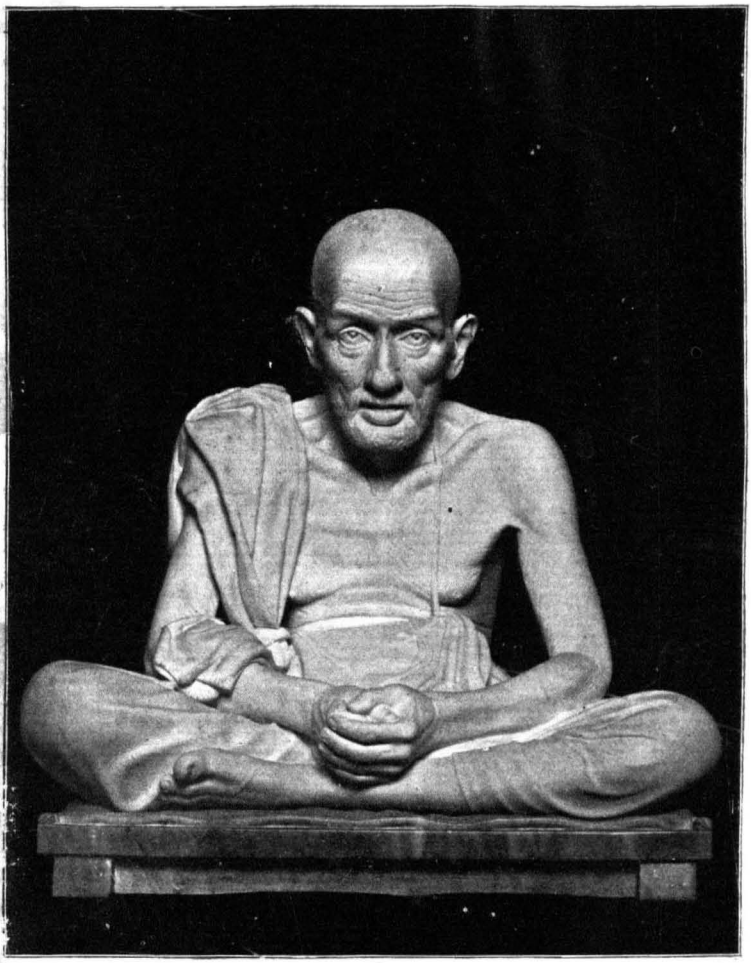

CONTEMPLATION.

(Statue of a SANYASI, by G. M. MHATTRE of Bombay.)

Frontispiece.]

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THE NEW SPIRIT IN INDIA

THE NEW SPIRIT IN INDIA

BY

HENRY W. NEVINSON

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THE NEW SPIRIT IN INDIA

INTRODUCTION

Summary of Recent Events

Although politics are not the only subject of this book, it may be of assistance if I summarize very briefly the chief political events of the few years preceding the winter of 1907–8 when I was in India.

No hard-and-fast line can be drawn in history, but the arrival of Lord Curzon as Viceroy on December 30th, 1898, marks a fairly strong and natural division. He had previously been Under-Secretary for India (1891–92), and Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs (1895–98), and he was well known for the distinction of his Oxford career and for his travels in Central Asia, Persia, and the Far East. In the House of Commons he had further won a high reputation for industry, knowledge, and self-reliance.

The first year of his office (1899) was marked by a change in the currency, by which a gold standard was introduced, gold and currency reserves instituted, and a permanent rate of exchange fixed at

sixteen pence to the rupee, or fifteen rupees to the pound sterling—a higher value than the rupee had reached in the fluctuations of the five previous years. Before the closing of the mints, it had sunk to 13·1 pence.

In the same year Lord Curzon began his policy of efficiency by reducing the CALCUTTA MUNICIPALITY from seventy-five to fifty, cutting out twenty-five of the elected members, in spite of strong protests on the part of the Indian electors.

He also began to earn an enviable unpopularity among certain classes of Anglo-Indians for his characteristic vigour in denouncing a British battalion, some privates of which were believed to have outraged a native woman to death in RANGOON and remained undetected.

The year 1900 was a season of terrible FAMINE, especially in the Central Provinces. About 5,500,000 people came on relief works, and famine was followed by cholera. At the same time the Punjab LAND ALIENATION ACT was passed, forbidding the transference of land to any but agriculturists, the intention being to prevent the expropriation of peasants by money-lenders.

LORD WELBY'S COMMISSION on Indian Expenditure issued their reports, but the majority report

For an eye-witness's account see "The Great Famine," by Mr. Vaughan Nash, at that time correspondent of the *Manchester Guardian* (Longmans: 1900).

suggested no important changes of taxation beyond the transference of charges amounting to £293,000 a year to the Imperial Exchequer. Their recommendation that England should contribute £50,000 to the expenses of the India Office was not carried out.

In 1901 the NORTH-WEST FRONTIER PROVINCE was created, and in the following year LORD KITCHENER was appointed Commander-in-Chief, the Education Commission, presided over by Sir Thomas Raleigh, published its Report (Sir Guru Das Banerjee writing a Note of Dissent), and the POLICE COMMISSION began to sit under Sir Andrew Fraser (afterwards Lieut.-Governor of Bengal).

In the same year Lord Curzon increased his unpopularity among the class of Anglo-Indians above mentioned, by punishing the 9TH LANCERS, because at Sialkot two privates were believed to have beaten to death a native cook who refused to procure a native woman for them; they remained undetected.

The next year (1903) opened with a great DURBAR AT DELHI, the estimated cost of which was £180,000, and the real cost probably at least £200,000, apart from the local expenses of provinces and Native States. The TIBET expedition started in the same year.

