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BRITISH INDIA



Photo by *W & D Downey*

H M. QUEEN VICTORIA
First Empress of India

BA, IADUR

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BRITISH INDIA

FROM QUEEN ELIZABETH TO LORD READING

BY

AN INDIAN MAHOMEDAN

WITH A FOREWORD BY

SIR THEODORE MORISON

K.C.S.I., K.C.I.E.

Principal of Armstrong College, University of Durham

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LONDON
SIR ISAAC PITMAN & SONS, LTD.
PARKER STREET, KINGSWAY, W.C.2
BATH, MELBOURNE, TORONTO, NEW YORK
1926

THIS WORK IS PUBLISHED SOLELY AS A HUMBLE RECOGNITION OF THE GREAT BLESSING BRITISH RULE HAS CONFERRED ON INDIA

PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN
AT THE PITMAN PRESS, BATH

PREFACE

THE close of Lord Reading's tenure of the office of Viceroy provides a convenient opportunity for making a retrospect of British presence and rule in India. It is necessary to be precise, for the British were in India for a century and a half before they had anything to do with its rule, and for a further half-century after the exploits of Clive their rule was qualified in authority and limited in extent.

In the following pages I have dealt with both periods, and traced to the best of my ability the transition from merchant-adventurers to sovereign-rulers.

The arrival of a new Viceroy in the person of Lord Irwin, grandson of that great statesman, Sir Charles Wood (subsequently Viscount Halifax), whose name is inseparably connected with the incidents of the transfer of direct authority to the Crown, on the disappearance of the East India Company, occurs at a critical moment in the relations of Britain and India. The question of thorough, sincere, and useful co-operation between the two peoples in the great task of making India prosperous, happy, and secure is the burning problem of the hour, and, at this moment, doubt, more than confidence in the result, obscures the sky. It is satisfactory to see from his farewell speeches in England that Lord Irwin inclines to the opinion that the situation is brightening, and that in the end concord and union will prevail. India has often been called the brightest jewel in the British Crown. A contented India must be a tower of strength in the consolidation and endurance of the British Empire.

Co-operation signifies a working together, and not a

pulling apart. If on the side of the British the becoming qualities are toleration and consideration, not less does the duty fall on Indians to be appreciative and to manifest the desire to be conciliated. That there is a common interest to be served cannot be doubted, and for its realization there must be a common effort. That duty devolves in equal shares on the intelligent members of both communities. The partnership can only be formed when its terms are clearly defined, and when it is recognized that no other arrangement can produce beneficial and enduring results.

Lord Irwin touched the true chord of sympathy when he expressed his conviction that " for the future of India, our own people and the peoples of India had each their peculiar and vital contribution to offer."

CONTENTS

CHAP.		PAGE
	PREFACE	v
	FOREWORD	xi
I.	THE ENGLISH ADVENTURERS	1
II.	THE MOGUL DYNASTY	14
III.	ANGLO-FRENCH RIVALRY	26
IV.	THE ACQUISITION OF BENGAL	39
V.	THE STRUGGLE WITH HYDER ALI AND TIPU SULTAN	51
VI.	THE WARS WITH THE MARATHAS	63
VII.	EXTERNAL MOVEMENTS	77
VIII.	INTERNAL PROBLEMS	89
IX.	THE FIRST ERA OF REFORM	103
X.	THE NEW DEPARTURE	116
XI.	THE FIRST AFGHAN WAR	132
XII.	AN EPOCH OF MISFORTUNE*	147
XIII.	THE FIRST SIKH WAR	163
XIV.	THE ANNEXATION OF THE PUNJAB	177
XV.	THE SECOND BURMESE WAR	190
XVI.	ADOPTIONS, LAPSES, AND ESCHEATS	203
XVII.	THE ANNEXATION OF OUDH	217
XVIII.	WARNINGS, AND PORTENTS OF THE STORM	231
XIX.	THE STORM BURSTS	245
XX.	THE TIDE TURNS	262
XXI.	THE TRANSFER TO THE CROWN	277
XXII.	A TRANSITIONAL PERIOD	291
XXIII.	AN IRISH VICEROY	305
XXIV.	THE PRINCE OF WALES'S VISIT	323
XXV.	EMPRESS OF INDIA	336
XXVI.	THE LAST AFGHAN WAR	349

