—and when the Prince ascended the throne was made aide to His Majesty.

In the fall of 1915 the Maharaja wished to return to the front, but he was in poor health, due to his having proceeded to the war too soon after a serious illness, and his physicians would not permit him to face another winter campaign in Europe. Again in 1916 he offered his services—his troops were still fighting for the colours—but the Viceroy of India felt that the Maharaja's services would be more usefully employed in India. So he remained in Bikaner. but continued making large contributions to the war fund and furnishing troops and camel corps for active service.

Once, after the beginning of the war, the Maharaja was singled out for assassination by a small party of seditionists in British India who felt, as was brought out at the Benares Conspiracy Trial, that he was a menace to their plans for causing an anti-British uprising. The plot was discovered quickly and promptly quashed.

During our conversation the Maharaja referred in glowing terms to the other rulers who had given their personal services during the war, and to the great contributions of money and men which had come from the various Indian states. His Highness enumerated the services of several of the other Princes, and spoke proudly

of the fact that among those who had taken the field in person for their Emperor were no less than six of his own, the Rathore, clan: the Maharajas of Jodhpur, Kishengarh, Rutlam, and Idar, Sir Pratap Singh, regent of Jodhpur during the minority of the heir, and himself. Concerning his own part he had little to say, passing over this subject with characteristic reserve and dignity. In discussing whether all this assistance had been given selfishly, His Highness said:

"When the war broke out there was a rush among the ruling Princes of India to assure the King-Emperor of their loyalty and to tender all the resources at their command. Those who charge us with acting selfishly seem to ignore, or overlook, the fact that these offers were made during the dark days when the Germans were sweeping everything before them. It was not outside the range of possibility that the Central Allies might accomplish their object of overrunning Europe. But did this deter India from standing by the Flag?

"A little later India was virtually denuded of regular British troops, which were needed to stem the onward rush of the Germans. The existence of the Indian Empire depended on the loyalty of Princes and people. It was the opportunity of generations for a successful uprising, had such a revolt been in the minds of

the people of India, for there was nothing to prevent it. But British India and the ruling Princes and the people of Native India stood by their King-Emperor throughout that trying period. Was that selfish loyalty, or was it the loyalty born of real devotion to the throne?

"Take the case of my relation, the young Maharaja of Jodhpur. When the war broke out His Highness was only sixteen years old, and since he was not of age the Viceroy, Lord Hardinge, had not selected him for active service. But the Maharaja wrote a personal and voluntary letter to the Viceroy, beseeching His Excellency to let him go to France, and spiritedly adding: 'I have two younger brothers, so what does it matter if I am killed.' The earnestness of His Highness prevailed, and he got his way. Was this selfish or true loyalty? If this does not demonstrate our deep and inborn loyalty to the King-Emperor, I don't know what does.

"To go back a little, was it selfishness or loyalty that drew my ancestor and many other Princes in person to the battlefields to fight for the British Government during the great Mutiny; that led to the widespread offers from the Native States of assistance in the time of the Panjdeh scare (in 1885), when it seemed in India that war with Russia was inevitable; that has caused the ruling Princes for years to maintain within their states and at their own expense bodies

of highly-trained troops for the defence of the Empire; that sent numerous Princes to risk their lives on the Indian frontier in 1897; that brought out huge contributions of money and troops from the rulers during the trouble in China in 1900; was it selfishness or loyalty, I ask, that dictated all these things which it was not necessary for us to do in order to maintain our standing in the Empire?

"I do not mean to say, of course, that Indian rulers are different from any other men in that they are never actuated by selfish motives. Selfishness is a characteristic of the human race, but our selfishness does not touch our devotion to the King-Emperor. We are absolute loyalists, and our people are loyalists with us.

"And the same can be said of British India. Apart from our religious precepts and traditions, which have imbued India with the spirit of loyalty, His Majesty the Emperor, having twice visited India, is personally known to the people and is extremely popular throughout the length and breadth of India as a great, just, and sympathetic Sovereign, and we are therefore drawn to him no less by personal magnetism."

His Highness pulled a document from the files on his desk and handed it to the correspondent. It was a copy of the oath of allegiance to the Maharaja that must be taken by every member of the Representative Assembly which he has

established for his state. Incorporated in this oath are these words: ". . . And that through our ruler I will be loyal and faithful and bear true allegiance to His Imperial Majesty the King, Emperor of India, and His Majesty's rightful heirs and successors of the Royal and Imperial House of England."

"Does that mean anything to the outside world?" queried His Highness with a smile.

Only a few hours previous to this conversation I had driven through the city with the Maharaja. On the way the carriage passed a humble dwelling which was gaily decorated, the most striking part of the display being an arch over the door which bore the words, "God Save the King." The attention of the Maharaja was called to this.

"That house undoubtedly is decorated for a wedding," he remarked, adding with a laugh: "It's a striking example of the disloyalty of the people of Bikaner to their King-Emperor, isn't it?"

But to return to the interview at the Palace. His Highness took back from me the document containing the Assembly oath and sat fingering it reflectively for a time before he continued.

"It would be foolish to claim that the ruling Princes never have had their differences with representatives of the Government of India. There have been times in the past when we

have felt the sting of pin-pricks inflicted by some official. I love the King-Emperor; but, frankly, there have been times when I have not loved the acts of some of his servants. There has been a disposition on the part of some to belittle the importance of the ruling Princes and to trespass on their dignity, thinking thereby to enhance the importance of the trespasser, and forgetting that the greater the rulers of India the greater the British Empire as a whole. Naturally, it is not pleasing to a ruler, whose ancestors have held the throne in their own right for centuries before the British came to India, to be subjected to petty annoyances by some minor official.

"But we have also many true and sympathetic friends among the British political officers, and things have improved and are improving fast. Fortunately, our annoyances have been caused by individual officials, and we are gratefully alive to the fact that the policy of the Government of India towards the Indian states has been one of sympathy, and that there has been displayed a sincere desire to eliminate all uncalled-for interferences in our internal affairs. I have seen this bond of sympathy growing under the four Viceroys who have served during my active rule—Lords Curzon, Minto, Hardinge, and Chelmsford—and I know that this attitude of the Government of India has certainly drawn

the Indian states closer to itself, and has stimulated the feeling among the rulers of real devotion to the King-Emperor and to his Royal House.