More important than either of these events for the history of India was the REDUCTION OF THE SALT TAX, or more properly, the reduction of the

price of salt under the Government monopoly. Between this year and 1907 it was reduced from 2 rupees 8 annas per maund to 1 rupee (a maund = 82·29 lbs.).

Lord Curzon's office was now renewed for a further uncertain term, believed to be two years. But before his departure for six months' leave in 1904, he had already reduced his popularity among the educated classes of India. By the OFFICIAL SECRETS ACT, he extended the Acts of 1889 and 1897 so as to include information upon civil affairs and matters of fact among the offences, as well as military secrets and newspaper criticism, "likely to bring the Government or constituted authority into suspicion or contempt." As the burden of proof was thrown on the accused, and it was unnecessary to establish criminal intention for conviction, this Act limited newspapers to the supply of such information as the Government pleased.

In the same year an attempt was made to raise the standard of higher education by the UNIVERSITIES ACT. The main object was to induce the five Universities of Calcutta, Madras, Bombay, Lahore, and Allahabad to undertake instruction and supervision as well as examination, to which their

The revenue from salt in 1907–8 was £3,336,900 against £4,362,706 in 1906–7, but the consumption of salt went up in 1907–8 to 44,289,000 maunds, compared to an average of 36,445,000 maunds for the ten previous years.

function had been limited at first. It was laid down that all students at a University must be members of an affiliated college, and changes were introduced into the constitution of the Senates, which were now to be largely composed of the Chancellor's nominees and *ex-officio* members—High Court Judges, Bishops, members of Executive Councils, the provincial Directors of Public Instruction, and professors of Government and missionary colleges. It was complained that these provisions destroyed the independence of the Universities, and, owing to the increased expense, much reduced the number of students able to compete for degrees. On the other hand, it is maintained, and I believe justly, that the standard of learning in its higher branches has been considerably advanced since the Act among the affiliated colleges.

A few sentences may be quoted from Lord Curzon's BUDGET SPEECH in March of this year (1904), as showing his general attitude towards educated Indians and their demands :—

"I sympathize most deeply with the aspirations of the Indians towards greater national unity, and with their desire to play a part in the public life of the country. But I do not think that the salvation of India is to be sought on the field of politics at the present stage of her development. . . . The highest ranks of civil employment in India must as a general rule be held by Englishmen, for the reason that they possess, partly by heredity, partly by up-bringing, and

partly by education, the knowledge of the principles of government, the habits of mind, the vigour of character, which are essential for the task, and that, the rule of India being a British rule, and every other rule being in the circumstances of the case impossible, the tone and standard should be set by those who have created and are responsible for it." *

He further went on to maintain that on salaries of £800 a year and upward, 1263 government servants were Europeans, 15 Eurasians, and 92 Indians; while on salaries between £60 and £800, there were 5205 Europeans, 5420 Eurasians, and 16,283 Indians. These figures were, however, severely analysed by Mr. Gokhale in his Budget speech of 1905.

It was held by educated Indians that a Government Resolution of May 24, 1904, carrying this statement of policy into effect, tended to exclude Indians from the higher branches of the service, and stood in contradiction to QUEEN VICTORIA'S PROCLAMATION for India in 1858, in which occur the following two clauses :—

"We hold ourselves bound to the natives of our Indian territories by the same obligations of duty which bind us to all our other subjects; and those obligations we shall faithfully and conscientiously fulfil.

"And it is our further will that, so far as may be, our

* "Lord Curzon in India;" selection from his speeches; with Introduction, by Sir Thomas Raleigh. Pp. 142, 143.

subjects, of whatever race or creed, be freely and impartially admitted to offices in our service, the duties of which they may be qualified, by their education, ability, and integrity, duly to discharge."

Accordingly, at the meeting of the National Congress in Bombay at the end of this year, the first resolution was in protest against the EXCLUSION OF INDIANS from the higher grades of the Service. The other resolutions, showing the tendency of the time, included protests against the increasing military expenditure, especially upon the Tibet expedition, and demands for wider education, technical schools, a Permanent Land Settlement, police reform in accordance with the Commission of 1903, the separation of judicial and executive functions throughout the Civil Service, simultaneous examinations for the Service in England and India, and part payment by England of the cost of the India Office in Whitehall. SIR HENRY COTTON, Chief Commissioner of Assam from 1896 to 1902, was President of the Congress that year, and he was deputed to lay the resolutions before the Viceroy in person. But Lord Curzon refused to receive him.

On February 11, 1905, Lord Curzon addressed the CONVOCATION OF CALCUTTA UNIVERSITY with a dissertation upon truthfulness and other virtues—

"I hope I am making no false or arrogant claim," he said, "when I say that the highest ideal of truth is to a

large extent a Western conception. I do not thereby mean to claim that Europeans are universally or even generally truthful, still less do I mean that Asiatics deliberately or habitually deviate from the truth. The one proposition would be absurd, the other insulting. But undoubtedly truth took a high place in the moral codes of the West before it had been similarly honoured in the East, where craftiness and diplomatic wile have always been held in much repute. We may prove it by the common innuendo that lurks in the words 'Oriental diplomacy,' by which is meant something rather tortuous and hypersubtle. The same may be seen in Oriental literature. In your epics truth will often be extolled as a virtue; but quite as often it is attended with some qualification, and very often praise is given to successful deception practised with honest aim."

The Viceroy, addressing his Bengali audience, went on to say that "he knew no country where mare's-nests were more prolific than here"; and he warned them especially against flattery and vituperation, and afterwards against eloquence.

