

imagine what purpose can be served by such wild and foolish talk. If the whole country is disloyal and discontented, does it reflect any credit upon British administration? Would it not be singular if the educated classes in a body were opposed to British rule? But no one who knows them has put forward such a suggestion, which has only emanated from the fevered brains of a few scaremongers. No less a critic than Lord Curzon has declared that the unrest in India is "skin-deep." Recent events have not affected the substantial truth of this verdict. It is true that there is a widespread feeling of discontent with British rule. But it is the inevitable awakening of the national consciousness, which has been fed and fostered by the "pax Britannica." In the history of the people there comes a time when commerce, industry, law, and good government cease to satisfy men's minds. There rises up then a vague feeling of dissatisfaction and a healthy restlessness. To call it sedition is preposterous. Lord Morley, before he was frightened into deporting respectable people, in his memorable Budget speech of 1906, proclaimed that he did not believe there was any disaffection in India worth speaking of. He expressly warned his hearers against over-readiness to scent evil and disaster. Unfortunately, it is the very thing that often happens, through lack of intimate acquaintance with the native character. It is useful to bear this in mind, when we come to consider the ways and means by which

sedition can most effectively be suppressed. The remedy must always be proportioned to the disease, and much evil results from unduly exaggerating the danger.

There are various ways in which sedition can be met. Bacon, in his essay on the subject, wisely remarks : "It is a thing well to be considered ; for the surest way to prevent seditious is to take away the matter of them. For if there be fuel prepared, it is hard to tell whence the spark shall come that shall set it on fire." Then he sets forth two causes that lie at the root of all trouble. Now, the remedy he prescribes is too obvious to require much argument. But it is generally the least thought of. It is plain that if we take away the matter of sedition it ceases to exist. Yes, but the question is, How shall we do it ? Here we enter upon large questions, and it would seem that the idea of changing the whole policy of the Government to suit the requirements of a few malcontents would be rather funny. But sober reasoning will tell us that as long as there is material for trouble there will always be trouble. Provided there is proper fuel, a spark will soon burst into a flame. In so much, therefore, as disaffection has materials to go upon, those materials must to some extent be removed. This need not involve such a change in the administration as may on first thoughts be supposed.

The prime cause of trouble is the want of confidence between the rulers and the ruled. As a first

measure, then, the people must be taken into the confidence of the Government. There should be no secrecy about its aims and policy, except under special circumstances. Nothing affords a better handle to the mischief-maker than an attitude of closeness and secrecy on the part of the authorities. He has then all the tools of his trade to work with : exaggeration, misrepresentation, calumny. Why should the Government fear to work in the open ? Let it submit its policy to the searchlight of public criticism before it is finally decided upon. Such a course would be of advantage both to the officials and to the people. Would it not have been better, for instance, to have consulted the wishes of the people before the Punjab Colonisation Bill was passed, rather than to have withdrawn it afterwards in deference to the popular will ? By that time much mischief had been done, and the Government had lost its prestige. This is but one of many instances in which deplorable results have ensued from working "in camera." Is it asking too much of the bureaucracy that they should let the people into their confidence, and thus prevent misconception and ill-feeling ? Surely it is a better preventive of sedition than deportations under an obsolete Regulation.

What I have suggested above is not a remedy, but a prevention. How, then, shall we meet sedition when we are confronted with it ? There ought to be no two opinions on the subject. Every one—

whatever his political views—must agree that sedition should be ruthlessly stamped out. If England is to retain her hold over this country, she must come down with a firm hand on those who attempt to subvert her authority. No Government, however powerful, can afford to ignore the open preaching of pernicious doctrines. A policy of indifference would be attended with serious consequences. We have lately tasted the fruits of the neglect of the Government to deal promptly and firmly with malcontents. The horrible atrocity in Muzaffapur showed the lengths to which miserable weak-minded men can go when once their minds have been worked upon by seditious doctrines. That retribution, then, should be swift and sure admits of no discussion. The problem is how to effect this object so that the ends which justice has in view may not be frustrated. On the one hand, there is the danger of making martyrs of insignificant persons; on the other hand, there is the grave risk to society of leaving dangerous criminals at large. To steer a middle course is the part of a wise statesman. Upon mature consideration, it will appear that what seems at first a difficult task admits of easy solution.

As sedition in India is more generally disseminated from the press than from the platform, I shall leave the latter out of consideration. What, however, applies to the one will, with certain modifications, apply to the other. To turn to the native press, then, within the last ten years the number of native

papers has greatly increased. The tone of Indian journalism has suffered much thereby. The taste for reading not being much cultivated in this country, new journals often have to cater for support by violent and sensational writings. Much of this is undiluted nonsense. Apart from that there is enough that is dangerous in character. Effusions of this kind must be severely dealt with. The offender must be warned twice, and if he still persists in his ways he must be brought before the regular tribunals of justice and dealt with according to law. On a second conviction he must be debarred ever afterwards from owning or editing any journal. The prosecution must not be conducted in a spirit of revengeful hostility—as was done in a famous case some years ago, when the Crown engaged all the leading talents of the local Bar—for this is calculated to bring discredit on the Government and attract undeserved sympathy towards the accused. Let Justice take her course, and if the offender is guilty he will assuredly pay the penalty of his misdeeds. When he has been tried and convicted, the journal which served to disseminate his views must be warned that its publication will be suppressed in case it transgresses again. If the Government has not this power, it must be acquired by special legislation.¹

Under present conditions, insignificant persons

¹ This has been done, since the essay was written, in the case of press incitements to violence.—ED.

are often put forward and made the wretched tools of clever, designing men who manage to keep outside the pale of the law. When these poor victims pay, as it were, for the sins of others, their places are taken up, and the guilty journal continues in its career of sedition. This is not a fancy picture, but based upon hard facts happening before our very eyes. Now, it is obvious that if persistently seditious papers are allowed to exist, the punishment meted out to their conductors fails to have a deterrent effect on the evil which it was meant to check. There are people who make light of a few months' imprisonment, provided they can again start on their career, specially as the circulation of their journal vastly increases after their supposed martyrdom. It is, therefore, necessary that such papers should be totally suppressed. Nor is it harsh to visit sedition with such consequences, if it is borne in mind that the prosecution of the offender takes place after two warnings, and the suppression of the paper only on a second conviction. People who are not deterred by repeated warnings or prosecutions must be so dealt with as to be rendered incapable ever afterwards of propagating mischievous doctrines. The higher the influence and position of the offender, the greater relatively must be his punishment, which should in no case be very severe. Insignificant persons should be dealt with lightly, as harsh sentences serve to give them an importance which they do not deserve. In all cases there should be a full and

free inquiry, and a prosecution must never be undertaken unless upon the clearest proofs. I think these provisions would go a long way towards checking a growing evil. There is nothing in them to which any reasonable man can take exception. They alter the existing arrangements but slightly, though in a much-needed direction. It has been suggested that all persons intending to start new journals should be required to furnish a substantial security. The suggestion has much to recommend it, but I am afraid it is not practicable.

