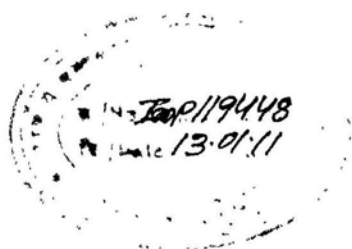


OPEN LETTERS

Lord Gerson

BY

Shiva Shambhu Sharma



PREFACE

"Shiva Shambhu-Ka-Chittha" in this pamphlet are all open letters to Lord Curzon translated from the Bharat Mittra, a Hindi weekly of Calcutta. They have been written by one Shiva Shambhu Sharma for that paper. Lord Curzon's vice-royalty has been universally condemned by the people, for, heedless of their protests and entreaties, he has always "given them stone when they have wanted bread." Voices of condemnation have been heard from all sides,—the public, the press and the platform,—and at all times.

But out of evil cometh good. An almost unconquerable desire to make themselves acquainted with the real condition of the country is now to be seen among a large section of our people whose hearts have not yet been fully illumined by the lights of the west. Many have learnt to look upon the new paper, not as an article of luxury, but as a thing of necessity; while others look upon it as a useful medium for the ventilation of their numerous grievances as well as for the free expression of their independent views on the affairs of the country. The more strenuously Lord

Curzon is exerting himself to bind them hand and foot, the more they are learning to move for the preservation of their lawful rights and privileges as subjects of the empire. Lord Curzon's reactionary policy and his reckless throwing away of the poor country's money, of which he has been made the responsible custodian by the sovereign and the parliament, have instilled a life into our hitherto almost lifeless countrymen.

Shiva Shambhu in his letters has told Lord Curzon in an unmistakable language in what light even the mass of the country have taken his several retrograde measures and his unnecessary and unjustifiable profusions of courtly splendour. If this pamphlet succeeds in conveying a true idea thereof to our rulers the object of the translator will have been attained.

A Reader of the Bharat Mitra.

[Translated from the *Bhural Mitra*, April 21, 1903.]

SHIVA SHAMBHU'S LETTER.

TO H. E. LORD CURZON.

My Lord ! in his boyhood, this Bhang-eating old man had a great fondness for Bulbuls. In his village, there were several other fine gentlemen also very fond of the winged creature. They used to catch the birds, feed and tend them and then put them into fighting with each other. Young Shiva Shambhu cherished no fondness for seeing them fight ; he only desired the pleasure of keeping a Bulbul seated on his hands. But the son of a Brahmin, as he was, how was he to get a bird ? His father always feared that the boy might kill the bird, if one were given him, and that would mean murder ; or if some cat would snatch the bird off his hands, it would be a sin. It, however, at the earnest entreaties of the boy, his father would ever get a bird from a friend and give him the same, it was never allowed to remain on his hand for more than an hour and that one hour also under the father's vigilant eyes.

It was the business of the village inn-keepers to catch the Bulbuls. The boys got their birds from them for two or three pice each. But young Shiva Shambhu could not do so. How could he get a bird without his father's permission or where could he keep it ? He had, however, an eager longing in his mind to have a bird on his hands, and so the very sight of a Bulbul, flying in the woods, agitated and excited his mind ; the notes

of the Bulbul caused his heart to throb and dance with delight, and oh ! what flights of fancies came pouring into his mind ! It is impossible for 'others to imagine those feelings. 'Others apart, Shiva Shambhu himself cannot now recall to mind those indescribable joys and delights of his childhood.

Thus, one day, with several fanciful ideas in his mind of catching Bubluls, young Shiva Shambhu fell asleep. In his dreams, he saw the world full of Bubluls, as if they were flying all over the village and as if hundreds were flying about in the small play-ground in front of his home. He also saw that they were not soaring high, but keeping themselves far below in the air. Nor were their places of sitting on high. They were flying now in one direction and again in another, now sitting here and again sitting there and sometimes coming to perch on young Shiva Shambhu's fingers. In the exuberance of his gladness, Shiva Shambhu himself was merrily frolicking about, as also two or three playmates of his, now catching a bird and now letting it off.

Shiva Shambhu had his heart's desire fully gratified to-day. He was no longer in want of Bubluls ; his play ground was converted into Bulbulstan to-day ; he was king of Bubluls, nay more, Emperor ! His happiness did not come to an end here. Shiva Shambhu further saw that there was a beautiful garden before him and all the birds were coming from there. Running and skipping, the boy went into the garden and saw there was a golden tree in it with golden leaves and flowers of various colours on which were sitting golden Bubluls,

now singing and now flying about. There was also a beautiful palace of gold in the garden with hundreds of golden jugs on it, on which too were perched many such Bulbuls. The boy climbed up the palace with his companions and immediately the garden of gold with its golden palace and birds began to rise high and fly in the air. Everything was delightfully flying and so were young Shiva Shambhu and the other boys. But this delight did not last long. The fancies of the boy for Bulbuls began to pass away from his brains.

"Where am I flying to ? Where are my parents and my home ?" These were the thoughts that came pouring into his mind and his delightful dream closed. The boy got up with a look of anxiety in his face and saw there was nothing but his own house and his own bedstead ! The kingdom of his fancy was no more !

My Lord ! since you landed on the shores of this country, have you ever done anything really worth doing or have you only seen similar dreams of bulbuls ? Have you ever performed any of your duties to the people of this country or have you only gratified your own whims ? I pray, my lord, think over this once in your mind calmly. The five years of your term of office in India have already been complete. If you will remain sometime longer, it will be in the shape of interest, the principal is already cleared. Calculate in your mind, my lord, what record of useful works you leave behind you except that of show, or what other thoughts of duty have ever crossed your mind in this country than those of pomp and pageantry.

The last budget speech was the last speech of the period of your duty. Read it, my lord, I pray, and see what description it contains of your good deeds during your five years! Repeatedly you have spoken therein of your two deeds of pomp and splendour, the one of which is the Victoria Memorial Hall and the other, the Delhi Durbar. But judge in your own mind, my lord, whether those deeds were "duty" or mere "show"! The Victoria Memorial Hall will be a thing for a few big swells to go and see. I suppose, you too, do not believe that it will in any way alleviate the miseries of the poor or ameliorate the condition of the people of India?

Now, let me tell you, my lord, what was that Durbar of yours. In your estimation it was indeed a great thing, but in that of the Indians, it was nothing greater than that dream of Bulbuls! The elephants have gone back to where they came from for that pageantry. The particular elephant which you decked with a golden cover and a golden howdah and on which you rode with an umbrella over your head, has also gone back with all those valuable things to its owner. Your lordship knew full well that neither that elephant nor those things were your own, and so did the spectators. The throne of gold on which you sat and received the homage of the Indian Rajahs and Maharajahs in the Durbar was there only until the Durbar was over and your lordship knew it well that it was not yours. The throne has been sent back to whence it was brought. All these things were merely for show and had been all along in India. Has any merit of yours been displayed

by all this ? Do the people remember Vikram and Akbar or do they remember their thrones ? Was the honour in which Shah Jehan was held due to his qualities or was it due to his peacock throne ? These are matters worthy of the consideration of men of intelligence like your lordship.