"In India," he said, "there are two sets of people, the reticent and the eloquent. I dare say you know to which class the people in this part of the country belong. I am sometimes lost in admiration at the facility with which they speak in a foreign language, and I envy the accomplishment. All I say to you is, do not presume upon this talent."

Towards the conclusion of the speech, he introduced the following sentences:—

"Learn that the true salvation of India will not come

from without, but must be created within. It will not be given you by enactment of the British Parliament, or of any Parliament at all. . . . Be true Indians—that is the prompting of nationality. . . . In India I see the claim constantly advanced that a man is not merely a Bengali, or an Uriya, or a Mahratta, or a Sikh, but a member of the Indian nation. I do not think it can yet be said that there is any Indian nation, though in the distant future some approach to it may be evolved. However that may be, the Indian is most certainly a member of the British Empire." *

Neither these contradictory remarks on nationality, nor the Viceroy's well-intentioned exposition of the national tendency to deceit, were received by the audience and their friends in a properly chastened spirit. But the *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, next to the *Bengalee*, perhaps the most influential Indian paper in Calcutta, contented itself with the following extract from Lord Curzon's book, called "Problems of the Far East" (p. 155 of the edition quoted), where, writing of his conversation with the President of the Korean Foreign Office, he said :—

"Having been warned not to say I was only thirty-three, when he put me the straight question, 'How old are you?' I unhesitatingly responded, 'Forty.' 'I presume you are a near relative of the Queen of England?' (asked the President). 'No,' I replied, 'I am not.' But I was fain to add, 'I am, however, as yet an unmarried man,' with which unscrupulous suggestion I completely regained the old gentleman's favour."

The quotation was regarded as apt, but the

* "Lord Curzon in India," pp. 491, 498–9.

passage was only a joke, and it must be remembered that Lord Curzon had not claimed that Europeans are universally or even generally truthful. He had called that proposition absurd.

The speech itself would probably have been soon forgotten if it had not been connected in the popular mind with the greatest and most disastrous of Lord Curzon's schemes for promoting his ideal of efficiency —the PARTITION OF BENGAL.

It had long been evident that the Province of Bengal, if the large outlying districts of Orissa, Behar, and Chota Nagpur were included, was too large for one administration. It contained close upon 80,000,000 souls. But of this amount Bengal Proper counted for only 43,000,000. The next largest of the districts was Behar, with 21,500,000. Two things were possible and would have been gladly accepted—either to form a new province out of the western districts of Behar, Chota Nagpur, and Orissa, with a capital at Patna or Ranchi, relieving Bengal of a population of about 33,000,000; or to have elevated Bengal into a Governorship on the same standing as Bombay and Madras, under a Governor appointed directly from England instead of a Lieut.-Governor appointed out of the Indian Civil Service; and at the same time to have organized the outlying districts as Commissionerships, responsible either to the Crown, or to the Governor of Bengal. Either of these two main

schemes would have been accepted without question by the enormous majority of the inhabitants, and the chief principles of the second were favoured by Mr. Brodrick (Lord Midleton), at that time Secretary of State for India.

Lord Curzon, however, was determined to cut Bengal Proper and the Bengali-speaking community in two, giving 25,000,000 of the population to the new Province of Eastern Bengal and Assam with a new capital at Dacca, and 18,000,000 of the population to a Province still to be called Bengal, with the old capital of Calcutta, and bound up with the outlying districts of Behar, Chota Nagpur, and Orissa, all of which differ from Bengal in race, language, and civilization, as does Assam. Under this division, the populations of the two new Provinces are approximately 54,000,000 in Bengal, and 31,000,000 in Eastern Bengal and Assam.

When Partition on these lines was first proposed, it excited strong protest, not only among the Hindu population of Bengal, but among many Civil Servants and Anglo-Indian papers, also among the Mohammedans of Eastern Bengal, who are Bengalis by race, but number three-fifths of the population, and, therefore, might be expected to welcome the change, especially as they were promised considerable advantages under the new administration. Large numbers of public meetings

Figures in Lord Curzon's Proclamation of July 19, 1905.

were held throughout Bengal to protest against the measure, and petitions were sent to the British Parliament. As the British authorities paid no attention to these representations, the "Swadeshi" (literally "Our own Country") movement was started for the exclusive use of native productions, in the hope that a boycott on British goods might at last induce public opinion in England to take notice of an Indian grievance. As Mr. John Morley said, when speaking as Secretary of State for India in the House of Commons, February 26, 1906: "I am bound to say, nothing was ever worse done in disregard to the feeling and opinion of the majority of the people concerned."

Nevertheless, Lord Curzon accomplished the Partition by an unexpected PROCLAMATION from Simla on September 1, 1905, appointing Sir Andrew Fraser Lieut.-Governor in Calcutta, and Sir Bampfylde Fuller Lieut.-Governor in Dacca, both being entire strangers to Bengal. The Partition came into force on October 16, 1905—a day observed as a fast of humiliation and prayer throughout the Provinces.

In the same month MR. GOKHALE and LALA LAJPAT RAI came to England as Congress Delegates, to lay the demands of the constitutional reform party before English audiences. Lala Lajpat Rai also visited America.

Before the Partition was proclaimed, Lord

Introduction

Curzon had submitted his RESIGNATION (August 12, 1905), owing to a difference of opinion with Lord Kitchener over the appointment of a new "Military Supply Member" to the Viceroy's Council; and, in reality, over the position of the Commander-in-Chief and the Military Supply Member with regard to the Governor-General in Council. The difference does not concern us, except that, as the Conservative Home Government supported Lord Kitchener's view, and thus drove Lord Curzon to resign, it was widely believed that Mr. Brodrick accepted the Partition the more readily as a salve to Lord Curzon's feelings.