I have now indicated some of the methods of suppressing sedition. There is one point, however, on which I cannot too strongly insist, and that is, that harsh repression can never achieve the object in view. Now that a new Press Act is said to be in contemplation, this note of warning cannot be too strongly sounded. At this critical juncture, the calm deliberation and ripe statesmanship of a Canning are needed. In the hour of danger, a policy of repression is apt to be mistaken for a policy of firmness. Let the Government of India beware of this. There should be no unreasonable checks on the safety-valve of public opinion, "for he that turneth the humours back, and maketh the wound bleed inwards, endangereth malign ulcers and pernicious imposthumations."¹ It is too often forgotten that intrigues carried on in secret are far more dangerous to the peace of the State than acts

¹ Bacon.

of open hostility. The Government of India lately acted in a manner which showed that they had not quite grasped this obvious fact. Finding that a regular campaign of sedition was being carried on from the platform, they passed a Bill which unreasonably restricted the right of public meeting itself. They did not reflect that what was publicly forbidden might be easily done in private, considering the difficulties under which a small number of police must labour when confronted with a vast population of various nationalities. The natural course for the Government to take was to bring to book such of the speakers as transgressed the limits of legitimate criticism. This could have been easily effected by a provision that at every public meeting official reporters should be present. The detection and punishment of seditious harangues would thus have been easy enough, and a few exemplary sentences could have effectually checked the evil. Instead, vexatious and unnecessary restrictions were placed upon the right of public meeting, and widespread dissatisfaction was caused thereby. What is more, the preaching of sedition continues as before, despite the industry of a corrupt and inefficient police.

These and like considerations will help us to understand the popular detestation of harsh and repressive measures. Very few people in England realised the intensity of public feeling evoked by the deportations some time ago of Lajpat Rai and

Ajit Singh. But such was the indignation felt by people at the injustice done to men against whom nothing was proved, that the Punjab was at one time on the brink of a revolt. It was rightly felt that to deport men without a trial under the sanction of an obsolete Regulation was a blot upon the fair name of British justice. The Regulation was passed at a time when England had not established herself firmly on Indian soil. It was a remedy suited to meet the exigencies of the period in which it was established. To revive it under conditions vastly different was to violate every canon of civilised jurisprudence. If the men were guilty, why were they not put on their trial? "Reasons of State" may be a convenient refuge, but they will not alter public opinion on the subject. Under such pretexts the Government could do away with any and every person who proved himself obnoxious. To supersede regular tribunals of justice is at all times dangerous, and particularly so at a period of unrest and ferment. It shocks our conscience to think that a man should be condemned without being heard in his defence. It is a great pity that the most odious act of the Indian Government for many a day should have received the approval of a philosopher who has worshipped at the shrine of Burke and Mill. But "Honest John" has put on many hues and shapes since he came to the India Office, and the irony of Fate was complete when he entered the House which he wanted to mend or end.

This subject would not be complete without some reference to a question closely related thereto and which promises to have a profound bearing on the course of Indian history. Of late, men have been asking whether our system of education has not contributed to the prevailing unrest and agitation. An instructive debate on the subject recently took place in the House of Commons. The question presents many points of difficulty, and to deal with it adequately would involve an inquiry into the net results of a system that has formed part of our Indian life for half a century. Looking at it from a critical standpoint, it must be admitted that our education policy has grievously failed in some respects. Inasmuch as it has done little for the growth and formation of character, it stands convicted of having shared largely in the shaping of the present state of affairs. In the zeal born of a noble cause, the statesmen of the earlier generation desired to engraft Western culture root and branch on Indian soil. Education was made too academic, too literary. The moral aspects of the question were overlooked. In the olden days the defects of the system were not apparent. The number of boys being very small, the influence of the professors could make itself felt. There was room for that personal factor on which so much depends. Thus, whatever was defective in the system was balanced by the hold which the professors had over the minds of their students.

But in these times of stress and activity such a thing is no longer possible. With the advance of culture we have found that our Universities have not quite realised the ideal of sending forth a healthy, level-headed, and manly set of young men to fight the battle of life. With the realisation of the fact has come the desire to alter the system responsible for these shortcomings. This is not the place to inquire into the merits or demerits of Lord Curzon's scheme of reform. Whatever may be involved by this and other schemes, education must be such that the imagination of the East may be schooled, not destroyed, by the learning of the West. It should aim at the development both of intellect and character. Without discipline, mere book-learning becomes useless and even dangerous. In India we are already realising the truth of this. Much of the sedition now rampant is a schoolboy affair. The recent dastardly outrages have been committed by hare-brained youths intoxicated with the pernicious doctrines of the scum of Western countries. I am far, far from saying that education is solely responsible for the present state of affairs. But it has prepared the soil on which cunning and intriguing persons have set to work with disastrous results. The minds of students have been inflamed to an extent which is scarcely credible. No wonder the poor fools play into the hands of clever agitators.

A powerful blow dealt at sedition will be to wean away schoolboys from bad influences. Whatever measures are framed to prevent their participation in politics must command the sympathy of every true Indian. Young minds are apt to be carried away by foolish notions of freedom and independence; specially when they devour without digesting Burke, Mill, and writers of that stamp. A true reading of history acts as a corrective to ill-formed notions, and I believe more attention might be paid to the subject than has hitherto been done. An attentive study of history will dispel many of the delusions under which ill-trained minds are apt to labour. It will be an evil day for India when her youths turn aside from the engrossing pursuits of arts, science, and literature to the dangerous attractions of politics. They who foster and encourage this tendency are the real enemies of the country. The men responsible for the recent dastardly outrages are not so much actual culprits but the infinitely more dangerous persons who spurred and egged them on. It is much to be regretted that the real criminals will escape the punishment that will be meted out to their less guilty brethren.

CHAPTER VII

THE OUTLOOK

THROUGHOUT this essay I have studiously refrained from mere loose assertions unsupported by argument, and have attempted to state my case with fairness and moderation. I should now like to supplement what I have said by a few general remarks, which, I trust, will not be considered out of place.

The dawn of the twentieth century has witnessed a new era in the history of this country. It has marked a distinct stage in our political progress, and has opened out before us new paths and fresh fields of work. What the future has in store for us no man can foresee. The Indian problem presents features that no country either in ancient or in modern times has hitherto presented. We have before us a vast heterogeneous population in all the various stages of civilisation, coming for the first time under the vivifying influence of Western civilisation and Western modes of thought. Whether the mingling of the speculative and imaginative

mind of the East with the logical and practical intellect of the West will ultimately produce a type superior to both, would be a very interesting question, but one with which we have no concern. What we are concerned with is to trace the results of implanting English institutions and English modes of government in the hoary soil of India. These results have falsified all expectations. It was perhaps anticipated that, being imbued with Western learning, the native would clamour for Western institutions. But the congresses and the conferences, the extremists, the seditionists, the anarchists, and all the rest of the various manifestations of political activity—these were not foreseen.

But these phenomena are of England's own creation. If the Government of India had moved with the times there would have been no unrest, no sedition. If it had recognised and encouraged the disinterested labours of the popular leaders the extremists and the anarchists would not have been produced. If it had respected the voice of the people the cult of the bomb would not have developed. It may be admitted that much of what goes on in India at the present time is inexcusable. But once dissatisfaction is allowed to grow, can it be directed and confined within well-defined limits? It would be futile to expect this. But the past is irrevocable, and let us spare our regrets. Instead, let us look to our future policy and shape it to suit the new forces at work. It is necessary that

England should pursue her great task in India in a different spirit from that which has dominated her hitherto. It is no longer possible to govern this country on the old hide-bound theories. We have outgrown the system of government on the Napoleonic principle of "everything for the people and nothing by the people." Why does the bureaucracy persistently ignore this glaring fact? The extreme unwillingness of British statesmen to comprehend the signs of the times is truly deplorable.

