INDIA IN THE BALANCE

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BRITISH RULE AND THE CALIPHATE

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FOREWORD

In all the course of my public career I have never, till now, touched politics. Rather have I purposely avoided them as forming a topic apart, with a tendency to create false perspectives when applied to matters outside its own particular, and somewhat narrow, sphere. For the last ten years, since relinquishing my practice at the Bar, I have devoted my whole time to religion, which, of all subjects, has been generally considered that most distinctly set apart from politics. Yet the war, in its course of destruction, has not spared even this intangible barrier, and to-day the line of demarcation between religion and politics is lost.

To many in East and West alike, but especially in the East, religion is still a very real and living thing; and when we find religion openly used as something more than a pawn in the dubious game of politics, we must needs find also—be we of Europe or Asia—food for disquieting thought.

The eyes of India, to-day, are watching the first-fruits of this new departure, as revealed in the problem of the Caliphate and the integrity of the Turkish Empire; for the handier solution of which, the principles of the Faith of Islam are being called in question, and Muslim doctrines deliberately misrepresented by pro-Greek propaganda for a political purpose—professing to show that it is impossible for a Christian race to live unmolested under Muslim rule.

Unfortunately, grave misconceptions as to the Faith of Islam and what it stands for, are still widely prevalent in England. Recent developments in the Near East and elsewhere have, it is true, induced the British Government to lend a belated ear to Muslim claims; but the root of the trouble must be sought in the indifference of the British people to Muslim susceptibilities, which indifference is largely due to inaccurate and meagre information.

Nor is such an attitude difficult to understand when the alleged experts and selfconstituted authorities on Eastern affairs, who write ex cathedra in the leading journals, and upon whom devolves the task of making and moulding public opinion, are themselves ignorant of the true significance of the phenomena of which they write.

My sole object in this little book is to put fairly and squarely before the people of Great Britain the actual position to-day of the people of India.

I shall endeavour to state, dispassionately and without bias, the condition of Muslim feeling in India as it is, and its possible bearing on the future; and, having stated the case as it is, neither justifying nor condemning, and explained the why and the wherefore, I shall ask the people of Great Britain to judge and, having judged, to see to it that their judgment is translated into action.

During the ten years in which I have been in direct touch with English people in England, my impression of the English has changed greatly. It is now, I had almost said, fundamentally different from what it used to be—and what it is still apt to be, I am afraid, when I am in India; and it is to that innate English sense of justice, honesty and fair play, which I find everywhere in this country, that I confidently appeal.

And here I may remark that the ideal of a united India, about which we have been reading so much of late, is not without practical difficulties for Indians, be they Muslim or Hindu.

The vast populations involved—aggregating some seventy millions of the one and two hundred and

thirty millions of the other—render the process of welding them into any sort of genuine corporate union, one that involves time, together with infinite patience and mutual understanding before all things. And, further, there is the danger, equally present and equally repugnant to both, that in such fusion—as in a melting-pot—distinctions of race and tradition and custom, and, indeed, everything that makes for national individuality, equally precious to both—may become lost.

Such an ideal of ultimate union is cherished, as an ideal, by educated Indians, Muslim and Hindu alike; but the "melting-pot" looms ahead, and it is the fear of the "melting-pot" which has hitherto kept the two races apart. I say "hitherto," for circumstances are like to prove too strong for the millions who have hesitated, and are still hesitating, reluctant to take the first decisive step on a perilous path that leads they know not whither, but impelled thereto more and more by mysterious forces from the West.

For this is a mystery—to me, at least.

At the present time, every English official entrusted with the task of Indian government in India, from the Viceroy and the Governors of Presidencies and Provinces downwards, through every branch of the administration, is convinced that the trouble is due, as regards Muslims at least, to a feeling of real and

desperate anxiety arising from the provisions of the Treaty of Sèvres as affecting the Caliphate and the integrity of Turkey, and that such anxiety is justified and should be removed.

The Home Government, too, on the occasion of the publication of the Viceroy's now famous message and Mr. Montagu's consequent resignation, stated expressly that that resignation was necessitated by the unauthorized action of the late Secretary of State, and was not to be construed as indicating the Government's want of sympathy in any way with the purport of the message.

All parties would seem to be agreed—yet nothing is done.

It would be palpably a foolish thing to suggest any doubt whatsoever as to the b o n a f i d e s either of the Indian Administration, or of the Government at home.

What, then, is the reason? There can be, as I believe, but one; and that one, that even now the Home Government, at least, is not fully alive to the real urgency of things in India; and it is in this belief, and in the earnest hope that a full and accurate knowledge of the actual position will, even at the eleventh hour, convince the British people and the British Government of the ever-gathering peril of delay, that I have written this book.

Now is the time to act. The thing has not yet gone too far, but if action be over-long delayed, an inevitable step will have been taken which, whatever may be its immediate and ultimate effects on Hindu and Muslim destinies, can scarcely fail to result in an outlook new and sinister for British rule in India.

CONTENTS

INDIA IN THE BALANCE

CHAPTER I

THE MUSLIM CONCEPTION OF GOVERNMENT

THE ignorance that exists in England concerning Islam may be of the kind that arises rather from lack of opportunity than of desire to learn, but its extent is amazing; more especially when it is remembered that the Muslim subjects of His Majesty outnumber the Christian. Hence, the strangest allegations and the most grotesque of fairy tales—appalling and diverting by turns—are received without suspicion, and pass lightly into alleged fact, which is, of course, ample ground for any charge or theory, however extraordinary.

There is, for example, a widely-entertained idea—almost subconscious at times—that this Muslim civilization, if such it can be called, is at best a wild and exotic thing. Mahdis and Mad Mullahs, dervish hordes and marauding Bedouin, and the moving incidents of their exploits, wherein savage scenery and unaccustomed garb serve to enhance the inevitable horrors of even border warfare, have doubtless had their effect on the man in the street—filling the stage of his mind when the Eastern curtain rings up, to the exclusion of the millions of Muslims, every whit as peaceable as himself, who, with him, constitute the audience.