The EARL OF MINTO was at once appointed to succeed, but Lord Curzon remained to nearly the end of the year, partly in order to welcome the Prince and Princess of Wales on their visit to India. In his farewell speech at Simla (September 30, 1905) he said :—

"If I were asked to sum up my work in a single word, I would say 'Efficiency.' That has been our gospel, the keynote of our administration." †

No one has questioned his industry and personal

"Lord Midleton, the Secretary of State at that time, made a reference to the Partition of Bengal in one of his telegrams which undoubtedly led to the inference in that country that that measure had been thrown as a sop to soothe my wounded feelings rather than on grounds of political propriety or expediency."—Lord Curzon in the House of Lords, June 30, 1908.

† "Lord Curzon in India," p. 564.

devotion. During his seven years' tenure, he instituted Commissions on plague, famine, irrigation, universities, and police; he organized departments of Commerce and Industry, and of Imperial Customs; he endeavoured to introduce elasticity into the Land Assessment; he revolutionized our Frontier policy; and he did more for the preservation of Indian history, architecture, and ancient memorials than any of his predecessors. All this in addition to the other changes and undertakings mentioned above.

The appointment of MR. JOHN MORLEY to the India Office (December, 1905) was received with the utmost enthusiasm by the country, but, unfortunately, Lord Curzon's industrious devotion to efficiency, without consideration of the prejudices or reasonable desires of the people concerned, had sown the seed for the irritation and disturbances of the next two years. The first signs of unrest naturally appeared in Eastern Bengal, where the SWADESHI movement had been instituted as a protest against the Partition. SIR BAMPFYLDE FULLER found himself at once involved in difficulties about the boycott of foreign goods, public meetings, and the participation of schoolboys and students in the political questions that occupied all minds. On April 14, 1906, the Bengal Provincial Conference was dispersed with violence by the police at Barisal. Bodies of punitive police and Gurkhas were

quartered in several small towns and villages at their expense. Schools were deprived of their grants and the right to compete for scholarships. A circular was issued curtailing the right of public meeting, and suppressing processions and the cry of "Bande Mataram." In another circular Sir Bampfylde Fuller laid it down that a fixed proportion of Government posts should be reserved for Mohammedans, and, until that proportion had been reached, no qualified Mohammedan candidate should be rejected in favour of a Hindu candidate, merely because the latter had superior qualifications (May 25, 1906). Finally, owing to some petty disturbances by schoolboys at Serajganj, in the Pabna district (November 15, 1905), the Lieut.-Governor who had already severely punished the two schools in the place, and posted punitive police there, demanded that they should be disaffiliated from Calcutta University. The Government asked him to reconsider the case, and he resigned (August 4, 1906), being succeeded by Sir Lancelot Hare.

The next month was marked by a characteristic description of a simple incident by Calcutta correspondents to the English press. On September 5th Mr. Surendra Nath Banerjea, twice President of the National Congress and now editor of the *Bengalee* newspaper in Calcutta, was honoured by a common Indian ceremony of "benediction" in a private house. It was an affair of an umbrella,

a chaplet, garlands, and the recitation of verses from the Vedas. It is almost impossible for even a casual visitor to India to escape a score of very similar performances. Yet the correspondents on whom England chiefly depends for Indian news described this as a solemn CORONATION of Mr. Banerjea as India's Emperor, as if to rouse the suspicions and rage of the English people into sensational panic.

In the spring of 1907, local disturbances occurred in Eastern Bengal and the Punjab. Meetings to protest against the Partition had been continually held in Eastern Bengal, and in the first week of March the Nawab Salimullah of Dacca visited the small town of COMILLA in order to encourage counter-demonstrations on the part of the Mohammedans, over whom he claimed great influence. During his visit small riots took place between Hindu and Mohammedan crowds ; a Mohammedan was killed and one or two Hindus. By one means or another, the report was circulated through the country that the Indian Government was favouring the Mohammedan population and would inflict no punishment for the looting of Hindu shops or the abduction of Hindu women, especially widows. Accordingly, shops were looted, Hindu widows abducted, and the cases of outrage upon women by gangs increased in number.

In the third week of April further disturbances

broke out at JAMALPUR, another small town in Eastern Bengal, where the Hindus, during a festival, were set upon by Mohammedan rowdies, who desecrated a temple and maintained panic in the district for the next few weeks.

The troubles that arose in the PUNJAB, about the same time, were largely agricultural in origin. There had been a large increase in the land-assessment, together with a sudden rise in the irrigation rates, especially on the Bari-Doab canal. The Punjab Legislative Council had also brought forward a COLONIZATION BILL altering the agreements by which colonists held reclaimed land, especially in the Chenab Colony, under the Act of 1893. Many relations of these tenants were enlisted in Sikh and other Indian regiments, and ultimately Lord Minto withheld his consent from the Bill. The question of the irrigation dues was also postponed for a year.

Meantime, Indian opinion was constantly irritated by the abuse and ridicule poured upon educated Indians in the "CIVIL AND MILITARY GAZETTE," the leading Anglo-Indian paper of Lahore. They were spoken of as "babbling B.A.'s," "base-born B.A.'s," "an unhonoured nobility of the school," "serfs," "beggars on horseback," "servile classes," "a class that carries a stigma," and so on. When petitioned twice to put an end to this kind of journalism as stirring up strife between the races, Sir Denzil Ibbetson, at that time Lieut.-Governor

hot weather from May 3rd to October 1st, when they were acquitted and discharged, the magistrate declaring the evidence was fabricated. In consequence of this unmerited imprisonment, one of them has since died.