So acute a critic as Seeley has declared that the day Indians are united England must begin to pack her things, and make up her mind to march out of the country. He considers it impossible that a handful of Englishmen can stand against the patriotic union of three hundred millions of human beings. Recent events have shown that a united India is a living possibility. Must we then follow Seeley, and say that the end of English dominion is in sight? I refuse to accept any such view. The stability of English rule in India depends not upon the valour of British arms, not upon the physical force which England can command, but upon the firm basis of justice, sympathy, and righteousness. Any other relation between the two countries is impossible. England will be digging her own grave if she pins her faith to the pernicious doctrine of the sword, and leaves out of account that moral force which is the greatest

asset of an empire. The military strength of a nation is an inconstant factor. Greece, Rome, Babylonia, Persia, Turkey, Spain, each rose and fell in the inexorable workings of Fate. Will England continue to rule the greater part of the world with her own unaided strength? How long will she hold Canada, Australia, South Africa, India and a host of other possessions with the might of her armies and her fleet? Already the moral factor—the feeling of kinship and loyalty—is beginning to be the dominating influence in the relations of the mother-country with her daughters across the seas. The ominous example of the American colonies is exercising its influence over British statesmen. It is being slowly recognised that the colonies have become too powerful and independent. Very recently a Canadian judge declared that Canada will soon be recognised as an ally instead of a unit of the Empire. How long, then, does England expect to govern India by the sword in the face of the growing forces of nationalism?

These and like considerations make it imperative that England should banish from primacy the military factor. India has never been and will never be held by the sword. This has been fully recognised by all who are competent to judge. But it is not sufficient merely to acknowledge the principle. It must be acted up to in a manner calculated to make it a living force. Now if it is held that the stability of England's rule in India depends

upon the willing allegiance of her subjects, it follows that no reasonable efforts should be spared to maintain and foster that allegiance. This can only be effected by a wise policy of reform, by a generous response to Indian aspirations, and by a just recognition of Indian subjects as citizens of the British Empire. If you continue to govern on the old cast-iron system, if you refuse to encourage the just aspirations of the people, and if you allow your Indian subjects to be trampled upon by your own colonies, then you are seriously undermining the deep-seated feelings of gratitude and loyalty which are so characteristic of the Indian people. Lord Curzon did not exaggerate when he said that India was the mainstay of the Empire. What a vast accession of strength she would be to the old country is but dimly realised.

And this brings home the sad reflection that the English people as a rule know very little and care still less about the affairs of this country. Whatever interests them beyond their own concerns pertains to the colonies. This may be partly natural; but it is none the less deplorable. Many of even the ablest of English statesmen are blissfully ignorant of what takes place in this country. The Indian debates are carried on in a nearly empty House. Crores of rupees are voted away with as much unconcern as if only the parish pump was in question. While this state of things continues there is little hope for this country. As long as English public opinion

is not brought to bear upon Indian policy, so long will the administration remain lifeless and soulless. No praise is too great for the disinterested labours of men like Sir Henry Cotton and Sir William Wedderburn, who are doing so much to enlighten public opinion in England. If only they were listened to with the attention they deserve, how much could be achieved ! But unfortunately the British public has other mentors as well, notably Mr. Rees, who is playing the heroic rôle of the champion of the bureaucracy. Thus it comes to pass that India is often either ignored or misunderstood.

However that may be, of this I am convinced, that, when once the conscience of England is roused, the sacred trust which an all-wise Providence has placed in her hands will be nobly discharged. The nation which has carried to the uttermost corners of the world the principles of justice and liberty will ultimately not fail in their application to the governance of a fifth of the human race. The present situation is one of great difficulty, but I do not believe that General Gordon was right when he said that India would never be reformed until she was in the throes of another revolt.

REGENERATION ON A
RACIAL BASIS

By ACTION FRONT

CHAPTER I

AN ALLEGORY

BEFORE entering into the questions framed by Mr. Laidlaw it will not be inappropriate to preface this essay with the following story of how the tiger became the king of the Indian forests, holding despotic sway over the lives of all the other jungle folk. The fable was related to me at the conclusion of a discussion I had with a shrewd native politician, whose comment at its close was: "Wisdom may be acquired even from little things. Let us hope the British Lion will profit by the fate of his fabled prototype."

Once upon a time there was a great and beautiful jungle-land which stretched from the north to the south and from the east to the west, and the lord of it all was the noble lion. He ruled over his subjects as a benevolent despot, and was admired and respected by all. He only took from the jungle that which was his due and what was absolutely necessary to maintain his regal position. He was a terror to evildoers, but the bulk of his subjects lived in peace and amity, increased and multiplied, and grew fast on the land. There was no danger to apprehend, as good King Lion guarded them all from both internal troubles and foreign foes.

They lived for a long time in such peaceful conditions ; but eventually the very peace brought forth grumblers, who knew nothing of the outside world, and began to think that their peaceful and happy condition was due to their own innate good qualities and had nothing to do with the fact of the lion being their King. They grumbled and groused and made much mischief, and at last decided that there should be a general meeting of all the animals to discuss the situation. On the occasion the leading grumblers explained in their own way that there was no necessity to have a King over all ; that it would be better if all the different animals governed themselves, and lived in their own way, and used the jungle as it best suited them. A good number of the foolish creatures were led away by the plausible arguments, and gave a " No King " vote. But a very much larger number remained neutral, and said they would wait and see what would happen, as they feared the lion's wrath.

At this stage the wolf, the hawk, the cobra, and the scorpion formed themselves into a committee of ways and means, and informed the beasts and birds that they would rid the forest of the lion, provided the others promised to support their efforts either actively or by passive resistance.

The disaffected quartet talked much, but were unable to combine for an open attack on the lion, for they feared his might, and, what is of much more consequence, they distrusted each other. Failing in this direction, they decided that it would be safer to try to worry the lion, and make his life henceforth such a burden to him that he would of his own accord abandon the jungle and go and live elsewhere—they did not care where, as long as they had the jungle to themselves. This plan appealed to them, for besides entailing less danger, it brought them a certain amount of cheap notoriety among the rest of the jungle denizens.

So it came to pass that henceforth the lion was subjected to all sorts of petty annoyances, and his rule in the forest was thwarted and upset in many little ways. When the lion went out for his dinner, the wolf would howl round him and frighten all the game away. The hawk would circle screaming round his head, and occasionally peck at his eyes. The cobra would suddenly rise out of the grass and puff himself

out and threaten to bite him ; and the scorpion used to nip at his large paws and threaten to sting him ; and so on, day by day and week by week, the proud lion was pestered by these contemptible tormentors, and he was very unhappy in mind at the base ingratitude of these creatures, whom he had fostered and protected for so many ages. He could have wiped them out by one sweep of his powerful paws ; but he was sorry for them, and felt that it was their ignorance of the world that made them so disrespectful and foolish. He thought he would gently reason with them and convince them of the folly of their ways. But his equanimity had the opposite effect, for they said, " Behold, the lion is afraid of us, or he would not speak to us like this. If he really was strong he would punish us ; so courage, brothers—let us renew our efforts to drive him out. He will soon go, for is he not already showing signs of weakness and despair ? "

So things went on in the forest from bad to worse. Occasionally the lion growled and slapped a few of his tormentors, and they got hurt and some died ; but he was too magnanimous to slaughter them all, as he could easily have done, and thus put a final stop to these evil doings. He just looked on with contempt, tempered with a great deal of pity for his misguided and foolish subjects. As a matter of fact, he was far too good a King, and as he had no evil thoughts against the other animals, he in his benevolence thought that they also were too noble-hearted to do him any real injury. But his magnanimity and compassionate heart were his undoing. He gradually became careless as well as contemptuous and pitiful. One day, after a hard day's work, he came home and lay down to rest. He slept heavily, and was therefore not as conscious as usual of the noises round him. This was the opportunity the disaffected were waiting for, and they fell upon their slumbering monarch.