Things should be made so as to be lasting. The happy dreams of young Shiva Shambhu broke immediately on the remembrance of his parents ; similarly, the Durbar hall and the amphitheatre, immediately on the Durbar being over, became things worthy of being pulled down and removed. They had once to be built and again to be demolished. Such is the end of all showy things ! Their life is like that of butterflies—very short !

My lord, in a post prandial speech among the tea-planters of Cachar, your lordship said that their connection with this country was permanent and that of yours was for a short period only. That "short period" of yours is over ; the limit has been reached. Should you happen to get an extension, it will be, you must know, in consequence of some good deeds of your previous life. So, it is in the hope that your lordship may be reminded of your duties at least once in this critical time, that Shiva Shambhu begs to address this letter to your lordship.

My lord, you have no permanent right to the post you now occupy. It is only an accident of life that you hold it. There is no such hope that you will have any further connection with it when once you leave it. But so long

as you have this power in your hand, you have the power of doing some good also. Nothing of what you showed at Delhi or elsewhere was yours, but the power to show them was certainly yours. Similarly, you have the power to do something real, something useful for this country before you leave. You possess the power to build your own memorial hall in the hearts of the people of this country. But all this is possible only when you appreciate the value of such memorials.

Bear in mind, my lord, that the maidan in front of the fort will one day be filled up with memorials of metal statues. Whether Her late Majesty's statue was obstructing the passage of air or not is another question ; but there will be such a number of other statues, that the air will collide with one at every fifty cubits. If Lord Lansdowne's statue is possible to be erected in this country, then whose else is not ? My lord, do you too want that a similar statue of yourself may be erected somewhere near it ?

What sort of ^{kind} memorials are these statues? Each of them is only a heap of this poor country's money which can never come to any use. One visit to them is enough to convince any one that they are nothing better than the temporary resting places of some birds. My lord, what will be the beauty of your statue placed there? Come, my lord, I will show you a statue. Look! there is a statue, not in the maidan of the fort, but deep in the hearts of the Indian people. Look ! this great man preferred the hearts of the poor millions of this country to the maidan of the fort, to erect his statue

upon ! It is Lord Ripon's statue. Then, look upon that Memorial Hall which is stronger and a hundred times more precious than your Marble Hall of fifty lakhs. It is the Proclamation of 1858 of Her late Majesty Queen Victoria. Here (in the heart of the people) also may be your memorial if you value such memorials in your mind as these two.

Now, my lord, I have finished. I have written what there was to write. Plainly speaking, my lord, you should make proper distinction between duty and show, and take all show for what they are worth, for a show can never be a duty. My lord, after sometime, only as much of the remembrance of your Delhi Durbar will remain in the popular mind as that of the happy dream of his childhood now remains in the memory of Shiva Shambhu.

Sd. SHIVA SHAMBHU SHARMA.

[*Translated from the Bharat Mitra, 26th November, 1934.*]

SHIVA SHAMBHU'S LETTER.

WELCOME TO HIS EXCELLENCY.

The immovable will never move. The inevitable will surely come. So, Lord Curzon is coming out again for two years as Viceroy and Governor General. Removing many difficulties and obstacles, he is once again about to set foot on Indian soil. His Lordship has already had a farewell audience with Emperor Edward for this auspicious sailing, and now it will not be long before we see him here.

Naturally, the thought that is now revolving in the Indian mind is why His Lordship is coming out again, but His Lordship knows best why. If it were a matter of Indian choice he should not be in this country again, while, had it been left to his will and pleasure, he would have come a few weeks earlier. But the rein of command over both is in the hands of some one else. The Indians are entirely powerless and have nothing in their control; even Lord Curzon, with all his manifold powers is powerless in many respects! This is why the Indians will have to see Lord Curzon in this country again and this is why his lordship has had to find himself detained. Says the Poet :—

“Thou shalt see what God will show.”

Now, the Indians have many things to see and so has Lord Curzon. These two years of his lordship's new rule will doubtless be worth seeing. Even now the Indian eye is rivetted to these two years. It is

long, very long, since these helpless on-lookers have been only looking on, ungratified and entirely cornered, as if they have no existence, no concern, and there is no knowing how long yet they will have thus to look on.

Yet, how many delightful sights have they not seen with untiring eyes ! Still, they will not turn their eyes. They have seen the downfall of the great king Jay Chand, as well as the reign of Mahomedan emperors. They have seen the great Akbar, Birbal, Khankhana and the musician Tansen, as well as the peacock throne of Shah Jehan and his imperial pageantry. Again, they have also seen the same throne carried away by Nadir Shah ! They have seen Sivaji and Aurangzeb as well as English warriors like Clive and Hastings. Thus, in the course of their sight seeing, they have derived much pleasure by the sight of Lord Curzon's elephant procession and Durbar at Delhi ; and now they are flying to see the English athlete Sandow place a weight of several maunds on his breast !

The Indians are always ready to see, only there should be some one to show. They can very well twist their moustache and say, there is hardly any one else in the world to be their equal in these qualities. Lord Curzon also has found out these qualities in the people under his rule, and this is why his lordship has been showing a variety of his will and pleasure in a multiplicity of phases.

So, the Indian mind is now full of thoughts as to what will be the pleasures of India's autocrat during

these two years.¹ From his doings in the past five years and more, India has understood what are to his lordship's taste and liking. Why, he can easily start a grander procession of elephants if he only pleases ! But that does not seem very important or necessary at present. The reason is, in his elephant procession at Delhi, his lordship took his seat on the highest of elephants. If the whole world has not a higher elephant than that one, then neither has India. How then can his lordship cherish a desire for another elephant ride ? A higher elephant than the one he rode on does not exist. The Oravat exists only in name, but no body has seen him. Only the bones of Mammoth may be seen in some museums, and people look upon them with astonished gaze, just as the small elephants are looked upon in the museums of his lordship's own country.

Of course it may be said that the smallness or the bigness of the elephants is not the question ; another procession, if deemed necessary, may at any rate be started again ; if not at Delhi, well, it may be anywhere else ! As for instance, there were plenty of fire-works at Delhi, and yet Calcutta witnessed the samething over again. In spite of the procession of elephants at Delhi, Calcutta saw splendid illuminations and procession of carriages !