CHAP.		PAGE
XXVII.	LORD RIPON'S VICEROYALTY . . .	366
XXVIII.	LORD DUFFERIN'S FIRST PERIOD . .	377
XXIX.	THE THIRD BURMESE WAR . . .	390
XXX.	LORD DUFFERIN—A RETROSPECT . .	401
XXXI.	LORD LANSDOWNE'S VICEROYALTY . .	414
XXXII.	LORD ELGIN'S VICEROYALTY . . .	428
XXXIII.	LORD CURZON'S PRO-CONSULSHIP . .	441
XXXIV.	THE EXPEDITION INTO TIBET . . .	455
XXXV.	LORD CURZON'S SECOND PERIOD . .	466
XXXVI.	THE EARL OF MINTO	478
XXXVII.	THE MORLEY-MINTO REFORMS . . .	490
XXXVIII.	LORD HARDINGE OF PENSHURST . .	502
XXXIX.	THE CHELMSFORD-MONTAGU ERA . .	519
XL.	LORD READING'S VICEROYALTY . . .	533
	INDEX	553

ILLUSTRATIONS

H.M. QUEEN VICTORIA, FIRST EMPRESS OF INDIA	*Frontispiece*	
THE MARQUIS OF DALHOUSIE	*Facing p.*	178
THE EARL CANNING	,,	246
THE EARL OF LYTTON	,,	336
THE MARQUIS OF DUFFERIN AND AVA	,,	378
H.M. KING EDWARD VII AND H.M. QUEEN ALEXANDRA	,,	440
THE MARQUIS OF CURZON	,,	466
H.M. KING GEORGE V AND H.M. QUEEN MARY	,,	502
LORD HARDINGE OF PENSHURST	,,	516
THE EARL OF READING	,,	536

FOREWORD

THE verdict of an Indian historian upon the conduct of the English in India from the days of Queen Elizabeth to Lord Reading cannot fail to interest Englishmen. We know our own opinion upon our work; we know also the opinion of the political parties which claim to represent the Indian people; but what may be the judgment of the sane and sober mass of India's educated public few of us would venture to affirm. Probably no one now living is competent to give an impartial verdict; the matter of controversy is too near us. We have ourselves taken part in the events which are still *sub judice*, and the emotions which they kindled have not yet subsided.

The author of the following pages has approached his task with conspicuous impartiality and moderation, but the reader cannot fail to note that all the incidents which provoke political passion have been crowded into the last forty years. Nothing in the whole story of British India is more remarkable than the rapidity with which the political constitution of India has been transformed; in the course of one generation its government has changed from an autocracy into a quasi popular constitution. When I first went out to India in January, 1886, the Government was still in essentials what it had been ever since the retirement of Warren Hastings; it was the government of a Civil Service composed for the most part of Englishmen, responsible in theory, if not in practice, to the British Parliament. It was, quite frankly, a bureaucracy, or, as the wags of Simla used to put it, "government by a dispatch box occasionally tempered by the loss of the key." It is easy to find fault with its constitution, but we cannot fail to recognize that for a hundred years this government did splendid work; the English administrators, military no less than civil, worked hard at the establishment of even-handed justice, the assessment of the land revenue, the making of

roads, railways and canals, and the prevention of famine. This was administrative work of a high order, and it is to this administrative work that the present prosperity of India is due. But the processes of administration are not dramatic. They are not marked by brilliant or tragic episodes; it is very difficult to weave them into the texture of chronological history, and to be quite plain they make for the ordinary man but dull reading. The only way in which the story of the first hundred years of British rule can be fairly told is to take, one by one, the administrative problems to which generations of great civilians devoted their lives, and show how by honesty and hard work they introduced order and well-being in the place of lawlessness and poverty.

