

INDIA.

ITS ADMINISTRATION & PROGRESS

From out the singer poured an alien race  
Who fitted stone to stone agone and Truth.  
Peace, Love, and Justice came and dwelt therein



## PREFACE TO THE THIRD EDITION

IN 1884 I gave a course of lectures on subjects connected with India before the University of Cambridge. They formed the basis of the first edition of this work, published in 1888. Since that time great changes have been made in the constitution of the Indian Legislatures, in the organisation of the Civil Services and Army, and in other branches of the administration, while the progress of the country in wealth and material prosperity has been immense. A second and revised edition of the book was published in 1894, and so many alterations were then made that the work assumed a new shape, and no division into imaginary lectures remained. In the present edition the changes and additions necessary to make it give, as far as possible, an accurate description of existing facts, have been still greater, it has been much enlarged, parts of the work have been entirely re-written, and its title has been slightly altered. The changes thus made in the original form of the book have one drawback. While it was merely a course of lectures, it was obvious that it professed to be nothing more than a series of papers, not necessarily connected with each other, on various Indian topics; that many subjects of importance necessarily

and designedly remained untouched ; and that I did not pretend to attempt the impossible task of describing in a single volume the great continent of India. In that respect the purpose of the book remains as it was, but, instead of being a collection of lectures on certain Indian subjects, it has become a collection of chapters.

Mr. Baines, in his *Report on the Indian Census of 1891*, a work which I have often quoted, and to which it would be difficult to give more praise than it deserves, has applied to himself the words of Molière, "Je prends mon bien où je le trouve," and every one who writes, with any just pretence to knowledge, on such a subject as India must say the same. There is no man living competent to give, from his own knowledge alone, an accurate description of a continent as large as civilised Europe, and one that in all its physical characteristics is far more various. Valuable works and official reports have been published in recent years, dealing with Indian subjects, or with special branches of the administration, and to these I have, in the body of the work, acknowledged my obligations. Among them I must here especially mention the contributions to our knowledge made by Sir Henry Maine, Sir James Stephen, Sir Alfred Lyall, Mr. Baines, Sir Denzil Ibbetson, Mr. Risley, and the Reports of the three Famine Commissions of 1880, 1898, and 1901. I am under many obligations of a more personal kind. Mr. A. N. Wollaston, Sir Steuart Bayley, Sir John Edge, Sir Charles Lyall, and Mr. Lionel Abrahams have given to me, in the preparation of this edition, both from their personal knowledge and from the records of the India Office, help for which I cannot sufficiently thank them. Mr. Bourdillon, now



acting as Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, and who possesses a knowledge and experience of the subject which few can equal, has been good enough to revise my account of that great province; and Sir Antony Mac-Donnell has not been prevented by his present arduous duties from going through the proofs of the chapters which treat of the United Provinces of Agra and Oudh, the government of which, a short time ago, he was administering with conspicuous ability. My special thanks are also due to Mr. Morison, the accomplished Principal of the Mohammedan College at Aligarh; to Sir Charles Elliott; to Sir Hugh Barnes, the Lieutenant-Governor of Burma; to my son, Major J. Strachey; and to Mr. G. H. M. Batten, who, in addition to much other assistance, has contributed to the book the most complete account which, in my opinion, has been written of all the facts connected with the opium revenue of India. Thus, if I may apply to such a subject as the improvement of this book the famous words of the poet, it has at least had the advantage of the help of "the masters of those who know."

When a man has been for many years writing and speaking on matters to which his life has been mainly devoted, there must be much about which he can say nothing new. As Mr. John Morley has written in somewhat similar circumstances, "These borrowings from my former self the reader will perhaps be willing to excuse on the old Greek principle that a man may say a thing once as he would have it said—*δὴς δὲ οὐκ ἐνδέχεται*—he may not say it twice." But it is not from myself alone that I have borrowed without acknowledgment, in the present edition. In 1882 a book, now long out of print, was

published by my brother, General Sir Richard Strachey, and myself on the Finances and Public Works of India. It was our joint production; our opinions were so much in unison, and were so constantly formed in close personal communication, that while I know that I owe far more to him than he has owed to me, it is impossible for me to say to which of us some parts of that book are to be attributed. In the present edition I have borrowed from it freely. And, having named my brother, I must add, because this is the last opportunity that I shall ever have of saying it, that there are, in my belief, few men living who have done so much, often in ways unknown to the outside world, for the improvement of Indian administration. It is to him that India owes the initiation of that great policy of the systematic extension of railways and canals which has been crowned with such extraordinary success, which has increased to an incalculable extent the wealth of the country, and has profoundly altered its condition. To him is due the conception of those measures of financial and administrative decentralisation which have had the most far-reaching consequences, and which were pronounced by Sir Henry Maine to be by far the greatest and most successful reforms carried out in India in his time. To his active support is largely due the initiation of the measures, which have proved of the highest value, for preventing the destruction of the Indian Forests, and for their scientific protection and management. He it was who first organised the great department of Public Works, and laid the foundations of the scientific study of Indian Meteorology. He was the first, many years ago, to advise that reform of the Currency which

has now been carried out, and the delay of which has involved India in incalculable loss. If the Weights and Measures of India are still in a condition of mischievous chaos, it is because, through the powerful influence of ignorant prejudice, the Act which he introduced and carried through the Legislature, and which is still on the Statute Book, has remained a dead letter. He presided over the first of the Commissions which have taught us the true principles upon which Indian famines can be combated.

I suppose that no two men had greater opportunities, through a long course of years, than my brother and myself of obtaining knowledge regarding India. For many years we took part, often in close association, in its government, and it would be an affectation of humility to profess that this part was not an important one. There is hardly a great office of the State, from that of Acting-Viceroy, Lieutenant-Governor, or Member of Council downwards, which one or other of us has not held, and hardly a department of the administration with which one or other of us has not been intimately connected. The book of which my brother and myself were the joint authors was dedicated by us to the public servants of all classes, the results of whose labours for India we had endeavoured, in some measure, to record. Whatever may have been done by viceroys, and governors, and great commanders, the soldiers and civilians whose names have hardly been heard in England have done much more in building up the splendid fabric of our Indian Empire. It is by the everyday work of administration that the real foundations of our power have been maintained and strengthened, and the steady progress

of the country has been secured. It is, indeed, to that part of their lives that Indian officials like my brother and myself, actively concerned although we have been in the work of the Central Government, look back with perhaps the greatest interest. We may be forgiven if we take pride in remembering that during the last century and a half four generations of our family have given to India the best portion of their lives.

A distinguished Frenchman, M. Harmand, did me the honour of translating into French the first edition of this book, and he prefaced his work with an Introduction which, if it had been less flattering to myself, I should have been glad to reproduce in English, showing as it did, the opinions of a most competent and intelligent foreign observer on the government of our Indian Empire. M. Harmand, during a long residence in the Asiatic possessions of France and in British India, in both of which he held important official posts, had rare opportunities of forming an accurate judgment on the problems which have to be solved by the Western rulers of Oriental peoples. He has discussed the principles on which the government of a great Eastern possession can alone be wisely conducted, and, taking India as his object-lesson, has endeavoured to show to his countrymen why the efforts of the English to establish a solid and self-supporting dominion in the East have been crowned with such extraordinary success. Another interesting book, written with aims similar to those of M. Harmand, has been published by M. Chailley-Bert, the worthy possessor of an illustrious name.<sup>1</sup> I

<sup>1</sup> *La Colonisation de l'Indo-Chine, l'Expérience anglaise.*

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commend to Englishmen who feel an honourable pride in the work of the men who have built up and who are maintaining the wonderful structure of their Indian Empire, the calm and impartial testimony of M. Harmand and M. Chailley-Bert.

JOHN STRACHEY.

*April 1903.*

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SIR HENRY MAINE, referring to the ignorance regarding India which prevails even among educated men in England, declared his conviction that for one who desires to unveil the stores of interest which India contains, the first necessity is that he should not shrink from speaking on matters which appear to him too elementary to deserve discussion, that he should sympathise with an ignorance which few felicitous efforts have yet been made to dispel, and that he should remember that the language of administration and government in India has become so highly specialised and technical that it forms an imperfect medium for the communication of ideas to Englishmen. Believing this, I make no apology for beginning this book with some very elementary matters, and I ask at starting this elementary question, What is India? What does this name India really signify? The answer that I have sometimes given

sounds paradoxical, but it is true. There is no such country, and this is the first and most essential fact about India that can be learned.

India is a name which we give to a great region including a multitude of different countries. There is no general Indian term that corresponds to it. The name Hindustan is never applied in India, as we apply it, to the whole of the Indian continent; it signifies the country north of the Narbada river, and especially the northern portion of the basins of the Ganges and Jumna.

I have been told by intelligent Natives of India who have visited Europe that they could see little difference between the European countries through which they had travelled; the languages being equally unintelligible offered to them no marks of distinction; the cities, the costumes, the habits of life, the manners and customs of the people, so far as a passing oriental traveller could judge, seemed much the same in England, in France, and in Italy. The differences between the countries of India—between, for instance, Bengal and the Punjab, or between Madras and Rajputána—seemed to them, on the other hand, immense, and beyond comparison greater than those existing between the countries of Europe. Englishmen have often similar impressions in visiting India; they cannot see the great diversities that exist. As to persons who know nothing of geology or botany or agriculture, rocks and trees and crops present comparatively few distinctive features, so it is with those who look with uninformed minds on conditions of life and society to which they have not been accustomed.

The differences between the countries of Europe are undoubtedly smaller than those between the countries of India. Scotland is more like Spain than Bengal is

like the Punjab. European civilisation has grown up under conditions which have produced a larger measure of uniformity than has been reached in the countries of the Indian continent, often separated from each other by greater distances, by greater obstacles to communication, and by greater differences of climate. It is probable that not less than fifty languages, which may rightly be called separate, are spoken in India. The diversities of religion and race are as wide in India as in Europe, and political catastrophes have been as frequent and as violent. There are no countries in civilised Europe in which the people differ so much as the man of Madras differs from the Sikh, and the languages of Southern India are as unintelligible in Lahore as they would be in London. A native of Calcutta or Bombay is as much a foreigner in Delhi or Peshawar as an Englishman is a foreigner in Rome or Paris.

People sometimes complain that Indian authorities differ so greatly among themselves that it is hardly possible to learn the truth. These apparent contradictions have frequently no real existence, but arise from false generalisations.