The cobra sneaked up and inflicted a poisonous wound ; the hawk swooped down and pecked at his eyes ; the wolf flew at his throat ; while the scorpion crawled round and stung the dying lion wherever he could safely make an attack. Taken by surprise by those he still trusted, the poor lion was unable to defend himself, so he was cruelly done to death and his carcass was thrown out into the sea. The four

miscreants then devastated the lion's home and slaughtered all his loyal adherents. After that they went and bathed, and cleaned and perfumed themselves, and put flowers and coloured paints on their foreheads, and then presented themselves to all the other animals and announced that henceforth they were free and could do whatever they liked in the forest. There were great rejoicings, and old enemies embraced each other and promised eternal friendship, and the wolf and the lamb played together, and for a time they all revelled in their freedom.

But the wolf, the hawk, the snake and the scorpion, having tasted power, were loath to come down to the common level for ever, so they decided among themselves that they should combine to rule the others. By the latter there was much weeping and gnashing of teeth and lamentations over the happy past. But it was too late, they could not resist their persecutors; the good old time had gone for ever. This state of affairs did not last long, however, for the wolf and the hawk and the snake and the scorpion—bred in suspicion and distrust—began to quarrel among themselves. Then they fell upon each other, and they and their followers fought and killed and slaughtered and looted by day and by night, and the forests rang with the pain and anguish of the wounded and dying, and the streamlets flowed red with the blood of the dead.

The smell of the blood and the cry of the dying were noticed in north, south, east, and west, and there was much comment and agitation among the animals of the world. At last, however, a mighty tiger, who roamed about in a spirit of adventure, seeking whom he could devour, decided to go to the forest and see whether he could do anything for himself in the commotion that was raging. But he was wise in his generation and took no risks; so he invited the leopard and the monkey and the mongoose to join him in the expedition. On arriving at the forest they saw it was a good place to live in, so they decided to conquer the other animals and possess themselves of all that was therein. To the leopard the tiger said, "Go thou and wage war on the wolf and all his tribe." To the monkey was allotted the freedom of the trees and the task of eating up the eggs and

young of the hawk and all feathered creatures. The mongoose was told to kill the cobra, and hereafter to spare no kind of snake.

And so it happened that the tiger established his terrible reign over the forest—and you will find him there to this day, and none of the jungle inhabitants have since known what safety or peace means. For every animal is against every other animal, and the tiger reigns supreme, taking his toll from all. The mournful cry of the koel is heard in the forest to this day lamenting over the happy days when he sang in the mango-tree over the peaceful lion, and the jackal howls dismally of a night, calling on the lion to return to his kingdom; but there is no lion now to hear either cry. As they have sown so they have reaped, and the night of death is over all.

This is the legend of how the lion, through his own thoughtless benevolence, disappeared from India, and how the shortsighted animals of his great kingdom returned once more to primitive savagery and desolation under despotic King Tiger and his ruthless followers.

CHAPTER II

ETHNIC TYPES

"IS it possible for the diverse races of India to become one united self-governing community?" Before answering this question it is necessary that we should survey the histories of other portions of the globe and see whether we have any analogous examples to base our theories on. The only modern instance of a variety of peoples forming one self-governing community is that of the United States of America.¹ There we have seventy-eight million people under one law and one government, speaking the same language, and practising one fundamental religion. Of this population the bulk are descendants of British colonists and immigrants. A comparatively small proportion are of Latin, German, and Scandinavian origin, and the balance is made up of ten million negroes and

¹ The writer probably means the most striking instance, for he must be aware of both German and Italian unification in the last century.—ED.

about half a million or so of aboriginal Red Indians.

It will be seen the preponderating factor is the Anglo-Saxon element. This virile and robust stock has imposed its language and its government on all the minor races, whom it has also absorbed, with the exception of the negro and the Red Indian. The latter race is already doomed to extinction because of its inability to conform to the life and ethical standards of the superior white majority. The negro population, on the other hand, is steadily increasing in numbers, but it has always formed a separate and distinct nationality in the United States. Though for ages the negroes have had the same government, language, and religion as the white Americans, they cannot be assimilated by the latter, and there is no doubt if they were able to do so they would separate entirely and evolve some form of kingdom or republic of their own. What is it that prevents the negro and the Red Indian from becoming one united community with the rest of the American nation? It is not the religion, language, or government of the country, for all these have already been adopted more or less by both these races, and yet they remain separate and antagonistic to the true American—and will do so as long as they exist.

To get a true appreciation of this problem one must go back to the origin of races. Ethnology teaches us that the different races of the globe

are products of certain climatic, geographical, and natural conditions—that the food they eat, the water they drink and the air they breathe, and the general environment of their habitation, go to form the peculiar physical and mental characteristics of each race. We also know that each portion of the earth's surface produces its own particular type of fauna and flora, and that these arrive at their highest limit of development in the land of their origin. There are a few apparent exceptions to this rule; but even these are explainable by later discoveries, which show that in instances where a vegetable or an animal has been transplanted to a new country and has thriven better there, it has really in the dim past originated there, or in a land with identical conditions. Its present home is simply due to some accidental circumstance, brought about by some great natural cataclysm or by unavoidable human agency, which has changed its previous favourable conditions of existence. The exotics have eventually adapted themselves to a changed environment, but have continued their species with a lesser degree of vitality and development. They therefore exist in a modified form and are no longer identical in every way with the original type.

The negro, for instance, attained his highest state of physical development in the land of his origin, namely Africa; and his mentality, if it ever develops beyond its present stage, will be developed in

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Africa and not in America, and will be of a dissimilar standard to that of Europe. The Red Indian, on the other hand, is entirely the product of American environment, and he has long since arrived at his highest state of development. Brought into contact with a more virile race, the product of European evolution—he is bound sooner or later to succumb to changed conditions of life. Being the ultimate human product of his own country, the natural laws of his environment effectually prevent his ever becoming a European or African ; his extinction is therefore only a question of time. While the Red Indian cannot become a European in his own country, it is conceivable, on the other hand, that an American of European descent might in the course of time conform to the type of the Red Indian. It is a very remarkable fact that this reversion to the aboriginal type is already noticeable to a certain extent in Americans of pure white descent. It is conjectured that if America could again be absolutely isolated from the rest of the world, in a million, or it may be only a few thousand years, the whole population would physically and perhaps mentally resemble the extinct Red Indian. This conformity to an aboriginal type has also been noticed in China and Africa, where children born of white residents have frequently shown distinct traces of the Chinese and African cast of features.