Some people say that whatever Lord Curzon puts his hands upon, he never leaves incomplete or imperfect. Well, the Durbar at Delhi was not perfect in all respects, there were some deficiencies. For instance, the Maharana of Udaypur could neither take part in the elephant procession, nor had he an opportunity of

coming to the Durbar and paying his homage. Similarly, the Gaekwar of Baroda did not join the elephant procession. Again, though he came to the Durbar, he was attired in a very simple dress, just as simple as he is now in during his visit to Calcutta.

The occasion, however, was of so much pomp and splendour, that His Excellency himself had to wear embroidered trousers and sit on a throne of gold, giving a silver chair to the Duke of Connaught and wooden ones to the Indian chiefs for their seats ! For the Gaekwar of Baroda to wear such a simple dress and leave the Durbar hall in such a simple manner was a new thing altogether ! Besides, he did not bend down to make his obsequence, but only shook hands in the simplest manner possible and left ! So, there are some such deficiencies, to make up which another Durbar may be held and another elephant procession may be started again.

Such surmises are not objectionable. But time is short and things to do are many. Besides, some of the Rajahs and Maharajahs have fallen in such drooping condition on account of their expenses on the occasion of that one Durbar, that it will be difficult for them to raise their heads even in the course of two more vice-royalties of seven years each after Lord Curzon. Thus, it is no use expecting another elephant procession or another Durbar.

But I hear his lordship will now raise education very high. To return good for good is indeed a great man's work. Education has made his lordship rich ; his lordship

now wants to give riches to education. So, it is now to be snatched off from the possession of the poor to be given to the wealthy. So, education will be relieved of the trouble it often has to undergo to make the poor rich. The foundation has been laid, it will not be long before the structure is completed. So long the poor used to read and learn and the rich therefore had the bad reputation that they never do so. The poor shall have to give up now, and the rich will have no more of that bad name, no matter whether they learn or not. Thus, Lord Curzon's favour will make them educated without their reading or studying !

There are other things also to attend to. The works of some Commissions have to be finally⁴ considered and the result of some Missions to be seen. Then, there are Kabul and Cashmere. A Railway may be opened up to Kabul and a colony of Englishmen may be established in Cashmere. Popularising Motor Cars, like tea, in this country is an important work. The partition of Bengal is another very important work. And the most important of all is the Victoria Memorial Hall ! India will no longer need to remember or think much of the Proclamation of 1858. This hall, erected by his lordship, will be a great monument to the memory of Her late Majesty and its very sight will tell the people that Queen Victoria was she whose memory this hall proclaims !

There are too many other matters, too many for the Indian to concentrate within the small compass of his scanty brains. Who knows what gigantic schemes and ideas Lord Curzon's imperial head is full of ?

His lordship himself once declared that in many respects an Indian is not the equal of an Englishman. Besides, Lord Curzon is a gem of England ! This Bhang-eating old man will never advise the people of this country to have the hardihood of proving themselves to be his equal in genius.

How very imperious and masterful a ruler his lordship is may be easily inferred from the series of his speeches delivered in England in which he endeavoured to explain to the English people what India really is ! Very clearly his lordship told the people of England that they are unable to understand India and that it is reserved for his lordship alone to understand India. How could they, in England, understand India ? Where is such a huge elephant to be found in England, as the one he rode on in India, with a large umbrella overhead and pages with fans at his side ? How could his lordship make them understand to what high class of rulers his lordship belongs ? Were there a means by which he could once deport the whole country to England, then, of course, he could show the Englishmen what India is and what his lordship's rule is. No wonder if some such means be discovered in the future, for science will accomplish many things yet.

Indians need have no fear ! They will have nothing to do during Lord Curzon's rule. All joy and nothing but joy for them ! So, eat Bhang and be merry as the poet Nazir has advised. But don't forget a cup for this old Brahmin !

Sd. SHIVA SHAMBHU SHARMA.

[*Translated from the Bharat Mitra, December 17, 1904.*]

SHIVA SHAMBHU'S LETTER.

THE VICEROY'S DUTY.

My Lord ! India is gratified at your coming out again to this country. The land which men of learning, intelligence and acumen set their feet on, becomes holy as a place of pilgrimage. Besides these three attributes, your lordship is the possessor of a fourth, and that is sovereign authority. So, your lordship's arrival has converted India into something holier. On Tuesday last, your lordship sat on the throne of India as the representative of the Emperor. May God do you good and inspire your heart with wishes to do good to this fallen country.

Immediately on landing in Bombay, your lordship spoke out something of your mind. The Bombay Municipality in their address to your lordship did not express a desire to hear those words, but nevertheless you said those words, unasked. Precisely in the same way, this poor, old, Bhang-eating Brahmin, Shiva-Shambhu Sharma, begs to approach your lordship, unasked, with his letter for the third time. This old man also claims to be a representative of the people, and that is why he appears before the representative of the sovereign to read out the people's letter. Your lordship may or may not hear, he will read it out all the same.

True, the people never called this poor Brahmin in

their meeting or decorated him with the badge of their representative, nor did they ever give him their power of attorney. Shiva Shambhu is not the legally constituted representative of the people as your lordship is of the sovereign. You were called by the sovereign and made his Viceroy for a second time with his own hand. It was announced in the London Gazette and the news came to India by the cable. You met with reception at some places in the way and then again in Bombay. Gazette announcements were made in Calcutta more than once. Salutes were fired both on your alighting from the train as well as during your investiture at the Government House. Many Rajahs, Nowabs and Begums ran to Bombay to pay you their respects. The bands played and the soldiers presented arms. Shiva Shambhu has no such charter with him as the people's representative.

Yet, he lays claim to the representativeship of the poor, insufficiently fed and scantily clad people of this country. The reason is, India is the land of his birth ; his body is made of India's earth and in India's earth he hopes his body will one day be reduced to earth. Playing in the dust of this country in his childhood, he has now grown up into manhood and it is the food and water derived from this country that preserve his life. From this very land he gets his Bhang leaves to gratify his desires. He has neither a cottage in the village nor a piece of land in the meadows to call his own. Not even to a leaf of a plant he has any right of ownership. Yet, under the sun he can get shelter no where else than in this very land and though he has

not the least right¹ of ownership to it, he considers this land his own.

No body knows Shiva Shambhu. He who knows him is entirely unknown to the world. Even knowing him, people do not want to know or recognise him. He has nothing with him by which to make himself known ; neither any title after his name nor access to the royal court of the country. He is not privileged to shake hands with the rulers of the country, the less so to ditto their prerogative assertions. He is only a penniless Brahmin, very mindful of his self-respect. My lord ! representative, as you are, of the sovereign, will you hear a few words from him ?