It is easy to visualize a sufficiently vivid and convincing whole from an insignificant part, if that part be dramatic, not to say picturesque; but it is not fair, neither is it particularly wise.

Before we judge a cause or a system—be it a civilization or some lesser thing—it is surely as well to know what it is; and before we make up our minds to the fact that the Muslim is, as such, a turbulent and irresponsible creature with an embarrassing turn for blood—the Ishmael of world-politics, with his hand against every man and, by reason of the nature of such civilization as is his, constitutionally impatient of control—it would be only fair to inquire as to this same civilization, and find out for our-

selves what actually is the Muslim conception of government.

There is an anecdote (historical) of the great Omar, the second of the Caliphs, which seems to me to the point.

One Jabala, king of the Ghassanides, a recent convert to Islam, whilst performing the t a w a f, or circumambulation of the Kaaba, became annoyed with a humble pilgrim engaged in the same pious duty, because the latter had inadvertently permitted a portion of his pilgrim's dress to come in contact with the royal person. Jabala struck the man, knocking out his teeth, and the victim came to the great Caliph for redress. "I sent for Jabala," wrote the Caliph to one of his generals, "and asked him why he had so ill-treated a brother Muslim. He answered that the man had insulted him, and that were it not for the sanctity of the place he would have killed him on the spot. I replied that his words added to the gravity of the offence, and that unless he obtained the pardon of the injured man, he would have to submit to the usual penalty of the law. Jabala retorted, 'I am a king, and the other is only a common man.'" To which Omar made answer, "King or no king, both of you are Mussulmans, and b o t h o f y o u a r e e q u a l i n t h e e y e s o f t h e l a w." Jabala duly fled to escape the degradation of the

penalty; but the words of Omar remain the ultimate summing up of the Muslim ideal of government—which is to say, democracy in its most human form.

Such was, and is, the law's regard for the individual, and that of the individual for the law is like unto it. Remember that we are judging Muslim law as we should British—by its principles, and not by breaches of those principles.

Muslim reverence for authority is instilled from earliest childhood. "And your Lord has commanded," says the Qur-án, "that you shall not serve others than Him, and that to your parents you shall do good; if either or both of them reach old age with you . . . do not grumble at them, but speak to them respectfully. And lower to them the wing of humility out of compassion and say, 'O Lord, have compassion on them, even as they brought me up when I was little' " (xvii. 23, 24). So also the rule of conduct for those of riper years is explicit enough: "Obey God and the Apostle and those who are in authority among you."

Authority is to be obeyed, and the person as representing authority. Such a person may be of any religion, but as parents are to be obeyed so must he be obeyed, and that he profess, or not, the Muslim faith is neither here nor there. There is a tradition that the Prophet ordained that this duty of obedience

must not be withheld even from a negro slave; and though, in these latter days, such ordinances may be considered to err on the side of too great strictness, yet it will scarcely be denied that they do indicate a species of civilization pecuriarly amenable to just and ordered government.

Such, then, is the attitude of the Muslim—the Indian Muslim as well as his brethren of the Faith—towards government by his own people; and if it be asked how this differs from his attitude towards British government, the answer will be—not at all.

The principle involved in the words of Omar is still uppermost in the mind of every thinking Muslim, for democracy—practicable and practical—is no new idea with us, as it is with you in the West. Democracy in its present form had its birth and home in Islam. This may appear a strong claim, but the seven principles, which I give below, promulgated by the Qur-án and the Prophet as constituting a democratic rule, will substantiate my assertion; and those who, actuated by Turcophobia, say that Turkish rule, based on Qur-ánic lines, is not suitable for present day progressive cummunities, should think twice before making an assertion based so obviously on inaccurate and insufficient information. I challenge such persons to produce better basic principles of government than those laid down by Islam.

Muslims possess, in their own jurisprudence, the best basic principles of law of which a civilization can boast. The soucre of this law is the Qur-án—a book from God, and not merely a product of the human brain, incapable of keeping pace with the needs of humanity from age to age. The seven principles are these:

First, sovereign political authority, for which the word Khilafat (Caliphate) stands in the Qur-án, and in the traditions of the Prophet. The word includes religious authority also, but this religious aspect I shall deal with fully in a subsequent chapter.

Secondly, the person representing this sovereign political authority, or Caliphate. There are several ways in which a person may become Caliph; but the most commendable one is e l e c t i o n.

Thirdly, the Caliph cannot rule without consulting the ruled. The famous dictum of the Caliph Omar sums up this principle clearly enough. "There can be no Khilafat," he says, "unless the voice of the ruled is respected." The Qur-án also enjoins upon the king that he is to take counsel in state affairs: "And take counsel with them in the affairs" (iii 158).

Fourthly, the king should rule for the benefit of the ruled, and not for his personal aggrandizement. "Blessed is He," the Qur-án says, "in whose hand is the kingdom, and He has power over all things ... He

may try you—which of you is best in deeds" (lxvii. 1, 2). "It may be that your Lord will destroy your enemy, and make you ruler in the land, then He will see how you act" (vii. 129). "Then He made you successors (kings) in the land after them, so that We may see how you act." "How you act" is the Divine test which must be satisfied before a nation is allowed by the Lord to continue to rule, Nations that do evil are swept away, and others are raised in their place, that they may do good. They live only so long as they do more good than harm to humanity, be they Muslims or non-Muslims; but when they begin to devote their lives to luxury and to indulge in evil, decay overtakes them. Thus the ruler is to rule for the benefit of the ruled, and not for his own benefit, or the benefit of his own nation, if he chance to have other races under him. The policy of weakening subject races by division, and thereby strengthening his own nation, is a most undesirable policy for a ruler, according to the teachings of the Qur-án.

Speaking of Pharaoh, the Qur-án says:

> Surely Pharaoh exalted himself in the land and made its people into parties, and weakening one party from among them . . . surely he was one of the mischiefmakers (xxviii. 4).

