has already proved a failure, the people declining to taboo foreign goods, which till now are cheaper and better than those produced in their own country. The policy of *Svaraj* must also fail so long as England has a spark of spirit left and continues, for India's good, and for her own, to govern the latter country.

Notwithstanding a judicial pronouncement to the contrary, the word *Svaraj* can only mean, and of course is only intended to mean, independence. The pretence that it means self-government under the dominion of another power, impossible where half the world intervenes, and the self-governed are 300,000,000, as against 40,000,000 of the dominion holders, is altogether too thin. No such form of government as that indicated has ever been known to Asiatics, nor is any such form of government possible. Those who cry out for *Svaraj* want to be rid of British administration, and all they would retain that is British is the protection of the fleet and army, for which a new generation of Englishmen, madder than their predecessors, would pay, while all the appointments and all the power in the protected continent would fall, not to its inhabitants, but to one small oligarchy of Brahmins, who despise them.

Intimately connected with *Svadeshi* is the boycott movement started in 1905, which has been practically confined to Bengal and Eastern Bengal, and in

spite of which the imports of cotton goods and sugar have concurrently grown in volume. There has been talk of starting *Svadeshi* cotton mills, and of other *Svadeshi* enterprises, but it has had no result. The agitators never calculated their requirements in men and money, but they have been vociferous in speech, and the anniversary of the movement is held in Calcutta, where Mr Surendra Nath Bannerji harangues a crowd composed chiefly of students and claims great things for his policy. Meanwhile, in *Bande Mataram* readers were reminded that the independence of America first found expression in the boycott of British goods, and that India's position was similar to that of all subject nations in the initial stage of their struggle.

Lest there be any mistake as to the attitude of the boycott towards the produce of Britain, let me quote the *Sanjibani*: "Oh, brothers, we will not pollute our hands by touching English goods. Let English goods rot in the warehouses, and be eaten by white ants and rats."

The mention of the *Bande Mataram* newspaper suggests a word upon the signification of this now famous expression, which is translated: "Hail, motherland!" whenever the object is to give it an innocent and commonplace meaning. The words however mean not: "Hail, motherland!" but "Hail, Mother!" "I reverence the mother"—that is to say, Mother Kali, the goddess of death and destruction. The word *mataram* is never used in the sense of the mother country. I have, myself, never come across it with this signification, neither has Mr Grierson, who at any rate is a great authority. The expression, in fact, is on all fours with the cry: "Victory to Mother

Kali!" which is associated with many scenes of riot and bloodshed.

It is an appeal to the lower instincts and ideals of Hindooism in its most demoralising aspects. Students now shout the cry into the ears of passing white men far more aggressively than Chinamen exclaim, or did at any rate twenty years ago: "Fankwei," or foreign devil, as an European passed them in the street.

Again consider the origin of the phrase. *Bande Mataram* is the rebel national song. It was put by Babu Bankim Chandra Chatterjee into the mouths of Hindoo Sanyasis who rebelled against their sovereign lord, the Nawab of Bengal, in the eighteenth century. The novel "Anandamath" was published in 1881, and of course, owing to its origin, the phrase *Bande Mataram* is peculiarly obnoxious to the Mahomedans. It is now habitually used with the intention of conveying an insult to them and to the English, and so kills two birds with the one stone, while boycott and *Svadeshi* were both alike intended to further the anti-partition policy, upon which the efforts of the agitators in Bengal and Poona were concentrated.

The case for partition is seldom or never stated, and the fact is always overlooked that it had already been decided by Lord Elgin that Bengal was too large, and that division was necessary.

The political agitators, who organised and maintained the anti-partition movement, and control the Bengali press, are for the most part journalists and schoolmasters—the latter being very frequently politicians,—barristers, and pleaders, whose interest it is to concentrate their legal practice in Calcutta, and zemindars with large estates in Eastern Bengal, who, living

by choice in Calcutta, find it convenient to have their Government headquarters there, instead of at far-away and provincial Dacca. Others who are in the same position in this behalf are the landlords, who saw their interests attacked, and the ascendancy of Calcutta and of the Bengali-Hindoo element threatened, by this division of Bengal. False stories were accordingly circulated to the effect that the object of the Government was to raise the taxes, to deport coolies, and such like rumours. All through the campaign Hindoo schoolboys and students have been urged into the front of the battle, while the real protagonists have been hidden away in the background, and many of these youths have been ruined for life by being implicated in criminal cases, for which they have to thank their Babu tutors in the arts of agitation. A circular was distributed through the agency of the bar libraries in Eastern Bengal, calling the English "lying cheats, who are ruining our life in the world, ruining our industries, and importing their own manufactures, plunder our fields, and throw us into the jaws of fever, famine, and plague. It is our blood they are sucking. Shall we bear it any more? These Feringhees have divided our Golden Bengal into two parts. Swear in the name of Kali that we Hindoos and Mussulmans will serve our country united, and will behead anyone who obstructs."