To one, for instance, who has gained his knowledge of India in Lower Bengal, India is a country of almost constant heat and damp, luxuriant vegetation, rivers, tanks, rice-fields and cocoa-nuts, with few cities and no monuments of art, densely inhabited by a mild and timid population. To such an India as this, a vivid imagination could hardly conceive a completer contrast than the India of Agra or Lahore. Instead of one of the dampest and greenest countries of the earth, we find in the early summer one of the brownest and most arid, a country scorched with winds like the blast of a furnace, but in the winter it has the climate of an Italian



spring, cold, frosty, and invigorating. In the latter season, instead of the tropical vegetation of Bengal, we find thousands of square miles covered with wheat and barley and the products of the temperate zone. It is a country with famous cities and splendid monuments, and its population is not inferior to that of many parts of Europe in manliness and vigour.

I have spoken of the different countries of India, but they are not countries in the ordinary European sense. A European country is usually a separate entity, occupied by a nation more or less socially and politically distinct. But in India, as Sir Alfred Lyall has explained in his *Asiatic Studies*, a work that is a mine of knowledge on Indian matters, there are no nations of the modern European type. The same fact has been clearly brought out by Professor Seeley in his lectures on *The Expansion of England*.

"Geographical boundaries," says Sir Alfred Lyall, "have no correspondence at all with distinctive institutions or groupings of the people, and have comparatively little political significance. Little is gained toward knowing who and what a man is by ascertaining the State he obeys, or the territory he dwells in; these being things which of themselves denote no difference of race, institutions, or manners. Even from the point of political allegiance, the Government under which a man may be living is an accidental arrangement, which the British Viceroy or some other inevitable power decided upon yesterday and may alter to-morrow. Nor would such a change be grievous unless it divorced from him a ruler of his own tribe or his own faith. . . . The European observer—accustomed to the massing of people in great territorial groups, and to the ideas (now immemorial in the West) contained in such expressions as fatherland, mother-country, patriotism, domicile, and the like—has here to realise the novelty of finding himself in a strange part of the world, where political citizenship is as yet quite unknown, and territorial sovereignty or even feudalism only just appearing. For a parallel in the history of

Western Europe we must go back as far as the Merovingian period, when chiefs of barbaric tribes or bands were converting themselves into kings or counts ; or, perhaps, he should carry his retrospect much further, and conceive himself to be looking at some country of Asia Minor lying within the influence of Rome at its zenith, but just outside its jurisdiction. He gradually discovers the population of Central India to be distributed, not into great governments, or nationalities, or religious denominations, not even into widespread races, such as those which are still contending for political supremacy in Eastern Europe, but into various and manifold denominations of tribes, clans, septs, castes, and sub-castes, religious orders, and devotional brotherhoods.”<sup>1</sup>

This is the first and most essential thing to learn about India—that there is not, and never was an India, or even any country of India, possessing, according to European ideas, any sort of unity, physical, political, social, or religious ; no Indian nation, no “people of India,” of which we hear so much.

Until we rightly appreciate the significance of such facts we shall, among other things, never understand how our Indian Empire has come into existence, and how this vast dominion is maintained by a handful of Englishmen. There was never, as Professor Seeley has said, any conquest of India by the English, according to the ordinary sense of the word “conquest.” The conquest was rather, to borrow his expression, “in the nature of an internal revolution,” directed by Englishmen, but carried out for the most part through the Natives of India themselves. No superiority of the Englishman would have enabled England to conquer by her own military power the continent of India with its 300 millions of people, nor could she hold it in subjection if it had been occupied by distinct nations. In

<sup>1</sup> *Asiatic Studies*, p. 152. Sir Alfred Lyall was specially referring to Central India in this passage, but it is equally true of India generally.

the words of Professor Seeley, "the fundamental fact is that India had no jealousy of the foreigner, because there was no India, and therefore, properly speaking, no foreigner."<sup>1</sup>

It is a consequence of all this, that in every great Indian province the political sympathies of large sections of the population towards men who, geographically speaking, are their own countrymen, are often as imperfect as they are towards their English masters. We have never destroyed in India a national government, no national sentiment has been wounded, no national pride has been humiliated; and this not through any design or merit of our own, but because no Indian nationalities have existed. They no more exist in the so-called Native States than in our own territories, and the most important of those States are ruled by princes who are almost as much foreigners to their subjects as we are ourselves.

The diversities between the countries of India and the people inhabiting them extend, more or less, to their administration by the British Government. The ordinary English notion is that the Secretary of State for India and the Viceroy and his Council carry on, somehow or other, the government of India. Few Englishmen understand how comparatively little these high authorities have to do with the actual administration, or appreciate the fact that the seven or eight chief provinces of British India, which may be compared in area and population, to the chief countries of Europe, have all their separate and, in a great measure, their independent governments. Under circumstances of such extreme diversity as those which exist in India, no single system of administration could be appropriate.

<sup>1</sup> *The Expansion of England*, p. 206.

Instead of introducing unsuitable novelties from other countries, Indian or European, we have taken, in each province, with some unfortunate exceptions, the old local institutions as the basis of our own arrangements. Good or bad administration in India depends to a far greater extent on the Government of the province than on the distant authorities in Calcutta or London. The vast majority of the population is hardly conscious of the existence of the Viceroy and his Government. From time to time a glimpse is caught of the great Lord Sáhib. He passes perhaps along the streets of some famous city with a train of elephants recalling the traditions of Aurangzib, or at some immense gathering, far more picturesque and magnificent than any of the ceremonial shows of Europe, he receives in Darbár the homage of chiefs and princes. From the splendour of his surroundings people derive some vague notions of an authority above the powers by which they know that they are governed.

Although in the management of the greater portion of the public business immediately affecting the everyday interests of the 294 millions of people inhabiting India the part of the so-called Government of India is comparatively small, this central power, administered by the Governor-General in Council, under the supreme authority of the British Government at home, has, of course, from another point of view the highest importance. It regulates and harmonises the Governments of the British provinces, controls the Native States and our relations with foreign powers, provides for military defence, makes war and peace, and manages those branches of the administration which directly concern the general interests of the empire.

It must not be supposed that such bonds of union

can in any way lead towards the growth of a single Indian nationality. However long may be the duration of our dominion, however powerful may be the centralising attraction of our Government, or the influence of the common interests which grow up, no such issue can follow. It is conceivable that national sympathies may arise in particular Indian countries; but that they should ever extend to India generally, that men of Bombay, the Punjab, Bengal, and Madras should ever feel that they belong to one great Indian nation, is impossible. We might with as much reason and probability look forward to a time when a single nation will have taken the place of the various nations of Europe.

I wish especially to insist on the fact that we can never hope to arrive at any accurate knowledge of India until we properly appreciate the immense diversities of the countries included under that name, and understand that there is no part of the world in which it is more easy to be misled by generalisations.

The changes through which India has passed during the last half-century have been so great, that it is often very difficult to deduce useful inferences from the comparison of its present and past condition. The changes in the condition of the country, in its available resources, and in its requirements for necessary administrative and material progress have been numerous and profound.

The territorial extension of the British Empire in India since the middle of the nineteenth century has been immense. Great provinces have been added to it, with an area about equal to that of France and the German Empire put together, with a population of more than sixty millions. This fact is alone sufficient to show how easily we may be misled by general comparisons; but other changes not less important have

occurred, and they have been hardly less remarkable in the older provinces than in the new.

There was formerly in British India, comparatively speaking, little of what we now think the first necessities of a civilised administration. When, in 1844, I first went from Calcutta to the North-Western Provinces, I was carried about a thousand miles in a palanquin on men's shoulders, and it took some three weeks to toil through a journey which is now accomplished in twenty-four hours; there were no other means of travelling through the richest and most civilised parts of India. Speaking generally, roads and bridges had only begun to appear; railways were not thought of; the value of irrigation as a means of affording protection to the people against famine had hardly been recognised; there were few barracks in which English soldiers could live with tolerable health and comfort; there were few jails in which a sentence of imprisonment did not carry with it a serious probability that it would prove a sentence of death.

British India, however, even at that time was entering on a phase of rapid change. The energies of the Government and its officers, which had at first been unable to do more than secure the bare existence of British power in India, by degrees rendered that power paramount. Then they were applied to its consolidation, and to the evolution of an organised system of administration out of the chaos bequeathed to us by the old rulers of the country. The firm establishment of order was followed by improvements in all directions. A vigorous impulse was given to material progress, and among the most active causes of the great changes which were beginning must be ranked the introduction of new and rapid means of communication. These not only directly

developed the resources of the country, increased the wealth of the people, and profoundly altered the conditions of life, but they stimulated the vitality of every branch of the administration ; they brought the various provinces of the Empire closer together, and England closer to India ; English influence became stronger and stronger, and all classes, as they were more frequently and immediately brought into contact with European habits and civilisation, had set before them new and higher standards.

Even before the mutinies of 1857 this process of change had made great progress. After that revolution, which for a time nearly swept away our government through a large part of India, the change went on with accelerated speed. Thousands of Englishmen, not only soldiers, but Englishmen of almost every class, poured into India. Ten thousand things were demanded which India had not got, but which it was felt must be provided. The country must be covered with railways and telegraphs, and roads and bridges. Irrigation canals must be made to preserve the people from starvation. Barracks must be built for a great European army, and every sort of sanitary arrangement which could benefit the troops must be carried out. The whole paraphernalia of a great civilised administration, according to the modern notions of what that means, had to be provided.

This was true not only in regard to matters of imperial concern. Demands for improvement, similar to those which fell upon the Central Government, cropped up in every city and in every district of the country.

Compare, for instance, what Calcutta was when Lord Lawrence became Viceroy in 1864, and what it is now. This city, the capital of British India, supplies an excel-

lent type of what has been everywhere going on. The filth of the city used to rot away in the midst of the population in pestilential ditches, or was thrown into the Hugli, there to float backwards and forwards with every change of tide. To nine-tenths of the inhabitants clean water was unknown. They drank either the filthy water of the river, polluted with every conceivable abomination, or the still filthier contents of the shallow tanks. The river, which was the main source of supply to thousands of people, was not only the receptacle for ordinary filth; it was the great graveyard of the city. I forget how many thousand corpses were thrown into it every year. I forget how many hundred corpses were thrown into it from the Government hospitals and jails, for these practices were not confined to the poor and ignorant; they were followed or allowed, as a matter of course, by the officers of the Government and of the municipality. I remember the sights which were seen in Calcutta in those days, in the hospitals, and jails, and markets, and slaughter-houses, and public streets. The place was declared, in official reports, written by myself in language which was not, and could not be, stronger than the truth required, to be hardly fit for civilised men to live in. There are now few cities in Europe with which many parts of Calcutta need fear comparison, and, although in the poorer quarters there is still much room for improvement, there is hardly a city in the world which has made greater progress.