By the eighties of last century good government had been established through the length and breadth of India. The advantages to be gained by this kind of administration had all been realized. But the Indian people had in the meanwhile been making great, though unchronicled, progress in education and citizenship, and our admirably efficient bureaucracy was slow to perceive that Indians could not always be contented with the paternal rule of foreigners, that they had a natural and wholly laudable ambition to share in the government of their own country, and that many of them had given proof of great capacity and of loyal devotion to the British Crown. Looking back on the past, I cannot help regretting that we English did not meet the demands of the young Indian nationalists with more generosity. They began by asking for a share in the higher posts of administration; the claim for "simultaneous examinations in India and England" was, in substance, if not in form, a very reasonable demand. If we had had the political prescience to accede to it, the history of the last forty years would have been less chequered. In my opinion the English much exaggerated the risks attendant upon a large admission of Indians to the public services. The Indians make very good public servants, and they have a very honourable tradition of loyalty to the employer, or, as the Eastern phrase is, "to the hand which gives the salt." In those

days we might have admitted Indians to the bureaucracy, and so given them a share in the government of their own country without changing the constitution.

What we did was less wise. We retained the predominance of the English element on the plea that the efficiency of the public services must be maintained, but as a " sop to Cerberus " we conceded the quasi democratic right of criticizing the administration. The Indian nationalists very naturally pressed their attack upon the point where we showed a readiness to yield ; their success in this direction has been astonishingly rapid. The first movement down the slippery slope at the bottom of which is representative government was begun in 1892, when the Legislative Councils were given the right to discuss questions of finance and to interpellate the Government. In 1909, Lord Morley and Lord Minto greatly extended the functions of these Councils, and assigned to them many of the attributes of representative chambers. In 1917, by the mouth of Mr. Edwin Montagu, His Majesty's Government declared that the object of British policy was " the gradual development of self-governing institutions with a view to the progressive realization of responsible government in India as an integral part of the British Empire." Mr. Lionel Curtis explained to the Indian people that in constitutions the words " responsible government " have the technical meaning of a government responsible to an elected assembly, and thus by the Act of 1919 India was invited to expect that after wandering for some years in the desert of Dyarchy, she would reach a Promised Land in which supreme power would be wielded by an elected Assembly.

The British people may have been slow to initiate changes in the government of India, but when once they began they moved fast. In the course of less than a generation they have attempted to perform two very difficult and delicate operations—

(1) The transfer of the administration of India from English to Indian hands ;

(2) The transformation of an autocratic into a popular government.

Of these two operations the latter appears to me to be by far the most difficult and hazardous. The first does not, in my opinion, involve any considerable risks to the security of India. Provided that the administration were autocratic, I believe that the government of India could be carried on even if the services were 100 per cent Indian, and this is a degree of "Indianization" which no party in India demands. But a democratic government, theoretically responsible to an Indian electorate, is a much more risky experiment. It is based upon assumptions, the validity of which we have not even begun to test. Representative government works fairly well in England, because our legislature reflects with reasonable fidelity the constitution of English society. But the constitution of Indian society is radically different to that of our own, and it is rash in the extreme to assume that it can be faithfully reflected by the same representative institutions. Of course, if you hold an election in India you will get a result; someone will be elected; but you have no guarantee that the electors hold his opinions or will support them by material force in time of need. Even among Europeans, if unpractised in popular government, representation plays strange tricks. Taine records that in the elections to the first Convention the Vendée returned four representatives, all atheists and all regicides; and yet a few months afterwards the people of the Vendée rose to a man to die for the Church and the King.