If the Bengalis had been anxious to prove that there were good reasons for decentralisation of the administration, rather than for concentration at Calcutta, they could not have been more successful than they have been. Partition of course affects the ascendancy of the educated Bengalis, and therefore the interests of the lawyers, schoolmasters, journalists, and others



whose prosperity depends upon the continued influence of Calcutta over the whole of Bengal. Partition moreover dealt a blow at the political influence they were acquiring by simulating and stimulating the sense of national unity amongst the Hindoo population of the province. Bengalis themselves have no particular claim to be regarded as a nation, and, as shown elsewhere, they are by no means the most educated people in India, indeed, the masses of the province are steeped in superstition, and the proportion of Bengalis educated, in the European sense, is admitted to be about one per cent. of the population. This small minority, however, has been very effectively occupied in debauching the loyalty of the student class, prone in every country to revolutionary feelings, *cereus in vitium flecti*, and flattered at being treated as a political power.

In and around Dacca, the capital of the new province of Eastern Bengal, the centre of a most prosperous country, and of the jute industry, there has been in the past, until the constitution of the new province, very little, far too little, European supervision, and the local landowners, moneylenders, and their agents have acquired great, nay, excessive, influence. These are the classes known as Babus, and with their aid it was possible to turn the *Svadeshi* movement into new and extended channels. Everywhere the people were told that the English were exploiting and ruining the country. The national Volunteer Movement, which was originally a harmless physical exercise and athletic club sort of association, was, after the model of the "Boxers," pressed into the service, and since the Mahomedans are two-thirds of the population of Eastern Bengal, and one Mahomedan is equal to at

least three Hindoos in fair fight, and since the former naturally approve of the elevation into a Lieutenant-Governorship of the province in which they are in the majority, the national volunteers had a very moderate success. Nevertheless, they tried to force the Mahomedans to join them in the anti-partition demonstrations, which led to riots at Jamalpore, among other places. One Hindoo was shot in the thigh, and an old man and a boy were beaten to death while engaged in loot, and a few Hindoo widows were carried off by Mahomedans, who, unlike their own males, have no objection to relations with them. Naturally, this riot, which the Hindoos, and not the Mussulmans, provoked, was exaggerated into a terrible onslaught by the Mussulmans upon the peaceful Hindoo population.

It may fairly be said that the boycott and volunteer movements have failed in Eastern Bengal to do more than produce a feeling of unrest, and to undermine the discipline of the students' classes, and it is admitted that the deportation of the two agitators in the Punjab produced an immediate effect for good upon the agitation in this far-distant region.

Nothing is too unlikely for the supporters of the anti-partition movement to urge. Thus we find Sir Henry Cotton writing in an English provincial paper "that the leaders of both sections of the community in Eastern Bengal are, for the most part, united in condemning partition, but that the ignorant and unruly masses of the Mahomedans have been roused to acts of violence by fanatic emissaries. Vain efforts were made to show that certain Mahomedan leaders did not approve of the partition, but they completely failed." Had any disproof of Sir H. Cotton's allegations been needed, it was afforded by Rafiuddin Ahmad,

President of the Mahomedan Conference, held at Lucknow, to adopt the address to Lord Minto, who wrote to *The Times* to say that each member of this deputation was asked his opinion, and that all were unanimous in their approval of partition, and indeed the Mahomedans had already, in each province, passed a resolution in favour of the change—a fact well-known to Lord Minto, who, in answering the address, thanked the Mahomedan community of Eastern Bengal for their moderation and self-restraint. Mr Rafiuddin Ahmad further said, what is notorious to all who have any acquaintance with the subject, that the partition agitation is engineered in England, and kept up in India, owing to the hopes which certain members of Parliament hold out to ignorant people in Bengal that Mr Morley will yield if sufficient pressure were brought to bear upon him. Thus, Mr O'Donnell, M.P., for instance, wrote to Mr Bannerji :

“Keep on agitating and do so effectively, large meetings are the most useful, you have the justest of causes, and I hope you will make your voice heard. Everything depends on you in India, and remember a Whig does nothing unless pressed. Have mass meetings by the dozen in every district, indoor and out of doors. Morley will yet yield.”

