A FORMIDABLE WARRIOR OF REWA

THE spiky armour of this old gentleman rattled, as he walked, like a lot of kitchen utensils.

metals, obliged one to realise how extremely lucky it was to have seen the Durbar. Strangers passing through India visit the different show-places; they "do" the temples and the ruins; and sometimes, through special letters of introduction, they call on the various Rajas. But they never see the marvellous stores of gold and jewels hidden away in the inner apartments of the Palaces, or, if they do, it is among more or less tawdry surroundings. To the Durbar every Raja brought his best and costliest; each vied with his neighbour in pride of possession; and we saw all these treasures massed together in one glittering heap against a dignified and suitable background.

OF THE IMPERIAL CADET CORPS

One of the gallant members of a corps which is considered the finest in India—a slim young prince whose very bearing suggests noble birth.

XIII

THE BOMBAY AND IMPERIAL CADET CORPS

THE IMPERIAL CADET CORPS AT THE DURBAR

All Princes or the sons of Princes, who had the honour of forming the Viceregal escort on the great day.

XIII

THE BOMBAY AND IMPERIAL CADET CORPS

Some of the handsomest and most distinguished types we saw in India were at the Bombay Camp. The difficulty was to make selections for pictures: they were all characteristic and splendid.

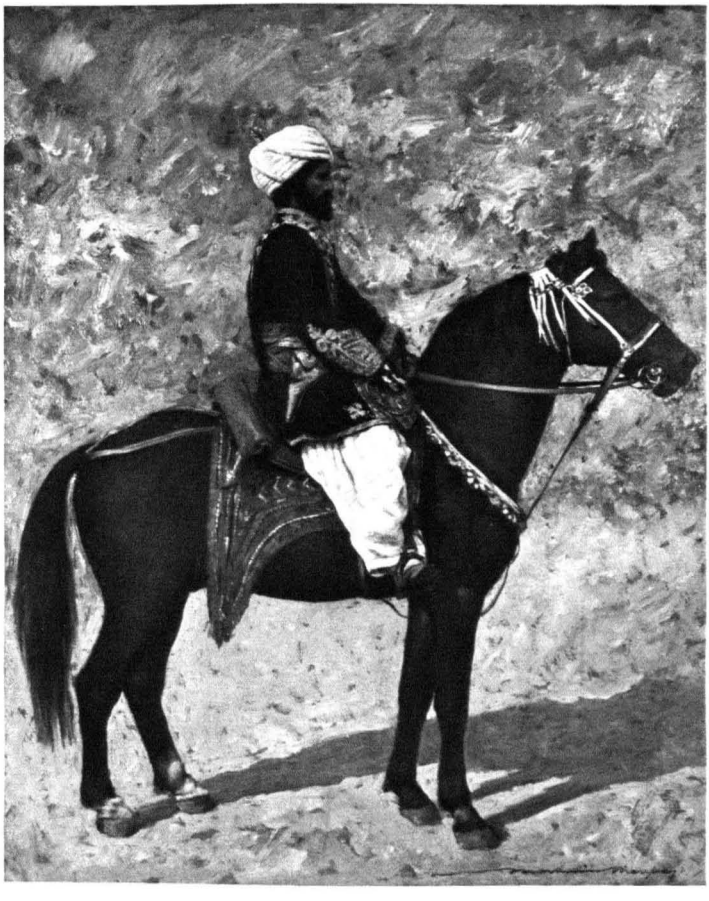
Some of the Bombay Chiefs refused to live in the tents allotted to them, and took houses in the village near by. Most of the camps were very elaborately prepared, neat and smart. For example, one never saw waste-paper lying about at the Bombay Camp. There were picturesque archways, gravelled paths, splendid drainage, large reception tents, and some had stained-glass windows. Some had gardens. All were illuminated by electric light. Cutch was proud in the possession of a camp made entirely of velvet

with poles of silver; it was like one great and perfect Eastern carpet, such as one sometimes sees in some Bond Street shop. One of the Chiefs of Bombay had a curious fancy. He lived in a quiet little house just out of the bazaar with an old-world garden, far from the haunts of men. A very good idea, too, I thought; far more attractive in some ways than many of the gaudier dwelling-places of brother Chiefs.

On the way home from the Bombay Chiefs' Camp we called at the Camp of the Imperial Cadet Corps. We were met by Major Thompson, a very alert man. He immediately took us round the camp and explained everything—the reason for the formation of the corps, its results, its dangers, the life of the boys indoors and out. He himself taught them lessons in English and arithmetic. We were taken to the stables and shown the famous horses, beautiful black creatures wearing red coverings to keep the dust off, for, as Major Thompson said, they become brown and rusty soon if they have not constant attention. He introduced us to H.H. the Maharaja of Idar, Honorary Colonel of the Imperial Cadet Corps, popularly known as Sir Pratap Singh.

HORSEMAN AT THE BOMBAY CAMP

One of the handsomest and most daring riders at the Durbar.