In your speech in Bombay, you said that India is the land of duty, not of mere story telling, and that for the performance of those duties you had come out again to India, though the time was critical for you. My lord ! we call this land of duty, our land of Karma. Your lordship has come out to perform duties, and we to suffer the consequences of our Karma. There is a limit to your lordship's duty, but none to our sufferings. Your duties done, you will be shortly off, but we shall die here in this land suffering all along from our Karma, and there is no knowing how long will it be before those sufferings come to an end. If, my lord, you love this land for the short period of your connection with it, imagine how dearly should we love it, we who are of this land from the cradle to the grave !

My lord ! you seem to pride upon a belief, all your

own, that the whole English race has not another man in it capable of understanding the Indian politics and governing the country like yourself. You said so on more than one occasion in England, though in a round-about manner of speech ; and again immediately on landing in Bombay this time, you said the samething ! All those that you moulded during the 72 months of your previous rule, you want to put into complete shape during these 24 months or even less of your new term. You want to construct a strong boundary wall of steel at the frontier, so that no enemy from outside may carry off the country to his own ; or, in other words, you want to give such an enduring character to the peace which has gradually accumulated in the country at your lordship's bidding, that your successors to the Viceregal throne may not have to spend their days and nights in anything but the enjoyment of luxury, amusement, play and dances, balls and sleep.

Yet, know for certain, my lord, that you have understood nothing of this country ; only you boast of having understood it, and there is hardly any hope that you will understand anything during the few future months. But this country has understood you too well to require of its understanding more. Although you profess to regard this country as the land of your duty and not talk, the people have quite understood that duty and talk are one and the samething with you. It is a curious coincidence that your lordship is a very proud ruler, and the people of this country are also very proud. The only difficulty is that the pride of the two is of two different kinds. Your lordship's pride makes the people

of the country laugh, while their pride is a thing which you neither do nor will perhaps ever understand.

The pomp and pageantry which so highly gratify your mind and produce the conviction in your mind of having done a great duty are of no importance in the eyes of the people of this country. They have already seen and heard of so much pomp and splendour and their imagination has already produced so much, that no such thing can produce any effect on their minds. For instance, your lordship wants to strengthen and fortify the frontier with a wall of steel, whereas they read in their country's literature that there was once a king who wanted, after subjugating the whole world, to erect a flight of steps leading up to heaven. Your lordship and Lord Kitchener are about to construct a strong iron wall at the frontier, but a stronger one was built by Lord Canning. Your lordship has been good enough to refer to Lord Canning in many of your speeches. Forty-six long years have passed since then ; still the wall stands firm and immovable to this day ! It is Her late Majesty's Proclamation which Lord Canning read out to the people on the 1st day of November 1858. That is the frontier wall of India which is protecting her. So long as that wall remains, neither you nor Lord Kitchener need make another. Under cover of that one, you can devise as strong a wall as you please !

India can never be governed through the medium of pomp and pageantry ; the poor people of this country can never like them. Your lordship has certainly done

much for this country according to your own lights ; but with this result only that in England you have had to recount it yourself. It is in your nature more to talk than to do. Thus, it so happens that even your actual doings remain unknown to the public until and unless they are talked about. The greater portion of the people of this country is such that they do not know that your lordship is the Viceroy and Governor General of this country or that you have come out again as such after a sojourn in England.

Neither have you ever cast a glance at the poor subjects of the empire, nor have they ever known you. Not an inkling of your desire to do so can be got from your recent utterances. Remember, therefore, my lord ! that however much you may get opportunities to trumpet forth your achievements and qualities when your term of office expires again and you go back to your own country, you will never be able to say that the heart of the people of India was ever with you.

My lord, India is the same country where the people were beside themselves with joy the day preceding their dear Prince Ram Chandra's proposed accession to the throne, and were again about to follow him with tearful eyes the next day when he went as an exile to the forests all on a sudden. Bharat had not to resort to such means as the holding of a Durbar or the starting of a procession of elephants for popular satisfaction ; but he had to hasten to the forests himself and try to bring back Ram chandra to Ajudhia. Ram

Chandra did not come back and so Bharat returned to Ajudhia, holding the sandals of the exiled prince on his head, placed them on the throne and worshipped the same for fourteen long years; attired in barks of trees. It was then that the people believed Bharat worthy to rule over Ajudhia.

My lord ! you are no doubt an accomplished orator, but oratory has a different significance in this country. Whatever fell from the lips of Yudhistir, the truthful, actually used to happen. Only once in his life, on a political exigency of the utmost importance having arisen, he attempted to speak an untruth of the pettiest description. Even that is recorded in the pages of the Mahabharat, and will remain there so long as the Mahabharat remains. Compare this, my lord, with your own speeches and then consider how will you perform your duties to the people of this country

And now my lord permit this Bhang-eating old Brahmin to look out for his Bhang leaves !

(SD.) SHIVA SHAMBHU SHARMA.

[*Translated from the Bharat Mitru, 2nd January, 1905.*]

SHIVA SHAMBHU'S LETTER.

DO NOT PUSH BACKWARD.

My Lord ! a few months hence only are wanted to make up a hundred years since the time when the East India Company sent out Lord Cornwallis for a second time as Governor General of this country. Between then and now, it is your lordship alone who has had an opportunity of coming out as such for a second time. Look back once on that period, a hundred years back, and mark what vast changes have come about between then and now, what the country then was and what it now is !

For a beggar overwhelmed with sorrowful thoughts while awake, to see in his dreams while asleep that he has become a king and that elephants are waiting at his door, or for a young man of light brains like Abul Hussain of the Arabian Nights, who has fallen senseless after a drunken orgie, to consider himself, just as soon as he can only partly open his eyes, as the Caliph of Bagdad, as if the beautiful sight of exquisitely furnished palaces are perplexing his thoughts, the lustre of the ornaments and embroidered costumes of beautiful slave-girls is dazzling his eyes, and as if the sweetest sounds of music are pouring the heavenly nectar into his ears—all this is perhaps not so astonishing as the result of a comparison between the condition of English rule in India of a hundred years back and of the present day.

It was in July 1805, that Lord Cornwallis arrived in Calcutta, a second time as Governor General of India.

Causes of anxiety were then pouring in upon the East India Company from all sides ; they could not breathe in peace owing to fears and anxieties. War with the Scindhia was already going on, while another with the Holkar was imminent. The treasury was almost empty ; five months' pay was already due to the troops in the field, while there was yet some time before the land revenue would be forthcoming. The credit of the company with the rich men of England was almost nil. The old Governor of seventy naturally felt depressed at this state of affairs, and the result was that only three months after his taking up the reins of office, he died at Ghazipur under the weight of cares and anxieties.