Similar anomalies may exist to-day in the Indian Assemblies, and they are the more possible because the electors are necessarily a very small percentage of the total population. Of what, I wonder, are the unrepresented masses thinking? What, for instance, do the Untouchables think of the Swarajists? Some day a gust of passion may sweep through these depressed castes and impel them to some wild Jacquerie. Will they then listen to the "Philosophes" of India, or will they feed fat their ancient grudge against the Brahman and the landlord and the money-lender, in murder, rapine and arson? In that wild hour, if it ever comes, India will need not an elected assembly, representative of the divisions of the people, but a strong Executive; to my mind,

the important question is not whether that Executive is composed of Englishmen or Indians, but whether it is capable of acting promptly and vigorously, confident of official support.

It will be seen from the following pages that some Indians are growing uneasy over the spread of anarchic opinions. The apprehensions are expressed with studied moderation but without ambiguity ; they represent an important section of Muhamadan opinion which deserves serious consideration.

THEODORE MORISON

BRITISH INDIA

CHAPTER I

THE ENGLISH ADVENTURERS

It is well known that the English came first to India in search of trade and wealth, and that any idea of conquest was not in their minds. Their European rivals of the sixteenth century, the Portuguese and the Spaniards, had shown them the way, and it was not in their spirit to lag behind. Sir Francis Drake and Thomas Cavendish by their successful circumnavigations of the globe in 1577 and 1586 respectively had opened the eyes of their countrymen to "the wealth of Ormus and of Ind," and to the bright prospects of trade with the Spice Islands and China. The overthrow of the Spanish Armada removed the chief impediment to their enterprise, and the occasional spoils of Portuguese and Spanish galleons, by their magnificence, whetted their appetite for more. Still, the Portuguese following up their first triumph by Da Gama's discovery of the Cape route in 1497 had gained the start of a century, fastening their hold on the most advantageous positions from the Persian Gulf to Japan. In India they had secured a monopoly of trade by the Emperor's firman, and their commercial policy was seconded by the religious propaganda of the energetic delegates of the Church of Rome. For a hundred years they thus excluded all European intruders. If any intelligent observer had appraised the situation of Europeans in Asia in the year 1600 he would have been able to give good reasons for concluding that the Portuguese would hold their own—at the same time that he furnished further proof of the danger of prophesying under the shifting fortunes of mankind.

Immediately after the defeat of the Armada, ships were fitted out by private adventurers in England to sail for the Indies. Some never left port, and others got only half-way.

Those that set out in 1591 and 1596 respectively may be mentioned, because they were lost on the voyage without leaving any trace. The expedition of 1596 consisted of three ships under Sir Robert Dudley's flag, and Queen Elizabeth is said to have so far favoured it as to risk a little of her money in the venture. Notwithstanding this discouraging commencement the movement was bound to continue, and the success of the Dutch in the Spice Islands, followed by the increase in the price of pepper, provided a stimulus to fresh exertions.

The London merchants took the lead in giving a practical form to the desire that was prevalent in the commercial as well as the nautical circles of the kingdom. They met together in common consultation at Founders' Hall in the City. They sought information far and wide from navigators, and finally they drew up the articles of an Association which they submitted to the Privy Council in 1599 for ratification, with the view of obtaining a Royal Charter. It was an anxious moment in the international arena. Peace with Spain was desired, and Portugal was part of Spain; troubles with the Netherlands seemed imminent. The Queen was slow to give her decision. It was not till the last day of the year 1600 that Queen Elizabeth signed the Royal Charter incorporating "the Company of Merchants of London trading to the East Indies," with which formal act the history of the East India Company began.

If the preliminaries were tedious, the action of the London merchants was prompt in beginning operations at once on the precise definition of their rights and privileges. A subscription list was opened and subscribers came forward in sufficient numbers for a first venture, £68,373 being deposited by 217 subscribers. Not only the merchants, but the nobility and many persons belonging to the official classes and attached to the Court came in and put down their money. The profits were to be divided in proportion to the individual shares. A fresh list was opened for each enterprise, or voyage, and this was the rule for the first three or four attempts, these being designated the Separate Voyages. The next sequence of voyages, ten in number

down to 1622, were styled Joint Stock, but it was only after 1657 that the Permanent Joint Stock was introduced, the fund becoming then of general and not separate employment.