I do not mean to say that Indian cities generally were as bad as Calcutta. This was far from being the case, but Calcutta affords, not the less, a good example of what has been and is still going on in India. Illustrations of the same sort might easily be multiplied. In 1865, for instance, in the city of Rangoon, containing,



at that time, more than 100,000 people, with half a million tons of shipping, there was not a single public lamp, no supply of wholesome water, not a single drain except the surface drains at the sides of the streets, and no means of removing the filth out of the town. About the same time, the Royal Commission for inquiring into the sanitary state of the army in India declared that thousands of the lives of our soldiers had been and were still being sacrificed in consequence of bad and insufficient barrack accommodation, and neglect of every sanitary precaution. So again, the Government was told, and in many parts of India it was certainly true, that, in consequence of the insufficiency of jail accommodation, the prisoners were dying at a rate frightful to think of, and that the necessary proceedings of the courts of justice involved consequences repugnant to humanity.

Thus arose demands for the requirements of civilised life and of modern administration, which had to be provided, and to a great extent for the first time, within the space of a few years. This was true not only of material appliances, of roads, and railways, and canals, and barracks, and city improvements, and so forth; for the demand for improved administration became so strong that it is not too much to say that the whole of the public services were reorganised. Thus, for example, the police, which was in a most unsatisfactory condition throughout India, was, although even now it cannot be said to be good, placed on a completely new footing. The changes in the judicial service, and in the laws which it administers, have been great. Lord Lawrence, when he was Viceroy, declared that the inadequacy of the pay given to the Native judges, and to the chief ministerial officers of the courts, was a public scandal,

many of these officers receiving salaries less than the wages earned in many parts of India by the better class of bricklayers and carpenters. No honest or satisfactory administration of justice was, under such conditions, possible.

The demands for every sort of public improvement, moral and material, which thus sprang up, could not be resisted. Whatever might be the cost, remedies had to be provided in the most complete way, and in the shortest time possible.

A greater or more admirable work was never conceived in any country than that which was undertaken, and which in a great degree has been accomplished by Englishmen in India, and which is still going on. That mistakes should have been made in dealing with a country larger and more populous than the whole of civilised Europe was inevitable. Nevertheless, the work has been excellently done, and with this further merit, that there has been little talk about it. For all this the credit is not due to the initiative of the Government alone. India has been fortunate in her Viceroy, but still more fortunate in the possession of a most admirable and hard-working body of public servants, to whose intelligence, devotion to their duties, and self-sacrifice, the results actually obtained are mainly due.

The vast majority of the population of India remains, in many respects, as it has remained from time immemorial, almost unchanged and unchangeable. It is still, in the words of Sir Henry Maine, "an energetic expression of the Past, hardly affected by its contact with the Western world." But, while this is true, it is not the less true that in material progress and in the improvement of the public administration the magnitude of the work that has been accomplished in India is-

extraordinary. In these respects the England of Queen Anne was hardly more different from the England of to-day, than the India of Lord Ellenborough from the India of Lord Curzon. The country has been covered with roads and railways; her almost impassable rivers have been bridged; the most magnificent canals and works of irrigation existing in the world have been constructed for the protection of the people against famine; our soldiers live in barracks that can hardly be equalled in Europe: quarters which once had a reputation little better than that of pest-houses are now among the healthiest in the British Empire, and the rate of mortality among the troops is not one-half what it was; the improvement in the jails and in the health of the prisoners has been equally remarkable; the cities and towns are totally different places from what they were.

Simultaneously with the progress of all these and a thousand other material improvements, with the increase of trade, the creation of new industries, and a vast development of wealth, there has gone on an equally remarkable change in every branch of the public administration. The laws have been codified, and improved, and simplified, and India has obtained, to a degree unthought of before, protection for life and property, and an honest administration of justice. All over India we have been building schools, and hospitals, and dispensaries. The Natives of India have been admitted to a far larger share in the government of their own country; municipal institutions, the first practical step in political education, have been established in every considerable town throughout British India. It is needless to continue this catalogue of the changes that have taken place; but it is not the least

remarkable part of the story that the accomplishment of all this work, and the immense expenditure incurred, which have increased to an incalculable extent the wealth and comfort of the people, have added nothing to the actual burden of their taxation.

This is a subject to which I shall return ; but a few other facts may here be given to illustrate the changes that have occurred in India.

In 1840 the total value of the imports and exports of British India was about £19,000,000 ; in 1901 it exceeded £150,000,000. The trade of India is more than twice as great now as that of the United Kingdom was in the beginning of the nineteenth century. In 1854, the first year for which any figures are forthcoming, the number of letters passing through the Post Office was 19,000,000, while in 1901 it was 545,000,000. It might be stated how many millions of tons of goods are now carried on the railways, and how many telegraphic messages are despatched ; but as fifty years ago railways and telegraphs in India had only begun to exist, there would be no comparison to make.

All this implies no disparagement of the work of our predecessors. On the contrary, great as, with the aid of modern science and capital, our later progress has been, it is certain that ever since our countrymen first established themselves as the dominant power in Southern Asia, each successive period, when viewed in relation to the circumstances of the time, has yielded, in one direction or another, not less important results. No language of admiration can be too strong for the noble work accomplished in India by the soldiers and civilians of former days. The greatness of their work, and of the work of which they laid the foundations, may best be seen by a comparison of the neighbouring

Asiatic countries with British India. Not only has it been rescued from the incessant sequence of foreign conquest, plunder, and anarchy which had marked its past history, but in little more than a century it has acquired a position of peace, good government, and wealth, in which it will compare favourably with that of many of the States of Europe.

There have always been, and perhaps always will be, people who, according to the unfortunate English fashion of decrying the great achievements of their countrymen, endeavour persistently to show that, in consequence of the wickedness or folly of our Government, India is in a state bordering upon bankruptcy; that its people are becoming poorer and poorer, more and more miserable, more and more exposed to ruin and death by famine; that crushing taxation goes on constantly increasing; that an enormous and ruinous tribute is exacted in India to be spent in England, and I know not what else. I have no inclination to reply to statements of this sort. "I know," said the wisest of English statesmen, "the obstinacy of unbelief in those perverted minds which have no delight but in contemplating the supposed distress, and predicting the immediate ruin of their country. These birds of evil presage at all times have grated our ears with their melancholy song; and, by some strange fatality or other, it has generally happened that they have poured forth their loudest and deepest lamentations at the periods of our most abundant prosperity."<sup>1</sup>

It is not pretended that the social, material, and political conditions of India do not leave ample room for improvement. Defects of many sorts can readily be pointed out. But it is through the progress made that

<sup>1</sup> Burke's *Third Letter on a Regicide Peace*.

these become known. In the arts of administration, as in all other applications of knowledge, our views widen with each successive step we take, and the emphatic recognition that much yet remains to be done for India neither dims the lustre of what has been accomplished nor should cool the ardour of those who there continue the strife with human misfortune, weakness, and ignorance.

That India has gone on, with a speed hardly surpassed in any country, steadily increasing in knowledge, in wealth, and in all the elements of progress; that every branch of the public administration has constantly improved in honesty and efficiency, and that of all the things for which England deserves honour in the world, there has been none greater or better than her government of India—these are to me facts not requiring to be argued about.

There are other critics of our Indian government who deserve to be spoken of with more respect than those “birds of evil presage” to whom I have referred. We often hear expressions of regret that the days of strong personal government have passed away. We are told that the men who, with much smaller personal authority than that of their predecessors, now carry on the everyday work of administration have neither the vigour nor the intimate knowledge of the country for which our officers were formerly so distinguished, and that they have less sympathy with the ideas and feelings of the people. While it may be admitted that there is in this an element of truth, I am satisfied, for my part, that we have gained far more than we have lost. Now that the distance between India and England is measured in days and not in months, the Englishman in India has become less Indian and more English in all his habits

and in all his feelings. He may know less of some aspects of Indian life, but he is no longer cut off, as he once was, from the invigorating and most wholesome influence of his own country. Methods of administration which were once the only ones that were appropriate, have become unsuitable and impracticable, and I entirely disbelieve that the men of the present generation are one whit less capable than those who went before them; they know more and not less of all that it is most necessary for them to know, and the results of their work are more and not less excellent. There can hardly be a more striking proof that there has been no falling off in the qualities necessary for the wise and vigorous government of a great dependency than the manner in which, within recent years, new provinces have been transformed from a condition in which there was no tolerable government, and no safety for life or property, into peaceful and prosperous countries. No more remarkable story than that of the pacification and progress of Burma can be told of any portion of the Empire.

## CHAPTER II

### THE GEOGRAPHY OF INDIA

The Indian Empire: area and population—The main features of Indian geography—The Indo-Gangetic plain—Presidencies and Provinces—The table-land of Central and Southern India—Physical causes of the great differences between the countries of India—The monsoons.

THE Indian Empire has an area of more than 1,700,000 square miles, and a population of nearly 300 millions. In area and population it is greater than Europe without Russia. A line drawn from its northern boundary beyond the mountains of Kashmir to Cape Comorin, the southern extremity of its vast peninsula, exceeds 2000 miles in length, a distance almost as great as that from Gibraltar to St. Petersburg. It is nearly equally far from the borders of Baluchistán on the west to the point where the eastern frontier of Assam approaches the frontier of China.

Excluding Burma and the mountain countries of the north, India proper may be roughly divided into two regions.

The first of these is a vast alluvial plain, lying immediately below the Himálaya, and stretching with an unbroken surface for some 1700 miles across Northern India. Its eastern and central portions are watered by the Ganges and Bráhma-putra and their tributaries, the northern and western portions by the river-system of the



Indus. At its highest point, on the watershed between the feeders of the Indus and Ganges, it is not more than 1000 feet above the sea. At its eastern end, it extends over the delta of the Ganges and Bráhmáputra, and includes the greater part of the province of Bengal. At its northern and western extremities, it spreads down the Indus to the Arabian Sea, over the Punjab, the western states of Rajputána, and Sind. The central portion of the plain comprises the United Provinces of Agra and Oudh. The alluvial deposits of which this vast tract is composed are, as Sir Richard Strachey says, "so finely comminuted that it is no exaggeration to say that it is possible to go from the Bay of Bengal up the Ganges, through the Punjab, and down the Indus again to the sea, over a distance of 2000 miles and more, without finding a pebble, however small."<sup>1</sup> The Indo-Gangetic plain comprises the richest, the most fertile, the most populous, and historically the most famous countries of India. Its south-western extension includes the desert tracts of Western Rajputána and the almost rainless districts of Sind. It covers more than 500,000 square miles, an area almost as large as that of France, with the German and Austrian Empires, and it contains more than 160 millions of people.