The people could know nothing of this occurrence for some days. Now news runs between England and India several times in a day through the telegraph wire, and a special train runs from Simla to Calcutta in only a few hours ; but then it took several days for the Governor to go up to Ghazipur, and there was no means of any assistance reaching him speedily from Calcutta.

The times have changed in all respects. My Lord, between Lord Cornwallis's coming out for a second time as Governor General and that of yours, the difference is indeed very broad. You have power with you. The British Empire is now at the zenith of its greatness. You have arrived in India from England perhaps in a shorter time than what it took the Governor General of those days to reach Ghazipur from Calcutta. Lord Cornwallis, immediately on arrival, had to encounter the anxieties of war with some of the Indian Chiefs,

while to receive you, several Chiefs hastened as far as to Bombay and thanked their lot for having welcomed you. Many chiefs have already been to Calcutta to offer you their congratulations and many others are on their way. Whatever the condition of the people, the treasury is full to overflowing, and for this you are being praised on all sides. The credit of the Government in England as well as in India is so much, that no sooner the word is out than money begins to come in torrents. You have the Secretary of State under your thumb, and the Conservative Government who appointed you Viceroy of this country is still in power. The Liberals are almost lifeless. England has no John Bright, no Gladstone or, no Bradlaugh now, and you are quite independent.

The India Office is a mere plaything in your hands. The Premier of England is a dear friend of yours. Whatever you have set your heart upon doing, you have already finally decided in consultation with the authorities in England during your few months' sojourn there. You are still young, and have no cares or anxieties. Whatever cares and anxieties you had, have already disappeared. You are now counted amongst the most intelligent and wise statesmen in England. Rather it may be said that they, the ministers of England, look to you for advice. The sovereign has great faith in you. The greatest English newspaper is, as it were, an eulogist of yours with whom the singing of your praise, now and then, is a sacred duty. In short, my lord, the difference between the time of Lord Cornwallis and that of yourself is vast indeed.

The British power is now in full display on the face of the earth. The Indian Chiefs are now wholly subject to your command. They are ready to serve your will, whether you may want to start a procession followed by them, hold a Durbar to make them salaam, send them off to England or call to Calcutta, as you please.

Your autocratic command is now melting away the snow on the Tibetan hills, drying the waters of the Persian Gulf and softening the mountains of Afghanistan. You are victorious everywhere, on land, on water as well as in the air. There is none in the world to raise his finger against the British power. As a description of the powers of a most powerful monarch of this country, it was said that Indra served him as water-man, Pavan as the driver of his grinding mills, and the sun and moon as his light suppliers. But British power has far exceeded that. The seas are the sailors of the British Empire, the table lands its chairs and benches, and electricity its slave-girl for driving engines and messenger-girl for carrying messages thousands of miles away !

It is very strange, my lord, that while British Empire and British power have so greatly advanced during these ofe hundred years, India on the other hand, under the rule of the same powerful empire, has to lose even the semblance of her privileges ; that during these days of universal progress, ideas of throwing the Indians backward, instead of those of leading them forward, are rising in the mind of your lordship, their ruler ; that instead of sympathising with their aspirations you are wasting your intelligence in inflicting blows upon their liberty and independence ! Does the nation, than

which a more ancient one does not exist on the face of the earth, which has not perished after more than a thousand years of alien rule but still exists, the study of whose ancient civilisation and learning still charms the learned and cultured men of the age, which by its uninterrupted rule of centuries over the world diffused civilisation and a spirit of manliness all over, does that nation, I ask, deserve to be pushed back and reduced to dust ?

• How has it entered the head of one of so high and scholarly attainments, as your lordship is, that there are various offices which your lordship's countrymen alone are fit to hold and the Indians are not? Put their merit to test, my lord, and see whether or not they are fit for the highest of high offices for which your countrymen are fit ! Labour, work, intelligence, learning, speech or patience, in none of these respects the place of the people of this country is below that of any other race of men in the world. Rather there are some qualities in the Indian character which no other race can imitate. The Indian scholar of Persian speaks the Persian tongue as if it were his mother tongue and composes verses in it. In speaking English, he can perfectly imitate the Englishman even to the articulation of sounds. But where is the Englishman who would clearly speak Hindustani like an Indian ? So, my lord, in no respect the Indians are bound to lag behind. Of course, there are two qualities in the Englishman which the Indians can neither imitate nor equal. The one is, that they cannot turn the darkness of their complexion into white like that of the Europeans, and the other is that by rubbing their lot with that of the

Englishmen they cannot come to be their equal in fortune.

But, my lord, beginning with variance, the creation comes to a complete harmony in the end. Time ultimately brings all to its own ways. The end of all from the monarch down to the poor mendicant is one and the same. Earth reduces itself into earth, and this world, the tempter of the living, remains where it is. What a vast number of rulers and emperors has this world seen, but no trace of them can be found now ! Blowing their own trumpets, each in his short time, they all passed away. Only a few small tokens of their works may now be found out by laborious researches in the pages of history or in the broken fragments of ruins.

My lord, to recall the past is not in the power of any one, not even in yours ! Can their times come back again ? By no means. Think of the case of your own coming to this country ; you came, as it were, only yesterday, yet six long years have passed since then ! Think how many days have already passed since you came for a second time ! It is thus, my lord, that years and decades will pass. In the great ocean of time, human age is smaller than the smallest drop. You do not possess the power to live those past six years over again or to undo what happened in their course. Two years you now have in your hand and you can do what you like during this period. You can, if you like, draw the thirty crore souls of this country to your side, gain their affection and leave your name in the History of India as one of the best of Viceroys ;

or these two years will also pass away and with them your power to do anything also will end.

The land did not go with Vikrama, Asoka or Akbar when they died. Aurangzeb or Allauddin could not keep it in their thumb, nor could Mahomed Timur or Nadir carry it away on the backs of their camels and elephants with their plunder. Similarly, my lord, the land in the future will not go away with anyone, however strong or resolute one may be. Providence has now placed the country in the hands of a nation which is famous all over the world for its intelligence, learning, power and influence. My lord, it is as the representative of that very nation that you rule over this country.

Now, my lord, it rests entirely in your hands to decide what are to be your duties towards the people of this country, the people who have been in a fallen condition for a thousand years. Do you want that they should continue in their downward course for another century or half a century? The utmost that can be gained by throwing it back is only this much, that the whimsical and irresponsible acts of a few narrow minded rulers may go on unchecked for some time more thereby. But the gain that lies in raising it and protecting it is incomparable with anything. History will bear evidence that the British nation raised a fallen country of three hundred million souls!

My lord, you are at liberty to choose between these two courses. Which will it be please? To push backward or to help forward?

(Sd.) SHIVA SHAMBHU SHARMA.

[*Translated from the Bharat Mitra, 25th February, 1905.*]

SHIVA SHAMBHU'S LETTER.