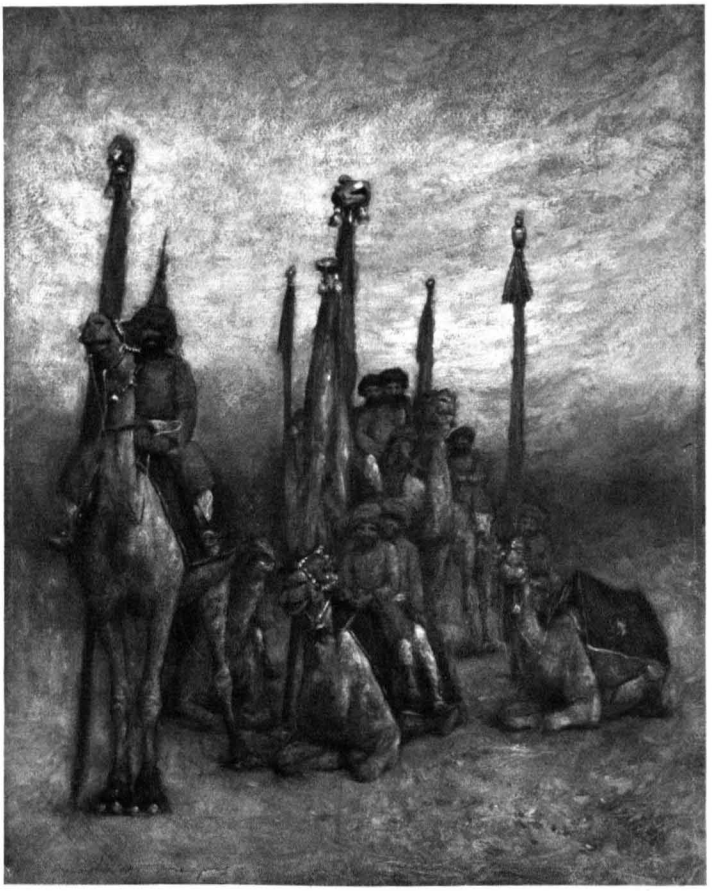


His Royal Highness, without a collar on, was sitting on his bed, looking happy and buoyant, brimming over with high spirits. He seemed on very friendly terms with all the men, who treated him as if he were a brother. I stayed there for over half an hour, and we had a long conversation—Major Thompson, Sir Pratap Singh, and myself. I was much impressed with the keen way in which they both talked. They were both full of enthusiasm and eagerly discussed the uniform of the Cadets. Sir Pratap Singh wondered if it was perhaps too pretty: he thought that perhaps it wanted relieving somewhere with a touch of blood-red. The two officers had worked out the scheme of the uniform themselves. We had a long and interesting talk about the corps. Sir Pratap Singh said that it was, of course, quite an experiment. He didn't know exactly how it would end; but his object was to make men of the Cadets, and to show them that there were other things to do in this world than merely luxuriating and leading a dissolute life—for men in their position there was a real and good work at hand. They seemed to think that it was an interesting experiment, and hoped that in the end it would be a gigantic success.

It was Sir Walter Lawrence's idea that we should visit the camp and sketch the Cadets. The Cadet Corps was a pet scheme of his. In fact, it was he and the Viceroy who originated it.

BOMBAY CHIEFS' CAMP

THE golden ornaments on the top of their banners are emblems which have been bestowed upon them by the Mogul Emperors. In one of the golden balls is some sacred water from the Ganges, which, if sprinkled on a dying man during battle, will ensure his entrance into heaven.



XIV

THE VICEROY

ARMOURED HORSEMEN OF KISHENGARH

THESE men with their coats of chain armour and metal helmets remind one of the warriors of the Middle Ages, and strike far greater terror into the hearts of their enemies than would our modern khaki soldiers.

XIV

THE VICEROY

TOWARDS the end of the Durbar, at a time when one was fully able to appreciate the power of Lord Curzon, I found myself, paint-box in hand and trepidation in my heart, waiting an audience with the great man. I had had many chances of studying him before, at dinner, driving in the streets, and at different ceremonies; but this was to be the final sitting.

I had been shown into an ante-room by an A.D.C., and had sat down to wait. A few minutes later the door opened and Mr. E. T. Reed made his appearance. "Hullo! what are you doing here?" I asked. "I am going to paint the Viceroy," he answered. "Impossible!" I cried. "Why, I am here for the same purpose!" "Then, we shall have to paint him together," we murmured as with one voice, collapsing. We sat down