"The party of seditionists and anarchists in India is small, but had the British Government not followed the just and sympathetic policy—the only right policy for the British Government—that was followed during the viceroyalties of Lord Minto and Lord Hardinge, the ranks of the party against order and good government would undoubtedly have been considerably swelled in spite of the criticisms of the short-sighted advocates of a certain school who can find nothing good in these two great Viceroys' policies.

"So long as the handling of affairs between the British Government and the Indian states remains in the hands of such capable political officers and such sympathetic friends as Mr. J. B. Wood, the Political Secretary, and Colonel C. J. Windham, the British Resident at present accredited to our courts, the future is full of hope.

"Far from wanting to sever relations with the British Government, the ruling Princes desire to remain a part of the Empire, for there is no government so great or so good as His Majesty's. We want to stay and help in the achievement of even greater things than have been accomplished in the past.

"We hope, of course, that before long the rulers will be given seats in an assembly, such as a Council of Princes, which shall have a voice in the Government of India in matters relating to our states, our people, and ourselves. We look forward also to the time when the people of British India shall have prepared themselves to take a greater hand in the affairs of State. I feel sure that these things are coming, for the signs all point that way. There is every indication that the Government of India has no greater desire than to see the Princes and the people stand on their own feet, under the guidance of England.

"I realise that political progress in India must be comparatively slow to be healthy; I believe that the Government of India will do all it can to meet the aspirations for advancement, and we ruling Princes ask nothing better than to be allowed to work hand-in-hand with the Supreme Government towards our goal.

"Loyalty? Call it selfishness, or devotion, or what you will, we of the ruling houses of India have followed and will follow the British Flag through adversity and through triumph to the end. The men of Bikaner, and the men of other states, are risking their lives, many of them dying gladly on the battlefield for their beloved King-Emperor. What better answer to the charges of disloyalty can be found?"

To this statement by the Maharaja of Bikaner I might add similar declarations of unswerving loyalty from other Princes, but I should like to give here a concrete example of the attitude of the Indian rulers towards the British Government. I refer again to the so-called Princes' Conference held in Delhi in November, 1916, at the invitation of the Viceroy, to consider questions of general importance to their states and people and to render advice requested by the British Government on certain matters.

Great weight was attached to the fact that two-score Princes and Chiefs, rulers over great territories and representing untold wealth and influence, should have come together at the invitation of His Majesty's representative at this crucial time in the history of the world war. Their mere presence in the capital city was interpreted as a tribute of loyalty to England, and in addition to this an unqualified statement of adherence to the throne was made in the name of the conference by His Highness the Gaekwar of Baroda, during his answer to the closing speech of the Viceroy. In concluding his address the Maharaja turned towards His Excellency and said:

"Further, we desire, with sincere emphasis, that Your Excellency will convey to His Most Gracious Majesty, the King-Emperor, warm

assurances of our unswerving loyalty to his august person and to the throne."

Among those who attended this conference were the Gaekwar of Baroda, above mentioned, ruler over more than 2,000,000 people, who up to that time, besides offering his troops and all the resources of his state to the King-Emperor for war service, had given some £32,000 for aeroplanes, and was contributing in other ways towards the expenses of the war; the Maharaja Scindia of Gwalior, who had sent two regiments of infantry on service, and whose contributions in money and material had aggregated hundreds of thousands of pounds; the Maharaja of Kolhapur, direct descendant of Sivaji, the great Mahratta leader; the Maharaja of Jaipur, one of the old-fashioned Rajput Princes, whose loyalty and generosity are household words; the Maharaja of Bikaner, whose services to the Empire are described earlier in this chapter; the Rao of Cutch, who from his lonely island on the western coast was sending £36,000 a year toward the expenses of the war; the Maharajas of Kashmir, Indore, Patiala, Alwar, and Kapurthala, the Nawab of Maler Kotla and the Raja of Sirmur, whose imperial service troops were fighting in the various theatres of war; the Begum of Bhopal, the woman ruler, who is likened to Queen Victoria in that she has devoted her life to the service of her people

and of the Empire; the Maharajas of Jodhpur, Kishengarh, and Idar; the Jam of Nawanagar and the Rana of Barwani, who served for some time in the field in France; and others, such as the Chiefs of Kotah, Dhar, Datia, and Benares, who had rendered notable assistance to England in the war.

CHAPTER IX

GERMAN PLANS THAT FAILED

THE loyalty of the Princes and of the people of India to the King-Emperor, upon which so much of the future of that country depends, was tried by fire after the outbreak of the war. For Germany, believing that the Indians as a whole were ready to sever their connection with Great Britain, left no stone unturned to bring about a revolt, according to both English and Indian authorities. In this, as in numerous similar instances, the Teutons badly misjudged the situation. Just how they were led into the error remains a matter of speculation.

Apropos of this subject I had an interesting conversation in Simla, in October, 1916, with Sir Charles Cleveland, Director of Criminal Intelligence for India. Sir Charles characterised the German plots as "clumsy, belated, too theoretical, and based on a misunderstanding of Indian character," and declared that the schemes failed chiefly because of the sanity of the great Indian public which withheld its support.

Sir Charles Cleveland is reputed to know more about those in whom the Secret Service naturally would be interested than any other man in India. For years he has made a study of that class which favours the darkness of night for its comings and goings, and the Government relies upon him, as head of the Secret Service, to check untoward occurrences in any section before they have grown into a serious menace.

"There has been some trouble in India," said Sir Charles, "but it has fallen very far short both of the picture drawn in enemy publications and of the enemy's desire. The state of India all through the war seems to have exposed a very big miscalculation on the part of the Germans.

"It would be interesting to examine how far this miscalculation was due to a misunderstanding of normal Indian affairs, and how far to a miscarriage of plans for causing trouble in India and among the Indians outside India during the war. My own impression is that Germany thought India would need very little extraneous prompting and assistance to rise against the British if the latter were in serious embarrassment owing to a big continental war, and that therefore not very much attention was paid by the German Government to instigation in India before the war.