Even in the tradition of the Prophet, speaking of the Quraishite Caliphate, to which prominence has

of late been given by certain writers in the daily Press, the words of the Hadis very clearly lay down that the Caliphate in the Quraishite will continue only so long as they shall rule for the benefit of the ruled.

Fifthly, the Qur-án inspires a strong sense of submission to authority, and speaks of sedition as a wicked thing. The verse speaking against sedition is as follows: "God forbids indecency, and evil, and rebellion" (xvi. 90).

Sixthly, the governed are to point out to the ruler, though with all respect, any defects and injustices in his government. The first sermon that the Caliph Abu Bakr gave, on the very first day of his power, speaks of this right of the subject to criticize the ruler. "Put me in the right," the noble Calipk says "If you find me in error." We have heard here a good deal of late of the Muslim Holy War, or J e h a d, and it would seem to be regarded variously as one of the irresponsible ebullitions characteristic of a civilization in the nursery stage, or as a devastating eruption of fanatical ignorance; but the Prophet Muhammad himself said that the best form of J e h a d is to approach the king, with the respect due to his kingship, and boldly tell him when he has committed a wrong.

Just as in British law, the appeal unto Caesar—broadened from its Roman basis—has ever been the

right, in principle, even of the humblest citizen, so access to authority, for the purpose of making known an injustice or obtaining redress for a grievance, is part and parcel of the law of Islam.

Seventhly, justice and equity, recognizing no distinction of descent or race, should characterize the rule. I have cited the case of King Jabala in this connection.

Those progressive nations who think that Turkish rule, with the Qur-án as the basis of its legislation, is unfit to govern, will do well to ponder on the principles I have enumerated, which are the foundation of that rule. Can they conceive of a better system of jurisprudence; or can they doubt but that, if these seven principles were consistently practised by ruling nations towards their subject races, all the unrest which is at the present time manifesting itself in subject races everywhere, would, as if by magic, disappear?

To emphasize the principle of submission to authority, sedition against the rule has not only been strongly prohibited, but it has also been hinted that if the governed found the rule too hard for him to submit to, he would do better to leave his home and seek another country, rather than stay and plot rebellion.

Herein, I think, is illustrated one striking and

peculiar experience or privilege, call it what you will, which Islam alone has possessed of all world-faiths that have sprung from humble beginnings; to wit, that it has fallen to the lot of Islam to attain to temporal power so rapidly that its first Caliphs, within less than a generation of the Prophet's death—with the light of the spiritual dawn still upon them—were able to put their newly revealed principles of conduct to the proof in the greater matters of the world as well as in the less, thus demonstrating to all mankind their practical application, nationally as well as individually. Omar's words to Jabala promptly involved him in war with the aggrieved monarch, but they proved that his faith was not an empty thing, nor one of implied limitations.

Foreign rule is not, of itself, obnoxious to the Muslim, and British rule in India during the last two centuries has been in no way discordant with Muslim ideas or with the Muslim faith.

The king, in whose person is symbolized authority, must, as king, have one religion only, and that justice—a conception closely analogous to the English maxim, "The king can do no wrong." British dominion, being taken as a just dominion and one based on democracy, found favour with Indian Muslims— a f o r t i o r i the fact that it is also, nominally at least, a Christian dominion, tended, if anything,

to enhance that feeling. Here the man in the street may open his eyes, but is true none the less, and for a very obvious and good reason.

Both the Christian faith and that of the Jews are regarded by the Qur-án as equally near akin to Islam. All three have the same Semitic origin, all three possess in common certain basic principles, and, while the prophets of Israel have their place in the Islamic hierarchy (if such a term be permissible), the Founder of Christianity is given the same reverence by Muslims as the Prophet himself.

But the consideration which outweighed all others with Muslim India, lies in the fact that British government, though it be a government by a Christian power, was not a Christian government in the sense in which the rule of subject races by the Romans constituted Roman government. That is to say, British rule had not sought in any way to force itself on the religion or the customs of the governed.

Events of the last twenty years in the Near East—and elsewhere—have, however, caused acute disappointment and a certain foreboding.

Up to that time Muslim India was content—having no apprehensions for the morrow.

Now, it is wondering.

CHAPTER II

THE CHANGE AND ITS CAUSES IN GENERAL.

THE spirit of India is changed. The "pathetic content" deplored by Mr. Montagu has gone, and the wonder to which it has given place is ever growing.

One factor in the situation—of some significance—must not be lost sight of. India, more especially during the last half-century, has visited England and has learnt to understand.

The Anglo-Indian population—narrow, "exclusive," caste-ridden to an extent at which a Brahmin might blush—jogs complacently along, in the rut of what it conceives to be old tradition, forgetting—or not perceiving—that the rut has widened to a well-trodden highway, and oblivions of the fact that its own personnel is different from that of the builders of British India and their fellows, in just the same degree that competitive-examination efficiency differs from statecraft, or mere brains from breeding.

To jog along on a broad highway, in the belief that it is a rut, may well excite the mirth of those that pass by; but when the joggers-on are persons in authority (however brief), who cannot see the joke or oven admit that there is one, the mirth is apt to be tempered by inconvenience, not to say annoyance, and the mixture is not good.

But India has been to England too, and has learnt in English school and English university those old traditions that survive there yet. India has gone thence into the European world, and seen for itself the manner in which those traditions are respected and upheld. India has been treated hospitably, with friendship and cordiality, as an honoured equal, and has returned, puzzled enough at all she has learnt, and particularly puzzled to find herself reduced, on a sudden, to a plane of racial inferiority.

And what has been the result of India's visit to England?

She has seen a country wherein all men are educated—where political power is for every class of the community, and, in theory, the knowledge how to use it. She has seen a nation more deeply stirred by the result of a race, a football match, or a boxing competition, than by an event of international import—concentrating its mental acumen

on the prospects of the coming cricket season, rather than on the outcome of the crisis to which their Empire is drifting daily.