uncomfortably on the edges of chairs, and had a furtive talk. There was a chilly, nervous atmosphere about that room. Neither of us is timid by nature; yet we felt its influence. Cold shivers stole down our backs and depression settled on our spirits. We talked to one another in whispers. Reed said it reminded him of a dentist's waiting-room. I have never been in one, but could sympathise. We had always helped each other, Reed and I, from the first start off on the boat; and even here we feebly tried to buck each other up. "Look here, Menpes," said Reed: "you ought to be all right: you sketched Lord Kitchener the other day, and that must have been a splendid rehearsal." I admitted that it certainly should have been, but said that I did not feel fortified. "Now, you, Reed," I added encouragingly, "you're different: you've got such habits—you have painted the Duke of Connaught." He murmured something about not feeling stimulated, and reminded me of my portrait of the Duke of Hesse. Both were floored in a vain attempt to be cheerful, and studied the pattern of the carpet for some minutes in silence. Suddenly Reed and I looked up, and the only picture in the room caught our attention at the same moment. It was the typical

amateurish picture with very brilliant colouring, juicy pigment, and the usual figure in a red shawl that most beginners seem to think it necessary to introduce into their landscapes. Reed and I were enthusiastic. We peered into the picture, examined it from all angles, talked of its technique, until the landscape assumed the proportions of a masterpiece. The artist, we declared, must be a genius. Reed said he liked the nice crisp drawing; I said it was a gorgeous bit of colour.

In the midst of our feverish criticism, and as though to save us from dotage, Lady Curzon swept into the room, a vision of beauty in the palest of lilac gowns. She carried me off to the drawing-room, and by her ready tact and sympathy soon dispelled my nervousness and made the way smooth. What an ideal wife for a Viceroy, I thought! She was looking extremely well, not in the least fatigued; and when I asked her if she did not feel the effects of the Durbar she said that work was meat and drink to her.

Soon an A.D.C. entered to usher me into the presence of the Viceroy. I was shown into a room that was being used as a study. Lord Curzon was at his desk, writing. The moment I was announced he sprang up. His movements

were very active. Holding out his hand to me, he said, "So I hear you want to paint me, Mr. Menpes?" I said I was very anxious to do so. He looked quickly round the room, his keen eyes taking in everything, and said, "Now, what about the light? Do you think the light is good, or do you think it would be better on the verandah? Perhaps it would be as well if you surveyed a little first, and then told me where to sit. I shall be prepared at any moment." I liked this. There was no waste of time, yet no nervous hurry: he took in the situation at a glance with a tactfulness that charmed me.

I went round with the A.D.C. and chose a position in the verandah.

Without any delay the Viceroy came and sat. He was wearing a gray frock-coat, and had a flower in his button-hole. He looked crisp and well-groomed, and in the keen, searching light one had a splendid chance of studying his expressions, which were changing constantly. What an alert face! With what bright, clear eyes he met my glance! Assurance seemed stamped in every line of those strong, almost stern, features. One felt that to this man there was no such thing as the insurmountable. In proportion to the

A RAJPUT OF RAJGARH

face Lord Curzon's head is enormous. It is an obviously intelligent head; at the back it seems to have burst out into bulges with intelligence. I was struck not only by the strength and intelligence of the man before me, but also by his kindliness and sympathy. Whatever Lord Curzon's critics may say, after that one sitting in his verandah at Delhi, I shall always maintain that the Viceroy of India is a magnetic man, a sympathetic man, a stimulating man, a man who has the power to draw the very best out of people. To me as a painter he showed the most delightful side of his character. Busy beyond words, he allowed himself to drift sympathetically, giving me the impression that time was of no consequence, and art the only thing to live for. He did not sit down with watch in hand and say, "Now paint me," as I have known lesser men do. He talked just as an artist would talk. He stimulated me, and got me in the right condition for work: in a word, he made me feel restful, which is the proper mood for a painter.

"Well, and how did the Durbar appeal to you from the painter's standpoint?" he asked. I told him that it had appealed to me because of its completeness. I had admired the arrangement of the

colour-schemes and the knowledge and artistic feeling shown even in the erection of the temporary buildings. Above all, I had been struck by the oneness of it—by its being the work of one man. In fact, if I remember right, I think I called the Durbar a "one-man's show."

Lord Curzon's face lit up as I spoke, and he smiled at me radiantly, for he is fond of his work, and he felt that he had achieved a triumph. "Ah," he said, "but you must not forget, Mr. Menpes, that I have been surrounded by splendid lieutenants, splendid workers who have carried out my intentions to the minutest detail!" Despite that, a few words with the great man was enough to convince me that the Durbar had been created solely by himself.

Lord Curzon talked of the art of the country and of the bad influence that had been brought to bear on it. One felt that he had really studied this subject, and that it came very near to him. He realised as no one else seemed to have done that the art of India was slipping away, and that if vigorous measures were not taken to foster and encourage it we should live to say that there was no living art in India. He touched a little, but very lightly, on the subject of the Exhibition that had

AN ARMED RETAINER OF THE BOMBAY CHIEFS

He is a great person in his State; at his back he carries a shield made of polished hippopotamus hide.