About sixty other persons were arrested, and five were condemned, three of them to seven years' imprisonment for riot and arson. The trial took place before Mr. A. E. Martineau, Sessions Judge of Delhi, as Special Magistrate, and the terms of his judgment did much to restore Indian confidence in British justice.

THE FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF THE OUTBREAK OF THE MUTINY (May 10th), had been fixed by some Anglo-Indian journalists as the date for a probable rising against the British, and, owing to their warnings, preparations were made for withdrawing the British residents, especially in the Punjab towns, into the forts. But in spite of all that prophecy could do, no outbreak occurred.

However, on May 9th, Lala Lajpat Rai was suddenly DEPORTED from Lahore without notice, charge, or trial, and conveyed to the fort in Mandalay. Ajit Singh was similarly deported from Amritsar.

When questioned in the Commons as to this breach of "Habeas Corpus," Mr. John Morley pleaded the powers of deportation granted by a REGULATION OF 1818, under which thirty-two persons were at the moment detained in restraint.

Introduction

On May 11th, Lord Minto issued a PROCLAMATION limiting the RIGHT OF PUBLIC MEETING in parts of the Punjab and Eastern Bengal. Under this Ordinance seven days' written notice was required before a meeting, the meeting might be prohibited by a magistrate, and the police were to attend.

On May 27th, the Viceroy refused his assent to the Punjab Colonization Bill above described.

Meantime, on behalf of the Home Department of the Government of India, SIR HERBERT RISLEY issued a CIRCULAR with regard to the political behaviour of schoolboys, teachers, students, and professors (May 6th). It ordained that where schoolboys associated themselves with political movements grants-in-aid should be withdrawn from the school, and the privilege of competing for scholarships withheld; universities were not to recognize the school, nor to admit its candidates to matriculation. Schoolmasters were allowed by the Circular "to have a right to their own opinions as much as any one else," but should be visited by "disciplinary action" if their utterances endangered the orderly development of the boys, or were subversive of their respect for authority. In the case of colleges, students were allowed to attend meetings, but if they became active in politics, the privileges of affiliation should be withdrawn. Professors were permitted more latitude, but if they

encouraged students to attend political meetings, the university or the Government should intervene.

The BUDGET for the year 1907–8 was estimated at £75,012,800 revenue, and £74,238,100 expenditure, giving a surplus of £774,700. In his Budget speech of June 6th, Mr. John Morley made the important announcement that TWO NOMINATED INDIANS were to be added to the INDIA COUNCIL in Whitehall, and gave the names of Mr. K. G. Gupta, as representing the Hindus, and Mr. S. H. Bilgrami, as representing the Mohammedans.

At the same time he announced a SCHEME OF REFORMS, proposed by the Indian Government at Simla, to be submitted to the Local Governments for criticism. In brief, the scheme included :—

(1) The institution of an "Imperial Advisory Council," consisting of about sixty members, all appointed by the Viceroy, including twenty ruling chiefs, "with a suitable number of territorial magnates of every province where landholders of sufficient dignity and status are to be found." This council was to be summoned at the Viceroy's pleasure, and to hold nothing but private, informal, and confidential meetings, having no legislative powers of any sort.

(2) Provincial Advisory Councils—apparently seven—of smaller size, but consisting of the local Imperial Councillors and representatives of lesser landholders, industry, commerce, capital, and the

professional classes, all nominated by the head of the Local Government; their functions also to be entirely consultative.

(3) The enlargement of the Viceroy's Legislative Council from twenty-four to fifty-three by the inclusion of more Viceroy's nominees, two representatives of the Chambers of Commerce, two Mohammedans elected by rotation from Mohammedan districts, seven landholders elected by the landed magnates, and seven instead of four members elected by the non-official members of the Legislative Councils. The last point may appear like a concession to popular representation, but seven out of fifty-three is not so powerful a fraction as four out of twenty-four.

(4) The enlargement of the Provincial Legislative Councils, but this proposal was left vague, beyond a few suggestions.

Some miscellaneous points in the history of the year remain to be noticed.

The official return of deaths from PLAGUE during the first four months of the year (1907) amounted to 642,000, and the total deaths from plague since its first appearance in 1896 up to April, 1907, were 5,250,000.

On August 7th, and again on October 2nd, disturbances arose in College Square and Beadon Square in Calcutta, and in the same city a popular speaker named BEPIN CHANDRA PAL was sentenced

to six months' imprisonment (September 11th) for refusing to give evidence in the prosecution of the Indian paper, *Bande Mataram*. When summoned as witness before the magistrate, Mr. Kingsford, he replied :—

"I have conscientious objections against taking part in a prosecution which I believe to be unjust and injurious to the cause of popular freedom and the interests of public peace." (August 26.)

Two special commissions were instituted in the autumn—a DECENTRALIZATION COMMISSION, under Mr. Charles Hobhouse, at that time Under-Secretary for India, and a FACTORY LABOUR COMMISSION, under Mr. W. T. Morrison of the Bombay Civil Service. They sat in various parts of India during the winter.

In July an agreement was announced with China, by which it was ultimately arranged that China should regard 51,000 chests of OPIUM exported from India as a standard amount, this amount to be decreased yearly by one-tenth from 1908 till it disappeared in ten years, provided that China made similar reductions in her produce.

On August 31st an ANGLO-RUSSIAN AGREEMENT was signed, dividing Persia into Russian and British spheres of influence, with a neutral zone between ; Afghanistan was recognized as outside Russian influence, and both Powers agreed not to send

representatives to Lhassa. In some quarters it was hoped that this Agreement would warrant a large reduction in the military expenditure of India.