The Indian is puzzled thereby, not as yet realizing perhaps the extent to which familiarity may breed contempt, nor reflecting, as yet, that it is this kind of familiarity, the familiarity with the things that matter, that constitutes democracy's most real danger. Instead, he sees these, to him, priceless privileges of responsibility and citizenship held as of less than no account, and is frankly envious, and, it may be, a little uncomplimentary in thought towards these people that know not what they do.

I am not defending this attitude; I merely suggest that it is an intelligible one.

Still more is the Indian at a loss when, after receiving with admiration and reverence the British gospel of equality for all, regardless of race, colour or religion, and observing it in actual operation, he returns to his native land to find between himself and his English fellow-citizens a great gulf fixed.

A cynic once observed that when a mixed boatload of English and Indians leaves Tilbury for Bombay there is, at the start, nothing to distinguish it from any other harmonious assemblage of equally civilized persons. Opinions differ as to the precise period of the voyage when the first signs of a cleav-

age begin to be perceptible, but all authorities are agreed that when Aden is left behind the thing is evident, and what was one community has become two.

Again, I do not contend that this should not be so. All may still be for the best in the best of all possible worlds, but to the Indian it is a little difficult to reconcile with theory on any grounds other than humiliating.

He realizes—or thinks he realizes—and through him, in time, the India with which he comes in contact begins to realize, that the principles of English democracy may be, and very possibly are, excellent in themselves, and well suited to English people, but that they are not thought to be so suited to Indians.

That is the situation—to date.

There is no party in India that is really anxious to see the end of British rule. The resentment, if such it can be called, is not aganist the British Raj, but simply aganist present methods of administration. The turmoil and unrest which are, unhappily, everywhere in evidence, are not the outcome of sedition, privy conspiracy, and rebellion; they are simply the admittedly imperfect methods of an inarticulate people to draw attention to an urgent need.

India feels that, in England, she is not understood. Knowing that little may be hoped for from the Anglo-Indian element, she has pinned her faith to the English. She has appealed to England—and England is indifferent, or, at least, does not seem to care.

One example will suffice—a trivial episode in English estimation, but one of vast significance to India. Thirty years ago a newspaper was established for the purpose if possible, of enlightening English opinion on the subject of Indian "aspirations" (I must apologize for using ex-President Wilson's foolish and rather mischievous phrase, but it serves to indicate my meaning). It was founded by the late Sir Henry Cotton and continued by his son: it was called The Indian National Congress, was published, throughout, in England, and, after thirty years struggle, has just died of inanition. Nobody read it. Nobody cared.

India at last realizes the hopelessness of English propaganda—that it is in truth to fight "as one that beateth the air," and has determined at last, being compelled thereto, to work out her own salvation at home, as best she may.

If one fourth part of the rights and responsibilities that have been so freely lavished on England's illiterate, who have scarcely a "thank you" to spare for

them, had been bestowed upon Indians in India, that fourth part would have made all the difference. India is lacking neither in education nor in what is called culture; nor yet in the finer perception that makes of that culture a valuable thing. Indian judges have proved not unworthy of the highhest tradition of the English Courts, and, logically there is no position, from Viceroy downwards, which an Indian is not adequately qualified to fill.

I have pointed out that one of the strongest factors in the stability of British government in India hitherto has been that it is government by Christians, rather than a Christian government. But now an idea is abroad that this government by Christians is ruling as a Christian government, and not as an impartial administration—favouring Christians, Christian interests and enterprises, to the prejudice of the religions of the country.

It is possible to make allowance for concessions to missionaries—the building of churches and religious institutions, and similar forms of activity, not unreasonable in themselves; but the war would seem to have shown—if we are to trust the published and acknowledged utterances of certain statesmen—that the ideal for which the Allies have fought—in the East, at any rate—is Christianity against all other creeds. When one eminent speaker referred to Salo-

nika as the portal of Christendom, and another compared the British occupation of Jerusalem to the Crusades, India became on the instant suspicious and alert.

A thoughtless word, dropped in the fervour of political eloquence, may, at the worst, sow the seed of an embarrassing harvest; at the least it may convey a wrong impression, capable of being removed.

Is this impression a wrong one? If so, let something be done to show it; if, on the other hand, it is right—then the future is dark indeed.

CHAPTER III

OF THE MUSLIMS IN INDIA THE PAST AND PRESENT ATTITUDE

EVEN so late as 1912, the Muslims in India had not swerved an inch from their support of the government. The clear teaching of the Qur-án and the precepts of the Holy Prophet had engendered in them the spirit of true loyalty to the British rule. With the partition of Bengal, however under Lord Curzon, serious unrest was created in that province, the whole of which had become a hot-bed of anarchy—to such an extent, indeed, that it was thought expedient to change the seat of government from Calcutta to Delhi. Even then, support to the Government measure was still forthcoming from the Muslims. In fact, the whole of Bengal was split into two camps, Bengalees on the one side and the Government and the Muslims on the other. The outlook for the general well-being of the country was not a bright one.

Amity, between Hindu and Muslim, on certain lines, is essential for the welfare of India—a fact which

was insisted upon by no less a person than the King himself at the Delhi Durbar in January 1912; but the relations between the two races had become strained almost to breaking-point. It was clear that the state of things thus created could not continue. When the task of administration had become practically impossible the partition of the province was annulled, and a homily of peace and unity preached at the Delhi Durbar.

This was well enough, but the effect on the two communities was most deplorable, and promised to be lasting. The Hindus felt themselves in the position of the victors, and the Muslims of the vanquished. Then it dawned upon the former that something more than political agitation was necessary to secure the desired end; while the Muslims began to realize that to side with the government against their own countrymen could only bring shame and disgrace. Even in the very days of the Durbar the crestfallen Muslim leaders had begun to ask themselves what they should do now.

The dissatisfaction was not confined to Bengal, but made itself felt in every corner of India, especially in the Punjab, where unrest among the Hindus had already begun to show itself in 1905, and had become acute in 1907. The leaders of the Muslim community in Lahore, the seat of the Punjab

Government, thought it necessary to do something to keep their fellow-Muslims within proper limits. I was asked to deliver a series of lectures on the very subject which was agitating the leaders of Islam at the time of the Durbar. What should the Muslims do now?