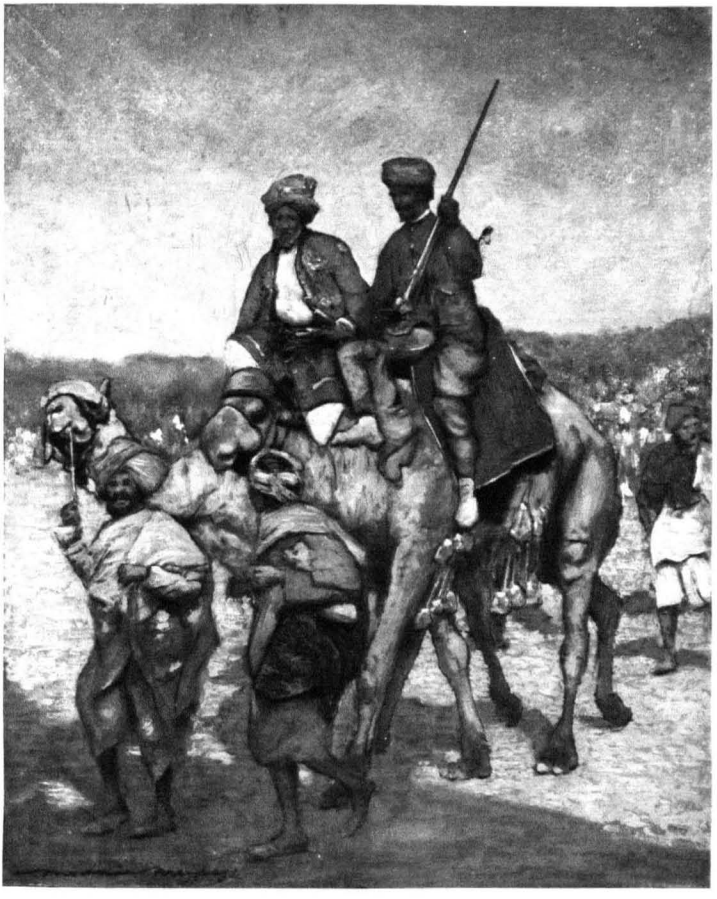
been opened at Delhi. The word *bazaar* was on the tip of my tongue. Personally, I thought it was the most hopeless show I had ever seen, involved and foolish; and I could not help understanding by the tone of Lord Curzon's voice that he, too, felt full well that the Exhibition was anything but successful in placing and arrangement.

"I fear your first two days in camp were not altogether satisfactory in relation to your work, Mr. Menpes," said Lord Curzon suddenly, after a pause, during which I had been feverishly trying to seize a certain dreamy expression often seen on his face. I was amazed at the question. Then, he knew? He had read my letter to the Military Secretary asking to be transferred from the Millionaires' Camp to the Press Camp! The Viceroy went on: "We were uncertain where to place you. Here, in my Camp, you would have been distracted from your work, and we were not sure if you cared to be in the Press Camp; so temporarily you were placed in Number One Camp. When you wrote to my Military Secretary expressing a wish to be transferred, it was immediately done; and I hope you are thoroughly satisfied." No man could have said more; it was just the right thing to stimulate me; it showed tact, intuition, and

knowledge of "the artistic temperament." How thorough the man is! Nothing escapes him. I was only one of thousands; yet he knew everything about me, and showed a keen interest in my affairs. "I know your work well, Mr. Menpes," he said, with a smile as he noticed my look of astonishment. "You have come here to do a big work; but no one is better equipped for the task of depicting these great ceremonies than yourself, absorbed as you are with the gorgeous colouring of the East." This is an instance of Lord Curzon's marvellous memory, and I dare guarantee that every man who came in contact with him in Delhi would have similar stories to relate.

When the sitting was over and I had completed my work, Lord Curzon chose exactly the right moment to dismiss me; and he did it in a graceful way. He hoped I would come to Calcutta, and described several scenes that I certainly must portray in different parts of India. I said that Delhi had absorbed me—that I wished to see nothing more. I wanted to work hard at my exhibition of the Durbar pictures, and keep away from other impressions until they were finished. Every moment during the Durbar was precious; but the instant it was over I intended to fly away

CAMELS FROM MYSORE



on a P. and O. boat and work, for I wanted to be alone. Lord Curzon turned to me, with a smile and a bow, and said, "If every moment is precious and you want to be alone, you must not linger here with me—I had better go!" With these graceful words my never-to-be-forgotten talk with the Viceroy of India ended.

As I passed through the ante-room on my way out, I cast an eye at the picture that Reed and I had so much admired. Pleased and elated with the success of my sitting, and with Lord Curzon's stimulating individuality, I looked at it with other eyes. The picture appeared in its true light: it was crude and poor and weak. Where was the gorgeous colouring? I looked about for Reed; but he had disappeared.

XV

LORD KITCHENER

LORD KITCHENER

THE Commander-in-Chief's Camp during the Durbar was one of the gayest and most brilliant in Delhi; he himself was genuinely sorry when the party had to be broken up at the end of the fortnight.