The first expedition was composed of five vessels named the *Mare Scourge, Hector, Ascension, Gift,* and *Susan.* The command was given to James Lancaster, who had sailed with one of the earlier ships which had been compelled to return, but he had acquired some knowledge of the seas to be traversed. This squadron did not touch India, but it reached the Spice Islands, establishing what was called a "House of Trade" at Bantam in the island of Java. The general result in the way of information as well as profit was considered satisfactory. Captain Lancaster was knighted on his return by James I, who had then succeeded Queen Elizabeth. A second expedition was despatched in 1604, the year of Lancaster's return, but again it did not touch the Indian coast. Its commander, Henry Middleton, strengthened the station at Bantam, and established others at Banda and Amboyna. The profits of the two first expeditions were stated to be between 100 and 200 per cent.

The third of these voyages was the first that was undertaken for the specific purpose of reaching India. It sailed in the year 1607, but it was chiefly remarkable for the visit of one of its captains, John Hawkins, to Agra, where the Emperor Jehangir held his Court. Although his mission was not very regular in form he was the bearer of a letter from the King to the Great Mogul, and of a certain number of presents which unfortunately went astray. Hawkins, notwithstanding the intrigues of the Portuguese, was allowed to reside during three years at Agra, but when he left in 1611 he had failed to obtain any material concessions. Promises had been given of the privilege of forming an establishment at Surat, but no firman had been issued. This was not surprising, for at that moment nothing had happened to raise the reputation of the English to a higher point than that of the Portuguese.

A complete change in the scene was now to take place, and it was brought about by what may be called a double action. During the year 1611 there had been some minor

naval encounters between the English and the Portuguese at the mouth of the Tapti and in the Gulf of Cambay, but without any decisive result. In 1614 a well-equipped squadron of four superior ships under the command of Captain Nicholas Downton arrived in Swally Bay outside Surat. This expedition was called the first of the Joint Stock Voyages—954 persons having invested the enormous sum, for that day, of £1,600,000 in the venture. The fighting power of the squadron seems to have been in due proportion with the interests it represented. Its appearance roused the ire of the Portuguese Viceroy at Goa, who fitted out the most formidable force he could get together to dispute the mastery of the Indian seas with these new-comers.

The encounter took place in January, 1615, and the following very graphic description of it was given in a letter sent home to the company by one of the combatants—

"I wrote you of the Viceroy's coming to the bar where he rid quietly till yesterday, and then sent three ships to Swally with thirty-five or thirty-six frigates, whereupon one of our smallest ships went out and fought with them, and in the end forced the frigates to fly, and took the three ships which after an hour's possession our General Downton set on fire. God grant us the like success with the rest and make us thankful for this. . . . The *Hope* being the first that began the fight, being at once laid aboard by the three Portugal ships and as many Portugal frigates as could lie about her, having entered their men into her and twice got to her forecastle, but they very lustily shipped them off again till such time as the other ships came and rescued her, else they would have put her in great danger. The Portugals came running aboard with great resolution, not so much as shooting a shot, but their courages were soon quailed. There were in their three ships many cavaliers, the most part whereof were most miserably burned and drowned. So in the report they lost in all between four and five hundred men."[1]

[1] *Letters Received by the East India Company from its Servants in the East*, Vol. II, 1613–15, edited by Sir William Foster, Historiographer at the India Office.

The heroic Downton having thus smashed up the Portuguese on the Indian coast, sailed on to Java, where he died suddenly of fever. He was thus deprived of the honour he would have received on his return home. A member of his staff preserved his merit by composing the following striking epitaph—

> " Lamented, admired, unequalled !
> He was the true hero, piety and valour being
> seasoned by gravity and modesty."