The greater part of the northern plain, excluding the countries on the extreme west, was formerly included, for certain purposes, in the so-called Presidency of Bengal. I shall have to explain how the name Bengal has had, at different periods, different meanings, and how the term "Presidency," although still sometimes used in official papers, has almost ceased to have any special signification. British India is now divided not into the three presidencies of Bengal,

Madras, and Bombay, but into provinces, nine of which are extensive countries under separate Governments.

The second region of India lies to the south of the Indo-Gangetic plain, and includes the great triangular peninsula which projects into the Indian Ocean. It has an area of about 700,000 square miles, with a population of more than 120 millions.

The greater part of this tract consists of a hilly table-land,<sup>1</sup> having an average elevation above the sea of about 1500 feet, but rising in the south, in Mysore, to 3000 feet. It may be said, in general terms, to include the whole of that part of India which lies to the south of the Tropic of Cancer, with a relatively small extension to the north, where it gradually merges into the southern borders of the Gangetic plain. On the western and eastern sides of the peninsula, the table-land terminates in the ranges known as the Western and Eastern Gháts. Roughly speaking, they run parallel to the coast on the two sides of Southern India, leaving between them and the sea a more or less broad strip of low-lying land. The Eastern Gháts are an ill-defined range of no great height. The Western Gháts rise steeply from the sea to about 4000 feet, and near their southern extremity reach 8700 feet in the Nilgiri mountains. Farther north, nearly in the same line with the Western Gháts, the Arayali range, in which Mount Abu rises to 5600 feet, forms the western border of the table-land. The northern border cannot be sharply defined; it is broken up into hills which pass

<sup>1</sup> I take the following note from Sir Henry Yule: "A friend objects to this application of 'table-land' to so rugged a region of inequalities. But it is a technical expression in geography, applicable to a considerable area, of which the lowest levels are at a considerable height above the sea."—*Glossary of Anglo-Indian Words*, Art. "Tibet."

more or less gradually into the plains of the United Provinces.

The Vindhia and Satpura ranges, the highest points of which have an elevation of more than 4000 feet, run from west to east across the northern parts of the table-land of Central India. "Now pierced by road and railway (says Sir William Hunter), they stood as a barrier of mountain and jungle between Northern and Southern India, and formed one of the main difficulties in welding the whole into an empire. They consist of vast masses of forests, ridges, and peaks, broken by cultivated tracts of the rich cotton-bearing black soil, exquisite river valleys, and high-lying grassy plains."<sup>1</sup>

Through two deep and almost parallel depressions in this tract, the waters of the Narbada and Tapti flow westward to the Arabian Sea. With these exceptions, all the chief rivers of the peninsula, the Són, the Máhánadi, the Godáveri, the Kistna, and Kávári, flow eastward, and excepting the Són, which joins the Ganges, they all fall into the Bay of Bengal. The high ranges of the Gháts, on the western edge of the peninsula, throw off nearly the whole of its drainage to the eastward.

This table-land, with the low-lying tracts on its borders, comprises the British provinces of Madras and Bombay, the Central Provinces, and many of the chief Native States of India. Among the latter are the Marátha States of Gwalior and Indore, and those of Haidarabad and Mysore.

There are other extensive countries that I have not named, lying outside the two great regions into which India Proper may be roughly divided. On the north-eastern border of Bengal the British province of Assam,

<sup>1</sup> *The Indian Empire*, 3rd edit., p. 68.

with an area of nearly 50,000 square miles, and a population of more than 6,000,000, lies immediately below the *Himálaya*, and comprises the great and fertile valley of the *Bráhma*putra after it issues from the mountains. On the opposite side of India, the North-West Frontier Province, formed in 1901 from districts transferred from the Punjab, and British Baluchistán farther south, are the outposts of our empire towards Afghánistán.

The French and Portuguese retain some small possessions, now little more than nominal signs of former greatness. The French possessions, of which the most important is Pondicherry, on the eastern coast, contain about 273,000 people; the Portuguese territory of Goa, on the western coast, has a population of nearly 500,000.

Lying on the east side of the Bay of Bengal is the great province of Burma, the latest addition to our Indian Empire. It is completely cut off by the sea or by mountains from India Proper, and differs essentially in every respect from every Indian country. Including the protected *Shán* States, it has an area of more than 236,000 square miles, with a population of 10,500,000. Its frontiers, on the east, march with those of China, French Indo-China, and Siam.

Politically, Aden, at the entrance to the Red Sea, belongs also to the Indian Empire.

The provinces of British India, including Burma, cover more than 1,000,000 square miles, and contain 232,000,000 people. The Native States cover nearly 700,000 square miles, with a population of 62,500,000.

Although the main natural features of India are comparatively simple, the differences between the climates and many of the physical conditions of its various

countries are, as I have already said, often far greater than any that exist between the various countries of Europe. The explanation of this fact is not difficult.

Excepting in temperature, and in a rainfall the amount of which varies within no very wide limits, the general climatic conditions of the countries of Europe, excluding those in the extreme north, are not very different. On the other hand, it is hardly possible to imagine greater contrasts than those which often exist between the climates of various parts of India.

Take, for example, the two extremities of the great Indo-Gangetic plain—Sind on the western, and Lower Bengal on the eastern side of India. These countries are almost in the same latitude; each of them is an unbroken alluvial plain, slightly elevated above the sea. In Sind, so little rain falls that the country may be said to be rainless. It is the Egypt of India, and without artificial irrigation would be an uninhabitable desert. Bengal, on the other hand, is a country of tropically heavy rain and luxuriant vegetation. The rainfall on the mountains along its eastern borders is heavier than any that has been observed in any other part of the world. At Cherra Punji, on the Khasiya hills, on the frontiers of Eastern Bengal, the average yearly rainfall is between 500 and 600 inches, and 40 inches have been measured in a single day. The average annual rainfall of London is about 25 inches, a quantity less than that which not infrequently falls in twenty-four hours in many parts of India.

It is not difficult to imagine from this illustration, taken from two Indian provinces, how great must be the differences in physical conditions between countries presenting such extraordinary contrasts of climate.

The one characteristic, common at certain seasons

to the whole of India, except at great elevations, is excessive heat. The southern half of India, including nearly the whole of the Madras and Bombay Presidencies, lies within the tropic. The northern half, including nearly the whole of the Indo-Gangetic plain, lies north of the tropic. Although in the southern or tropical region the mean temperature of the year is higher, the variations of temperature between summer and winter are comparatively small; and it is in the second region, in the plains north of the tropic, where the days are longer and the power of the sun more continuous, that Indian heat reaches in the summer months its greatest intensity. In parts of the Punjab and of the United Provinces of Agra and Oudh, and in the desert on the borders of Sind, the temperature in May and June is probably exceeded in no part of the world; but this extreme heat brings by its own action the relief without which all life would perish.

“The dominant feature of Indian meteorology (I am quoting from the late Mr. Blanford, formerly the head of the Meteorological Department in India) is the alternation of the monsoons, the annual reversal of the prevailing wind-currents. This alternation is consequent on the fact that, in the early summer, the broad plains and table-lands of India are heated to a far higher temperature than the seas which bathe their shores; whereas, in the winter, the seas retain much of their warmth, while the land radiates away and throws off into stellar space much more heat than it receives from the oblique rays of the sun during the shorter winter days, and, especially as regards Northern India, speedily cools down to a temperature much below that of the surrounding seas.”<sup>1</sup> Observations of these phenomena

and their consequences, especially in regard to the winds and the rainfall, show us, as Mr. Blanford says, "how each season in succession affects in diverse modes the different portions of the country; why one province may sometimes be devastated by flood while another is parched with drought, and why, with special adaptation to the peculiarities of its own seasons and resources, each of them has its own agricultural system, its own staples, its own rotation of crops."

After March the heat in Northern India rapidly increases. As the air above the heated earth becomes hotter, the pressure becomes less. At the same time an increase of pressure is going on over the ocean south of the equator, which has then its winter. Thus, a current of air laden with moisture is gradually established towards the continent of India from the sea. This is the so-called south-west monsoon, which brings the periodical rains every year to India, when the heat of the summer has reached its greatest intensity. Towards the end of May the monsoon has usually become established in the south-western extremity of India, and before the end of June it has extended to the greater part of the northern provinces.

The quantity of rain that falls in any part of India depends mainly on the configuration of the surface of the land, and on its situation with reference to the vapour-bearing winds. As the amount of watery vapour which air can hold in suspension varies with the temperature of the air, and increases with the temperature, any cause which cools the current from the sea leads to condensation of the vapour and to the fall of rain.

One of the chief of such causes is the existence of mountains which stand in the path of the winds, and

force the vapour-bearing currents to rise over them. Thus, the range of the Western Gháts, which form an almost continuous barrier along the western coasts of Southern India, meet first the whole force of the monsoon as it comes saturated with moisture from the sea. A great condensation of rain is the immediate result of the fall in the temperature of the hot moist air as it is forced to rise in passing across the mountains. On the face of the Gháts, not far from Bombay, the annual rainfall in some places exceeds 250 inches; but a very large part of the moisture which the current of air contains is drained away by the excessive precipitation near the coast, and, as the current flows on over the land, the quantity of rain is greatly reduced. At Poona, only 60 miles from the sea, the annual rainfall is not more than 26 inches.

Similar phenomena are observed in a still more remarkable form on the Himálaya. The line of maximum elevation is not far from the southern edge of the great mountain mass. When the monsoon winds strike the outer ranges of the Himálaya, a large amount of rain immediately results; the quantity diminishes as the wind passes over the mountains, and when it reaches the regions of perpetual snow, about 100 miles from the plains of India, almost the whole of its remaining moisture is condensed. Thus, the periodical rains are completely stopped by the ranges of the southern face of the Himálaya; they can find no entrance to the mountains beyond, or to the table-land of Tibet, one of the driest and most arid regions of the world.

Similar causes shut off the rain-bearing south-westerly winds from the Madras provinces, on the south-eastern coast of India. These winds cannot carry much moisture over the obstacle to their course



formed by the Western Gháts, and little rain falls in the eastern districts of Madras during the summer months. But, as I shall presently notice, the remedy for this deficiency is not wanting.