"Where and how did the German Government

get that idea? Was it conveyed to them by secret unknown agents or by their consular officers in India or by some over-confident Indian Extremist or by British panic mongers? It is difficult to say for certain, but I remember that some years ago an Indian Extremist leader used the following words to me:

"'We shall certainly try to embarrass you in India if you have a war with a continental power or with Afghanistan. Our feelings are firm on that point unless, indeed, self-interest or some special reason dictates a passive attitude to some or all of us. But never again will you find such positive assistance as we gave you at the time of the Boer War.'

"My Extremist friend went on to tell me that we were foolish to think we could count on the Indian army. At the time I thought my friend's attitude was pathetic in its self-delusion, and time has shown that I was right.

"After the war broke out, the German Government showed a willingness to spend money lavishly on Indian trouble, but there was no sign of 'financing' of troublesome schemes or individuals before the war. In 1913 and 1914 a German viewing the situation in India with patriotic anti-British eyes would have observed the following phenomena:

"A rapprochement between a section of Indian Mohammedans and the Young-Turk

party in Europe; an anarchical revolutionary movement in Bengal with some ramifications in the north of India; a latent movement of extreme nationalism in the Bombay Presidency and some other places; an unrestrained *Ghadr* movement among Indians in the United States and Canada, and a certain amount of Moslem dissatisfaction in the north of India and along the North-West Frontier.

"I think it was beyond the power of any German to decide whether these phenomena were the signs of a deep and widespread unrest or merely local surface disturbances, and I feel sure that in order to interpret them the Germans consulted exiled and partisan Indians who were out of touch with India as a whole and who therefore magnified their own views and feelings and those of their friends and associates out of all reasonable proportion.

"For the first few months of the war the Germans waited for the Indian storm to come of itself, as they had been led to believe that it would come. To begin with, our enemies based extravagant hopes on Turkey's intervention, but the Indian Mohammedans as a whole took this with extraordinary calm and resignation. Then came the *Ghadr* invasion from the United States, Canada, and the Far East, but that broke itself hopelessly on the good sense and feeling of the Punjab public and on

the resourceful administration of that province.

"Disappointed by these failures of the Indian trouble to arrive automatically, the Germans realised that they must attempt direct assistance, and turned their attention to the Bengal revolutionary party. After six months or so of the war the Germans had established a regular bureau of disaffected Indians in Germany itself, among whom were included some leading members of most of the disturbing movements already mentioned. Under their advice grandiose schemes were evolved for the supply of arms, ammunition, money, and even German soldiers and sailors to the revolutionaries in Bengal and to the disaffected Moslem fanatics in the north of India.

"The schemes all miscarried hopelessly; remittances had a way of getting intercepted by the wrong people; ships on secret German errands kept knocking up against the Allied warships, and last, but perhaps not least, most of the moves in the plots were promptly reported to us by our own agents. These plots are still continuing, but there is little sting in them, and I am afraid the Germans themselves do not believe in them very strongly.

"I should like to be able to say that the frustration of the plots has been due to the Indian police and to the branch of that service under me, but I gladly admit that it has been

chiefly due to the sanity of the great Indian public which has withheld its support. Plots and conspiracies are very severely handicapped when the public environment is apathetic or hostile to the conspirator. At the moment we of the Secret Service are feeling very comfortable, but professionally we are disappointed with the German plots for India. We had hoped to learn a great deal from their system and methods, but they seem to us to have been clumsy, belated, too theoretical, and based on a misunderstanding of Indian character. At the same time I believe the British Empire owes a great debt to the Indian police in all its branches for its unswerving loyalty and zeal during the great war."

Not long after my talk with Sir Charles Cleveland I had an opportunity to discuss this same subject with His Highness the Maharaja Scindia of Gwalior, one of the most powerful of the Indian Princes, in his capital. Here is what he had to say :

"I believe that the war will continue for eighteen months longer" (this was in January, 1917), "and I hope, for my part, that it will go on until Germany has been crushed. And I am sure that all India feels as I do about this matter, quite the reverse of the attitude Germany expected from us at the outbreak of hostilities.

"Germany firmly believed that India would

join the Central Allies. Just what led the Teutons into this error I cannot say, but they certainly misjudged the situation here badly. There never was a chance that India would turn against Great Britain. I don't mean to say that there is no sedition in India. There is, just as there is sedition to some degree in America or in any other country, but those who are plotting against the Government are negligible in number, and they are no more representative of India as a whole than were the New York bomb-throwers three or four years ago representative of the American public.

"But Germany thought, for some reason or other, that we were ready to sever relations with Great Britain and banked on our support in the struggle. Long before the war began, Germany was busy trying to stir up sedition in India. I cannot prove this statement to you at this time, but I know it to be true. The attempts failed, and to-day Hindustan is standing loyally with the rest of the British Empire, and will continue so to stand until the last gun is fired.

"In ordinary times we Princes grouse and grumble among ourselves a good deal—and sometimes, I think, we have had reason for it—but when the big crisis came it found us all rushing to tender our support to the King-Emperor. That is only natural. Even the pots and kettles in the kitchen jostle and bump one

another about angrily between meals, but when the master's dinner is being prepared they are bubbling away merrily in harmony, doing their best. That's the way it is with us here in India, and I don't know that we are so much different from the rest of the world."

It may be added that the Maharaja Scindia has furnished very tangible evidence of the sincerity of his words. His Highness is a major-general in the British army, and gave his personal services with the British expeditionary force to China in 1901. During the present war affairs of State, or, more properly, affairs bearing directly on imperial interests, have precluded his leaving Gwalior, but from the beginning he has been making great contributions to the British arms. His troops have been in France, and at the time of this interview were fighting in East Africa and Egypt and were helping to guard the Indian Frontier from Quetta and Bannu.

Just how much he has given he himself will not know until the war is over and the final accounts are in, but up to January, 1917, he had expended somewhere in the neighbourhood of £300,000 outside the upkeep of the hospital ship *Loyalty*. To the great contribution called for in the purchase and maintenance of this ship he modestly called himself only a subscriber, but as a matter of fact during the two years and more the ship had been in commission he

had financed it himself and spent on it nearly £300,000. He was also expending £1,000 a month for the up-keep of a convalescent home for officers and soldiers which he established at Nairobi, Africa, at the beginning of the war.