THE END OF HOPE.

My lord ! your recent speeches have spoilt my pleasure of intoxication. The favourite drink, Bhang-Sherbet, one or two palmfuls of which made Shiva Shambhu forget all worldly cares and anxieties, now fails to attract the mind. Fastened with the rope called "hope," the world goes on. Every one of the suffering humanity hopes to be relieved one day of his sufferings ; the sick man of his ailments, the prisoner of his imprisonment, the debtor of his debts and the poor man of his poverty. They may not be relieved of their troubles so long as they are in this land of the living, but hope effects at least this much in them that they patiently endure their troubles till one day they are relieved of their miserable existence. But alas ! who can describe their agony when that hope also is broken ?

"Woe to the fite of the traveller who is extremely tired and unable to proceed on his journey, although it is yet incomplete."

My lord, all those fond hopes which the people of this country entertained and all those happy dreams which they dreamt when you landed on the shores of India as her viceroy have now fully vanished away. For some time there could be seen in the columns of the

newspapers of this great city of Calcutta, such startling news as that the Viceroy was seen in disguise talking with a poor Indian at some street junction; or that His Excellency visited some offices, saw the condition of the extremely hard-worked clerks and asked them many things, etc. etc. From all this, the Hindus began to anticipate that perhaps another Vikramaditya had come to rule over them, or perhaps they were to live Akbar's time over again, and the Mahomedans thought that perhaps the time of Caliph Harun-al-Raschid had come. I cannot tell you for certain whether or not the Parsis got sufficient opportunity to take you for their Nowsherwan. For, your lordship, by your actions, soon relieved such men, who were so hasty in their conclusions, of the trouble of building castles in the air. It took them only a few days to be fit to comprehend the fact that the Viceroy was not of the colour and shape of Vikram or Akbar or Harun, and that his were something peculiarly his own, which agreed with those of none else.

My lord, there are two things in this country which have a very strange effect. The one is the climate of the country and the other is the salt derived therefrom. Even in the driest of dry constitutions, the climate causes a sort of saltiness to grow. The most curious part of the whole process is that the person remains always unconscious of the growth of the saltiness. A Persian poet has said, that not even a green leaf in India is without some salty property in it, as if salt has been sprinkled all over the country. But Shiva Shambhu's conclusions are even

somewhat in advance of the poet's. He believes the country is a large mine of salt and whoever falls into it becomes salt. Standing on the banks of the lake Sambar your lordship may see, if it ever pleases your lordship, that whatever falls in it is reduced into salt. Away from this climate, large ideas and resolutions present themselves before the mind, but immediately on contact with this climate they disappear.

It is a matter of great regret, my lord, that the effect of the climate has even destroyed your power to remember your own past. Otherwise a comparison in your own mind between as you were six years ago and as you now are would have staggered you, and in utter amazement you would have exclaimed, "oh ! what have I become ? Am I still as I was before leaving England for India ?" No sooner had you landed at Bombay and set your foot on Indian soil for the first time, than the climate began to assert its influence upon you ; and the first result was the annihilation of the independence of the Calcutta Municipality. When that influence grew stronger, it came into your head, while administering relief to the famine-stricken poor of the country, that many of those who came to the relief works were not really poor, but that attracted by the liberal conditions of labour, they unnecessarily thrust themselves upon the generosity of the benign Government with the really famishing people. Thenceforth the condition of labour was made severe !

In this manner the influence of the climate went on increasing and you then put a bandage over your eyes against the famine stricken people and celebrated your Durbar at Delhi !

To crown all, last year you gave the Indians clearly to understand that there are several such offices which the Europeans alone are, naturally and by their birth right, entitled to get, and what the Government are already giving the Indians are more than they deserve by their ability. The people then understood that the climate of the country had fully succeeded in putting its own hall-mark upon your lordship.

• Your lordship then desired to visit your own country, and the people thought it was all right that you were going; what was done was done; they would be free at least from the effects of the further developement of the climatic influence. But your lordship thought differently. • When in Korea, your lordship's age suddenly increased by seven years and you became a man of forty, you thought that inspite of your forty years, you looked two or three and thirty owing to the beautiful climatic influence of the place. But you have never been able to understand the effect of the climate of this country upon you. It went with you to England and exerted its influence as long as you were there in such a degree that it fetched you back again to this country defying all obstacles in the way.

My lord, the salt of this country always stands by its climate, for it is the product of the climate. The effect of both therefore grows apace. First, it destroys conscience, then dispels all kindliness and magnanimity from the heart and eats up and digests all liberalism of ideas. Then, in the end, it binds the eyes with a bandage, stoppers the ears, drags its victim wherever it pleases by a rope passed through the

nose and makes him openly vilify this country. It creates the habit of abusing the master and supporter and of bragging of self. We too are not wholly unaffected by the effects of that salt. But our bones are made of it, and so we can preserve our senses so far as to be able to feel the effects. We knew it full well that should your lordship come out to India for a second time, you would at once fall into its salt mine and be reduced into salt. We therefore wished that you had better not come out again. But we could not help it ; you came and at once displayed the effect of the salt in your Council and Convocation speeches :

So long, my lord, you were engaged in preventing the people of this country from knowing official secrets, getting high appointments, understanding the means and sources of their own advancements, receiving high education with ease and moving the parliament etc., for their rights and privileges ; in short, in doing all that lay in your power to retard their progress. But not content with that much, you have now begun trying your hands on the authority of God !

My lord, calling in meeting the people of the country which has been vouchsafed a love of truth from the beginning of creation, where truth is regarded as God illimitable, and dressed in the costume of the learned and wise men, you castigated them in their face as liars and as a crafty race of men. Consider how very disgraceful it is ! Your lordship held out your own country as the model of truthfulness, and the people of that country as men of unquestionable veracity ; may I ask if the

best sample thereof is to be found in your lordship ? If really England were as your lordship represented her to be, and India a country of false and crafty men as your lordship said, would it be right and consistent with good taste to speak of it in the fashion you did ? Is it becoming of the really good and truthful to kick the fallen ? Is it any proof of one's own truthfulness, while trying to prove the same, to call others untruthful ?

. My lord, since forgetting your own position as the ruler, you hurt the feelings of the people of this country, it would not be, I suppose, deemed impertinent to say a word or two. You must know, my lord, that the difference between the conditions of the conquered and the conqueror is not small. Can the veracity of the people of India which has been rolling under the feet of foreign conquerors for a thousand years, be like that of the people of England ? If, like England, India were an independent country under an Indian sovereign, and you could prove the veracity of your countrymen to be greater than that of the people of this country, then of course it would be a victory for you.