Such encouragement produced no little effect, for Bengalis are notoriously more excitable than the more staid and phlegmatic followers of the Prophet. Moreover the Hinduism of Bengal is of a peculiar type, more morbid and emotional than elsewhere, and as Mr Oman, a very well-informed and recent writer held, more calculated to effeminate the race. It is among the Bengalis that the most popular worship is

that of Kali the eponymous heroine of Calcutta, the mother of *Bande Mataram*, the goddess, who loves, and exacts, bloody sacrifices, in our day, of goats, but before it, of human beings, as well as of animals. It is among the Bengalis that licentious rites are usual at the Durgapuja festival, and it was in the temple of Kali at Calcutta that seditious meetings have of late been held. It is in Bengal alone that the Kulin Brahmins practise a peculiarly bad form of polygamy. It would not become a subject of the British Empire, and I at any rate would never suggest, that we should exact in Bengal the ethical standard, or rather ideal, which obtains in Britain, but that this is polygamy *in excelsis* is evident from the fact that the partisans of the Babus have endeavoured in vain to deny its existence, including an ex-official of the Bengal Government, who has thrown in his lot with this party, and actually went so far as to say that Kulinism was extinct, until his solitary voice was drowned in a dissenting chorus of unimpeachable authority.

It is partly owing to this emotional and excitable temperament that the Bengalis have easily been induced to imitate, and take part in, attacks upon Mahomedans. Nevertheless the participators in such disorders have been almost exclusively dwellers in towns who have come under, or were originally under, the influence of the Babu element. The ordinary Bengali villager is a peaceable and estimable person, and he and his representatives have lost no opportunity of manifesting their disapproval of the anti-partition agitation. It is, however, the case that in the large towns classes which have hitherto been loyal and orderly in character have been guilty of riotous conduct. For instance, in the riots which occurred

last year at Calcutta on October 2nd and 3rd, while the charges against the police were proved to be grossly exaggerated, the Government of Bengal discovered the fact that the disturbances took their origin in the conduct of a usually orderly class of people, from which it drew the conclusion that they were the outcome of the writings and speeches of agitators. The Lieutenant-Governor, Sir Andrew Fraser, warned the Government of India of much more serious possibilities, if a naturally turbulent class followed this example, as a direct outcome of the persistent campaign on the platform and in the press, carried on with the object of bringing constituted authority into contempt, and encouraging resistance to the police. Few will be of opinion that Sir A. Fraser spoke too soon.

In like manner unusual and unfortunate features distinguished the assaults committed by Hindoos on Mahomedans at Comilla in March last year, when the former, incensed by a meeting held by the latter religionists in support of the partition, attacked the Nawab of Decca, assaulted his private secretary, and killed and wounded some of his followers.

Among the leaders of the anti-British faction are men of considerable ability—for instance, Mr Bepin Chandra Pal, who has fully expounded the gospel of the new movement. He, like the writer of these pages, was present when the first Congress met in Madras in 1887, and he again visited the southern capital last year, and explained that the British had not kept their promises, and that he had lost faith in them.

He denounced Mr Morley's statement that so far as his imagination reached, so long must the Govern-

ment be personal and absolute, and, unlike some adherents of the Congress in England, he admitted that there could be no constitutional agitation in India. He referred to a full revelation of the policy of self-government which was proclaimed by Mr Dadabhai Naoroji at the Congress of 1906. Good government, even if the British Government became good, was no substitute for self-government. India could not be kept by the sword, the army was not big enough. It was the natives of India now who governed India, the British only stood at the top and took the biggest pay. The British incubus once removed, prohibitive tariffs would be imposed on Manchester and Sheffield goods, and English trade with India would soon be a thing of the past. Englishmen would be refused admittance to the country, and British capital would be rejected. If the revolution in India were permitted to be peaceful, the United States of India would be evolved and the ægis of Britain might be left till a conflict arose. If the situation then called for a dictatorship, the Amir of Afghanistan was a man with a headpiece on his shoulders, and it was not merely due to love of gaiety that he made a visit to India. Mr Naoroji is claimed, not without reason, as a sharer of these views, and he is regarded as a Moderate Congressman, and is one whom Englishmen in high places, whether wisely or not, go out of their way to honour. Few who know Orientals will think it is expedient to kiss the rod, and until India turns Christian, and probably after, it will be better not to condone openly avowed disaffection.