CHAPTER X

"HOME-RULE"

POLITICAL matters having taken on an added importance in India of late, naturally the subject of ultimate "home-rule" for British India occupies a large place in the thoughts of the Indian politician, a few of the so-called ultra radicals even advocating the immediate granting of some form of self-government.

The questions of what the British Government ought to do and intends to do as regards the bestowing of further political powers on the Indian, and of how much immediate advance he is capable of making, are being generally and eagerly discussed. One finds a wide divergence of opinion in this respect between the Indian extremist, on the one hand, and the British extremist on the other, but the bulk of the thinking people of India appear to be largely agreed on the fundamental points.

During my tour of India I discussed the problem of self-government with many prominent Europeans and Indians. Some extremely radical

views were encountered, of course, but the majority of the moderates who expressed an opinion met on certain common grounds which are well summarised in a statement that was made to me by the Reverend Dr. J. C. R. Ewing, the well-known American educator, who has spent much of his life in India, and who for the past seven years has occupied the important post of Vice-Chancellor, or President, of the University of the Punjab. Dr. Ewing is the only American who has ever been accorded so high an honour in India as was bestowed upon him when he was made head of this university to direct the activities of twenty-seven affiliated colleges in the province, with their student population of some 12,000. As a mark of appreciation for his services to India he was decorated by the King in 1914, being created Companion of the Indian Empire. He has made a deep study of political questions in India, and not infrequently has been consulted by Government officials on delicate matters of policy.

Dr. Ewing expressed the belief that home-rule for India was inevitable, but declared that the country was not prepared for it at the moment and would not be ready for this important step for many years to come.

"When the British Government at the time of Lord Macaulay introduced Western education into India it opened the door for self-govern-

ment," said the Doctor. "Such a step, involving the teaching of democratic ideals, could have no other result. It was the crossing of the Rubicon, and there is no turning back. To do the British Government justice, I believe that they made this move with the full knowledge of what the outcome must be, and that they have always had in mind the ultimate granting of home-rule to the people of Hindustan.

"There are, of course, various shades of opinion amongst both Europeans and Indians as to the speed with which the home-rule goal should be approached. It is my personal belief that India is not ready now for self-government. Occasionally one hears some Indian preaching the doctrine of immediate home-rule, but such views are advanced only by the radicals, who, I fear, often play politics with this subject to further their own ends. However, while India is not yet ready for self-government, I believe that the time has come when the Government must inaugurate measures which will call for the employment of an ever-increasing number of Indians in the conduct of national affairs.

"The great bulk of the people of India are illiterate, something like 94 per cent., according to the latest statistics, but among the other 6 per cent. there are many highly-educated and brilliant men who could be called upon to play their part in government. The only way that India

will learn to govern is by governing. The only way she will learn to avoid mistakes is by making them. Home-rule can never become an accomplished fact until a trained body of Indians has been raised up. And in order to achieve this, one of the most important steps will be the opening up of the Civil Service to a still greater extent to the educated Indian. Not only must this be done, but Indian and British Government employees must be placed on the same footing, and must learn to work in close co-operation. There can be no line of racial demarcation so far as Government service is concerned.

"How long it will be before this country is prepared for some form of self-government is a matter of pure speculation. Certainly many years, probably many generations, must elapse. Foreigners in considering this question often make the mistake of looking upon India as a nation. As a matter of fact, Hindustan represents many races and many languages, and in the process of unification there are as many difficulties to be overcome as there would be, for instance, in an attempt to bring all the various countries of North and South America under one supreme government.

"Moreover, the average Indian of the so-called illiterate class knows nothing of politics and takes no interest in problems of government. He is mainly concerned with his own little personal

matters, and so long as conditions of government favour him in the pursuit of his affairs it makes small difference to him what that government is or what shape it takes. The educated Indian politician of to-day is a class distinct from the masses, and as a member of the legislative councils he represents only himself and a few of his compatriots.

"Until the people of this country have been educated to take an intelligent part in politics and to exercise the franchise in selecting their representatives, there can be no self-government. And the education of the masses will be a long and arduous process. The ideas of democracy are entirely foreign to the bulk of India. For endless centuries, until the assumption of British rule, the people were governed as a conquered race, and so thoroughly has the idea of subjection been instilled that it will be exceedingly hard for them to break away from the belief that they can have no voice in governing themselves. But all this is bound to change gradually with the spread of general education.

"One great stumbling-block in the way of democracy is the fact that the Indian never has learned to bow to the will of the majority. This may be seen wherever bodies of Indians come together for the discussion of matters of mutual interest. Opinion is divided along partisan lines, family, racial, and religious ties

playing an important part in the division. The fact that the majority decide that certain things are for the best means nothing to the minority, and a split of the body into two or more factions *is almost inevitable. This characteristic is some*thing that must be overcome before any success can be achieved in the matter of popular government.

"There are numerous other features which present obstacles to the home-rule advocates. For one thing, all arguments to the contrary, there is no doubt but that the question of religion will play an important part in the solution of the problem. We have here the two great religious bodies—the Hindus and Mohammedans —whose interests at present are largely at variance with each other.

"Some Indian politicians will tell you the claim that Hindus and Mohammedans cannot work in harmony is a pure fallacy; but to one who has spent many years in India and has made a deep study of these questions it seems an almost self-evident fact that the chasm to be bridged between these two bodies is wide and deep. Ultimately, through a process of education, Hindus and Mohammedans will be drawn together into close enough political bonds so that they can work in unison for the common good. We have seen similar conditions in the past history of many countries, and while the

question of religion at the moment is a most important one, yet I do not feel that it is a permanent barrier in the way of political progress for India.

"There is still another point which cannot be ignored in the consideration of home-rule for India. Due partly to the form of government under which the people were ruled prior to the British occupation, and partly to an Oriental characteristic, the average Indian has never developed the initiative and administrative qualities which are so necessary to the successful conduct of the affairs of State. He has always been used to dictation, and has yet to learn to dictate for himself. In subordinate positions the Indian often displays the marks of genius; but frequently it proves to be the case that when some brilliant subordinate is placed in complete control he fails to make good. Please note that I have not applied this statement to all Indians, but only to the average native of this country.