Remember the days when the land of the English people was in the possession of foreigners and consider what was the moral condition of your countrymen then. India is a country which has not fallen from truth in spite of its having been trodden down by foreigners for a thousand years. If either Europe or England were to remain under an alien rule for only ten years, then you could understand how superior your countrymen are in respect of morality and truthfulness ! Cap the country

of which *Karma* (deeds) is the guiding principle, ever become untruthful ?

Your countrymen live in large mansions in this country and enjoy whatever is to their taste and liking. India is the land of your enjoyment and luxury. But millions of this country who have taken their birth in this land wonder here and there like stray dogs and die. Neither do they possess a few cubits of land to sit upon, nor have they enough to eat their fill. Clad in dirty rags, they pass their days and falling down somewhere, or other they bid a silent adieu to this world ! In the cold blast that has recently passed over the country, many a life has been lost to the country here and there. Do they ever say, in spite of all such sufferings and deaths that their misery is owing to the sins of their rulers ? My lord, they are firm believers in *karma* and they feel that all their troubles and miseries are the consequences of their own past deeds, and they blame no one else ! Alas ! my lord, these are the people whom you call crafty.

Never, since you came to this country, have you thought of the poor ; never have you taken the condition of the hunger stricken people into your consideration ; nor have you ever so much as said a few pleasing and sweet words by way of encouragement ; then, in exchange of what kindness, my lord, do you now vilify them ? Dependence causes a severe wound in the minds of men. But Queen Victoria's kind treatment made the people of this country almost forget the pains of that wound. The Indian people looked upon

her as a mother. Now their love and admiration for her son, Emperor Edward, are quite as much. It is very unfortunate, my lord, that being the representative of that very Emperor, you have become so very unpopular. My lord, neither do you want the people of this country, nor do they want you. Yet, you are the ruler of the country, not only for once, but for a second time.

Thinking and thinking over all this, this half-old Bhang-eating Brahmin's pleasure of intoxication is getting spoilt.

(Sd.) SHIVA SHAMBHU SHARMA.

A PRESUMPTION.

Having a drink of his vernal Bhang-Sherbet prepared in orange syrup and saffron, Shiva Shambhu was lying on his charpoy and giving way to emotions of pleasure. The reins of the horse of imagination were let loose and it was frolicking freely, as it were, by leaps and bounds. His hands and feet were also enjoying the fullest freedom and were lying beyond the limits of the length and breadth of the charpoy. Thus, for some time Sharmaji's body was on the charpoy and his thoughts in some other world.

Suddenly, his reveries were broken in upon by the sweet sounds of music and fond, as he was of it, Shiva Shambhu got up on his charpoy and began to hear with rapt attention. The sounds of the following sweet song were pouring the heavenly nectar in his ears.

"Let us go and play *holi* to-day at Kanhya's house."

(*Chalo, chalo aj khelen holi, Khanhaya ghar.*)

Coming out of his room he stood on the Verandah. It seemed there was a musical party going on at some rich man's house in the neighbourhood. Some expert musician might be singing that *holi* song, keeping time with the sweet sounds of some musical instrument. He further saw, that the weather was inclement with flashes lightning every now and then and continuous drizzling. This conversion of the spring into the wet season of *Sravan* somewhat perplexed his thoughts and he began revolving in his mind whether the singer

should have sung *malar* or *holi*. It was, he felt, the bright fortnight of *Phalgun* which heralded the approach of the spring ; why should *holi* be sung then ? The mistake however lay, not with the singer, but with God Himself Who turned the spring into *Sravan*. Whereas it should now have been shining moon light nights with the cool and pure southern breeze and the musical notes of the nightingale, it was in reality as dark and stormy as the nights of *Bhadra*. Oh ! what a sad change of season !

He dismissed all these thoughts and the consideration of the meaning and sense of the song now occupied his mind. " Let us go to play *holi* at *Kanhya's* house " that was what the *holi* players were saying. Who was *Kanhya* ? No other than the son of the King of Braja. And who were the players ? His subjects, the milkmen of the Kingdom of Braja. Shiva Shambhu felt still more perplexed and wondered, " was there ever a time in India when the subject people used to go to their sovereign's house to play *holi* and when the rulers and the ruled mixed up with each other and shared in each other's amusements ? Was there ever a time in India when the rulers considered the happiness of the subjects as their own happiness ? Supposing, however, Shiva Shambhu were to go to-day in company of some friends with *Abir*, *Gulal* and syringe in hand to play *holi* at his sovereign's house ; where was he then to go ? " The sovereign is in a distant country, across seven oceans ; we have only heard his name ; neither has Shiva Shambhu ever seen his sovereign nor the sovereign Shiva Shambhu. There is no king here—

but he has sent his representative to India. Krishna is in Dwarka—but he has sent Uddhava as his representative for the satisfaction of the people of Braja. May not Shiva Shambhu go to that representative's house to play *holi* there ?

Ah ! it is only a drunken man's idea and is as ridiculous as that singing of the *holi* song in the rainy weather ! But what was the fault of the singer in it ? He was singing just as fitted in with the season. Is the singer to sing *Malar* in spring if the weather happens to be rainy and stormy like the wet season ?

Really the question is a puzzling one. There is Krishna and there is Uddhava—but the Braja people can approach neither of them. There is the sovereign and there is his representative, but the subjects have no access to them. There is the sun—but no rays, there is the moon—but no light. My lord is in the city, but Shiva Shambhu cannot even so much as go to his gates, to say nothing of playing *holi* in his house. The words of the subject people cannot reach my lord's house, not even a scent of it. His lordship has not connected his *bed* room, as Shah Jehan did, with outside by a chain, by pulling which the subjects may approach him to tell him their grievances ; nor is there any hope of his doing so in future. Neither does he understand the language of the subjects, nor do they understand his. Neither does he understand nor wants to understand the mind of the people, and on the other hand, the people cannot understand his mind nor have they any means to understand it. Very rarely can he

be seen. Like the second night's moon of the bright fortnight, his face may or may not be seen even by long straining of the eyes.

If seen, the people point to him "there" with their fingers. Even for the second moon of the bright fortnight, there is a fixed time to rise, by which the people can know, but there is no such fixity of time for the rise of the moon of my lord's face ! Now, does my lord ever remember or think of the people of this country, as they wait with silent and anxious gaze to have a view of his face, or as Shiva Shambhu desires in his heart of hearts to play *holi* with the "my lord" of his country ? Does it ever occur to his lordship's mind to meet any one of the people, over whose destiny he has come to preside and to ask him his mind or to probe into it by means of amusement ? To remind my lord of his duty is to show light to the sun. He has himself declared, that he has come out again for the sake of duty and that he dearly loves the country. The question of duty and love is settled with his lordship's speech and there is hardly any need of raising the dispute again. Yet, however, the question naturally arises in the mind, whether to let the subject people approach his lordship and to know their minds, falls within the bounds of that duty or not ? If so, can his lordship say what has he known of this country during his long reign of six years and what has been his relation with the people by that knowledge of his ?