Where, on the other hand, the configuration of the land is such that no obstacles are offered to the passage of the monsoon current from the sea, there may be no condensation of its moisture. Thus, when the wind strikes upon the coast of Sind, very slightly elevated above the sea, it finds a hotter and not a cooler surface than that which it has left, and it passes on with all its watery vapour for 1000 miles across the rainless plains to the Punjab, where at last the Himálaya converts the vapour into rain. If, as Sir Richard Strachey has observed, there had been a range of mountains connecting the high land of the Indian peninsula with that of Baluchistán, hardly a drop of rain would have reached the Punjab and the North of India.

It would be easy to multiply illustrations of the manner in which geographical position and configuration determine the fall of rain in the various provinces of India, and even local conditions of a kind which might have seemed of little importance produce remarkable results. Thus, for instance, a deep depression in a range of mountains may afford an opening for the entrance of the vapour-bearing currents of air, and give an ample supply of rain to a tract of country which would have been almost rainless if the mountains had been continuous. In this manner, the valleys of the Tapti and Narbada rivers, which enter the sea north of Bombay, are gates through which the monsoon finds access to the provinces of Central India, and makes them fertile and prosperous.

As the sun travels southward after midsummer,

the south-west monsoon passes gradually away, and towards the end of September it ceases to blow over Northern India. Causes acting in the converse direction, but similar to those which brought it with its rain-bearing currents, lead to its cessation. The temperature falls as the sun goes south, and the vast dry tracts of the Asiatic continent become rapidly colder; the barometric pressure over the land increases, and winds begin to blow from the north towards the south. These winds are the north-east monsoon.

This monsoon, although far less important than its predecessor to the greater part of India, is essentially necessary to Madras and the south-eastern provinces of the peninsula, which, as already explained, are cut off by their geographical position from the benefits of the monsoon from the south-west. When the wind from the north-east is established, these are the only parts of India which it reaches after passing across the sea, and, while everywhere else the current of air is dry, it takes up in its passage across the Bay of Bengal a supply of moisture. Under the operation of the same laws which give their rainy season in the summer to the other provinces, the moisture brought by the north-east wind from the sea is precipitated in rain on the eastern districts of Madras and Southern India from October to December.

This slight sketch of some of the main facts of Indian meteorology may serve to illustrate the causes which render the physical conditions of various parts of India so extremely different. As Mr. Blanford has observed, we may speak of the climates, but not of the climate of India. "The world itself (he says) affords no greater contrast than is to be met with, at one and the same time, within its limits." When these facts are

understood, it will no longer seem surprising that India and its inhabitants, its natural productions, and all the conditions of life, should present such contrasts and diversities.

The following Table, taken from the "Statistical Abstract relating to British India," presented to Parliament 1902, gives the area and population of the British Provinces and Native States of India, according to the Census of 1901.

PROVINCE OR STATE.	Area in square miles.	Population.
PROVINCES.		
1. Ajmer-Merwara . . . . .	2,711	476,912
2. Andamans and Nicobars . . . . .	3,188	24,649
3. Assam . . . . .	56,243	6,126,343
4. Baluchistān ( <i>Districts and Administered Territories</i> ) . . . . .	45,804	308,246
5. Bengal . . . . .	151,185	74,744,866
6. Berar . . . . .	17,710	2,754,016
7. Bombay ( <i>Presidency</i> ) . . . . .	123,064	18,559,561
<i>Bombay</i> . . . . .	75,918	15,301,677
<i>Sind</i> . . . . .	47,066	3,210,910
<i>Aden</i> . . . . .	80	43,974
8. Burma . . . . .	236,738	10,489,924
9. Central Provinces . . . . .	86,614	9,876,646
10. Coorg . . . . .	1,582	180,607
11. Madras . . . . .	141,726	38,209,436
12. North-West Frontier Province . . . . .	16,466	2,125,480
13. Punjab . . . . .	97,209	20,330,339
14. United Provinces of Agra and Oudh . . . . .	107,164	47,691,782
<i>Agra</i> . . . . .	83,198	34,858,705
<i>Oudh</i> . . . . .	23,966	12,833,077
Total, British Territory . . . . .	1,087,404	231,898,807
NATIVE STATES.		
15. Baluchistān . . . . .	86,511	502,500
16. Baroda State . . . . .	8,099	1,952,692
17. Bengal States . . . . .	38,652	3,748,544
18. Bombay States . . . . .	65,761	6,908,648
19. Central India States . . . . .	78,772	8,628,781
20. Central Provinces States . . . . .	29,435	1,996,333
21. Hyderabad State . . . . .	82,698	11,141,142
22. Kashmir State . . . . .	80,900	2,905,578
23. Madras States . . . . .	9,969	4,188,086
24. Mysore State . . . . .	29,444	5,539,399
25. Punjab States . . . . .	36,532	4,424,398
26. Rajputāna States . . . . .	127,541	9,723,301
27. United Provinces States . . . . .	5,079	802,097
Total, Native States . . . . .	679,393	62,461,549
Grand Total, India . . . . .	1,766,797	294,360,356

## CHAPTER III

### THE HIMÁLAYA

The Himálaya—Its influence on India—Its geography—The great rivers of India—The story of the sources of the Ganges—British and Native Himálayan provinces—The Kumáon Himálaya—Scenery of the Himálaya.

I HAVE referred in some detail to the regions into which India is divided, but there is a third region which has been barely mentioned, on and outside its borders, the influence of which over a great part of the Indian continent is so important that some knowledge of it is essential to a proper comprehension of Indian geography. I refer to the Himálaya. Without these mountains some of the richest tracts of India would be deserts; they give to India her principal rivers, and, through the effect that they produce on the monsoons and the rainfall, they affect all the conditions of life in the plains above which they rise. This is a subject on which books on India have usually not much to say.

It is unfortunate that we are taught to call these mountains the Himālāya, instead of giving them their more euphonious old Sanskrit name Himālaya, "the abode of snow." There are excellent general accounts of the Himálaya in the ninth edition of the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, and in the fifth supplementary volume of that work, by Sir Richard Strachey and by Sir T. H.

Holdich respectively. As Sir Richard Strachey has shown, the *Himálaya* is not a mountain chain in the ordinary acceptation of the term. There stretches across a large part of Asia, immediately to the north of India, "a great protuberance above the general level of the earth's surface." We usually call the whole of its southern border by the name *Himálaya*, and its northern border, in a much less definite way, *Kuenlun*, and between them lies the mountainous table-land of Tibet, with an average elevation above the sea of 15,000 feet or more. Neither the *Himálaya*, nor *Kuenlun*, nor the Tibetan table-land, have any special or separate existence, the whole constituting one huge agglomeration of mountains.

A range of mountains like those to which we are accustomed in Europe gives no notion of the *Himálaya*. It extends from east to west for some 2000 miles, and the average distance from its southern to its northern edge exceeds 500 miles. The *Himálaya*, thus defined, would stretch from England to the Caspian, and it covers 1,000,000 square miles, an area as large as that of Great Britain, and the German and Austrian Empires, France, Spain, and Italy all together. Mountains like those of Europe have never been obstacles very difficult to pass, but except for a comparatively short distance on the north-western frontiers of India, where the mountains of *Afghánistán* and *Baluchistán* run southwards from the ranges of perpetual snow, the *Himálaya* and its offshoots form a barrier between India and the rest of Asia which for all practical purposes may be called impassable. Except in the quarter that I have named, the *Himálaya* has in all ages given protection to India along a frontier 2000 miles in length. But the exception has been a serious one.

From this vulnerable side, in the course of the last eight hundred years, a swarm of invaders has five times come down upon India, sometimes to conquer, sometimes only to destroy.

As might be supposed from its vast proportions, the *Himálaya* comprises many countries, differing from each other in almost everything except in this, that they consist entirely of mountains. We find in them every possible variety of climate, of vegetation, and of all natural products, and they are peopled by tribes of various character in most different stages of civilisation. The *Himálaya* offers a good illustration of the misleading generalisations which are common in regard to almost everything Indian. Some authorities tell us that the mountains between the plains of India and the regions of perpetual snow are bleak and bare and arid, and that their scenery, in spite of its stupendous scale, is uninteresting; others tell us that they are covered with forest and rich vegetation, and present, in the higher regions, scenes more beautiful and sublime than anything to be found in Europe. Both stories are true; but considering, as I have just said, that these mountains would stretch from England to the Caspian, we might as reasonably expect to find the same conditions in the Grampians, the Alps, and the Caucasus, as to find them everywhere in the *Himálaya*.

It is only with that portion of the *Himálaya* which rises immediately above the plains of Northern India that I am now concerned. The highest peaks hitherto measured in the *Himálaya* or in the world are, for the most part, found on the southern side of the watershed between India and Tibet, at a distance of about 100 miles from the Indian plains. Mount Everest, in the Eastern *Himálaya*, reaches more than 29,000 feet; many

of the peaks exceed 25,000, and still higher points may possibly remain to be discovered. On the north and north-west of Kashmir some of the peaks are hardly inferior to Mount Everest and the highest summits of the eastern portions of the chain. The elevation of the passes from India into Tibet is seldom less than 16,000 feet, and the average elevation of the watershed probably exceeds 18,000 feet. The table-land of Tibet is usually 15,000 or 16,000 feet above the sea.

I have already referred to the manner in which the lofty mountains that rise along the southern margin of the *Himálaya* form an impassable obstacle to the periodical rains of the south-west monsoon. The moisture-bearing currents cannot pass such a barrier, and all their vapour is condensed on the southern or Indian side of the chain. It is now well known that this furnishes the simple explanation of the fact formerly discussed by Humboldt and others, and long misunderstood, that the line of perpetual snow is lower on the southern than on the northern slopes of the *Himálaya*. Although on the latter, in Tibet, the winter cold is almost arctic in its intensity, very little snow will be found there in the summer even at 20,000 feet, because the air is so dry that snow can hardly form, while on the southern slopes of the chain the snow-line is found at an elevation of 15,000 or 16,000 feet.

The greatest rivers of India all come from the *Himálaya*. It is remarkable that, although their courses through India to the sea are so widely divergent, their chief sources are not far apart from each other, and are all on the northern or Tibetan side of the Indian watershed. They are in the high Tibetan plateau, near the lake of *Mánasarowar* and the peak of *Kailás*, names among the most sacred of Hindu mythology. This is

strictly true of the Indus, the Sutlej, and the Bráhma-putra, and, although the Ganges seems to be an exception, it can hardly be said to be one.