In each lecture I dwelt upon a particular phase of the subject. The theme of the last lecture, which was listened to with rapt attention by an assembly of about five thousand persons, was "The Attitude of Muslims towards the British Government and other Muslim and non-Muslim Powers." The lecture was printed in one of the Indian journals, and I make the following extracts from it simply to show how strong was the sense of submission to rule held by the Muslims in those days.

The Maulawis (Muslim priests) have not forgotten the verse which the Holy Prophet made a point of reciting every Friday in his sermon from the pulpit, and which is consequently recited this day. The verse runs thus: "Verily God enjoineth justice, the doing of good and the giving unto kindred; and He forbiddeth immorality, wrong and revolt." . . . You will find by reference to the second part of the above verse that it deals with the very three matters to which the aforesaid laws refer . . . The first thing forbidden in the verse is F a h s h a, which signifies such evil deeds as pertain to the personal morals of men. The next thing forbidden is M u n k e r, i. e. such acts as involve a wrong to our fellow-creatures. Lastly, we are commanded not to resist the laws of the government, which have been framed to protect the rights of the subjects. The

word Baghy (revolt) is a comprehensive term which not only includes the sense of the word "sedition," but also applies to all those acts which are calculated to threaten the stability of a government established by law in a country.

Dealing with the first part of the verse, which enjoins the observance of three moral laws, I made the following remarks to show their application as regards the government:

If we respect the laws of the government and pay the legal taxes, we are not laying the government under any obligation. The government made laws for us and protected our lives, property and honour. . . . The Holy Qur-án requires us not to stop here, but to do more than this. But we should also practise beneficence in our relation with the government. . . . We should share the burden of our government, fly to its assistance when it is confronted with difficulties, create facilities for it, chastise its enemies and volunteer our services when it has to undertake great expeditions. . . . But the Holy Qur-án requires us to rise higher than this . . . showing that pure form of kindness which one shows to one's kinsmen (the last moral which the verse speaks of). . . . When a mother, for instance, lavishes her care on her child, she does not do so out of any desire for regard or recognition. We shall be practising this highest virtue in relation to the government if we render it services even without its knowledge and without looking for any reward from it. . . .

Referring to the unrest of 1907 in the Punjab, I said:

Ye thousands of men, that are now assembled in this meeting, and that are the residents of this great city, I ask you whether any seditious spirit was to be found in you in 1907, and whether you were so disloyal as to plot against authorities? Had you forgotten the teachings of the Qur-án with regard to obedience

and loyalty? Had the verse recited to you from the pulpit every Friday faded from your memory? . . . You are Muslims, and no Muslim can be guilty of treachery; you are a believer, and no believer can wish evil to his rulers. You are the followers of the Holy Qur-án, and the Holy Qur-án enjoins obedience to authority on its followers. . . .

Referring to the conduct of the Muslims in those days, I said:

There is hardly any part of India which has been free from political agitation and intrigue during the past few years. Anarchism had appeared in various forms, and in every district affected was a large number of Muhammadans. East Bengal, some parts of which had been the centres of political agitation, has more Muhammadans than Hindus. . . . Why is it, then, that never a Muslim was involved in any of the intrigues, riots, dacoity, thefts and outrages that had been the order of the day during the past few years in every part of India? . . . It is to Islam and its Holy Founder . . . that the credit is really due for the admirable attitude of the Muslims towards their foreign ruler. . . .

Of Pan-Islamism, I said:

The German and the Italian clergy are attempting the wholesale destruction of Islam by spreading the supposed terror under the name of Pan-Islamism. If by Pan-Islamism I am to understand that all Muslims living in the different parts of the earth are planning to overthrow the Christian empires, and thus to renew afresh the glory of Islam, it is a falsehood which has been made by mischiefmongers. . . . Religion is nothing but obedience to certain commandments . . . among other things, the order relating to submission to the government. It is an odd inconsistency that in endeavouring to live in the service of my religion I should wantonly allow myself

to go against the express commandments of it. . . . But if Pan-Islamism means that the Muslim should wish that all the human souls living on earth may become Muslims and accept the truth of the Arabian Prophet, then I shall be the first to be proud of my love for Pan-Islamism!

The lecture was a very long one: it took me three hours to deliver it. It was heard with rapt attention, without exciting any question or arousing any opposition. That it went to the heart of the audience and mirrored their feeling can easily be ascertained from the fact that very full reports appeared in many vernacular papers, including the Zamindar of Lahore, the editor of which has now been considered as an arch-seditionist and is in jail.

Only ten years have passed since then, and what a world of change is to-day in the Muslim attitude towards the British government! Suffice it to say that an utterance such as this of mine, that I have quoted, will not only barely secure the one-hundredth part of the audience in these days, but that if anyone went to the platform with such a lecture he would be hooted down. Who can wonder? How this change of feeling occurred is not a secret to the official class, or to the Government here; but to the millions of my fellow-subjects in this country it is still a mystery, and in this coming chapter I shall try to explain it briefly

CHAPTER IV

THE CHANGE IN THE MUSLIMS

WITH the outbreak of war in 1914 the gathering murmurs of unrest were lost, for the time, in the din of a world-conflict, upon the upshot of which depended the future of every part oft the British Empire, India included; and it was not until the entry of Turkey into the struggle that any cloud of difficulty began to hover on the horizon of Indian affairs.

Even then, by prompt and diplomatic handling, those on the spot who had some knowledge of Muslim feeling, and, in consequence, some glimmerings of the complications rendered possible by Turkey's action, succeeded in reconciling the duty required of Muslims, as subjects of the King-Emperor, with the allegiance due to the Sultan as Caliph, Guardian of the Holy Places and temporal representative of the spiritual entity called Islam.