It follows that if the American and the negro are ever to fuse into one race, it will only be

when they, after many æons, have evolved into the aboriginal Indian type. But this can never be, because the American population has a constant inflow of white blood from Europe, while the negro, coming originally from a distinct type in Africa, and now living in a somewhat similar tropical climate in America, will tend to remain a negro for an incalculable and indefinite period.

The reason why the immigrant European races have hitherto partially fused into the Yankee type is because the latter is the preponderating factor, while all are more or less of the same stock. This tendency to racial fusion is, however, already showing signs of abridgment, as the later immigrants are forming distinct colonies of their own, where their own language, customs, and characteristics are being perpetuated. If this continues, there can be no doubt that the United States of America will eventually be formed of many separate nationalities. The question will then arise as to whether these races will remain as integral portions of the United States or separate therefrom and form independent governments of their own.

Two distinct inferences may be drawn from what has already been said. They are, first, that an aboriginal conquered race can never change its typical racial characteristics and rise entirely to the new standards of its superior invading conquerors; while on the other hand it is quite possible for the latter, in the course of time, to

gradually conform to the aboriginal type and thus lose their own distinctive qualities. That is to say, given a set of conditions, nature will always produce the same result as often as the conditions are repeated. These results may be artificially modified for a time, but they can never be radically altered in essentials. The second inference is that even under favourable circumstances diverse races do not naturally coalesce to form a united self-governing community. The tendency, on the contrary, is for different races to separate and for each to work out its own salvation independently.

This latter fact will be now clearly elucidated as we survey the races of Europe, where we have at the present moment over a score of separate and independent governments, many of which are gradually but surely splitting up into fresh racial divisions. The original empire of Turkey in Europe has, for instance, within the last century been divided into Turkey proper, Bosnia, Servia, Montenegro, Bulgaria, and Roumania. Norway and Sweden separated only the other day. In the United Kingdom itself Ireland has always agitated for independent government, and Wales is asserting its distinct nationality. Russia shows the same tendency to disintegrate and form many separate nationalities. And there can be no doubt that, if the Hungarians were in a position to do so, they would strike for absolute independence from Austria. In cases where two or more races have

formed one government this may as a rule be traced to *force majeure*; for instance, the Danes and Poles would not be factors in the German Empire if they could possibly avoid it.

There are practically only three great families of human speech in all Europe, namely the Slav, the Teutonic, and the Latin, and there is only one religion throughout, and that is Christianity. Yet no reasonable person has ever suggested the possibility or even the desirability of fusing the whole of Europe into one self-governing community. If such a doctrine were preached its promoters would be classed among the wildest of visionaries, and their retrograde and unpractical scheme would be laughed to scorn by all thinking men. All civilisations, on the contrary, have proved that rivalry and racial competition have been the essence of progress. Without such incentives a nation stagnates and eventually degenerates. The continuity of progress in Europe proves that the independent development of each race is the best means of perfecting the highest attributes of mankind. Europe would not be what it is but for the individual development of each of its component parts.

CHAPTER III

A LAND OF CONTRASTS

BEFORE applying our previous deductions to India, let us analyse the factors which go to the composition of that vast continent.

In area India is 1,766,557 square miles, and therefore greater by 12,000 square miles than the whole of Europe, excluding Russia. Of this area 61·5 per cent. is under British administration and 38·5 per cent. under native government. In the last census (March, 1901) the total population was roundly 294 million persons, or about one-fifth of the whole world, of whom 232 millions were enumerated in British territory, and 62 millions in the Native States. These figures held good seven years ago, but considering the rapid increase of the population, the present numbers are computed to be over 300 millions, and this is the enormous total that should be borne in mind when Indian problems are discussed.

However, for the sake of absolute exactness we will deal only with the actual figures given in the

1901 census. Of the total population 70 per cent. or 207 millions were returned as Hindus of various degrees and denominations. About 21 per cent. or 62½ millions were Mahomedans, who therefore amount to a fifth of the people of India. Over three per cent. or about 9½ millions were votaries of Buddhism. Nearly another three per cent. (over 8½ millions) were classed as Animists, who are mostly wild tribes with no particular known religion. In 1901 about one per cent. or 2,923,241 were Christians, of whom 2,664,313 were natives, and the remainder Europeans or those of European descent. The Sikhs of the Punjab slightly exceeded two millions, and the Jains numbered about 1,350,000. The Parsis only formed a small section of the population, about 80,000 all told. The balance was made up of numerous small communities that could not be classed among any of the above principal religious divisions. The whole European population of India in 1901 only amounted to 249,721, of whom about 80,000 were of mixed European and Asiatic descent.

Of the 207 millions who are votaries of some form of Hinduism, it is impossible in the limited space available to describe the innumerable castes, sub-castes, and distinct sects and sub-sects, which go to make the above enormous aggregate. There are four main castes or divisions, namely, Brahmins or priests, Kshatriyas or warriors, Vaisyas or traders, and Sudras or memials. These four castes are again

subdivided into an infinite number of sub-castes. They are separate communities, more or less antagonistic, and do not intermarry or live together in any way; in fact, members of different castes cannot eat, drink, or smoke together.

The 62½ millions of Mahomedans, though essentially of one religion, are divided into two great sects, namely the Sunnies and the Shias. These may roughly be compared to the division in Christendom of Protestants and Roman Catholics. There are within them many minor sects. But though the Mahomedan sects may differ on certain doctrinal points, they as a whole are far more united in their faith than the Hindus, to whom they are opposed not only in religious and social matters, but also in politics and racial feelings.

Of the total population of India only 53 per thousand, that is, one male in 10 and one female in 144, were able in 1901 to read or write more or less in some vernacular tongue. Of 10,000 persons of each sex only 68 males and seven females had any knowledge of English. And if all Christians are excluded the proportions fall to 56 males and one female. Nearly two-thirds of the whole population relies on some form of agriculture as a principal means of subsistence. It is worth while noting here that there are five million professional beggars in India, who are supported and fed as a matter of religious duty by the rest of their countrymen. Forty-seven per cent. of the people work for their living,

and 53 per cent. are directly or indirectly dependent on others. When we review the subject of language we find there are five distinct families of human speech which have their homes as vernaculars in India. There are the Aryan, the Dravidian, the Munda, the Mon-Khmer, and the Thibeto-Chinese. To these might be added in a smaller degree the Semitic and Hametic. These seven families of speech give birth to over 30 separate languages and nearly 200 dialects spoken in this vast continent.