The true story of the sources of the Ganges is curious. We all know how, in the eighteenth century, Bruce was supposed to have discovered the sources of the Nile, and how it afterwards appeared that he had been to the head, not of the great river, but of one of its tributaries. Something of the same sort may be said of the Ganges:

Almost every work on the geography of India still tells us that the Ganges has its origin in the glacier, or, as it is often and inaccurately called, the snow-bed of Gangotri, where it issues from the ice-cave, the "cow's mouth" of the sacred books of the Hindus. The truth is that, apart from mythology and religion and common belief, and judging as we judge less holy streams, Gangotri has no claim to be called the source of the Ganges, designating by that name the river that issues from the mountains at Hardwár. The river which comes from Gangotri is the Bhágirathi, one of the numerous Himálayan feeders of the true Ganges. The main stream is that of the Alaknanda, which has a much longer course and, at all seasons of the year, a much larger body of water than the Bhágirathi; its most distant sources are on the southern side of the watershed, near the Niti and Mána passes into Tibet, and it collects the drainage of the peaks and glaciers of the Kumáon and Garhwál Himálaya, from Nanda Devi to the sacred shrines of Badrináth and Kedárnáth. These two streams unite about 40 miles above Hardwár. But the Ganges, applying that name, according to universal custom, to the combined river that flows through Bengal past Patna and Rájmahál, and thence on to the sea, has also, like the Indus, the Sutlej, and the Bráhma-putra, its trans-



Himálayan sources. The Gogra, or more correctly the Ghágra, which joins the Ganges above Patna, about 500 miles from the sea, is hardly known to European fame, but in the upper portion of its course it is a much larger river than the Ganges. It rises on the north of the Indian Himálaya, not far from the sources of the other great rivers, near the lake of Mánasarowar, finds its way through the mountains of Nepál, under the name of Kauriáli, and flows on through Oudh until it joins the Ganges. The Kauriáli, near the borders of Nepál, after it has entered the plains, is said to have a minimum discharge of 11,000 cubic feet per second, whereas that of the Ganges at Hardwár is only 6300 feet. Whether at the junction between the Ganges and the Gogra, the former, after its longer course through the plains of India, has become the larger stream, is a question to which no certain answer has hitherto been given. It may seem curious that it should still be possible to doubt whether the Gogra can properly be called an affluent of the Ganges, or whether it ought not rather to be held that the Ganges, in its passage from the mountains to the sea, falls into a river greater than itself, the very name of which is hardly known in Europe. The question has no material importance, and the truth is that no standard has hitherto been clearly recognised by which to determine the characters that justify us in speaking of any particular affluent of a river as its source. It remains undecided whether that term should be applied to the affluent which has the longest course, which has the greatest catchment area, or which has the superior volume; and, if volume be the test, whether this is to be measured where the stream is at its highest, its lowest, or its average level.

Like the rivers that I have named, the Irawadi and

the Salwin, the great rivers of Burma, have also their main sources on the northern or Tibetan side of the *Himálaya*.

Between Assam, the British province on the extreme north-east of India, and the western frontiers of Kashmir, a distance of 1500 miles, the countries of the Indian *Himálaya* and its offshoots cover more than 150,000 square miles, and contain some 6,500,000 people. They are mostly under Native rule, and among them the most important is *Nepál*, the one State in India, or on its borders, which has remained entirely independent of our power. In 1815 and 1816 the Nepalese measured their strength against ours, and lost in consequence *Kumáon* and *Garhwál*, their richest districts. Since that time they have preserved an unvarying policy of absolute but thoroughly friendly isolation. The British representative at *Kátmádu*, their capital, is treated almost as a highly honoured prisoner, and Central Africa is more accessible to European travellers than the greater part of *Nepál*. However unenlightened from our point of view this policy, which the geographical position and configuration of the country alone rendered possible, may have been, it has had the result of shutting out all causes and opportunities of dispute, and of preserving the independence of *Nepál*. The other Native Hill States are all under British control. The most important of them is Kashmir, with its dependencies in Western Tibet. I have spoken of the great differences between the various countries and peoples of these mountains. A remarkable illustration is seen in the contrast between the States on the Eastern and Western extremities of the Indian *Himálaya*. There are no braver soldiers than the little Gurkhas of *Nepál*, and few greater cowards than the stalwart *Mohammedans* of Kashmir.

In the Western *Himálaya*, in the Punjab Lieutenant-Governorship, several districts, of which *Kángra* is the most important, are under British administration, and in one of them, a small patch surrounded by Native States, is *Simla*, the summer headquarters of the Government of India. But the most considerable tract of British territory in the *Himálaya* is the province of *Kumáon* and *Garhwál*, bordering on the plains of *Rohilkhand*, in the *Agra Province*.

It would be foreign to my purpose to speak at length regarding this or any other portion of the chain, and, as I have just said, in treating of so vast a subject as the *Himálaya* it is easy to be misled by generalisations. I will, however, say something about *Kumáon*, because in its main features it affords instructive illustrations of many of the chief and most widely prevailing characteristics of these mountains, and because it is a country with which I have had unusual opportunities of making myself acquainted.

The province of *Kumáon* has an area of more than 12,000 square miles, and its population exceeds a million. Its whole surface is covered by mountains. They rise with strange suddenness from the plains of India. We pass almost in a moment into the mountains, and when we have once entered them, we hardly find level ground again until we have gone 400 or 500 miles across the *Himálaya*, *Tibet*, and the *Kuenlun*. The *Gágar* range, described with enthusiastic admiration by Bishop Heber, rises immediately above the plains to more than 8000 feet, and in one of its valleys lie the little lake and station of *Naini Tál*, the summer headquarters of the Lieutenant-Governor of the United Provinces of *Agra* and *Oudh*.

After travelling through *Kumáon* for more than

100 miles, through a constant succession of high ranges and deep gorges, we pass the great peaks of the Indian *Himálaya*, and cross over into Tibet, but, looking northward from the watershed, we see again fresh snowy ranges and mountains that look as endless and as vast as those that we have left behind.

In the earlier part of my Indian life I had the good fortune to be employed for about ten years in various offices in *Kumáon* and *Garhwál*, and I spent many summers in the higher regions of the *Himálaya*, sometimes among the almost countless glaciers at the sources of the Ganges and its tributaries, or visiting the passes into Tibet, one of them more than 18,000 feet above the sea, or on the forest-covered ranges immediately under the snowy peaks. I have seen much of European mountains, but in stupendous sublimity, combined with a magnificent and luxuriant beauty, I have seen nothing that can be compared with the *Himálaya*.

Although none of the *Kumáon* summits reach an elevation equal to that attained by a few of the peaks in other parts of the chain, for only two of them exceed 25,000 feet, it is probable that the average elevation of the snowy range of *Kumáon* is nowhere surpassed. For a continuous distance of some 200 miles the peaks constantly reach a height of from 22,000 to more than 25,000 feet.

The Alpine vegetation of the *Kumáon Himálaya*, while far more various, closely resembles in its generic forms that of the Alpine regions of Europe; but after we have left the plains for 100 miles and have almost reached the foot of the great peaks, the valleys are still, in many cases, only 2000 or 3000 feet above the sea, conveying, as Sir Richard Strachey says, "the heat and vegetation of the tropics among ranges covered with

perpetual snow." Thus, he adds, the traveller may obtain at a glance a range of vision extending from 2000 to 25,000 feet, "and see spread before him a compendium of the entire vegetation of the globe from the tropics to the poles." Something similar may be said of the animal world. Tigers, for instance, are common in the valleys; and it is not very unusual to see their foot-prints in the snow among oaks and pines and rhododendrons 8000 or 10,000 feet above the sea.

If I wished to give to any one, acquainted only with European mountains, some notion of the scenery of the Kumáon Himálaya, at elevations of about 6000 to 10,000 feet, I should advise him to travel in the Italian valleys of the Alps, to which, on a far greater scale, the gorges of the Himálaya have often a stronger resemblance than those of Switzerland. The Val Anzasca, as we go up towards Macugnaga through the chestnut woods, with Monte Rosa always before us, is not unlike in miniature a valley in the Himálaya, and I hardly like to say that it is less beautiful. But the Indian mountains are grander, their forests are nobler, their whole vegetation is more rich and varied, and nowhere in Europe can we find the splendour of the atmospheric effects and colouring of the Himálaya.

Still less is comparison possible in the higher regions of the mountains. To the traveller who remembers the wild magnificence of the peaks and glaciers of the Himálaya, and the general sublimity of its aspect, Zermatt and Chamouny seem insignificant. The mere fact that the ranges of the Himálaya are often twice as high as those of the Alps gives no idea of their relative magnitude. The whole of the Bernese Alps might, it has been said, be cast into a single Himálayan valley. We might almost as reasonably, when the Scottish or

Welsh hills are white with snow, compare them with Mont Blanc and Monte Rosa, as compare anything in the Alps with Nanda Devi and Trisúl. If, preserving the form of its great obelisk, we could pile the Matterhorn on the Jungfrau, we should not reach the highest summits of the Himálaya, and should have a mountain less wonderful than the astonishing peak of Dunagiri.

Among earthly spectacles, it is hardly possible that any can surpass the Himálaya, as I have often seen it at sunset on an evening in October from the ranges thirty or forty miles from the great peaks. "For the picturesque beauty of its natural setting" (Sir Thomas Holdich writes), "in the midst of tropical mountain scenery, no less than for grandeur of outline and profound impression of majestic predominance, there is probably no rival in the world to Kanchinjunga as seen from Darjiling." One other such view, that from Binsar in Kumáon, stands out vividly in my own remembrance. This mountain is 8000 feet high, covered with oak and rhododendron. Towards the north we look down over pine-clad slopes into a deep valley, where, 6000 feet below, the Sarju runs through a tropical forest. Beyond the river it seems to the eye as if the peaks of perpetual snow rose straight up and almost close to us into the sky. From the bottom of the valley to the top of Nanda Devi we see at a glance almost 24,000 feet of mountain. The stupendous golden or rose-coloured masses and pinnacles of the snowy range extend before us in unbroken succession for more than 250 miles, filling up a third part of the visible horizon, while on all other sides, as far as the eye can reach, stretch away the red and purple ranges of the lower mountains. "In a hundred ages of the gods," writes one of the

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old Sanskrit poets, "I could not tell you of the glories of Himáchal."