Turkey, they said, with perfect truth, had deliberately elected to throw in her lot with the enemies of the British Government. It was not deemed necessary to go into the reasons which had moved Turkey to take such a

step, repugnant as it was to the tradition of a hundred years and more; but, the step being taken, Turkey must be fought, brought to see the error of her ways, and received back eventually into the fold, chastened and penitent. Indian Muslims need entertain no qualms about waging war, ostensibly, with the temporal Head of their religion—for the whole dispute was of a purely political nature, without religious or spiritual significance of any kind.

Muslim India took them at their word. Blood and treasure flowed freely for Great Britain against the Turk. Such was the still surviving confidence in British good faith, which could induce a nation of Muslims to take arms against the temporal Head of their religion.

It was, none the less, a situation without precedent, involving points of unusual delicacy.

That it should have been capable of successful adjustment at all, and that with a minimum of friction and misunderstanding, was, indeed, in view of the highly controversial nature of the business, matter for congratulation for the adjusters, but could not warrant their losing sight for an instant of its essential peculiarities, which were, of course, still in being.

As with every compromise, there was an implied bargain. How far, with the best of good will, this was ever really capable of fulfilment on the British

side is another question. So long, however, as that good will was present, and beyond suspicion, one might hope for the best.

The Indian had, in effect, to double the parts of enmity and amity—to fight for his country and maintain at the same time a sentiment of undiminished fraternity for the foe against whom he fought—to harmonize as best he could the sacred feeling of brotherhood with the clash of steel and the roar of the guns; for it must be remembered that the defeat of Turkey, to whatever extent justifiable, was bound to be felt in India. So the Indian troops fought gallantly, as all the world knows, and loyally kept their part of the bargain.

Then gradually, almost imperceptibly, something began to leak out—such is the mystical power of rumour in India—was all over that country before a hint of the truth had so much as suggested itself to that vast unofficial part of Great Britain, which still regards questions of public obligation and private honour as, in principle at least, analogous.

The rumour, which purported to give for the first time the real reason which forced Turkey to ally herself with the Central Powers, seemed on its merits outrageous enough, but doubly so when viewed in the light of that understanding to which I have just alluded.

The promise of Constantinople as a sop to Russia, for the purpose of dissuading that never too reliable ally from the project of a separate peace. might conceivably appear to some as an act of far-seeing statesmanship.

On the other side, however, must be set, leaving India out for the moment, two considerations, neither without weight: to wit, first that the capital of the Turkish Empire was not Great Britain's to dispose of; and, second, that the offer blithely sought to accomplish, at a pen's stroke and without the privity of British public opinion, just that which Great Britain had for generations been putting forth all her ingenuity to prevent. In India the business took on yet another aspect, inasmuch as Russia has ever shown herself the relentless foe of Islam, as well as a standing menace to Indian security.

In face of such rumours, whether well or ill founded, it was not surprising that India should become bewildered, disheartened, lukewarm rather than not, in a cause of which the true issues were more than ever hidden from her.

The Indian Government took prompt measures to allay anxiety, on the old familiar lines. Pledges were given, ample and satisfying, in so far as pledges, as such, can satisfy.

The integrity of the Turkish Empire was not in danger, the sovereignty of the Sultan in no way threatened, nor ever had been. The "rich lands of Thrace," with the holy city of Adrianople, would still be Turkish, as of yore—nothing was left unsaid which could tend to reassure Muslim opinion in India and restore in the fullest measure that spirit of confidence which had been so miraculously contrived in the first instance.

But the pledges, ample and satisfying, came from the lips of the then Viceroy, Lord Hardinge, and it was Lord Hardinge, according to rumour (which was by this time rumour no longer, but sober and ascertained fact), who had, in his own person, borne a principal part in the negotiations for the Constantinople bargain. These divergent truths, with their unity of origin and fundamental disunity of purport, becoming known and weighed and compared together, could not fail to produce an unpleasant impression. Not only must they needs tend to destroy confidence in the ample and satisfying pledges, but also to raise certain vague, far-reaching and most undesirable doubts as to British good faith in general.

There was a time, and not long ago, when the word of an Englishman (and surely the word of England should be the same) was a sacred bond.

It is a million pities that such ideas should be now things of the past—that a mess of pottage, so unaccountably savoury, should be deemed worth the sacrifice of a birthright so precious.

Such were the doubts engendered in India by the diplomatic manipulations of Lord Hardinge—manipulations conceived on the Machiavellian scale, but lacking the finesse of the master. British diplomacy is not built on the lines of Machiavelli, although a long record of straight dealing may have given that impression to minds naturally tortuous. British diplomacy could not survive the acid test. Machiavelli would never have allowed himself to be "caught out" so early.

The rest is history. India's doubts have been more than justified. The ample and satisfying pledges, though confirmed by a British Prime Minister in the House of Commons, have not been kept.

There has never been any intention to keep them—that is pretty generally admitted now—and the hysterical Crusading talk of responsible British politicians has given additional proof, if such were necessary, that religion was to be exploited from motives of policy, and that the war in the Near East was to be made a war of religion. The Arab-Jew question in Palestine helps to prove that the pledges

given by diplomats in their utmost need are honoured more in the breach than otherwise.

Current political talk runs openly on these lines to-day. Every utterance of every politician, which has for its topic the blessed principle of the Rights of Minorities, Self-Determination, Realization of Aspirations, or any other of Dr. Wilson's kindly-conceived beatitudes, as applied to the Near-East, is to be approached from the point of view of Religion, and to have Religion for its object, ostensible at least.

Interference on religious grounds, if sincere, must be impartial, and not confined to Christian communities in Muslim States. If the British Government were sincere in its sympathy for religious disability, where found, would it not be justified in interfering on behalf of the 40,000,000 Muslims of Java, on the ground that they are co-religionists of a vast number of British subjects, besides being subjects of the Caliphate? But British government is Christian government, and there has been no interference.