XV

LORD KITCHENER

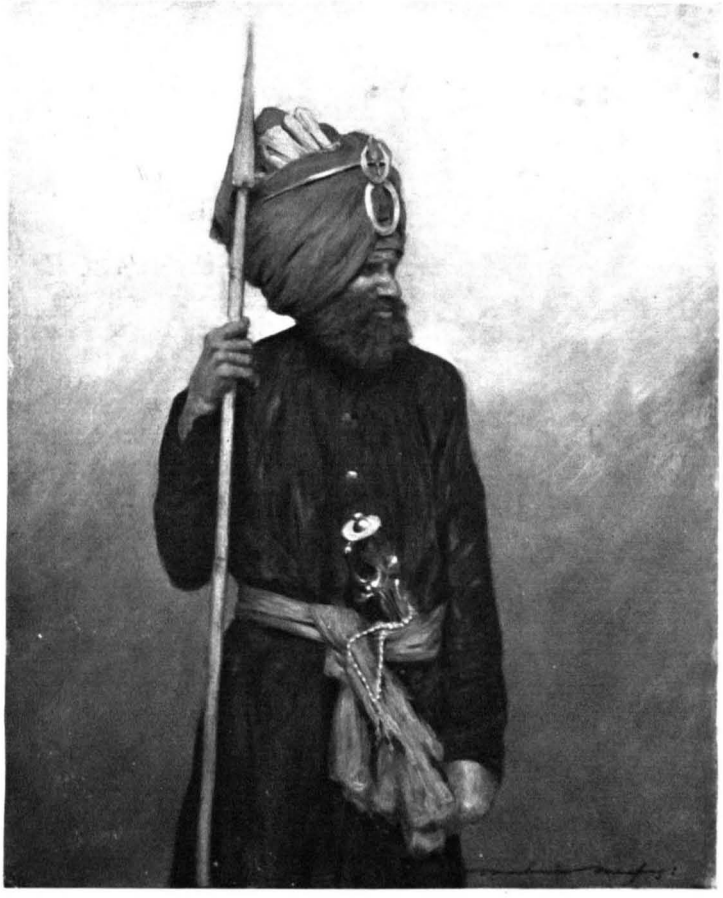
EVERYONE helped me to persuade Lord Kitchener to sit—Colonel Rhodes, Colonel Hamilton, and others. They had all talked to the Chief about sitting, and he had promised each one faithfully that he would. It was some time before I heard from any of them; but at length I received an urgent letter from Colonel Hamilton saying that Lord Kitchener would be ready to sit to me the next morning at nine. Somehow, I rather feared this sitting. I felt that, being so much occupied and in such a hurry, Lord Kitchener would be brusque and unsympathetic.

We were determined to be before rather than after the stated time, and in our anxiety arrived at the Commander-in-Chief's Camp at a quarter to nine. A bit ashamed, we wandered about in our little tonga, and were just in time to see Lord

Kitchener return from his morning ride. At nine o'clock to the minute we were shown into the reception-room. Shortly afterwards Colonel Hamilton joined us there, and took us into an inner room—Lord Kitchener's study. It was a large tent, and rather dark. The Commander-in-Chief was sitting at his desk, writing. He was exceedingly kind and sympathetic, took a real interest in my work, and was not nearly so difficult a sitter as I had expected him to be. At the same time, he struck me as being intensely shy—not at all the same man I remembered on the kopje at Osfontein in the midst of battle. Even the character of his face seemed to have changed. He was a different person. There was a softening, a distinct alteration. The whole time I was painting him I noticed that he seemed self-conscious. I was aware that he longed for the sitting to be over, not so much because he disliked it as because he was really shy. Still, he was jovial withal, entirely sympathetic and kindly. He looked serious during the sitting, almost tragic; but it seemed a passing expression on a jovial face. As we entered he stood up, and Colonel Hamilton introduced us to him. Then there was a pause, and nothing was said for a moment, until I

SPEAR-BEARER FROM JIND

THE steel circles in his turban are not only for decoration, but for use in warfare.



mumbled out an apology for asking him to sit. He said at once, "I think this room is too dark. I don't believe you will be able to see me; but you can try." With that he sat down and stared straight at me, as rigid as a sphinx; and so long as I painted him he fixed me with those brilliant steel-blue eyes of his. It was a little unnerving at first. After a time he shook off his shyness, and began to talk about the Durbar and the possibilities for my work, expressing his opinion that in the native Chiefs' camps I should secure my best material. By the time I had sketched him in the tent I became bolder, and begged that he would sit outside. This was rather daring, for there he would be seen by other people, and in answer, Lord Kitchener murmured something I did not quite hear, which showed me clearly that it was not altogether his pleasure. Still, so many friends of mine had talked to him about this sitting that he felt that he must go through with it. He braced himself together manfully and came out. He sat outside in the sun in a rigid and dogged way, and the moment I said that I had finished he sprang up and rushed into his tent. We followed; and he stood up and talked, but not for long, and we left hurriedly.

Directly we came out of Lord Kitchener's tent

we were besieged by a group of his guests, all eager to know how we had found the "Chief,"—how he had looked, and what he had said. They were all full of stories about him, and were delighted with their stay in his Camp. He was a perfect host, they said, always jovial and good-tempered.