In October Sir George Clarke, lately Secretary to the Committee of Imperial Defence, arrived from England as new Governor of Bombay. In the same month Mr. Keir Hardie, ex-leader of the Labour Party in the Commons, visited Eastern Bengal, where his private statements and conversation were misrepresented by correspondents to the English newspapers and agencies as seditious speeches.

On November 1st a Seditious Meetings Act was passed by the Viceroy in Council at Simla, giving Local Governments the power to "proclaim" the whole or part of their provinces, in which case seven days' notice in writing must be given of every public meeting, including the assembly of twenty persons or over in a private house; the District Magistrate, or Commissioner of Police was given power to prohibit such a meeting, or to direct that police should be present.

Mr. Gokhale and Dr. Rash Behari Ghose spoke strongly in opposition to the Bill as Indian representatives on the Council, and the Tikka Sahib of Nabha, a Sikh representative of the Punjab, joined them in voting against the measure, which was carried by a majority of nine British against three Indians, no other members of Council being able

to attend, as the session was in Simla contrary to precedent for important legislation.

The next week brought the full text of Mr. John Morley's speech to his constituents at Arbroath, in defence of his Indian policy. I quote the following sentences on account of the attention they attracted:—

"Does any one want me to go to London to-morrow morning and to send a telegram to Lord Kitchener, and tell him to disband the Indian Army, and send home as fast as we can dispatch transports the British contingent of the Army, and bring away the whole of the Civil Servants? . . . How should we look in the face of the civilized world if we had turned our back upon our duty and upon our task? How should we bear the savage stings of our own consciences when, as assuredly we should, we heard through the dark distances the roar and scream of confusion and carnage in India?"

Speaking of Mr. Keir Hardie and one of his reported sayings in Eastern Bengal, Mr. Morley said:—

"I am not at all sure that he said this, but it does not matter, because many other people have said it—That whatever is good in the way of self-government for Canada must be good for India. In my view that is the most concise statement that I can imagine, and the grossest fallacy in all politics. . . . You might just as well say that, because a fur coat in Canada at certain times of the year is a most comfortable garment, therefore a fur coat in the Deccan of India is a sort of handy garment that you might be very happy to wear."

A few sentences further on he added :—

"I hope that the Government of India, so long as I am connected with it and responsible for it to Parliament and to the country, will not be hurried by the anger of the impatient idealist. The impatient idealist—you know him, I know him, I like him ; I have been one myself. He says, 'You admit that so and so is right, why don't you do it? why don't you do it now?' Ah, gentlemen, how many of the most tragic miscarriages in human history have been due to the impatience of the idealist ?

". . . You would not have me see men set the prairie on fire without arresting the hand. You would not blame me when I saw some men smoking their pipes near powder magazines—you would not call me an arch-coercionist if I said, 'Away with the men, and away with the powder.'"

In answer to those who said India was astonished at the licence extended to newspapers and speakers, he continued :—

"Orientals, they say, do not understand it. But we are not Orientals ; that is the root of the matter. We English, Scotch, and Irish are in India because we are not Orientals. . . . We are representatives, not of Oriental civilization but Western civilization, of its methods, its principles, its practices ; and I for one will not be hurried into an excessive haste for repression by the argument that Orientals do not understand this toleration.

"Anybody who has read history knows that the Extremist beats the Moderate by his fire, his fiery energy, his very narrowness and concentration. But still we hold that it would be the height of political folly for us at this moment to refuse to do all we can to rally the Moderates to the cause

of the Government, simply because the policy will not satisfy the Extremists. Let us, if we can, rally the Moderates, and, if we are told that the policy will not satisfy the Extremists, so be it; our line will remain the same.

"... Some of them (the leaders of unrest) are angry with me. Why? Because I have not been able to give them the moon. I have got no moon, and if I had I would not give them the moon.

"... I am not surprised that these educated Indians who read these great masters and teachers of ours (Milton, Burke, Macaulay, and Mill) are intoxicated with the ideas of freedom and nationality and self-government which these great writers promulgate. Who of us can wonder who had the privilege in the days of our youth, at college or at home, of turning over these golden pages and seeing that lustrous firmament dome over our youthful imaginations—who of us can forget the intoxication and rapture with which we made friends with these truths? ... I only say this to my idealist friends, whether Indian or European, that for every passage they can find in the speeches or writings of these great teachers of wisdom, I will find them a dozen passages in which, in the language of Burke, the warning is given—'How weary a step do those take who endeavour to make out of a great mass a true political personality!'"

After referring to a saying about Sir Henry Lawrence, that "no one ever sat at his table without learning to think more kindly of the natives," Mr. Morley added :—

"India is perhaps the one country—bad manners, overbearing manners are very disagreeable in all countries—India is the only country where bad and overbearing manners are a political crime."

Introduction

Towards the end of the summer there had been some local riots and disturbances in Southern India because at COCANADA, on the coast north of Madras, an Englishman was accused of having beaten a Hindu boy for shouting "Bande Mataram." He was sentenced to a small fine (£10, including damages), and was acquitted on appeal. But this autumn, unhappily, Indian opinion was further inflamed by the results of two trials in private cases held before British juries in the Punjab. In LAHORE a British journalist was accused of having shot his bearer dead, after kicking him out of the house, revolver in hand, and was sentenced to six months' imprisonment, the jury finding that death was accidental. In the other case, at RAWAL PINDI, a British assistant station-master and a Mohammedan porter admitted to having in turn outraged a Hindu woman, who was waiting for a train and was enticed into the stationmaster's room by threats and pretended information about a telegram. Both were acquitted by the jury on a plea of "consent."