Again, Babu Bepin Chandra recommended vast quasi-religious meetings, at which white goats should



be sacrificed. White goats probably means Europeans. The Government would not prohibit such assemblies, and the holding of such midnight ceremonies at regular intervals would have great meaning, and might, like the chupatties, work wonders. This reference to the mysterious circulation of cakes just before the Mutiny frightened the Babu, when he saw it published in his own paper, *Bande Mataram*, and the newspaper subsequently more or less repudiated its own report. Babu Bepin has, however, as a consequence of other proceedings, made the acquaintance of the inside of a jail.

Late in 1907, when agitation in Bengal was subsiding, came the visit of Mr Keir Hardie, M.P., leader in Parliament of the Labour party, who, before leaving England, had said: "A lying press campaign is being waged to bias the people of this country against the natives, and make it difficult for Government to do anything to break down the official caste, under which we hold them in the bondage of subjection. I may be able to let a light in upon the dark places of Indian government. Needless to add I go as a warm supporter of the claims of the people. My time will be brief, but with the aid of friends I hope to turn it to good account." Such words bespeak, perhaps, an impartial attitude and an open mind. At any rate, Mr Keir Hardie travelled about Eastern Bengal with Mr J. Chowdhury, a Bengali barrister, connected with the *Svadeshi* agitation, who explained in the press that he was not Mr Hardie's secretary, but served him out of love and admiration, without any intention of prejudicing him against any sect or class he interviewed. Thus he accused and excused himself, while Mr Hardie spoke at Barisal, a local

storm centre, and is reported to have said he would do his best to make India a self-governing colony like Canada, as what was good for the Canadians must be good for the Indians, a statement which defies criticism, and, as Mr Morley observed, is as reasonable as to hold that because a fur coat is good to wear in Canada it is good to wear in India.

Other statements attributed to Mr Hardie, in which exceedingly strong language was used against the Government, he repudiated, and of course his disclaimer must be accepted, but the Bengali press described his advent as the act of God, in order to the demolition of a gigantic conspiracy against the Hindoos. The cry that Russian methods had been adopted in Eastern Bengal apparently originated in the conviction of Surendra Nath Bannerji, who was fined 400 rupees (£26) for breach of the police regulations for the conduct of processions, the Babu having dexterously persuaded the police to arrest him, to the profound annoyance of the editor of a rival Bengali newspaper, which protested that Babu Bannerji had no right to selfishly take all the glory to himself. It appeared that Mr Hardie's known views on Asiatic labour in British colonies were not such as to commend him at the outset to the Bengali Babus, but they overlooked this objection in their anxiety to aid him upon his impartial quest after truth. The Labour party, he said, was intensely anxious to see a much larger share given to the natives in the government of the country. Mr Hardie compared *Svadeshi* with Sinn Fein, but one of the Indian weeklies, *The Spectator*, unkindly reminded the Bengalis that he had protested in Parliament that Indian manufacturers should not

have the benefit of long hours of work in addition to cheap labour.

The Indian papers report that Mr Hardie cried : "*Bande Mataram*," or Hail, Kali!" at Barisal, amid the lusty cheers of his audience. Nothing could more aptly have illustrated the extraordinary position in which a stranger is placed who, ignorant of India, puts himself in the hands of the Babus. The leader of Labour in England, the denouncer of Indian labour in the Colonies, cries : "Hail to the goddess of destruction! in Bengal!" The utmost sincerity, the most anxious endeavour to get at the truth, the sublimest impartiality, would not suffice to save a man in such a situation.

*The Amrita Bazaar Patrika* kept records of Mr Hardie's words and of his interviews, with the aid of interpreters belonging to the disaffected faction, with petty cultivators and shopkeepers. Mr Hardie was horrified, it was said, at the contents of a native hut, and was evidently unaware that the owners of palaces have as much, or rather as little, furniture in the rooms in which they actually live, in the East. A low standard of wants does not necessarily evidence poverty. A punkah is a luxury, but it is a far greater luxury not to need a punkah.

From representative Mahomedans Mr Hardie was unable to learn anything, owing to his being under the guidance of a prominent Calcutta agitator, Mr J. Chowdhury, and, on his arrival at Calcutta, the editor of *The Englishman*, Mr Duchesne, questioned him upon the reports of *The Englishman's* correspondent at Barisal, but he gave no information regarding the Mahomedans he had interviewed, or the interpreter who had communicated between him and them.