The Commander-in-Chief's Camp was certainly the brightest and gayest and happiest in the whole Durbar, not in the least what one would have expected it to be. He was always anxious for his friends' comfort, they said. One day, I was told, he took some of them out to a picnic, and spent the whole day with them. Strange to say, he seemed to delight in ladies' society: one lady told me that on the last day, when they were all breaking up, he was really grieved to say good-bye to them. The reports stating Lord Kitchener is a woman-hater are, I should say, quite false. His aversion from ostentation and display, however, is not at all overrated. Lord Kitchener hates what he terms "unnecessary fuss." One day one of his young officers drew his attention to a fine body of men who were waiting outside the tent: they were to form his escort at some important Durbar ceremony. Lord Kitchener immediately flew into a towering rage, and exclaimed that he would not

FROM RAJGARH

have all those men following him about. It was not until the officer had timidly explained how hurt the men would be if they were not allowed to escort him that he grudgingly assented. Then, again, his dislike to publicity was shown at Simla. There every one expected that he would take a large house and entertain lavishly; but after he had been over to choose the ground, they found to their great chagrin that he had selected a very small place far from the madding crowd.

BALUCH CHIEFS ON DURBAR DAY

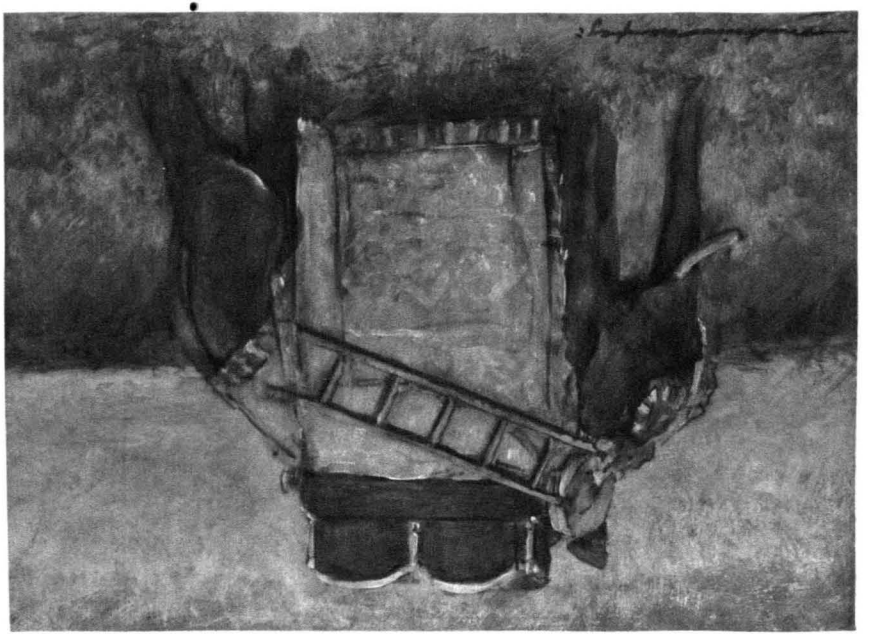
Crossing the plain on the way to their seats in the grand amphitheatre.

XVI

REFLECTIONS

AN ELEPHANT OF CENTRAL INDIA

One of the fifteen massive elephants from Gwalior.



XVI

REFLECTIONS

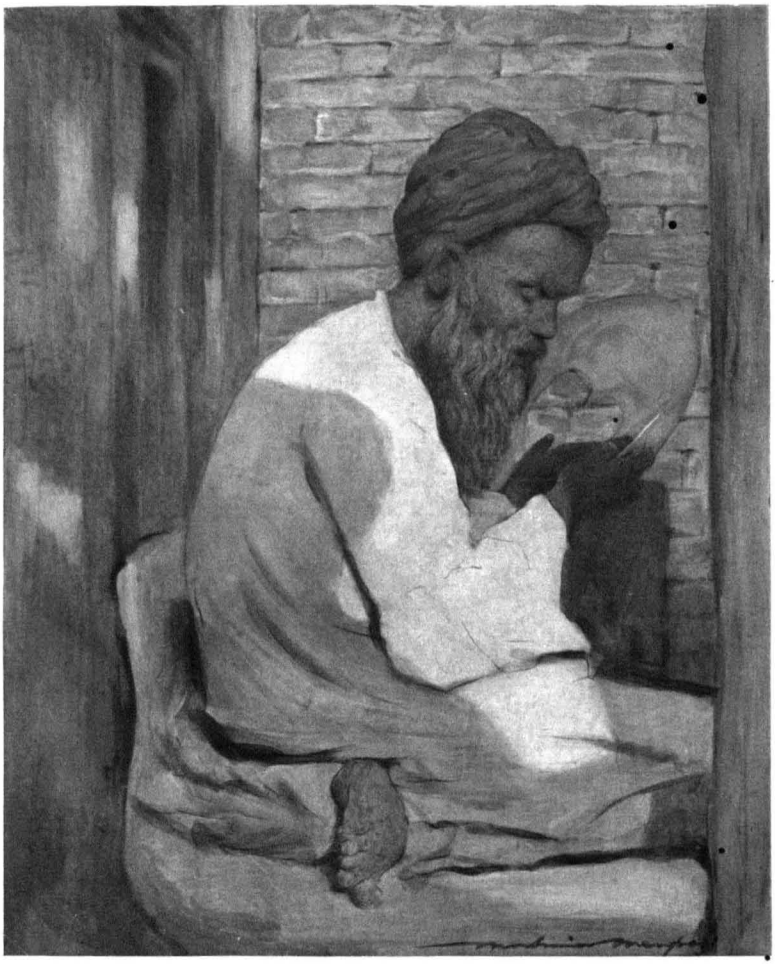
WHEN one reflects upon the Durbar as a whole, and thinks of its effect upon native and European alike all over India, one cannot but worship and bow down to that marvellous brain at the back of all, the man who pulled the strings—Lord Curzon. The politician of the village pump declaimed against the Durbar. It was a waste of money, he said—a useless display of splendour. Let us argue with him, then: let us proceed to justify the Durbar.