Has my lord ever, even out of forgetfulness, asked the watchmen, who with *pagrees* on their heads and bayonets

in hand, are always to be seen standing at the gates of the Government House like so many wooden dolls or moving to and fro like mere shadows, has he asked them how they spend their days ? Has he ever enquired of any of his Indian peons or valets, how are they going on or what is the real condition of their country, or what do their countrymen think of the British rule ? Have these lower servants ever been so fortunate as to hear the sweet sounds of the words uttered by his lordship's own lips, or do the warblings of the birds in the trees and plants of the Government House garden only reach their ears ? Has his lordship ever made time for himself to have a talk with any *man* of this country either privately or in any of his outings ?

Or has his lordship ever, by calling to his house any such independent and well informed Indian gentleman who does not seek favour at his hands, attempted to acquaint himself with the real views of the country ? or, excepting to those who come forward to bend their heads down and make salaams, has his lordship ever taken the trouble during his tour in the Native States to enquire anything of or speak to any Indian of independent circumstances ? It is said that his lordship has visited every creek and corner of Calcutta ; that neither in the interior nor in the frontiers of India, has his lordship left a place unseen. Many people thought so. But the proofs which my lord gave of his experience in the convocation of the Calcutta University, dressed in the costume of its chancellor, have made it clear that the eyes with which my lord saw, had not the power to take a correct view of this country.

Entire India apart, there are so many things worth seeing in this city of Calcutta itself, that from a careful and minute inspection of them, a good deal may be understood of matters Indian. The six years of my lord's rule have been passed in erecting an obelisk in memory of Holwell, in finding out the site of the Black-hole, in discussing the demolishing of the Ochterloney monument in the maidan to build the Victoria memorial there and in arranging for the better lighting of the streets around the Government House, as well as for the construction of better footpaths and better thoroughfares there. The second term is also being passed in similar works. Possibly in this term of office also, some more big and wide thoroughfares will be cut through the European quarters of the town which his lordship loves so well, and the limits of the heaven-like neighbourhood of the Government House will be further extended. But the town is as dark as ever, for, to see it as it really is, one must have another sort of eyes, and so long as that sort of eyes does not open, the town must remain dark.

If my lord were to go one day with Shiva Shambhu to visit the condition of the town, the sight of lakhs of the subject people rotting in dirty, delapidated huts, like herds of sheep or swine, would meet his eyes.

Filthy and decomposed water is flowing in the drains around those huts, giving off an unbearably fetid smell and heaps of dirt and rubbish and refuse are lying all around. They have no other covering on their body than dirty and torn rags and many of them have not

known in their lives what it is to have a full meal a day, or a full piece of cloth to cover the body with. In the winter, they are to be seen tottering and shivering with cold ; in the summer, wandering in the streets and lying down to rest somewhere or other ; and in the rainy weather, down with sickness, in those damp and rotten huts. In short, in the height of every season, they are the first to accompany death and death is their only friend who takes pity upon their condition and relieves them hurriedly of their sufferings from the disease of their miserable existence.

But is there no greater sight to see ? Yes, there is. But it requires a little more patience to see it. An elephant cannot take up with its trunk the grains of sugar scattered in sand ; what is wanted for the purpose is the ant's tongue. In this city of Calcutta, this city of palaces, and among the subject people under my lord's rule, there are thousands who have not even a dirty hut to live in. Wandering from street to street, they lie down at last wherever they find a little space, and smarting under the blow of the policeman's baton, they remove somewhere else ; and it is on the streets that they fall down in illness and give up the ghost. Lighting a fire, sometimes they lie down in the open land and sometimes they spend their nights sitting by the fire side of the confectioner's shop.

Dead bodies of such men are found lying in various places and removed by the police almost every day, but who is to tell my lord of the miseries of these men ? During the Dehri Durbar, when the wealth of the whole

of India was gathered there, hundreds of such men could be seen lying in the streets of Delhi ; but there was none to look at them. Could my lord once have a look at them, then it might be asked if those men also were the citizens of the British Empire ? If so, then my lord could be asked to kindly ascertain their whereabouts or where were their homes, and what was their relation with the British Empire. How were they to address their sovereign and his representative ? What was to be their word of blessing to the British Empire ? Was it to be that "blessed be the empire in which we have not an inch of land to call our own, though that is the land of our birth ; in which we can not get even a piece of sordid rag to cover the body with or a sufficiency of food with which to fill this unlucky belly ?" Yet, the representative of the sovereign of that country started a procession of elephants with a large umbrella overhead and fans at his side, and trumpeted forth among his countrymen the prosperity of the people thereof !

There are millions of such people in this country who, when they happen to meet somewhere in the morning or evening, talk of Maharaja Vikramaditya or recite the eulogies of such other kings and emperors who, either to alleviate the miseries of the poor subjects, or to ascertain their wants, used to go out at night in disguise. They divert their minds by the recitation of stories of Akbar's solicitude for the welfare of his subjects, as well as of Birbal's regard for public satisfaction ; and they believe that those days of justice and happiness are gone ! The Earth does

not now produce such kings who used to visit the peoples' homes to enquire into their condition. Of course the people knew Queen Victoria and that she was their sovereign and they also know that her son has now become their lord and sovereign in her place.

But they are not aware that their sovereign has a representative in this country who is all in all in respect of the administration of the country ; that at times he boasts of his rule over these thirty crore souls, or that without ever doing any thing for the good of the country, he vilifies the people, whenever it pleases him to do so, as wily and untruthful.

Pondering over these facts, Shiva Shambhu now feels convinced that the days of the rulers and the ruled mixing with each other to play *holi* are dead and gone long ago. What still remained of those by-gone times, ended with the life of Maharaja Ranbir Singha of Cashmere. There is hardly any hope of those days returning soon, for, the people of the country are not lucky enough for the purpose. Similarly, the rulers too are not lucky enough to be able to appreciate or to gain the humble love and affection of the subject people. My lord may have a beautifully illustrated, elegant history^{ic} written of his administration ; what cares he of the love of the people ? Yet, this Bhang-eating old man begs to approach his lordship with this request, that he would be pleased to remember this eager, expectant of a *holi play* at his gates at least as a mad man, if not as anything else. He holds the brief on behalf of the dumb people under his lordship's rule for

whom my lord will do nothing till they are sufficiently
educated to plead their own cause.

"To the Sultan's attendants
who will cause to reach this prayer,

In thanks for sovereignty,
drive not away the beggar."

(Sd.) SHIVA SHAMBHU SHARMA.