He thought, however, that while Government interpreters often made mistakes, his own interpreter was exempt from this failing, and indeed it is probable that the latter made no mistake in carrying out the duty entrusted to him. Mr Hardie seems to have accepted anything the Hindoo agitators told him of the truculent and immoral character of Mahomedans as the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, and he prescribed freedom, such as is enjoyed by Australia and Canada, as the remedy for all the ills to which Indian flesh is heir.

This interest in India on the part of Labour members—or Labourites, as they are called in the Indian press, probably following the analogy of the familiar anchorite—is a new development, and it is not a little extraordinary to see an honourable member of Parliament, with the utmost sincerity and purity of purpose, dancing to the tune set by the Congress as the representatives of the Indian upper and aristocratic classes, and repeated in England at the expense of landlords, against whom the British Government had had by repeated enactments to protect their tenants.

## CHAPTER IX

### UNREST

The Press in Bengal, in Bombay, in the Punjaub—The Bar Libraries—Deportation of Laj. Patrai—Punjaub Colonisation—Agitation in Madras—The Partition of Bengal—Proofs of Loyalty to the British Government—Remedies for Unrest

IT is now seven years since, in *The Nineteenth Century*, I urged that the newspapers published by Indians for Indians, whether written in English or in the vernacular languages, deserved more attention than they received ; that they were the sole means whereby the inhabitants of India learnt what was going on in their own and in other countries ; that to them exclusively educated Indians owed their news, and from them they took their opinions. I testified to the ability of these journals, upon which it was one of my official duties for many years to report, and gratefully acknowledged their loyalty during the dark days of the war in South Africa. *The Bengali*, now so vituperative of, and hostile to, Britain, and British administration, then quoted Skobelev's statement that "England is a vampire seeking the last drop of India's blood," and added, "India thinks otherwise. Russian rule would blast our hopes of political progress, and advancement, and destroy our dreams of self-government." *The Amrita Bazaar Patrika*, now another enemy in Bengal, then wrote : "If the English proposed to leave, the people would entreat them to

remain." *The Mirror*, however, said : " The spirit of rationalism and criticism evoked by Occidental influences has undermined the foundations of Aryan faith and religion."

That was a true word, and the agitator found out long ago that contempt for the religion and customs of his country cut him off from the masses of the people, and began to mend his ways, so that at present beef-eating, England-visiting Bengalis are lecturing on the impurities of sugar and cotton sizing, as practised by the irreligious Englishmen to the destruction of the sacred caste of the Hindoo purchaser.

*The Tribune* of Lahore, not London, thought seven years ago that the people of the West had outgrown Christianity, wanted something more ethereal, more potent than what was presented by Jesus to half barbarians like the Jews, and offered a local prophet to supply the want. *The Hindu Patriot* at that time deplored the manner in which legislation affecting the social institutions of the country had been forced upon an unready and unwilling people, and instanced the Civil Marriage and Age of Consent Acts. That *The Patriot* was right I have never doubted, and alone among those who wrote on the subject I condemned the latter Act in *The Nineteenth Century*, and predicted that the results would be disastrous. True, the act has been a dead letter, but none the less the Hindoos do not forget that at the instance of a Parsee gentleman, backed by philanthropists and others, their British rulers made an offence of one of their cherished customs, because it offended against their own ethical ideals. Indeed I firmly believe that the action then taken is one at



least of the reasons why the Indian press at the present day manifests a far less satisfactory, and the Bengali press a downright seditious and hostile, attitude towards ourselves, and our Government in India.

Not that the Indian press as a whole can by any means be condemned as seditious. Take, for instance, recently published passages from *The Hindu Patriot* and *The Hindu Mirror*.

The former, the oldest native paper in India, wrote :

“It is self-advertisers who are at the bottom of the mischief, and these people ought to be kept out of all serious movements, for then the chances of ugly incidents occurring would be reduced to a minimum. It is easy to assume the leadership of men, but not so the task of rightly leading the people. . . . Only such men as have been found fit to guide and control the masses, and whose tried ability and wisdom are a guarantee that they will not lead their followers astray and ruin the cause they have taken up, should be admitted and recognised as leaders.”