To begin with, the home-staying wiseacre does not realise that for centuries the Oriental idea of power has been connected with superb shows and ceremonies, and that the natives would regard anything done in a plain way as poor, and look down, not so much upon the show itself as upon the British Empire which had produced it. The very fact that in a moment of time a Western

Ruler should come and beat them on their own ground has established in the mind of prince and peasant alike a lasting impression of the position of the British Raj which nothing else could possibly have achieved. Then, again, that Lord Curzon was able to bring together under one roof for the first time one hundred independent Chiefs and Rulers from all over India, many of them never having seen one another before, was in itself a great *tour de force*. Think what a tremendous lesson the Durbar must have been to these men! Whatever expense we may have been put to, that alone is a justification. It not only made the natives realise the great power of the British Empire, but also fired them with loyalty and caused them to be knit together in bonds of fealty.

The Durbar acted on a concentration of loyalty which spread itself all over India. To many of the great Rulers the British Empire must have been something misty and intangible; but all the mystery and intangibility passed away, as it were, and was translated to the clear and concrete, when they stood in the presence of the Empire's Viceroy and in the presence of the brother of the Emperor himself. They realised then that, great as they themselves were, and great as their fathers had

A SLIPPER-MAKER



been before them, eminently greater was the Ruler of England and the Indies and much else of the world besides. At the Military Review, these Princes were able to see a force of 30,000 men. Those among them who thought at all must have said to themselves, "Look at that! How splendid! Who has done it all?" The answer must have instantly suggested itself: "It has all been done by the Emperor!" They realised the power of the Sovereign they have over them, and went home with new ideas of discipline, saturated with pride and loyalty; and they spread these feelings far and wide throughout their States.

The Durbar contained a lesson not only for the Indian people, but also for the whole world,—one which the whole world would do well to lay to heart. Gathered there together under the roof of that great amphitheatre were the representatives of one half of the whole human race. There were the old Powers of Europe; the young republic in America; the countries of the Far East, such as China and Japan—all of these must have realised, as perhaps they never did before, how vast is this great Empire and its influence how far-reaching.

Lord Curzon is possessed of all the qualities that are necessary to a successful Viceroy—energy,

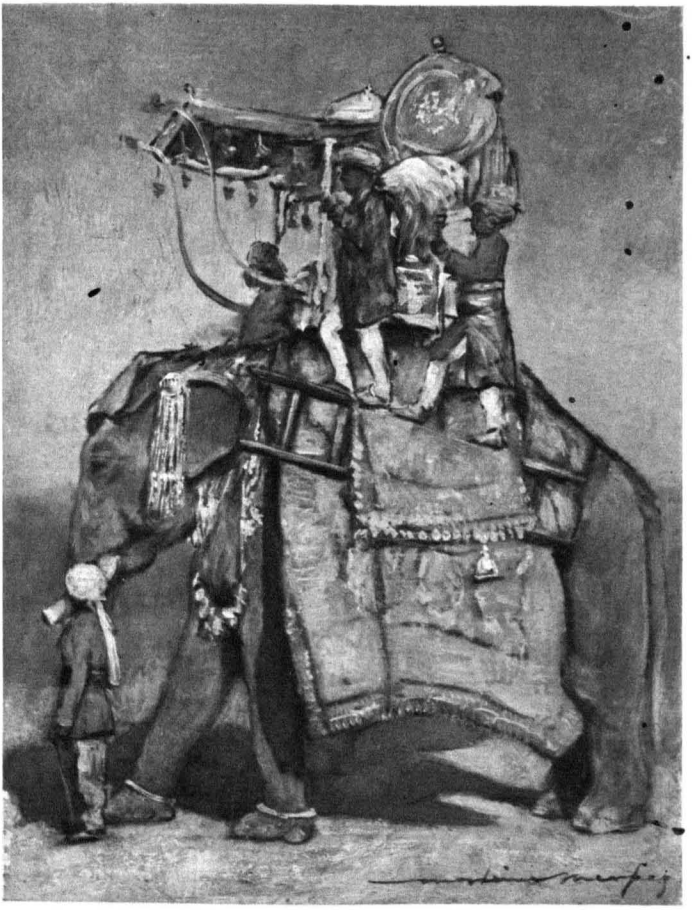
eloquence, immense persuasive powers and vigour, a habit of refusing to recognise anything as insurmountable, and a perfect disbelief that any one is better than himself. He made his power felt in every detail of the Durbar. Everything you saw you knew that Lord Curzon had done. Nothing was too big or too small for his consideration, and his grasp of detail was just as strong as his breadth of understanding. He neglected nothing, from the large temporary buildings to the placing of a little elastic band on the official directory.