"This characteristic lack of administrative ability is something which will be eradicated to a large extent in time. As I said before, the only way to learn to govern is to govern, and the only way the Indian will acquire initiative is by a gradual training in positions of responsibility. I do not think that the Orient will ever acquire the same type of initiative as exists in the West. I will go further and say that it will

be very many years before any form of self-government which may be established in India will approach the efficiency of the government maintained by the British. In my mind a form of home-rule under which the British Government should still retain the power of appointing certain supervising officials would perhaps be the best for India, but, of course, that would not meet the aspirations of the people.

" However, despite all the drawbacks to home rule that I have mentioned, I have great faith in the capacity of India to govern itself ultimately and to do it well. The Indians are a wonderful people, and while they lack certain characteristics which we of the West consider important, in some other features they have shown themselves to be our superiors. The history of ancient India is replete with marks of the highest order of civilisation. Hindustan to-day stands at the open gateway leading out on to the highway of progress. The people of this vast Empire are rousing in a remarkable manner from the lethargy into which they had sunk. And from this awakening will come a reconstruction of the glories of the past, and newer and greater things.

" I cannot, of course, set myself up as a spokesman for the Government of India, but I have talked with many officials on the question of home-rule, and I may say that in general I have

gathered the impression that the British Government intends to do all that may seem possible to facilitate the entrance of Indians who are qualified to higher positions in the Government service."

Dr. Ewing was asked what, in his opinion, would result if the British Government should suddenly decide to grant immediate and absolute self-government to India and should withdraw the army and all British officials. The Doctor replied with emphasis :

"There is absolutely no question as to what would happen. There would be chaos within two weeks. There would be wars between the various races, each of which would try to establish itself as the dominant power. The country would be split into a thousand parts, and there would be a reign of terror and bloodshed which is awful to contemplate. That is what would occur if India were left to its own resources to-morrow."

Dr. Ewing dropped the subject abruptly and turned to another point.

"While we are discussing the question of British rule in India," he said, "I should like to take this opportunity of refuting certain false statements which are being made in some of the newspapers of the United States. I have read many articles recently which have depicted the British Government as carrying on a rule of

oppression. It is charged that the Indian taxpayer is being crushed by the burdens imposed upon him and that the people are being harshly governed as a conquered race. A short time ago I was asked by an American friend to write a series of articles telling the truth about these matters. I have not had time to write the articles as yet, and I am very glad to have this opportunity of saying some of the things which I would have written.

"I am an American. I am a friend of the British and I am a friend of the Indian. I have always tried to maintain an unbiassed attitude in the consideration of all questions pertaining to the two races, and I hope and believe that I have succeeded. And so when I tell you that the stories of oppression which are being published in America are false I speak from an impartial standpoint.

"The British Government in India undoubtedly has its faults, but I know of no government in the world which is perfect, not even our beloved American Government. I believe, however, that British rule in India has been a good thing. I believe that, on the whole, affairs have been conducted unselfishly and with the idea of doing everything possible for the advancement of India. Neither in taxation nor in any other way is the British Government oppressing the people of India. As a matter of fact, India

is the lightest taxed nation in the world to-day, and the administration of equal justice for all has been one of the features which always has marked British rule here, at least so far as I have observed in my long study of this country."

CHAPTER XI

THE PRINCES, TOO, HAVE HOPES

ANOTHER element recently has entered into the discussion of the future government of India. The Indian rulers are beginning to express the hope that some sort of council or assembly of Princes may be formed which shall have a direct voice in the Imperial Government of India—not that they desire to trespass on any of the privileges which might accrue to British India if home-rule were granted, but that they wish to be in a position to express an official opinion on matters which relate to the states collectively, or to the welfare of the country as a whole.

The history-making conference of Princes at Delhi in 1916 developed more or less quiet discussion along this line. The very nature of the conference furnished a basis for considerable speculation concerning the possibilities of the extension of the privileges of the Princes. As I have already pointed out, this meeting was held at the invitation of the Viceroy, not only to

consider questions of general importance to the various states and their people, but to afford advice requested by the British Government on certain matters. Thus a notable precedent was established, for, while two very small conferences had been held previously for the discussion of problems relating to the higher colleges for the education of the sons of rulers, never before had general subjects come up for debate.

Both Princes and British officials attached great significance to this conference, it being held that it possessed elements which might have a vital bearing on the future of the Indian Empire. Stress was laid on the fact that the congress, which undoubtedly will become a fixed annual event, gave promise of an extensive co-operation between the Indian states. It was felt that this meeting was an important step towards the further unification of the various sections of the Empire, and with this thought naturally came the query as to whether the annual conferences might develop into a council which should have a hand in the government of India. Just a hint of this was contained in the address of welcome delivered by the Viceroy at the opening of the sessions.

"It may be," said Lord Chelmsford, "that in time to come a constitutional assemblage may grow out of these conferences which will take its place in the government of this great empire,

but for the moment I would say to you to content yourselves with the prosaic but useful task of advising the Government of India on certain specific matters."

While I was in Gwalior, during a conversation with His Highness the Maharaja Scindia of Gwalior, who had taken a leading part in the Delhi conference, I asked for his views on the subject.

"We hope that a council of Princes or a House of Lords of some sort may be the outcome of these conferences," he said. "As a body perhaps we are not ready for such an organisation just yet, but the various bigger states are making great strides in matters of administration. I think that in a few years it should be possible to constitute an assembly of Princes who may have a hand in the adjustment of relations all round. And we Princes also look forward to the time when British India shall have a similar assembly under proper safeguards. We want to work with them and with the Government for the common good. The only thing we can do now is to sit on one side and offer suggestions, but such a rôle doesn't get us very far, does it?"

This was all His Highness had to say bearing directly on the question of an Assembly of Princes, but in the course of the interview he touched on several points which have such a vital relation to the subject that the views expressed,

coming as they did from one of the greatest of the Indian rulers, are worth repeating here.