The latter joined in condemning the extremists, and its attitude may be gathered from the following passage :—

“There is nothing in the national awakening of India to lead one to suppose that it is inconsistent with the maintenance of British rule. It is British rule which brought about this awakening, and through it alone can the ideal of an Indian nation be fulfilled. For over a century and a half England has been the model for India. Japan cannot thrust England out of her place. . . . We want a practical spirit in all our national work. The extremists think they can

conquer India by obstreperous noisy agitation. Well, they have not done so yet. . . . Internal reform and development are the two things essential to the real growth of Indian nationality."

Indeed, most of the journals in other than Hindoo hands are well disposed, such as the Parsee papers of Bombay, *The Lahore Observer* and *The Moslem Chronicle*, and papers edited by Hindoos cannot at all be comprehensively classed as disaffected, though the epithet applies pretty freely in Bengal.

In *The Parsee Chronicle* the opinion was expressed that the cardinal mistake of the Government had been to remain indifferent to sedition until the bitter seed had borne poisonous fruit, whereas the application of the ordinary law at an earlier period would have met the requirements of the case. It was pointed out that in native states the vernacular press is only allowed very moderate criticism, in spite of the theories of liberty and autonomy of which so much is heard from the agitators in British India. Even in Baroda, it was suggested, the windows were, with the help of Mr Dutt, dressed for advanced Indian and European admiration. Parsees were genuinely alarmed for trade lest the flow of British capital to India should be checked, and their organ pointed out that in the course of national evolution social and industrial progress is the prelude to political rights. The so-called drain, said the *Chronicle*, was entirely due to the fact that rich Indians would not use their own wealth in productive industries. The English Radical newspapers, which published effusions from youths at college, were severely criticised as having contributed to the creed that the Liberal Government would yield to any demand, however unreasonable,

for anything called, however erroneously, popular rights.

It would be difficult to state the case better, but *The Parsee Chronicle* is not concerned to conciliate those who regard a fur coat as equally suitable for hot and cold climates, and the liberty of the press to libel the Government as one of the essential virtues and necessary features of British rule in all parts of the globe.

The native newspapers in Bombay are to a very small extent Mahomedan, but chiefly Mahratti and Gujerati, the former, which is entirely under Brahmin management, being violently anti-British, and the latter fairly moderate, in tone and character. The Brahmins who control the press are here, as elsewhere, lawyers, landlords, writers, moneylenders, priests, clerks and Government servants, and the Mahrattas are landlords, cultivators, traders, and followers of other professions and callings. The Brahmins, who live in Poona, and exercise such journalistic influence, are often described as Mahratta Brahmins, but they are of course not Mahrattas, and do not represent the Mahratta race, or any race. They represent their own caste, the most exclusive and aristocratic in the world, the pretensions of which they have persuaded socialists and democrats in England to champion, a proof that the Brahmin's right hand has not lost its cunning.

The papers they inspire breathe fire and slaughter against ourselves. The editor of *The Vehari*, for instance, taking a poem by Mr Wilfrid Blunt as his text, said that India had fallen into slavery, and that the ultimate means of acquiring independence was by the sword, which must eventually be unsheathed.

The High Court of Bombay sentenced him to two years' imprisonment, and he had previously described the empire of the Feringhees (Europeans in India) as "Hell on Earth," and "the English as surpassing Nero, Nadir Shah, Tamerlane, and even Satan in cruelty. The whole world hated the English, and the mercifulness of God was being doubted because success was being granted to them." For these mild expressions of party feeling he had been bound over to be of good behaviour, but this was asking too much of a Brahmin in command of a Mahratti newspaper, and he soon again offended.

*The Deccan Herald* printed a manifesto calling on all honest Bengalis to rise and throw the Feringhees into the sea, killing 50,000 of them, and the proprietor and editor of *The Punjaubi* newspaper of Lahore were deservedly sent to jail for the publication of an article in which it was practically stated that all Englishwomen who frequented dances came thither for purposes of prostitution.

In the spring of 1907 *The Punjaubi* accused a European officer of wantonly shooting a policeman for some trifling offence. There was no shadow of evidence to support the story, and the two journalists concerned were convicted, the convictions being confirmed, though the sentences were reduced, in two successive Courts of Appeal. The men were treated as martyrs; an explosion of anti-British feeling took place as they were removed to prison, and the usual complaints were made in the House of Commons that liberty of speech and of the subject was being endangered in India.

But while the Bengali Babus were sowing sedition amongst the Hindoos of the Punjaub, and seditious