In November of this year, Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji, veteran champion of India's cause before the English people, returned to spend his last days in a quiet place on the coast near Bombay. Born a Bombay Parsi in 1825, he had first gone to live in England just before the Mutiny, but had often returned to official or other work in Baroda and

Bombay. He was a member of the first Indian National Congress at its inauguration in Bombay (1885), and in the next year stood as Liberal candidate for Holborn, on which occasion Lord Salisbury told the electors he could not believe they would vote for a "black man." Nevertheless, he was Liberal member for Central Finsbury from 1892 to 1895, being the first Indian in the House of Commons. In 1892 he was President of the Congress held at Lahore, and in 1906, in spite of his great age, he consented to be President of the Congress held at Calcutta, because it was felt that the reverence with which he was regarded by all Indians would avert the danger of open rupture between the moderate and extremist parties.

This bare summary of events may, perhaps, be useful for reference, and I think it will enable readers of the following pages better to understand the subjects of public interest that were occupying the attention of educated Indians and of Anglo-Indians when I arrived at Bombay in October, 1907, as correspondent for the *Manchester Guardian* and other papers.

I owe my hearty thanks to all Anglo-Indian and Indian officials and friends who gave me ungrudging assistance during my visit, and especially to Mr. S. K. Ratcliffe, lately editor of the *Statesman* in Calcutta, for reading my proofs and giving me the advantage of his exceptional knowledge.

CHAPTER I

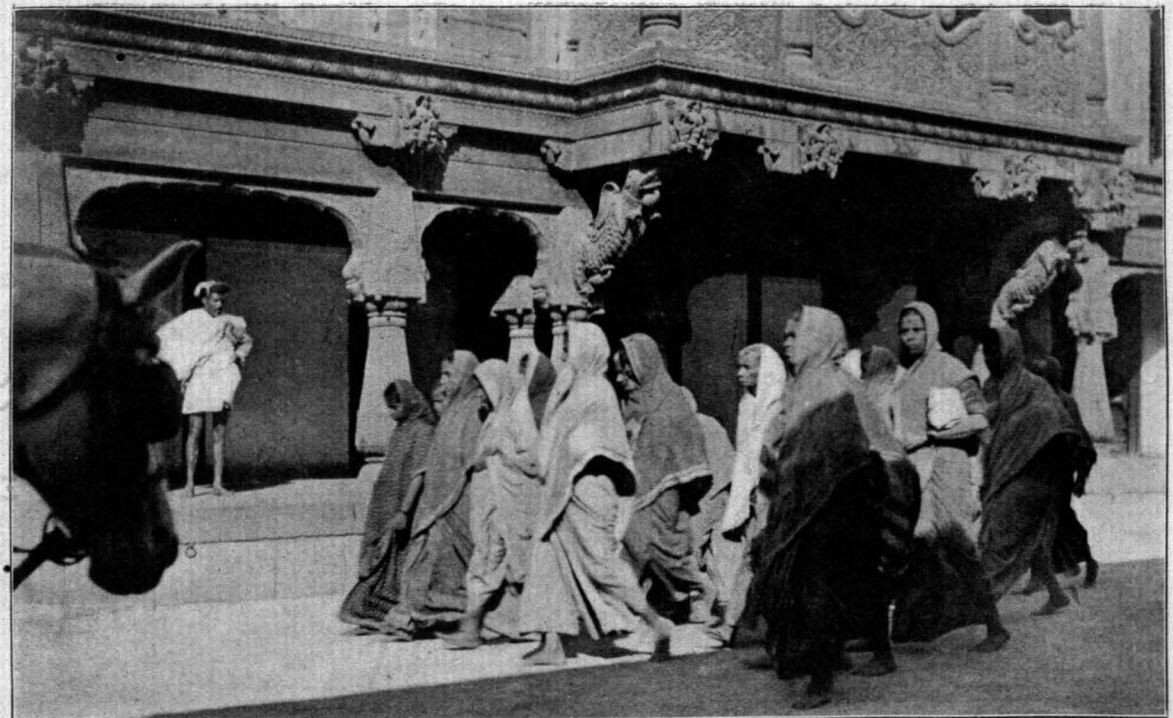
A Servant of India

It was the Indian festival of Diwali, held at Poona on Guy Fawkes' Day, and celebrated with innumerable flames, like our own thanksgiving for the protection of King and Parliament. But, in feeling, the Diwali comes nearer to Christmastide, for it has no political significance, and the flames are not lighted as a defiance to the Pope of Rome, but in honour of Lakshmi, the goddess of family prosperity, who provides wealth sufficient for us, and holds a baby to the breast above her heart.

So brothers and sisters, nephews and nieces, cousins to the tenth removal, were gathered together in the joy of a kinship that regards the smallest trace of common blood as absolute and unquestioned claim to lifelong support under a common roof. No Workhouse or Industrial School for them! As long as one of the kin has pancakes and a cow, there is always a certainty of a crumb and a sup of milk all round. In honour of such riches and family love, the ceilings of the rooms

and the verandahs fluttered with pink and yellow flags; the windows and doors were hung with festoons of orange marigolds on a string; upon the entrance pavement neat patterns in whitewash were drawn by hand-rollers; and, as the streets turned blue with evening, the children, draped in all the gorgeous crimsons and golds their mothers could afford, lighted the tiny oil lamps on window-sill and doorstep, or threw the spurting fires under the very noses of sacred bulls that wander for their living from shop to shop. To be sure, other helpful powers beside Lakshmi have a share in the honour (for who can tell under which form he loves God best?), and it is the temples of Durga and Vishnu, of Siva and Parvati, lady of the far-off mountain snow, that make the sacred hill of Parbati outside the city sparkle like an illuminated birthday cake, for at least one night during the Diwali feast of brotherhood.