CHAPTER V

AFTER THE TREATY OF SÈVRES

THE Treaty of Sèvres has opened the eyes of the Muslim, in so far indeed as they had remained closed. He has found that the principles of democracy, the boast of the English nation, were only, after all, the privilege of the English people, and were not for him. He was told during the war, that the participation of Great Britain in the world-conflict was for the democratization of the world—in the words of Dr. Wilson, "to make the world safe for democracy." He had heard, at a crisis of grave and imminent peril, the British Premier declare, in a speech at Glasgow, that the Government had been a libel on the name and teaching of Jesus, and that they would make amends if they won the war, and see to it that every land be free and open to every people.

The words are still ringing in the ears of Muslims, for the principle of making every land accessible to every man is a Qur-ánic principle. He was rejoiced

to hear Mr. Balfour saying, in his thanksgiving speech after the Armistice, that if God was pleased to give victory to the British nation, it was not on account of that nation's prowess or strategy, but because the principles of government for which it fought were the principles of democracy, that is, of justice and fair dealing between nation and nation as between man and man. In short, the war was declared to be a war between democracy and military despotism, which, from the Qur-ánic point of view, was a war between Islam and infidelity, and the Muslim's duty was naturally to support the former. He had his own misgivings, too, lest the war should prove, after all, a fight between Christianity and Islam. His doubts became strengthened when the secret treaty between Russia and England, as to the handing over of Constantinople to the former, became disclosed. He wanted a definite assurance that the result of the war would not affect the integrity of the power and suzerainty of the Sultan as Khalifa-tul-Muslamin. The assurance was given, and he was satisfied.

The war ended, and even before the peace was concluded, the cat emerged from its bag. The deplorable event of Amritsar and the impolitic support of the methods adopted in the Punjab in those days forthcoming from certain quarters in Eng-

land, suggested not merely that the Indian estimation of England was incorrect, but that that nation was capable of acts such as are recorded of Hallaku and Ghanges of the Middle Ages. This comparison came from a President of the All-India Muslim League, when he referred to the Amritsar massacre in his presidential speech in December 1919. Then came the peace of Sèvres, and the Muslims found all the pledges of the Government broken. Leaving aside the more impolitic remarks in which Messrs. Asquith and Lloyd George saw fit to indulge from time to time, and which tended more and more to make the war appear a war between Christendom and Islam, the very mode of settlement of the Turkish territories indicated the religious character thus imposed on the struggle.

Christian minorities under Turkish rule have become mere pretexts for dismemberment, or for intervention from without. New régimes in Smyrna and Adrianople are proposed, with supervisory powers vested in the League of Nations, and again Christian minorities supply the reason. No such proposals would have been possible but for the war, and the Muslim is forced to the conclusion that the war was for Christianity—to the detriment of Islam. Yet no interest, be it noted, was evinced in the

Muslim minorities in the Balkan States when a settlement was made with them.

I have already pointed out that from a Muslim point of view a government has to represent and safeguard the interest of the governed. The gain and loss of the government are the gain and loss of the governed. If the war has indeed been won, it has been won by the British Government for the benefit of those under the British government, including the Muslim, who is, in fact, in a majority.

If the Christian British subjects can demand interference from the British Government in the interest of their co-religionists in other countries, the right to make a similar demand attaches with fourfold force to the Muslim British subjects. Their number is more than four times that of the Christian.

If Greeks and Armenians are the co-religionists of the smaller community under British rule, the Turks are co-religionists of the greater. But the question of Turkey has yet another aspect. The Turkish Sultan is the universally accepted Caliph of the Muslims, and the Caliphate in Islam, is, as I will explain, of vital importance to Muslims. If the plea of Christian interests being in danger has, from time to time, justified British intereference in the government of other countries, then the question of the Caliphate should surely justify the Muslims of India in request-

ing their government (which is the British government) to interfere in the matter on their behalf.

A government, in the Muslim view, can only justify its existence by giving heed to the voice of the governed, as I have shown in the first chapter. If for example there had been no war, and the Caliphate was in danger from some other quarter: the Muslim would have deemed it his legitimate right to compel the government to interfere and protect the Caliphate. But what an irony of fate and faith! The very body to which the Muslim in India looks for help, turns out to be his adversary.

The Greco-Turkish War served only to confirm this opinion. While the Indian Muslim is sending financial help to the Angora Government, he finds the British Government facilitating the same in favour of his enemies—the Greeks. To quote The Times, February 5th.

> We have the testimony of Lord Northcliffe that the permission given by the Government to Greece to raise a loan of £ 15,000,000 in this country has been deeply resented by Indian Muslims. The Government's blunder has been accentuated by the more recent proposal to permit Greece to obtain credits under the Trade Facilities Act with a British guarantee. When a country is at war, any form of financial help it may receive is, in effect, help in the waging of war.

What a lack of imagination! Could such countermoves on the political chessboard by the ruled and

the rulers create any good will between the two?

Deputation after deputation came, but all the representations made, and repeated, fell on deaf ears. The Muslim was in a dilemma when events began, or seemed to begin, to take this turn. He could not openly side with sedition, neither could he conspire secretly against his rulers, this being contrary to the teachings of his religion. He felt that it would not be possible to live under such a government and remain loyal to it. Religion, however, came to his help. Hijrat—emigration from the country—was a convenient remedy recommended by Islam to meet such contingencies, and the learned in religion gave their verdict for Hijrat.

Does it not speak highly for the peaceful teaching of Islam? Anarchism was not unknown to the Muslim as a means to achieve a political end. His neighbours in the country had resorted to it, when the Bengal partition was distasteful to them; but Islam came in his way. Islam permitted no such course. He preferred Hijrat, and thereby showed to the utmost his dissatisfaction with the rule, against which, as a true Muslim, he could not rebel.

Thousands of Muslims sold their valuable property for paltry sums under the pressure of the moment,

and left the country, with their families, for Afghanistan. This went on for a few months, but new developments in the diplomatic relations between the British Government and Afghanistan affected the movement, and it had to be given up. Many of the Muhajirn (emigrants) came back from Afghanistan penniless and houseless. They saw their salvation only in making joint efforts with their fellow-countrymen to get their grievances redressed.