I must add that few of those who spend the summer in the hill stations of Northern India have the opportunity of witnessing such scenes as these. If they suppose, at a place like Simla, that they have seen the Himálaya, they greatly deceive themselves.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE CONSTITUTION OF THE GOVERNMENT IN INDIA

Presidencies and provinces—The Presidency of Bengal—First constitution of the Government—Hastings and his Council—Changes between 1773 and 1833—The Governor-General of India in Council—Separation of the North-Western Provinces from Bengal—Renewal of the Charter in 1853—A Lieutenant-Governor appointed for Bengal—The mutiny of the Native army—Transfer of the government to the Crown—The existing constitution of the Supreme and Provincial Governments—The Indian legislatures—The Provincial Governments—Former cumbrous mode of transacting business—Changes made by Lord Canning—Reforms completed by Lord Lawrence—The Council converted into a Cabinet—Manner of transacting business—Power of Governor-General to overrule the Council—Migration of the Government to Simla—Relations between Supreme and Provincial Governments—Mr. Bright on the government of India—Decentralisation.

IN the earlier times of the East India Company, the affairs of the three principal settlements in Bengal, Madras, and Bombay were, in each case, administered by a President and a Council composed of servants of the Company, and the term "Presidency" was applied to the whole tract over which their authority extended. The term has lasted to the present day, and is still used in official papers, but it has almost ceased to have any special meaning. British India is not divided into presidencies, but into provinces, nine of which are extensive countries under separate Governments. The



presidencies of Madras and Bombay are now the provinces of the same names.

The term "Presidency of Bengal" requires some explanation.

The name Bengal has had, at different periods since the country came into our possession, very different meanings. It was originally applied, as it still is by the Natives of India, to the tract sometimes called Lower Bengal, including the deltas of the Ganges and Bráhmáputra, and inhabited by the people who speak Bengáli. The earliest factories and settlements on that side of India were established in Bengal, and, as British authority went on extending, the name Bengal was applied to all the territories administered from Fort William, the official headquarters in Calcutta. Thus, the Presidency of Bengal, or, according to its proper official designation, Fort William in Bengal, came to include not only Bengal and the neighbouring provinces of Behár and Orissa, but the whole of the British conquests in Northern India. Some remnants of the old system have lasted into our own times. There was, until 1894, a single army for the provinces of Bengal, the North-Western Provinces and Oudh, and the Punjab, and although, as I shall have again to notice, it had not a single native of Bengal in its ranks, it retained the name of the Bengal Army. This name still survives, for although the Army in the Punjab is now a separate body, the other provinces remain included in the so-called Bengal Command. Another survival from old times is seen in the Bengal Civil Service. The members of the Indian Civil Service, recruited under the system of open competition, are appointed, before they leave England, to the provinces to which under ordinary circumstances they remain permanently attached. The

Civil Services of the United Provinces of Agra and Oudh, and of the Punjab are, for all administrative purposes, as distinct from that of Bengal as from those of Madras and Bombay ; but, in regard to some matters connected with annuities to widows and children, they are still treated as a single body and included in the so-called Bengal Civil Service.

The first Act of Parliament which prescribed a definite system of government for the affairs of India was that of 1773.<sup>1</sup> It provided for the appointment of a Governor-General and a Council of four members for the Presidency of Bengal. The administration was to be carried on in accordance with the votes of the majority of the Council, and the Governor-General had no power to set aside their decisions. Certain powers of control, vaguely defined, were given to the Government of Bengal over the presidencies of Madras and Bombay. Warren Hastings was the first Governor-General of Bengal. The scandalous dissensions in his Council, under the malignant influence of Francis, have become a well-known matter of history. They showed that government by the constantly shifting majority of a Council was impossible ; but although similar facts repeatedly occurred to illustrate the folly of such a system, it was not until 1786 that a partial remedy was applied, after Lord Cornwallis had made it a condition of his acceptance of the office of Governor-General that the power of overruling his Council should be given to him. On the renewal of the Company's Charter in 1793,<sup>2</sup> the powers of the Governor-General were further extended ; authority to overrule their Councils was given to the Governors of Madras and Bombay ; the power of the Governments of those presidencies to make laws and

Regulating Act, 13 Geo. III. c. 63.

<sup>2</sup> 33 Geo. III. c. 42.

regulations for their own territories was recognised ; and the supreme authority of the Governor-General in Council over the whole of India was distinctly declared. No very important changes in the constitution of the Government were made after this until the renewal of the Charter in 1833,<sup>1</sup> when the trading powers of the Company ceased. The Governor-General in Council of Bengal then became the Governor-General of India in Council. Bengal was to be divided into two presidencies, Fort William in Bengal and Agra. The Governor-General was to be Governor of the former, and a Governor was to be appointed for the latter. The Agra presidency was not constituted, but by an amending Act passed in 1835<sup>2</sup> the territories which were to have been included in it were placed, under the name of the North-Western Provinces, under a Lieutenant-Governor without a Council. Madras and Bombay retained their Councils, but no Council was appointed for Bengal.

The Punjab became a Lieutenant-Governorship in 1859, and Burma in 1897. In 1901 a new province, the North-West Frontier Province, was formed, and, to avoid confusion from the similarity of names, the North-Western Provinces, with which Oudh had been included, became the United Provinces of Agra and Oudh.

In 1853 the Charter of the Company was again renewed,<sup>3</sup> and an important change in the Government was made. It had long been obvious that it was impossible for a single person to discharge the double duty of Governor-General of India and Governor of Bengal, and the administration of Bengal had notoriously become less efficient than that of any other province

<sup>1</sup> 3 and 4 Will. IV. c. 85.

<sup>2</sup> 5 and 6 Will. IV. c. 52.

<sup>3</sup> 16 and 17 Vict. c. 95.

in India. The Governor-General was relieved from this charge, and a Lieutenant-Governor, without a Council, was appointed.

In 1857 came the mutiny of the Bengal Native army.

In the following year, by the "Act for the better government of India,"<sup>1</sup> the government was transferred from the East India Company to the Crown, and it was provided that all the powers of the Company and of the Board of Control should be exercised by a Secretary of State, in concert, in certain cases, with a Council. This Act, of which I shall again have to speak, applied almost solely to the Government in England, and the Government in India was carried on as before.

In 1861 important changes were made in the constitution both of the Supreme and Provincial Governments in India. The "Indian Councils Act"<sup>2</sup> then passed still regulates, for the most part, the Governments in India. I shall describe its principal provisions.

The Governor-General and the Ordinary members of his Council are appointed by the Crown. No limit of time is specified for their tenure of office, but custom, not often disregarded, has fixed it at five years. The term "Viceroy" has been commonly applied to the Governor-General since the transfer of the government to the Crown, but it is not recognised by law. There are five Ordinary members of Council, and, by an Act passed in 1874,<sup>3</sup> a sixth member may, at the discretion of the Crown, be appointed for public works. Three of the members must have served in India for at least ten years; two of them are members of the Covenanted Civil Service, and the third is a military officer; but

<sup>1</sup> 21 and 22 Vict. c. 106.

<sup>2</sup> 24 and 25 Vict. c. 67.

<sup>3</sup> 37 and 38 Vict. c. 91.

this distribution is a matter of custom, not of law. One of the two remaining members must be a Barrister, or a member of the Faculty of Advocates in Scotland, of not less than five years' standing; he has charge of the legislative department. The fifth member has charge of the finances. The Commander-in-Chief in India may also be, and in practice always is, an Extraordinary member of the Council. The Governors of Madras and Bombay become Extraordinary members if the Council meets within their presidencies. Whenever it is declared by the Governor-General in Council to be expedient that the Governor-General should visit any part of India without his Council, he may nominate one of the members of his Council to be President of the Council. The President, during the absence of the Governor-General, exercises the powers which the Governor-General may exercise at meetings of the Council, except that of assenting to or withholding assent to laws; and the Governor-General, when so absent, may himself exercise all or any of the powers which he might exercise as Governor-General in Council, except the power of making laws. The Council may assemble at any place in India which the Governor-General in Council appoints.

For the purposes of legislation, Additional members are nominated to the Council. The Legislative Council is often spoken of as if it had a separate existence, but this is a mistake; only one Council is known to the law. The Additional members are nominated by the Governor-General, and they join the Council when it meets for legislative purposes. Not less than one-half of their number must be persons not holding offices under the Government; some of them are always Natives of India. The Lieutenant-Governor of any province in which the

Council may meet acts as an Additional member. When the Council meets for legislative purposes, and the Ordinary members are present, the Government can usually command a majority of votes.

Under the Indian Councils Act of 1861 the maximum number of Additional members was twelve, all of whom were nominated at the discretion of the Governor-General. The Council, when it met for legislation only, could occupy itself with no matters except those directly connected with the legislative business before it. It had no concern whatever with any of the functions of the executive government. The Provincial Legislatures, of which I shall have again to speak, were similarly constituted, and their powers were similarly limited.

In 1892 an important change was made in the constitution of all the Indian Councils. It had long been felt that the time had come when the administration might gain much advantage if public opinion could be brought more largely to bear upon it. This was especially true of the Provincial Governments, the ordinary business of which is of a kind in which local knowledge is necessary, and on which the expression of intelligent independent criticism may often be very valuable. By an Act of Parliament, passed in 1892,<sup>1</sup> it was provided that the number of Additional members in the Council of the Governor-General should not be less than ten nor more than sixteen. The exact number is left to the discretion of the Governor-General for the time being. The Governor-General in Council, with the approval of the Secretary of State in Council, makes rules defining the manner in which the nominations of Additional members are to be made. under

<sup>1</sup> 55 and 56 Vict. c. 14.

which the annual Financial Statement of the Government may be discussed, and under which questions may be asked. It was obviously impossible to obtain, by any system of popular election or otherwise, any direct representation on the Governor-General's Council of the multifarious interests of the vast populations of the numerous countries of the Indian Empire, and the following procedure was adopted in the rules passed under the Act. There are sixteen Additional members, of whom six are officials appointed by the Governor-General, and ten are non-official. Four of the latter are appointed by the Governor-General on the recommendation of a majority of the non-official Additional members of the Provincial Legislatures, each of these bodies recommending one member. A fifth member is recommended by the Calcutta Chamber of Commerce. The Governor-General can, if he thinks fit, decline to accept a recommendation thus made, and in that case a fresh recommendation is submitted to him. The remaining five non-official members are nominated at the discretion of the Governor-General, "in such manner as shall appear to him most suitable with reference to the legislative business to be brought before the Council, and the due representation of the different classes of the community." In the words of a despatch from the Government of India, "measures may at one time be before the Council, relating to interests which ought to be specially represented in their discussion; at another time the legislative work may be of a different description, calling for the selection of representatives from particular local divisions of the empire, or of persons chosen to represent the most skilled opinion upon large measures affecting British India as a whole. It is desired also to reserve to the Governor-General

the liberty of inviting representatives from Native States."