It is when we bring thought to bear on the myriad peoples, the diverse races, the conflicting religions, the multiplicity of tongues, of this vast continent, that we begin to realise the insuperable difficulty of generalising in any way about the Indian Empire. What, for instance, might be welcome to a fiery Pathan in the north would be repellent to the mild Madrasi in the south. What might appear a matter of necessity to the volatile Bengali in the east would probably be looked upon with contempt by the Maharatha in the west. The proud intolerant Brahmin has absolutely no sympathy for the other sects beneath him in the Hindu hierarchy. He can break bread with none of them: their touch is a sacrilege, the very fall of their shadow a pollution. The warlike Kshatriya defies the Brahmin and despises the Vaisya or trader; and these in their turn consider the Sudras preordained to slavery. The Mahomedans lump the whole Hindu population as infidels and idolaters. The peaceful Jain asks for

nothing but to be left alone. He is an unqualified vegetarian, and abhors bloodshed of any kind. It is his belief that no form of life should be destroyed, not even that of vermin. Conversely the dignified Sikh is a born soldier of a militant church. He glories in battle and the slaughter of his opponents, whoever they may be. Again, the sturdy Mongoloid Goorkha on the north-east, and the bellicose Pathan on the north-west are invaders by instinct, and consider India their rightful looting ground. With few exceptions the rest of India would get very short shrift from these two hardy races were British rule ever removed. Lastly, we have between eight and nine millions of Animists or barbarous jungle tribes who have no friends amongst the other peoples of India. For countless ages preceding British rule these poor folk were despoiled and slaughtered by every Indian race that has come in contact with them. There are many scattered tribes of these primitive and nude savages still living across Bombay Harbour, within a few miles of the second largest city in the British Empire. Such are some of the vivid contrasts to be found in juxtaposition in India—contrasts that defy all idea of nationalism, and have only to be stated to demolish the sentimental theories of the armchair faddist.

CHAPTER IV

POPULAR FALLACIES

INDIA has been from immemorial antiquity the land of conquest, subjugation, and colonisation. At the present time the wild aboriginal jungle tribes are probably the only real Indians in existence. The rest of the inhabitants are merely the product and residue of numerous invasions from every point of the compass. The greatest invasions have come from the north and north-west, and the next in importance are those from the north-east and east. There are races of negroid origin in the south-west, of Mongoloid descent in the north-east, and a mixture of Scythians, Bactrians, Aryans, Greeks, Persians, Turks, Afghans, Baluchis, and other races all over the north and west. The invaders entered the peninsula not as humanitarian philanthropists, but with the lust of conquest and the sole intention of possessing the land, the previous inhabitants of which they either exterminated, drove out, or reduced to menial servitude. These latter when driven out pressed in turn on the neighbouring

• races, who had likewise to move further on. Practically every conquering host left its hordes in India, and thus in the course of time very nearly the whole peninsula has been re-peopled by foreigners and their descendants. Besides the conquerors, many minor races have entered India as suppliants and fugitives, fleeing from persecution in their own countries. Of these may be mentioned the Jews in the extreme south and the Parsis in the west.

There are many pleasing fancies about the phrase "our Aryan brother," and we indiscriminately use it as if all India was peopled by none other than Aryans. Now these, it is well known, came from Central Asia in two separate waves of invasion, and never got much beyond the north-western portion of India, where alone their descendants can be found in any considerable numbers. But they were a virile, energetic white race who impressed their characteristics, religion, and language, in more or less modified forms, on their indigenous neighbours of those days. These latter looked upon the Aryans as a superior celestial people; hence the Aryan cult spread, and when a certain amount of this was absorbed they flattered themselves with the idea of being Aryans also. Consequently, obviously distinct races in various parts of India call themselves Aryans, who have no more Aryan blood in them than have the Chinese or Patagonians. Comparisons are odious, so it is not

necessary to mention who these pseudo-Aryans are. We may, however, still have feelings of pride and kinship for our real "Aryan-brothers." It is unfortunate, however, they number only from eighteen to twenty millions of the myriads of India.

That non-Aryans did in the past call themselves Aryans has long ago been logically and scientifically proved, and it is not necessary for me to recapitulate the proofs here. The assumption by an inferior race of the religion, language, and designations of a superior race is a common practice in India to this day. The most modern instance of it is that of the Mainpuris on the east of Bengal. These are pure Mongols of Thibeto-Chinese origin, but have in comparatively recent times been converted to Hinduism, and have now all the Hindu castes and religious mythology, and actually claim descent from some fabulous Aryan ancestors !

To revert to our original argument, it will now be obvious that the present-day Indians are not one people, any more than all Europeans can be reasonably called one people. In fact, it may roughly be computed that quite two-thirds of India's inhabitants are of diverse foreign origin. The only right these foreigners have to Indian soil is the right of the conqueror; and the only difference between them and the British conquerors is the difference of time! We happen to have come after others, and that is all that can be said. But we have just

as much right to call India our country as the descendants of early invaders, while we have still greater claim to govern the country, because, as a vernacular paper was candid enough to explain to its readers, "the British are the only conquerors, who have hitherto governed India in the interests of its people."

While on the subject of aliens in India it is interesting to know that of the many Native States a large proportion are ruled by dynasties of foreign origin. That is to say, the ruling classes are often of totally different race, religion, and language to the ruled. And it is still more remarkable that many of these ruling dynasties were established by conquest, and that they only received fixity of tenure in consequence of the establishment of British sovereignty over the land. Before that period the founders of these dynasties were pure adventurers, more often of no family or lineage, only holding what they could by the ancient law of might being right.¹

There is, in fact, no homogeneity even in the so-called self-governing parts of India. If this question were thoroughly gone into it would be found that instances of "swaraj" or independent government of a race by its own people are extremely rare, if not wholly unknown, in present-day India.

¹ In illustration of this point the writer mentions Hyderabad, Kashmir, Gwalior, and Indore. The paragraph is omitted to save space.—Ed.

A common fallacy is that Hinduism is one organised form of religion, exactly alike for the 207 million so-called Hindus. Nothing could be more erroneous. Hinduism comprises innumerable separate sects and sub-sects, all more or less in opposition to each other, worshipping different gods and having fundamental differences in belief. Even among the highest Brahmin caste there are vast divergencies in sentiment and religious belief, and often bitter racial antagonism. The Maharatha Brahmin of Poona has very little in common, except the name, with the Dravidian Brahmin of Madras, whom he heartily despises. The Brahmin of Benares would consider it a personal pollution to have to consort with a Brahmin from Lower Bengal. Other sects are similarly out of sympathy with each other, and by no stretch of imagination can it be said that there is an organised Hindu church for all Hindus. One can describe what Mahomedanism, Buddhism, and Zoroastrianism are as religious systems, but no one, not even the Hindus themselves, can give an adequate and comprehensive description of Hinduism. Each Hindu caste differs in its beliefs, and each race accentuates the differences. The priestly Brahmin caste have a philosophic cult comprising some of the sublimest spiritual conceptions of the human intellect; but it does not follow that they either practise or preach these altruistic doctrines. Still, they have them, and if you assail a Brahmin the

philosophical aspect of his religion at once confronts you, and you are told that his ordinary every-day religious practices are only for the edification of the ignorant multitude ! Hence Brahminism may be considered a religious edifice with foundations of idolatry, walls of superstition, and an ærial superstructure of eclectic philosophy.