These martial occurrences confirmed the diplomatic success that had been obtained a few months earlier. In 1614 on the initiative of the company, King James accredited Sir Thomas Roe as a special Ambassador to the Great Mogul. It was a royal mission suitable to the dignity of the Court to which the Ambassador was proceeding, and the envoy took with him an adequate supply of presents. Roe found the Emperor Jehangir at Ajmere in January, 1616, and met with such an honourable reception that he remained at his Court for two years in high favour. The Emperor's wife, the celebrated Nur Jehan, took a favourable view of the Ambassador's address, and exerted her influence in support of his petition with the result that the long solicited favour for an English factory at Surat and the necessary licence to carry on trade by the Imperial firman were granted. Sub-factories were also permitted to be established at Gogra, Cambay and Ahmedabad. It must be mentioned that Sir Thomas Roe was a man of exceptional parts. Of handsome presence, he was gifted with the most ingratiating manners, and possessed unfailing tact. He had discovered the Amazon before his visit to India, and after his return he represented his country with equal distinction at the Courts of Poland and Stambul. He thus combined the qualities of a great explorer and a tactful envoy—a combination rarely met with. The Emperor Jehangir paid him many compliments and held him in favour to the end of his sojourn, which was a remarkable occurrence in an Oriental Court.

The Portuguese were thus compelled to admit the presence

of the English in the centre of trade in Western India on a footing of equality with themselves, but no doubt they did so the more readily because they were sensible of their enfeebled state. The relations of the two nations were finally arranged by Treaty in 1635.

The conclusion of the competition between the Portuguese and the English was followed by intensified bitterness between the latter and the Dutch farther east. Religious differences did not complicate their strife because they were both of the same persuasion and had been allies. Yet no rivalry could have been more bitter than theirs was during the greater part of the seventeenth century. The English were not fortunate and met with many reverses. Their ships were destroyed or captured, their stations surprised and burnt down, their countrymen massacred at Pulo Condore and Amboyna, and the Dutch firmly established their supremacy over the Eastern Archipelago. But the consequences of these misfortunes reacted upon the position in India, for the English only withdrew from Java and its sister isles to concentrate their attention on India and her affairs.

The establishment of the English factory at Surat and its dependencies was followed by the acquisition of similar rights in various parts of India, including some over which the Moguls at that moment had not established their sway. In 1625 Armagon, on the Coromandel coast, was occupied as a head or fortified station, but being found unsuitable for the purpose a move was made in 1639 to Fort St. George, on the site of the future city of Madras. In 1632 the King of Golconda sanctioned an English station at Masulipatam, and about the same time the Emperor granted a similar favour at Peeplay for Bengal. Peeplay proved of no use, and the Bengal factory was removed first to Hughli and then to Chuttanuttee or Calcutta.

Surat continued to enjoy pride of place on the west coast down to 1687 in spite of the transfer of Bombay by Charles II to the company for an annuity of £10. One incident in its fortunes claims notice. In 1664 the Maratha leader, Sivaji, having conquered Malwa, resolved to seize Surat, where he

promised himself much spoil at the expense of the European traders. He had no difficulty in capturing the town and in plundering its rich bazaars and the houses of the Parsees. He also occupied the Dutch factory, and his plunder altogether was said to amount to a million sterling. He intended to increase it at the expense of the English, but when he came to examine the factory he found it very different from the others.

Sir George Oxenden was then in command at Surat under the title of "Governor of the English in India," and tidings of the coming attack seems to have reached him, for he called up men and cannon from the ships at Swally and prepared to make a stout defence. When Sivaji examined the strong position of the English he decided after a few shots were fired to draw off his cavalry and to rest satisfied with what he had got. Sivaji was then in rebellion against the Emperor, who was immensely pleased at the Maratha's rebuff, and the English rose higher than before in his estimation. The possession of Bombay differed from all the other stations in its fundamental character. They were held by the firmans of either the Emperor or of one of the still unsubdued Hindu kings, while it was a transfer from one European king to another, and held in full sovereignty.