Under the law as it stood, before the passing of the Act of 1892, there was no opportunity of criticising the financial policy of the Government except on those occasions when financial legislation was necessary. Under the rules now in force, the annual Financial Statement must be made publicly in the Council; every member is at liberty to make any observations that he thinks fit, and the Financial member of Council and the President have the right of reply.

Rules have also been made defining the conditions under which questions may be asked in the Council. The questions, of which due notice has to be given, must be requests for information only, and must not be put in argumentative, or hypothetical, or defamatory language, nor is discussion permitted in respect of an answer given to a question on behalf of the Government. These two restrictions are substantially identical with those in force in the British House of Commons. The President may disallow any question which, in his opinion, cannot be answered consistently with the public interests.

Certain Acts of Parliament under which the Government of India is constituted cannot be touched, and no law can be made affecting the authority of Parliament or allegiance to the Crown, but with these exceptions the legislative powers of the Governor-General in Council over the whole of British India are unrestricted. Measures affecting the public debt or revenues of India, the religion of any of His Majesty's subjects, the discipline or maintenance of the military or naval forces, and the relations of the Government with Foreign States, cannot be introduced by any member without the



previous sanction of the Governor-General. Every Act requires the Governor-General's assent. The assent of the Crown is not necessary to the validity of an Act, but the Crown can disallow any Act that has been passed.

Apart from these ordinary legislative powers, the Governor-General in Council was authorised in 1870<sup>1</sup> to make, without calling in the Additional members, "Regulations" having the force of law for the less advanced parts of the country, where a system of administration simpler than that in force elsewhere is desirable. The effect of this was to put on a legal basis the administration of the so-called "Non-Regulation Provinces."

Further, in cases of urgent necessity, the Governor-General can, on his own authority and without reference to his Council, make Ordinances which have the force of law for six months. This power was given by the Act of 1861 for the first time. It has seldom been exercised, and only for reasons of temporary convenience.

The constitution of the Executive Governments in Madras and Bombay was not altered by the Act of 1861, and they still retain some signs of their former dignity and partial independence. On certain matters they correspond directly with the Secretary of State, a privilege not possessed by other Provincial Governments. The Governor and the Ordinary members of Council are appointed by the Crown. The Governor is usually an English statesman sent from England. Two members of the Civil Service constitute the Council. Until 1893 there was, in each of the two Presidencies, a Commander-in-Chief, who was also a member of the Council, but, as I shall have to notice in describing the constitution of

<sup>1</sup> 33 Vict. c. 3, sec. 1.

the Army in India, the offices of Provincial Commander-in-Chief were, in that year, abolished. The power of legislation, which had been taken away in Madras and Bombay by the Act of 1833, was restored in 1861.

Under the Act of 1892, to which I have already referred, changes similar to those made in the Council of the Governor-General were also made in the Councils of the Governments of Madras and Bombay. Additional members are nominated by the Governor, and they join the Council when it meets for legislative purposes. Their number, both in Madras and Bombay, is twenty, of whom, under the rules laid down, not more than nine can be officials. The system under which the non-official Additional members are chosen is so nearly identical in the two provinces, that it will be sufficient to describe that adopted in one of them. I take the Bombay Council as the example. There are eleven non-official members. Nominations to eight of these seats are made by the Governor on the recommendation of various bodies and associations. The Corporation of Bombay and the Senate of the University each recommend one member. Six members are recommended by groups of Municipal Corporations, groups of District Local Boards, classes of large landholders, and by such Associations of merchants, manufacturers, or tradesmen as the Governor in Council may prescribe. The remaining non-official members are nominated by the Governor "in such manner as shall in his opinion secure a fair representation of the different classes of the community."

The rules for the discussion of the annual Financial Statements in the Provincial Councils are the same as those applicable to the Council of the Governor-General, except that the discussion must be limited to those branches of revenue and expenditure which are under

the control of the Provincial Government. The rules regarding questions are also the same, with two restrictions. Questions cannot be asked or answered as to any matters other than those under the control of the Provincial Government; and in matters which are or have been the subject of controversy between the Provincial Government and the Government of India or the Secretary of State, no question can be asked or answer given except on matters of fact.

All laws passed by the Provincial Legislatures require the sanction of the Governor-General, and may be disallowed by the Crown. The powers of the Governor General in Council to legislate for all matters throughout India are not affected by the establishment of the Provincial Legislatures, but, as a general rule, the latter are left to deal with subjects of provincial and local interest. They cannot repeal or amend any Act of Parliament, or any law passed in India before the time when the Indian Councils Act of 1861 came into operation, nor, except with the previous sanction of the Governor-General, can they take into consideration any measure affecting the public debt, customs, imperial taxation, currency, the post office and telegraph, the penal code, religion, the military and naval forces, patents, copyright, or relations with Foreign States.

In the other great provinces of India the Executive Governments are differently constituted from those of Madras and Bombay. Bengal, the United Provinces of Agra and Oudh, the Punjab, and Burma are administered by Lieutenant-Governors; they must be chosen from officers in the service of the Crown who have served in India for at least ten years; they are appointed by the Governor-General with the approval of the Crown; and, with one exception, they have

always been members of the Covenanted Civil Service.<sup>1</sup> The Lieutenant-Governors have no Councils for executive business, but the Governor-General in Council may establish in each province a Council for legislative purposes only. This power has been exercised in each of the Lieutenant-Governorships; I shall have occasion to refer again to their Legislative Councils; they are similar in their constitution to those in Madras and Bombay, the Lieutenant-Governor taking the place of the Governor; but in the Punjab and in Burma, the Councils having been formed under the Statute of 1861 and not under that of 1892, the members are all nominated. The Governments of the Central Provinces and Assam are administered by Chief Commissioners. Excepting in name and dignity and in amount of salary and patronage, there is no great difference between them and Lieutenant-Governors. For provinces which have no legislatures of their own, laws are passed by the Governor-General in Council.

I must now speak of the manner in which the executive business of the Governor-General in Council is transacted. The system is very different from that in force under the Government of the East India Company. Although after the Act of 1793 the power of the Governor-General to over-rule his Council was not open to question, the fundamental idea, on which previous legislation had been based, still remained, that the Government was to be carried on by the Governor-General in concert with the whole Council. All public business of every kind, however trivial, was supposed to come before all the members of the Government. Questions were ordinarily decided by the majority, the Governor-General having a casting vote if the votes

<sup>1</sup> 5 and 6 Will. IV. c. 52, sec. 2, and 16 and 17 Vict. c. 95, sec. 16.

were equal. If the Governor-General determined to over-rule the majority, it was provided that he and the members of Council should "mutually exchange with and communicate in writing to each other the grounds and reasons of their respective opinions." They were then to meet a second time, and if both parties retained their first opinions, their minutes were to be entered on the consultations, and the orders of the Governor-General were to be carried out.

In his *Essay on Representative Government*, published in 1861, when the procedure which I have described was still legally in force, Mr. J. S. Mill described the manner in which he considered that Ministers in charge of the great departments of an Executive Government ought to be assisted by Councils. —

"The Councils should be consultative merely, in this sense that the ultimate decision should rest undividedly with the Minister himself: but neither ought they to be looked upon, or to look upon themselves as ciphers, or as capable of being reduced to such at his pleasure. The advisers attached to a powerful and perhaps self-willed man ought to be placed under conditions which make it impossible for them, without discredit, not to express an opinion, and impossible for him not to listen to and consider their recommendations, whether he adopts them or not. The relation which ought to exist between a chief and this description of advisers is very accurately hit by the constitution of the Governor-General and those of the different presidencies in India. These Councils are composed of persons who have professional knowledge of Indian affairs, which the Governor-General and Governors usually lack, and which it would not be desirable to require of them. As a rule, every member of Council is expected to give an opinion, which is, of course, very often a simple acquiescence; but if there is a difference of sentiment, it is at the option of every member, and is the invariable practice, to record the reasons of his opinion; the Governor-General or Governor doing the same. In ordinary cases the decision is according to the sense of the majority; the Council, therefore, has a substantial part in the Government, but

if the Governor-General or Governor thinks fit, he may set aside even their unanimous opinion, recording his reasons. The result is that the chief is, individually and effectually, responsible for every act of the Government. The members of Council have only the responsibility of advisers; but it is always known, from documents capable of being produced, and which, if called for by Parliament or public opinion, always are produced, what each has advised, and what reasons he gave for his advice; while from their dignified position and ostensible participation in all acts of government, they have nearly as strong motives to apply themselves to the public business, and to form and express a well-considered opinion on every part of it, as if the whole responsibility rested with themselves."

I must continue my quotation, for Mr. Mill's commentary on the system thus described is remarkable:—

"This mode of conducting the highest class of administrative business is one of the most successful instances of the adaptation of means to ends which political history, not hitherto very prolific in works of skill and contrivance, has yet to show. It is one of the acquisitions with which the art of politics has been enriched by the experience of the East India Company's rule; and like most of the other wise contrivances by which India has been preserved to this country, and an amount of good government produced which is truly wonderful considering the circumstances and the materials, it is probably destined to perish in the general holocaust which the traditions of Indian government seem fated to undergo, since they have been placed at the mercy of public ignorance and the presumptuous vanity of political men."

Mr. Mill's anticipations have been to some extent verified. The manner of transacting business which existed under the East India Company has perished, but, I venture to say, not for the reasons which he predicted, but because it was not the wise contrivance which he supposed. The principle which he laid down was undoubtedly true, that while a man in the position of Governor-General of India ought to possess, in the

last resort, power to act upon his own judgment, he ought also to be obliged to hear the opinions of experienced councillors, and that those councillors should have the right of making their opinions known, whether they were followed or not. This principle has not been infringed. If Mr. Mill had himself seen in operation the system which he described, he would, I am sure, have given it a different character. The truth is that a more cumbrous, I might say a more impossible, system of administration for a great empire could hardly have been invented than that which prevailed under the Government of the East India Company, when every case was supposed to be laid before the Governor-General and the whole Council, and to be decided by them collectively. The only reason that enabled such a system to last so long was that in matters requiring prompt and vigorous action it was not really acted upon.

In the latter years of the East India Company, and for a few years after the transfer of the government to the Crown, the Governor-General was frequently separated from his Council. His presence was often required in Northern India by reasons of political necessity. He was authorised to exercise, while absent from the Council, all the powers of the Governor-General in Council, except the power of legislation. The Council remained in Calcutta under the presidency of the senior member, who exercised, during the Governor-General's absence, all the powers of the Governor-General in Council, except the power of giving assent to laws. There was a double Government, with a division of authority and responsibility fatal to good administration. Sir Henry Maine has described, from his own observation as a member of Council, the manner in which the system actually worked :—