From the Brahmin's heights of philosophical theology you come to other branches of Hinduism, and by ever-varying degrees you find less and less of philosophy and more and more of superstition and idolatry, till you descend to the grossly libidinous rites of the numerous Sakti sect in Bengal, and the revolting practices of female infanticide, widow immolation, and human sacrifices, still believed in by many of the votaries of Hinduism. The differences in the religious sects of Christianity are small compared to the infinite differences that exist between the various sects of Hindus. In fact, there is just as much divergence in religious beliefs between the highest class of Brahmins and the lowest sects of so-called Hindus as there is between the High Churchman in England and the fetish worshipper in the heart of Africa. It is therefore obvious that Hinduism is not one religion, but a complex agglomeration of a medley of beliefs and practices more or less in antipathy to each other. We realise the hopelessness of the Christian sects, with their comparatively slight differences, over coalescing to form one

A description of the effects of food, climate, and environment on a few typical diverse Indian races will substantiate these statements. We will deal with the Punjabi Mahomedan of the north-west first. He is of Turko-Iranian descent, probably formed by a fusion of Turki and Persian elements, in which the former predominate. He is a flesh-eater, and his bread is comprised principally of wheat and Indian corn. He is a teetotaler by religious conviction. He lives in a dry climate, varying from intense heat to severe cold. He inhabits a country of treeless plains, bleak rocks, and towering mountains, where only the fittest can survive. The result is a physically well-developed and hardy, tall race of born fighters, who prefer to settle a quarrel by force rather than by argument, by the sword rather than by the tongue. An army of such men, supplemented by their kindred across the frontier, could not be resisted by the other races in India. The Punjabis have, as a matter of fact, often led the vanguard of Mahomedan invaders in the past, and would do so again but for the British.

We next come to the Maharatha of Western and Central India, who is a Scytho-Dravidian, formed by a mixture of Scythian invaders and some Dravidian sects of the south-west. He has adopted certain bigoted forms of Hinduism as his religion. He is of a wiry build, but of lower stature than the Mahomedan of the north-west, from whom he differs in many other physical qualities. His food

consists principally of rice and millet and small quantities of fish and goat's flesh, and he is addicted to spirituous liquors. He lives in an equable though semi-tropical and somewhat enervating climate. His language is distinct from that of any other race. He has a keen intellect, generally misapplied towards destructive rather than constructive criticism. His instincts are predatory rather than warlike. He abhors permanency and prefers fishing in troubled waters. On the destruction of the Moghal Empire he, like his Scythian ancestors, roamed about India and looted and devastated a considerable portion of the country. He represents responsible authority, even that of his own countrymen, and is consequently much given to political intrigue. If British sovereignty were removed, the Maharatha would at once resume his predatory and destructive propensities, to the detriment of all neighbouring races.

Our last typical example of race differences is the Bengali. He is mainly of East Dravidian descent, modified by a strong strain of Mongoloid blood from former conquering invaders of the north-east. In Bengal many forms of Hinduism are practised, from the loftiest philosophical conceptions of the spiritual down to the grossest superstitions and libidinous rites, to be found nowhere else in India. The Bengali lives in a moist, steamy, and wholly enervating climate,

and in consequence he is physically weak and unenergetic. He is very voluble in speech and excitable and hysterical in temperament, and much given to mischievous intrigue and interference with others' affairs. A Bengali not long ago excitedly informed me that his nation meant to declare war against the British Government. On my pointing out that that might be a somewhat dangerous pastime, he exclaimed, "God forbid that we should be made to fight with lethal weapons; I only meant fighting with our *lingua franca*—by tongue and pen!"

To compensate for his moral and physical weakness a kind Providence has endowed the Bengali with the quickest and subtlest intellect in all India. He can acquire almost any mental knowledge, which, however, he is generally unable to assimilate. He is now suffering from an acute attack of mental dyspepsia brought on from a surfeit of European education. His language is distinct from that of the Maharatha or the Punjab Mahomedan, neither of whom understands him, while both wholly despise him for his effeminate characteristics. His food consists entirely of fish and rice, both of which his country produces in superabundance. A plentiful supply of such sustenance and a relaxing climate have made him a verbose talker, with a strong aversion to all forms of physical exertion. He is the opposite of all that is warlike. In the whole of India, neither in the British service nor in the armies of the Native

States is a single Bengali soldier to be found. He has as a consequence never been able to protect himself or defend his country against invaders, and has therefore, since the dawn of history, always been under some form of subjection to other stronger races, both Indian and foreign. He is the natural product of an unfavourable climate and environment. But he is also the unfortunate victim of our misguided policy. Our illogical system of education, and the absence of all moral and disciplinary restraints in his upbringing, have produced the unhappy results we see before us. Instead of gradually building up his character and teaching him how to be self-respecting and self-reliant, we have destroyed the guiding and beneficial influences of his religion, caste, and community, effaced the good in him and accentuated the evil, and then cast him loose on the ocean of life like a damaged and rudderless ship.

We have poured rich new wine into old and weak bottles; we have given irresponsible freedom to those who required strong but sympathetic guidance, and we have in our folly wilfully neglected to cultivate the rich mental inheritance of the East. There is much that is admirable and likable in the Bengalis. Under other methods and other ways they, with their high mental capacity, might now have been the brilliant leaders of all arts and sciences in India. Let us hope it is not yet too late to apply the breaks and call a halt all round.

Let us hope our Government will cease to pander to the notoriety-hunting political mountebank, and that the Bengalis will themselves justify the good opinions their real friends still have of them by giving up childish politics and seriously applying their undoubted mental abilities to the regeneration of their country in the arts and sciences, in industrial developments, in trade within and commerce abroad, and, last but not least, in internal, social, and religious reforms. Let them be assured these are not only the most practical and laudable, but also the easiest means of attaining that self-respecting freedom and nationality which we all sincerely wish them.

If the reader carefully studies the brief epitomes of the three typical races here depicted, he will at once realise the vast diversity of speech, religion, dietary, climate, environment, and racial blood that go to make the Mahomedan of the north-west, the Maharatha of the west, and the Bengali of the east. Is it possible to imagine that three such absolutely distinct human factors can ever fuse into one nation, having one common sentiment and one impartial system of self-government over all? I have only described three races by way of example, but scores of others might aptly be mentioned just as distinct and even more opposed in every way towards each other.

CHAPTER V

THE WAYS OF THE PEOPLE

ANOTHER and a very common fallacy is the belief among homestaying Englishmen that India is a poor country. Some colour is lent to this idea by the low standard of living among its inhabitants. But what is not remembered is that a great part of India has a tropical climate, where all but the lightest clothing is a luxury and not a necessity. A light covering of cotton cloth is often worn more for decency's sake than from any desire for warmth and comfort. It is a country, too, where a light vegetarian diet is preferable to strong meat. Of the three hundred millions of people, over two-thirds are connected with agriculture in some form or other; these live scattered over the whole peninsula, often in wild and remote parts where they live in primitive yet peaceful conditions. The villager's wants are few, and ambitions, as a rule, he has none.

A self-satisfied globe-trotter, nurtured on the British Constitution, unimaginative and insular, and

with very exaggerated ideas of the rights of man, comes touring round India. He travels luxuriously in a well-appointed train, and while being whisked through the land he notices a village ryot ploughing with two slender bullocks out in the broiling sun, and with hardly a scrap of clothing on. "Poor fellow," says our comfortable tourist; "how hard his lot! He evidently cannot even afford a decent covering to his weak body. And we call ourselves a Christian Government and allow the people to be reduced to such a pitiable state! I must take a note of this, and speak about it in Parliament on my return." While in this frame of mind, he next day meets some natives who have already heard of his biassed tendencies. He asks them some direct questions about the wretched ryot, and is volubly told harrowing tales of the great injustice done to the poor villager by our Government. He thinks now he has ample corroborative evidence against the Government officials, and Anglo-Indian brutality generally. He straightway sits down and writes a perfervid letter to his pet paper at home, drawing on the imagination he may possess to make his story have the desired effect on the credulous British public.