There is no doubt that the acquisition of Bombay, which was thought at first to be a place of little value, produced new ideas on the subject of the position in India and opened up a fresh vista of political activity. The possession confined to an island was separate from the rest of the country, and the Emperor's officials had no right of entry. The advantages of this tenure were so obvious that a new programme was drafted to the effect that the Company did not desire any more stations or factories, but that no chance should be thrown away of acquiring territorial possessions free of all outside control. The first definition of the new policy was given in a letter of instructions sent out in 1687 by the Court to its servants in India—

"The increase of our *revenue* is the subject of our care as much as our trade; 'tis *that* must maintain our forces when twenty accidents may interrupt our trade, 'tis that must

make us a nation in India ; without that we are but a great number of interlopers united by his Majesty's Royal Charter fit only to trade where nobody of power thinks it their interest to prevent us ; and upon this account it is that the wise Dutch in all their general advices that we have seen write ten paragraphs concerning their Government, their civil and military policy, warfare, and the increase of their revenue for one paragraph they write concerning trade."

The compliment to the Dutch may have been inspired by the fact that a Dutch ruler had just acquired the English Throne, but if the history of Anglo-Dutch relations is carefully studied it will be seen that there was no reason at any time for the narrow-minded and self-seeking Dutchmen to receive compliments. In 1664 Pepys stated in his Diary that " there is great talk of the Dutch proclaiming themselves in India lords of the Southern seas and denying traffic there to all ships but their own upon pain of confiscation." The Spaniards and Portuguese were not the only monopolizers. The Dutch carried their arrogance still farther.

But the Company's instructions did not end at that point. They went on to lay down a scheme of future policy which in its main aspects has been followed ever since, with the result that a British Empire exists, however different and more comprehensive it may be than what was first conceived. It is not a monopolizing separation of races, but an embracing congeries of brother States. The text of this mandate deserves preservation—

" It is our object to establish such a polity of civil and military power and to create and secure such a large revenue as may be the foundation of a large well-grounded sure English dominion in India for all time to come."

It is a curious fact that has never been clearly explained, that while the Company obtained its privileges and established its position on the Bombay side under the authority of the Emperor and by amicable relations with his officers, its procedure in Bengal was very different. During the earlier years of trade in that quarter privileges had been gained by the timely services Dr. Gabriel Broughton had

rendered in his medical capacity to the Emperor Shah Jehan in 1645–6, but these had passed out of memory in the time of his successor, the Great Aurangzeb, who extended the Mogul power throughout India. The new Emperor was self-assertive, and his officers naturally imitated him. The English merchants seem to have given offence, and were described as "a company of base quarrelling people and foul dealers." But their chief head of offence lay in removing of their own accord their head factory from Hughli to Chuttanuttee, where they constructed a fort, which they named Fort William after the new King. Thereupon disputes and collisions began to be frequent, and although the Emperor was engaged in much more important matters elsewhere, he gave orders that the pretensions of the English were to be curbed. On their side the English, under Job Charnock, were in no mood to be repressed, and having obtained some reinforcements from Europe, they determined to make a fight for it. In this decision they were supported by the Court, for the reinforcements were accompanied by the following letter of instructions—

"You must always understand that though we prepare for and resolve to enter into a war with the Moguls (being necessitated thereto) our ultimate end is peace for as we have never done it so our natures are most adverse to bloodshed and rapine which usually attend the most just war. But we have no remedy left but either to desert our trade, or we must draw the sword his Majesty hath entrusted us with to vindicate the rights and honour of the English nation in India."

Hostilities of a kind followed, but the issue was not the one expected, for the English lost some of their ships and a good many of their men. The principal part of the fighting took place on the island of Hidgley. But neither did the Moguls score any decisive success. They also lost some of their ships, and after a stubborn fight one of their batteries was carried at the bayonet point; the result being that both sides were soon brought to a peaceful mood. The Emperor granted terms for the resumption of trade in the

year 1690, which were accepted and remained in force for over sixty years down to the Black Hole. It may be observed that the Company, dissatisfied with the results of trade on the Bombay side, had turned with greater hope to Bengal, which they described as "the best flower in the Company's garden," and in this sense they were not to be disappointed.