"This war has done India a great deal of good," said His Highness. "By furnishing a common platform for us to work upon, it has drawn the Princes closer together, and, I hope, the Government of India to them. Mind you, there never was any question of disloyalty among the Princes, but they had not been given a chance like this before to show their devotion to the King.

"I must confess that, for various reasons, there was not the co-operation between the various states that there should have been. We worked along our own individual lines mostly. But the great common cause has changed all this and I hope for good. The recent conference of Princes in Delhi was an evidence of this change.

"The past months of war have done more to strengthen the feeling of sympathy between the states and the Government of India than anything else could have done. And sympathy on both sides is what India needs. There have been complaints that certain minor British officials have been inclined to trespass on our rights and dignities. (I am speaking now for Indians generally and their self-respect as human beings, not only for the Indian Princes.) Some of them have, to be sure, but such officials are the little fellows—small in calibre I mean—and I am glad to say that they have never represented the attitude

of the Government. They are the exceptions, not the rule. They are the irresponsible.

"The pompous little chap who tries by bullying someone to raise himself to a higher level does not perhaps seriously hurt the person he is making uncomfortable, but he does hurt himself and, indirectly, the Government which he ought to be serving more intelligently. For Government does not approve such actions or condone them either when brought to notice: they are the actions of the men who are a law to themselves and disregard the precepts both of the Government and of their Sovereign, the King-Emperor of India. In a word, if they only knew it they are really 'un-English.' And yet even they cannot destroy the loyalty and devotion of the people committed by God and the Government to their care."

At this point I raised a question which I had asked Dr. Ewing and others before, when discussing the matter of an extension of governmental power to the people and the Princes of India.

"What would happen in India, Your Highness, if the British Government suddenly should decide to grant absolute self-rule to British India, should constitute the Princes absolute sovereigns, and should withdraw entirely from the country?"

"Who would be King?" countered the Maharaja quizzically.

"By that Your Highness means that there must be a supreme head?"

"Exactly. If you should take away our British Sovereign someone else would have to rule. Who would it be? That is hard to say, but it would be a case of the survival of the fittest. I will be frank in answering your question. If the British were to withdraw from India altogether, the country would be plunged into chaos.

"But of course the British Government will not withdraw, and no one, excepting perhaps a handful of hair-brained agitators, wishes it to withdraw. We want the British Government to stay, for it is the greatest and best Government in the world. We have a true devotion for our King-Emperor and for his Government, and all we ask is that we may be allowed to remain a part of the Empire and do our share."

CHAPTER XII

PROGRESS IN THE INDIAN STATES

One of the most hopeful signs in India is the growing tendency on the part of the Indian Princes to draw the curtain on the dark and primitive days of the past and to establish in their states a new regime which shall represent a combination of the best of the ideals of the West and of the East. A number of the more progressive of the Princes have for a long time been remodelling the affairs of their states on a modern basis, and many of the remainder of the rulers are beginning to fall in line and emulate the example of their more advanced brothers.

It seems almost unfair to select any one state as an example of progress, but since it is impossible in the space at my command to describe what is being done in all of them, I will confine myself to Bikaner, where I spent considerable time. It is not my purpose to give a history of what has been accomplished in this important state, but rather, if I am able, to present a brief sketch which shall leave in the mind of the

reader a general impression of what is going on, rather than a maze of statistics and dry details.

The Maharaja of Bikaner, of whom I have already told something in a previous chapter, belongs to the new order of Indian rulers who have been schooled in the learning of the West, and who have accepted the tenet that the stability of government depends upon the enlightenment, prosperity, and happiness of its people. When he took over the control of Bikaner eighteen years ago—he was then eighteen—he immediately set about to put into practice the advanced ideas which he had acquired; and to-day railways, modern schools, an up-to-date hospital, a model prison, electric lighting, sanitary improvements, water-supply systems, and beautiful public buildings furnish visible demonstrations of progress. He has also established a representative assembly; and has put his administration on a business basis that has resulted in the State income being nearly trebled.

In personal appearance, in bearing, and in accomplishments His Highness someway always impresses one as having just stepped out of an Arabian Nights' tale in which he has played the part of the gallant Prince, so typical is he of what one has been led to expect in a story of that sort. Tall, broad-shouldered, handsome, of Chesterfieldian courtesy and a trained courtier, ever affable and easy for all to approach, yet

maintaining a dignity which brooks no over-familiarity, of magnetic personality, a born soldier, an excellent horseman, a sure shot and keen sportsman, as the trophies of big game in his palace show, an indefatigable worker in affairs of State—such is the Maharaja of Bikaner at the age of thirty-six.

The training of His Highness for his duties has been most varied. He ascended the throne when seven years old, although he did not assume control until he became of age—eighteen. He was educated at the Mayo College, Ajmer, being graduated with honours at fourteen; and then was placed under the guardianship of Mr. (now Sir) Brian Egerton, of whom the Maharaja speaks in the most affectionate terms, for he attributes much of his success to the knowledge and ideals imparted by his English tutor. While still a small boy he began to receive instructions in affairs of State from the various ministers, so that when he was of age he was thoroughly conversant with the details of his Government. During one conversation which I had with the Maharaja concerning the education necessary for the heir to a throne, His Highness sent for a big ledger, which he handed to me with a smile, saying:

"That represents part of the training of one Prince."

It was the "private notebook" of his boyhood

days, in which he had recorded the facts gleaned from the lectures delivered by his ministers of state. Discussions on finance, law, administration, and what not filled many pages, all carefully done in his boyish hand. It represented months of toil with the pen, and in the written characters one could almost see the little Prince at work—sturdy shoulders bent, hair rumpled, feet curled under his chair, fingers inky—as he set down with infinite pains what he had learned. And the energy and thoroughness which this book represents are outstanding characteristics of his work now, for he labours from early morning until late in the day with his ministers.

One of the most striking innovations which the Maharaja has made in his state has been the establishment of the Representative Assembly through which his people have a voice in the Government. It was a voluntary concession on his part, and he explained the reason for his action to me thus :

" I came to the conclusion that the greatness of a ruler lies in the greatness of his people. I believe that a ruler and his subjects should work together for the common good and that the people should have a hand in governing their state. When I first announced that I intended to establish the Assembly some of my friends came to me in great trepidation and begged me not to take such a step.