But what are the facts of the case? Our hypothetical ryot prefers to go about practically in a nude state; he is more comfortable in that condition. He ploughs in the sun in perfect contentment, as his ancestors have done for thousands of years.

His cattle are small and lean in appearance because the indigenous breeds in India are mostly of that type. He has enough cotton clothes in his hut for his simple wants. His wife may even have some silver trinkets and a gala dress of bright colour for village festivals. He has a pair of shoes and an umbrella for such occasions. These two latter are absolute luxuries, but he can afford them. He is, in fact, a hundred times better off now than he was when the British first put foot in India. Within my own experience in this country the standard of living among the lower classes has risen by leaps and bounds. Thirty years ago it was the exception to see the ordinary villager wearing shoes. As for umbrellas, they were considered marks of distinction which only the rich could venture to use. And now, well, it would be hard to find anybody who did not wear some sort of foot-gear ; and as for umbrellas, the very coolies use them when working. Such a change does not prove increasing poverty or decadence.

As regards the corroborative evidence the globe-trotter obtains from his native friends, if he only knew his India like the much abused Anglo-Indian does, he would realise that you can get any imaginable kind of corroborative evidence you like there. False witnesses are procurable around any court at fourpence each ! And it is well known that the average native is an adept at guessing your wishes. If you asked him directly if he did not think the

ryot a poor map, he would reply as he felt you wished him to, and he would swear by all his gods that the Indian ryot was the most miserable wretch in existence, and would straightway call upon his fertile and agile imagination, and narrate many examples to show how pitiable was the condition of the gentle, suffering ryot.

If on the other hand our globe-trotter had, we will suppose, said in all sincerity to his native friends, "I am so pleased to see the happy, contented ryot; don't you think he is well off?" the answer would have been, "Oh yes, sahib; under the benign British Government the ryot is indeed a favoured individual. No other country can show such happy, contented, and well-to-do ryots. It is all due to your honour's love and care of them," &c. The natives among themselves, and those experienced in their ways, avoid asking a direct question when exact information is wanted. One has to be tactful and dissemble one's intentions. After a multitude of indirect questions, and much patience and waste of time, one may eventually be able to glean the few grains of truth, and by analytical deduction arrive at some fairly correct conclusions.

I have sometimes when shooting in the interior of the country lost my bearings, and not knowing which path to follow to get back to a camp, I have had to question those I happened to meet. In my callow and inexperienced days I used to ask the direct question, "Does this path lead to the village

of Jhutpore?" "Yes, your honour," was the prompt reply. "How far is it?" "Only the distance of two gun-shots." Such information invariably sent me in the wrong direction and generally further from my camp! Afterwards, when I learnt discretion, I put the question as follows, "Where does this path lead to?"—speaking as if it really didn't concern me. The reply came, "This path—oh, it goes down to Rampur." "What sort of village is that?—many people, good crops," &c. Then I heard the good or bad history of Rampur. "And how," said I, "do the people of Rampur get to Jhutpore?" "Oh, Jhutpore, that is not near Rampur at all; it is over there," pointing in the opposite direction. "You see that hill? Jhutpore is just beyond it, about seven gun-shots from here." "Is there good drinking water over there?" "There is only one good well in the village, but it belongs to the headman. But he will doubtless give your honour some milk to drink." "All right, salam." "Salam, sahib." At last I know my way and reach my destination safely.

Now, it must not be inferred from the above that the natives of India are as a rule a set of liars. The villagers on the whole are simple and confiding; and, taking their lives into consideration, a truthful folk. But you must speak their language, and be friendly and sympathetic, before they will be frank towards you. For hundreds, nay, thousands of years they have been ruthlessly treated by the

many Asiatic conquerors, as well as by their own people in power, and have been used to seeing the strong always tyrannise over the weak. Unable to hold their own, they have been compelled through force of circumstance to resort to misrepresentation and deception as a means of self-defence. And these have now become a part of their nature. If the villager does not know you, his first impulse is to tell a lie and avoid having anything further to do with you.

Unfortunately, I cannot speak as favourably about the town folk. They have in many places raised misrepresentation to a fine art, and this is not done in self-defence, as in the case of the villager, but as a means of attaining some object in view. The end, it is considered, justifies the means. A very telling instance of this came under my observation after Lord Curzon's famous Convocation speech in Calcutta, on which occasion he advised the Bengalis to be more exact in their statements. Always ready to find fault and abuse the Government, the Bengalis started indignation meetings, wrote pamphlets, &c., to prove they had been maligned and were the most truthful people on the earth. I came across one of these pamphlets, which was being widely circulated throughout India for the purpose of getting up further indignation meetings among other races, whose veracity, mind, had not been impugned by Lord Curzon. In one pamphlet were given a number of extracts alleged

to have been taken from various Anglo-Indian papers, proving that they also considered the Bengalis truthful and Lord Curzon wrong in his statements. One of these extracts purported to have been taken from a leading Anglo-Indian journal of a certain date. As at the time I was a careful reader of this particular paper, I was astonished at not having seen the alleged extract. I searched the files in vain. I inquired, and found that nobody else had come across any such paragraph in the paper. Subsequently the journal itself took up the matter. The authors of the pamphlet were written to, pointing out that the said paper had never published the paragraph quoted in its name, and demanding that the alleged extract should be deleted from the pamphlet. No reply was received to the remonstrance, and the pamphlet continued to circulate in increasing numbers. Now, here was an appeal made to the native public to support the Bengali contention that they were a truthful people, and yet this very appeal was based on a deliberate falsehood !

Now, it must not be understood that I make these statements as evidence to show that there is no honesty in India, and that all Indians are untruthful. I have no such purpose. I merely desire to explain that superficial impressions about Indians are extremely misleading, and that the so-called corroborative evidence tendered by interested parties is as a rule utterly unreliable.

To revert to my thesis that India as a whole cannot seriously be considered a poverty-stricken country:—it may be a land of easily satisfied and unenergetic people, but it can never be called a poor country. My contention will be amply borne out by the following extracts from a speech by a learned native gentleman, Mr. Shapurjee Broacha, the President of the Bombay Native Share and Stock Brokers' Association, at the annual meeting in 1906. He remarked:—

"It is the conviction of brokers, merchants, tradesmen, and captains of industry that India is slowly but steadily advancing in material prosperity, and for the last few years it has taken accelerated pace. Opposed to this is the opinion of the pundits, that is, the professors, the lawyers, and the pedagogues with assumption of universal knowledge, who have made it a business to arraign the shortcomings of the Government, that India is steadily retrograding deeper and deeper into poverty. . . . If the Indians are poor, they are poor in the sense the Red Indians were poor when the white men took possession of their country. If the Indians are poor, they are poor in the sense the Zulus and other races of South Africa were poor with gold clinking under their heels, with King Solomon's mines spread out to the view in all their variety, and their land flowing with milk and honey. India was considered the richest country by the ancients and modernes. She was the cynosure of all eyes, and no traveller or adventurer has left a record that his expectations were not realised. She was the cynosure of all the marauders from the North. . . . India is capable of yielding all the crops and all the textile fibres of the world, besides some special products of her own; she has all the fauna and flora of the world; her bowels are bursting with all the liquid and solid mineral wealth; her spaces are strewn with diamonds and gems; her shores are encrusted with pearl oysters, and her seas and rivers are teeming with fish. If India is so rich, and