From an artistic point of view the Durbar was irreproachable. The handling of the elephants as a mass, the colour-scheme, the construction of the temporary buildings—everything was carried out in an artistic way. No painter could have complained of the Durbar. I myself criticised it from that standpoint, and was astonished. Even Rembrandt could not have handled the affair better.

When Lord Curzon first went out to India he went there full of vigour and energy. One of the first things he did was to reform official documents, the wordy documents which took one so long to read. He was determined to master detail, and it was impossible to do so

A STATE ELEPHANT IN ALL ITS TRAPPINGS

Even among such a gorgeous display as the native review this elephant attracted attention.



unless things were presented to him in simple and clear forms. The reform of these official documents was a big task; but he did not shirk it, and at length the herculean labour was completed. As things are now, with a few crisp sentences one can take in a situation at a glance, instead of wading through many pages of foolscap. After simplifying the official documents Lord Curzon started his wider reforms. That superb machine, composed of permanent officials, our great staff in India, up till then had been a little apathetic, rather stagnant. The Viceroy began to move it. Some people said he did so too rapidly; but Lord Curzon knew better. Any movement at all would have been resented by a machine which had settled down as this one had. One might liken it to a ship anchored on a rock in still water and suddenly boarded by an energetic commander who meant to move. Every one aboard was sick. Even the officers were sick. They were not used to such movement. It was comparatively gentle in itself; but by contrast to the former stillness it appeared violent.

This action of Lord Curzon in India was absolutely necessary. Only a bold man could have attempted such a tremendous work. Only

a bold reformer, and no one who has not visited India, can comprehend the magnitude of it. For example, Lord Curzon attacked the Caste Question. Englishmen in India have supremacy over the natives, and Englishmen have abused it. The Viceroy announced in his speeches that equal justice must be meted out to native and to European. Up to a very recent period, before Lord Curzon came to India, it was almost impossible to obtain capital punishment for a white soldier who had murdered a native. I know perfectly well that the theory of Empire is based on the supremacy of the white man over the black; but there is a right and a wrong way of demonstrating this supremacy, and in the past the wrong way predominated.

Here are two instances which actually occurred not long ago in the Bombay presidency. One day a subaltern got into a first-class railway carriage and found sitting there a "coloured gentleman." In a fit of rage, he seized the poor man by the shoulders, and, shouting out to him, "Out you go, you black beast!" pitched him and his portmanteaus on to the platform. This, to his great astonishment, caused a considerable disturbance; and when he inquired what the people

meant by putting themselves out over a black man, an Englishman who was passing by answered: "Well, perhaps you don't know it, but you have just thrown one of Her Majesty's judges out of the train." On another occasion Lord R——, a great governor, had a big dinner-party, at which were present a certain Anglo-Indian official of some importance and his wife. Lord R——, with a "coloured gentleman" at his side, walked up to the lady and said, "Will you allow me to introduce my friend Mr. S——? He will take you into dinner." She, without taking the slightest notice of the "coloured gentleman," threw up her head, walked up to her husband, and the two marched out of the room together. The whole of Anglo-India was on her side! It is easy to understand, then, the vast importance and magnitude of the task that Lord Curzon set himself to do. He set his face as a flint against the many outrages which were being perpetrated by Anglo-Indians against native Indians. It required much courage; but he carried on his crusade logically. It did not help to make him popular with the military out there; and, as these are the people who surround him socially, whom he must live with day after day, it is

obvious that only a courageous and strong man could have pursued this course.

Then, he says that if we are to retain India we must respect the native prejudices and traditions, religious, social, and other. With a view to carrying this out, he has turned his attention to the shooting. Certain birds, such as the peacock, are sacred; but Tommy went out shooting peacocks galore. Now Lord Curzon has laid down strict and stringent laws. Soldiers must not go out shooting unless they are able to speak the language, which practically means that Tommy cannot shoot at all. This doesn't exactly help to make Lord Curzon popular with the army; but, after all, was ever a great reformer universally popular?

THE END

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