The sad thing was that in the beautiful streets where Mahratta nobles had built their simple palaces under the Peshwas a century ago, many of the houses now stood dark and empty, in terror of the plague. Hardly eleven years had passed since the pestilence first appeared, imported from Hongkong as people thought, and in those eleven years it had killed nearly six millions of India's inhabitants. Six millions out of three hundred millions may not sound very much; it is only two in every hundred spread over eleven years.



A Street in Poona. [*Face p.* 32.

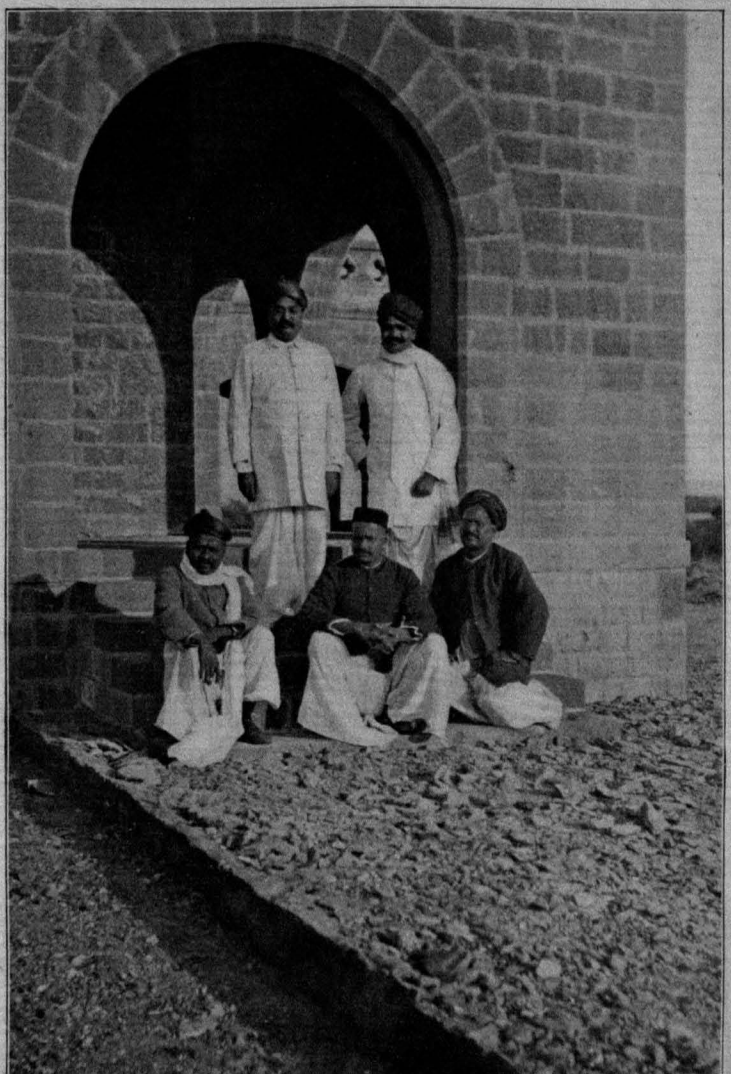
But the loss was not equally distributed, and when I was told that within those eleven years the inhabitants of Poona had been reduced to nearly one-third, I knew why so many homes were dark on a night of lamps and family affection. At the time, the plague was striking down from twelve to fifteen, or at the highest twenty, so that its visitation was regarded as light. But I remember the panic when a single case was reported in London, or even at the more comfortable distance of Marseilles, and so it was natural to find that many families had gone to live on selected open spaces outside the city. There among rocks and withered grass they kindled their little lamps and celebrated family joy in any hut of wicker, matting, canvas, petroleum tins, old boxes, boards, or branches which they and the Imperial Government could manage to rig up between them. Many shopmen had even transferred their little stores of grain, sweets, and cottons to this countrified scene, and the general effect was like a scrappy Derby Day without the races.

Having crossed a bridge, to the left of which thin columns of smoke still rose from the smouldering bodies of yesterday's dead, I passed through one of these Health Camps, as official language fondly calls them, and found before me a partly finished building of solid stone—unfinished, but with something already monastic and grave in its straight-roofed hall and line of cloistral habitations. It was the rising

home of the "Servants of India Society," and in front of his own small house the founder and "First Member" of the Society was standing to receive me.

Mr. Gopal Krishna Gokhale is one of the very few Indians whose name is known in England to a certain number of people outside the score or two that pay attention to Indian affairs. Born a Mahratta Brahman of the highest caste and of ordinary poverty in the small town of Kolhapur, he threw away the caste and retained the poverty. While a student at the Elphinstone College in Bombay, he came under the influence of Justice Ranade, also a Mahratta Brahman and judge of the High Court, famous already for social reform, and at that time combining with others to establish the National Congress, which held its first meeting in 1885. Mr. Gokhale had taken his degree the year before. Lord Ripon had just left the country, honoured and regretted among Indians as no other Viceroy has been, and the air was full of schemes for political emancipation under the favour and encouragement of British statesmen. Among the reformers of that time, when all were moderate, Ranade was distinguished for moderation, and when Mr. Gokhale in his student days chose him as his "guru," or spiritual guide, he fixed for life his own characteristics of moderation, and a certain sweet reasonableness, not only of manner, but of aim.

It is common to say of a dead politician that



MR. GOKHALE AND SERVANTS OF INDIA. [*Face p.* 34.