Is it, then, surprising that the Muslim should rally to the flag of Mahatma Gandhi and deem himself justified in furthering the cause of civil disobedience? The Muslim is not unaware of the theory on which all taxation is based. To him it is a fee for the services of protecting the life, property and other interests of the taxpayer. He levies a tax in like manner on non-Muslims in Muslim territories, which Christian propagandists have called a "poll-tax on infidels." A Muslim under Muslim rule is subject to conscription for the defence of the country; he has to pay also a special tax for the poor, and various other taxes. A non-Muslim under Muslim rule is exempted by law from all such taxes, and from military service, and he has only to pay a tax for the protection of his property and other interests. This is what has been branded as the poll-tax.

To put it shortly, the Muslim has been taught by his religion the theory of taxation, which can only be levied validly if used to further and protect the interests of those who are called upon to pay; and if the Caliphate is an interest of supreme importance to him, can he be willing to pay taxes if the body which receives them not only does not protect the Caliphate, but, in ignorance, does many things which imperil it? I say in ignorance, because the Cabinet represents a nation which is not interested in injuring its fellow-subjects. This much I can affirm, from my own knowledge of that nation.

Mr. Gandhi has gone to jail, and may die there; but his principles, as far as I can judge, are taking deep root in the minds of the people, who have been forced to the belief that whatever they pay in the form of taxes and rates is not being rightly used. There is no vital necessity for the Muslim to follow Mr. Gandhi. It would not be a difficult matter to wean him from this new allegiance, but he cannot go against his own religion. His conception of government is quite clear to him; an alien rule is no grievance to him, so long as that rule adheres to the following principles laid down by Omar with reference to the administration of government:

My Brothers, I owe you several duties and you have several rights over me. One of them is that you should see that I do

not misuse the revenues; another that I may not adopt wrong measures in the assessment of the revenue; that I should increase your salaries; protect the frontiers; and that I should not involve you in any unnecessary dangers. Whenever I err, you have the right to stop and take me to task.

Who can deny the wisdom or the truth in these words of Omar? Personal religion should not be allowed to sway the judgment of those who hold in their hands the reins and responsibilities of government. They are the representatives, not of the King of England, but of a monarch who rules the destinies of the adherents of many religions, among whom Muslims preponderate in number. He is Defender of the Faith, but the word "faith" must not be taken in the narrow sense of four centuries ago. It should connote Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, Christianity, Judaism, Sikhism, Parsiism, and the rest. It is a pity that to placate certain powerful religious interests in this country, whose support is of vital importance in party government, the Cabinet should have become a helpless instrument in their hands.

Unfortunately, the last thirty years have seen Islam being constantly weakened by the Christian Powers, and the Muslims in India have reason to suspect the presence of a British hand in this game against Islam. Prior to the war the process was one affecting the geographical boundaries of these countries, but the war itself could never have aroused such

an upheaval of unrest in all Muslim lands, if the foolish policy of certain statesmen, egged on by religious bigotry in this country, had not led Muslims to believe that the war was, after all, a war between Islam and Christianity.

CHAPTER VI

INCENDIARISM AND THE GOVERNMENT'S DRASTIC MEASURES

TO dub the political worker in India a firebrand may, or may not, serve a useful purpose; but it will certainly not be of any assistance to those who are seeking to understand the real character of the people with whom they have to deal.

Civil disobedience in India is, no doubt, fraught with many dangers, and the sooner it comes to an end the better, for the sake both of the ruler and the ruled. But the measures adopted by the British Government must eventually prove useless. Unfortunately, no true and proper information of the state of things in India is ever laid before the people here. Not even the hundredth part of the gravity of the situation there has, as yet, been appreciated. What I read in the Indian vernacular newspapers simply strengthens my conviction that whatever appears in the English daily papers is written in ignorance, due to lack of adequate means for obtaining reliable

information. It is never a good policy to suppress the truth, though Mahatma Ghandi's imprisonment may seem to improve matters, to those who believe in opportunism.

Of late, much has been made in the Press of certain so-called "drastic measures" which are being adopted. Every new arrest, especially if the person arrested be a person of importance in India, is hailed with approval and regarded as a "step in the right direction."

From the same point of view Mr. Montagu's dismissal from the India Office is held to be fully justified; but it is not a paying policy to permit the spirit of party politics to hamper or defeat those who are dealing with the problem of India's affairs in all honesty of purpose, and with the wide vision of true statesmanship. I do not believe that any Englishman would lend his countenance to harsh measures that can serve no good purpose. It is the practical utility of any proposed measure which should more than anything else guide the conduct of a statesman. Those who lay stress on a "strong rule" merely show ignorance of the psychology of the people with whom they have to deal.

My attention has been called to a statement in the editorial columns of the Pall Mall Gazette (April 25, 1922), which, though it may well command

ready credence from those who are content with hoping for the best, is yet so utterly at variance with the actual position of affairs that it becomes my plain duty, so far as in me lies, to open the eyes of the people of this country and convince them that they are, in very deed, living in a fools' paradise.

The statement is as follows:

> The news from India shows that Mr. Montagu's departure from office has had a wholesome effect upon the general tone and condition.
>
> The restoration of a spirit of real government and the decision to give authority the support so long withheld from it have had immediate results, and the disorderly element has been cooled by the imprisonment of Gandhi and other leaders.
>
> The greatest crime against a country like India is to give the impression that its rulers are timid in the face of incendiarism. It is a wrong that will not be repeated, we trust, in this generation.

It is possible that this "greatest crime against a country like India" may "not be repeated, at least in this generation," but whether because of the "restoration of the spirit of real government" or of some new and wholly startling change in the "real government" itself, the next few years must decide.

Apart, however, from its air of complacent optimism, the Pall Mall Gazette's facts are fundamentally in error. The imprisonment of Mr. Gandhi has brought calm instead of unrest, order out of disorder, because the gospel that he preached—the