"'It is giving away your power!' they declared. 'You will not be able to do what you want to do.'

"'That all depends on what I wish to do,' I replied; 'if I desire to play the part of the tyrant and do things which are not for the benefit of my people, then I ought not to be on the throne at all.'"

The Maharaja was asked if the people were pleased with the power granted them and if he was satisfied that the change had been beneficial.

"Come," he replied, "and ride with me and my sons to the Temple in the city this afternoon, and I think you will get a better answer than I can give you verbally."

The invitation was accepted, and I accompanied the Maharaja and his two young Princes to the great Hindu Temple where the ruler and his sons performed their devotions. During the morning the streets leading to the place of worship had been specially watered to lay the dust, and this had given the people warning that some member of the reigning family was to pass through the city. As the carriage with its mounted guard proceeded along the winding ways dense crowds gathered beside the road and nearly every window was filled with eager faces. Even the roofs were covered with those who hoped to get a better view from their elevation.

It is not an unusual thing for the Maharaja

to make a trip through the capital, but there were the throngs just the same, as keen to get a glimpse as though he were a foreign Prince. And as the carriage advanced the people broke into such cheering as I had seldom heard before. Even tiny children took up the cry of "Khama," a salutation of respect and devotion peculiar to these parts and used only for the ruler, and the volume swelled until it became almost deafening. More than one of the aged people gave the Maharaja their blessings, and invoked any troubles which he might have to come upon themselves.

All the way this wonderful demonstration was kept up, His Highness smiling and saluting to right and left. When a point finally was reached where he could make himself heard, he leaned forward and said:

"Does it pay to do the best one can for one's people? For myself I ask no better answer than we have just been given."

The Maharaja is rapidly turning his capital into a model city. Bikaner now has one of the largest and best electric-light installations in India, being among the first of the Indian cities to adopt this mode of lighting. The telephone, too, has been brought into use to connect all the important government offices and residences. Sanitation is a hobby of His Highness, and the entire city has been cleansed, buildings being torn down and replaced where necessary. The streets have

been widened in many places, and just now a modern water-supply system is being installed.

The Maharaja has a keen sense of appreciation of the beautiful, and has erected a large number of magnificent buildings, of Oriental design but with Western interiors, most of which are for the use of the public or the Government. The plans for all these structures have been personally supervised by His Highness, who is said to have great architectural ability.

The Ruler no longer lives in the ancient, fort-encircled palace of his ancestors, but has built a palace further away from the city—a fairyland with its beautiful gardens. And at the same time, while placing himself in more modern surroundings, he laid out a great public garden for his people opposite the old palace. Even a zoo has been placed in this park for the amusement of the little folk of Bikaner, and facilities for bathing are provided in a large artificial lake.

His Highness is particularly interested in the education of his subjects, and while he has not yet inaugurated compulsory education, he has by persuasion worked wonders in getting the people to send their children to school. In the capital two colleges have been built, one for the public and the other for the sons of nobles. The public college has something like 1,000 pupils, who are being taught both in English and

their own language. The nobles' college, while smaller, has a large number of students.

The State prison in Bikaner was characterised recently by a distinguished foreign nobleman, who had travelled extensively, as the best-managed prison he had seen in any country. The institution certainly appears more like a well-regulated factory than a place of confinement. Cleanliness is a great feature, the whole place being kept so spotless that it fairly glistens. And in this prison the men are being instructed in useful arts which will be of value to them when they are released. Carpet-making is the principal industry taught, and so beautiful in design and well made are the carpets that orders from many countries are constantly pouring in. The Maharaja's palace is equipped throughout with exquisite rugs made in the prison.

Outside the capital the Maharaja has also been at work, and has increased the mileage of railways in his state from 86 to 498 miles. Two new lines are in project—one 132 miles long, and the other a more direct connection between Delhi and Sind via Bikaner, some 500 miles in length. A great irrigation plan, which will turn the sandy country of Bikaner into good agricultural lands, is also under consideration.

For his achievements the Maharaja has been decorated by the King several times, being a Knight Grand Commander of the Most Exalted

Order of the Star of India and Knight Grand Commander of the Most Eminent Order of the Indian Empire—the two highest Indian Orders. He is also the possessor of the gold Kaisar-i-Hind Medal, instituted for rewarding public service, which His Highness won for the part he played in the greatest famine on record—that of 1899–1900. Cambridge University, too, has conferred upon him the honorary degree of LL.D.

CHAPTER XIII

THE DAWN OF A NEW LITERATURE

THE awakening of India to a desire for progress has touched not only material matters, but has reached into the realms of literature.

It was my privilege while in India to become acquainted with Sardar Jogendra Singh, the eminent Indian novelist, philosopher and poet, and to have many conversations with him concerning the future of Indian letters. The Sardar, a keen student of Western methods and ideals, and a member of the modern school of Indian literary men and women who have, to a large extent, adopted the English language as the vehicle for their thoughts, declared that he could see the dawn of a new literature breaking over his country. The influence that was ushering in this era, he said, was emanating not from the East, but from the West.

The Sardar devotes most of his time to writing or to studying the problems of life. Eight months of the year he spends travelling about the Punjab, partly for the purpose of supervising his estates,

but principally to add to his knowledge of humanity, for on these trips he lives a great deal among the labouring people. During the summer he is in Simla, India's hot-weather capital, and it was here that I first met him. His Simla home is built high on the side of one of the myriad mountains of this region, overlooking ravine-like valleys and a confusion of vast, multi-coloured hills, which are typical to the Himalayas. Here he dreams and writes, utilising the information that he has gathered through the season past.

When I finally asked the Sardar to express for publication his views on Indian literature and its future, I requested him to do so in the form of a written statement. This he consented to, and prepared an article which not only presents his beliefs, but shows something of the new style of writing developed in the East. Here is what the Sardar wrote :

" You have asked me a difficult question. The growth of literature is the growth of a nation : its painted story, set in relief by high and low lights of imagination. After long ages India is awakening from a heavy slumber, seeking freedom from vapoury dreams. It is not from the East this time, but from the West that the light has come and touched the eyelids of the sleeper. It has awakened once more national emotions and a passion for high matters of human progress.

With the awakening has come the dawn of a new literature.

"The days that are gone were bankrupt of any inspiring conceptions of human progress, and drearily commonplace. The spiritual realm beyond the bounds of phenomena was only real to the elect, and vaguely indefinite to the many. Life was not to be lived as a joy for ever, but to be regarded as a delusion. What we saw and heard with our eyes and ears was unreal, utterly incomplete and useless. To reach the realm of reality the impulse of passion must be crushed. Men burning with high emotions turned their thoughts to the inner world, and all literary effort was confined to the writings of commentaries. The soul of the country found expression in common village songs—soul emotions that in a moment of piercing passion passed the lips and shaped into sweet, sad, swooning refrains, that rise and fall, echo and re-echo, in the silent hills, or the solitary widespread plains

"'Khujva Tairi Mairi Hansa di Juri.'
'O wanderer, Thou and I
Make a wondrous pair of swans.'

"India in decadence was not altogether without the consolation of high thoughts. Tulsi Dass, whose tender melodies are on the lips of almost everyone, discovered a new way for the ardent spirits to lose self in the love of God and

gain immortal self. He did not try to reason out faith, or bind the absolute into intellectual conceptions. He opened out fresh fountains of faith, to sweep away all misgivings. He spoke with a sweetness and spirituality at once beautiful and tender, which seems to transmute the finite universe of light and shadows into endless reality.

"The Mohammedan period had its days of glory. Men like Abul Fazal and Faizi explored the regions of thought, untiring in their search after animating ideals of life. Poets like Ghalib scaled new realms of thought and emotion; and their passionate impression found expression in wondrous verse. But those who followed them were essentially imitative. They wrote, as a matter of course, poetry or prose full and solemn in sound, but thin in thought and impression. The literature of this period is opulent in grace and sentiment, but without the strength of passionate experience. It is perfumed and sentimental about love and the rose, spring and the nightingale, but of too delicate a sweetness to last. It mirrors the decadence of the race.

"Then came the change. India passed under the British Crown and unconsciously became a partner in her garnered wealth of wisdom and aspiration. Macaulay placed the golden key to the 'King's Treasuries' in the hands of Britannia's dark-eyed sister. The intellectual excitement

in and about the universities gave birth to a great movement for social good. New aspirations and serious thinking stirred the towns and travelled down to the villages. Men could no longer complain that there was no national passion in the country. The new thought currents 'racing full blast' disturbed subjective musings and dissipated consolation in the thought that the world was a mere representation of self —an appearance of the 'thing in itself,' unreal in the essence, and therefore to be disregarded. They set the heart aflame with deep religious, social, and political questions. They have brought into play passion and fire and deep emotion which must give rise to a great literature.

"It is always fascinating to stand at the birth-place of a great stream, as it flows from its source. The new literary movement, in almost all the provinces of India, is mostly imitative. English ideals predominate. What we write is Western and not Eastern. The events are the same, but the environment has changed. The characters are developed in the modern fashion, and even style and expression are subordinated to approximate Western models.

"In old provinces like Bengal or Bombay, the people have turned from rivers of English literature to freshly-found fountains of their own. Great poets like Tagore have brought to life an impassioned literature, retaining the

loveliness, simplicity, and fine melody of the old, but animated by a new and positive influence. Tagore's songs are like fire-tipped arrows dipped in honey, sweet and strong at the same time.

"In Northern India, which is the land of Guru Nanak and Kabir, the literature was essentially religious. The poets were hymn writers, who raised their voices in gentle devotion, seeking communion with God, in obedience to a set of large religious ideas which have emancipated the minds of men from the tentacles of Pantheism. Faith in a personal God restored the dignity and the importance of the personal soul. Bir Singh, the first Punjabi writer of our time, has all the delicate feeling and tender grace of cloistered contemplation. He has a gracious love of natural beauty and a keen joy in a quiet and a lovely world. His imagination, however, does not soar; he seems to have set for himself limits which he cannot and will not transcend. Men and women in the villages are beyond his reach. They have their stories and their songs, passing from lip to lip and drawing together all the passion of the soul as contributaries with all their light and heat and variety.

"The mental invasion of the East is more potent than the physical conquest. The new ideas are dominating every sphere of human activity, working in a quiet way and changing

the manner and form of our literature. The spirit from within is moving, in response to new demands.

"A great poet has risen in the Punjab whose poems are consecrated to the ideas of new time. Iqbal has initiated a new era in Urdu poetry. He combines the imaginative philosophy of the East with ardent aspirations of the West. Like Moses he smote the rock, and fresh streams of poetry have leapt out in response, on whose swift and translucent surface we can hardly breathe. He does not sing of self-effacement, but holds forth self-affirmation as essential to self-preservation.

"The life value of self-affirmation he illustrates in a poem of great dignity and grace, 'A thirsty bird might mistake a diamond for a drop of water, but it cannot make it a source of life to itself. It sips the soft morning dew from the painted petals of flowers which lose their own brief existence in the yielding. The coal in essence is the same as a diamond, and yet coal feeds the flaming furnace while the diamond adorns the crown.' In a poem of keen, strong, rousing power he draws the moral that self-affirmation is the key to self-preservation.

"Iqbal in this poem has broken away entirely from the canons of accepted opinion. He is the precursor of great events in the domain of literature. He is the poet of reality, close to

the very truth of things, in contradistinction to metaphysics and mere sentiment.

"His force, anger, even his gloom and freedom from mystic reticence, make him a spirit of power. His ambition is to set the heart burning like a candle, to be consumed and yet in the very process of burning to illuminate the path for the unseeing eye.

"He plunges into the whirlpool of thoughts, hopes and passions, joys and sorrows, and brings forth into life, with unshackled freedom, truth, and favour, ideas, silent so long, of religious, social, and political well-being. Iqbal, Tagore, and others are precursors of a new movement. What will India make of it?' What will the new movement make of the new literature? It is not for me to prophesy. The words of Iqbal ring clear:

> "'The world will witness when from my heart
> springs the storm of expression;
> My silence conceals
> the seed of aspiration.'"

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