Meantime the Company had had troubles of its own at home, and more than once its very existence seemed to be in peril. Queen Elizabeth's Charter had a limitation. It only ran for fifteen years. In 1609 James I renewed it in perpetuity, subject to a clause in the Charter preserving the superior interests of the State. This Company was at first described as "The Governor and Company of Merchants of London trading to the East Indies," but when rivals appeared on the scene this title was contracted for clearness' sake into the London Company. The first of these rivals appeared in 1635, and was known as Courten's Association. Charles I, in want of funds, gave it a special licence to trade with India, China, Madagascar and Sumatra in return for a royalty. Its proceedings were marked by violence and its agents relied on force. They seized Mogul ships at Diu and elsewhere, they bombarded Canton. In 1650 it was bought up by the London Company and absorbed by it. The field once more seemed clear, but Cromwell followed the King's example, and for a small sum recognized the Association of Merchant Adventurers The Association had but a short life, and it too was merged in the London Company. In 1657 Cromwell made the best reparation he could by granting a new Charter and the Company was put upon a Permanent Joint Stock basis with a capital of £740,000. Cromwell's death made no difference, for after the Restoration, Charles II, without making any reference to his predecessor, granted a licence which signified its continuance undisturbed.

For nearly forty years the London Company held the field, but it was to have one more experience of the fickleness of rulers when they are in need of money. William of Orange came on the scene as an entire stranger, and he

recked nothing of the promises of the rulers he had succeeded, nor did he think much of keeping his own. Powerful members of his Court joined together to end the monopoly of the Company, and at the same time they assured the King that if he would do what they wanted he might count on their raising a loan of three millions for his service. The struggle between the London Company and its would-be rival went on for five years. Enormous sums were spent on both sides, many members of the Privy Council were openly bribed, and at last the new aspirants gained their end in the House of Commons. Evelyn, referring to the event in his Diary, states that "The old East India Company lost their business against the new Company by ten votes in Parliament, so many of their friends being absent going to see a tiger baited by dogs." The Charter described the new Company as "The General Society or English Company trading with the East Indies."

During ten years the rivalry between these two Companies, both of which controlled large resources, was very keen, and a serious clash seemed inevitable between their representatives in India. The English Company began operations in a grand way, and the King being directly interested in its success, despatched a duly accredited ambassador, Sir William Norris, to solicit the Emperor's favour and support for the new enterprise. Norris was received by the Emperor Aurangzeb, and his mission was not less successful than that of Sir Thomas Roe, although it has received less notice. At the same time the Indian authorities became somewhat confused between the two companies, more especially when they found that the representatives of each of them were not on speaking terms. The wiser heads in London soon realized that there was not room in India for two separate Companies, but the English Company was too important a concern to be bought up and absorbed like the earlier rivals. Negotiations were commenced in 1702, but they were long spun out, and it was not till 1708 that the terms of a union were agreed upon. Thereupon the titles of the London and English Companies became merged in the United East India Company, which

continued to exist until superseded by the Crown in 1858.

In these early days there were bold individuals who ignored the Company's monopoly and operated on their own account. They were denounced as pirates, but as they did not plunder any one, but only traded on their own account the title was unjust, and a new one was invented of "interlopers." They could not be hanged at the yard arm, but they could be sued in the Courts for damages and penalties because they had violated the Company's Charter. They would not claim notice but for the daring deeds of one of them who was the progenitor of one of the most famous English families. This was Thomas Pitt, grandfather of the great Earl of Chatham.

For twenty years of his career Thomas Pitt was the terror of the London Company, for he sailed his ship without their leave, making many profitable voyages, and eventually purchasing a seat in Parliament. Then the Court awoke to his merit, and sent him out as President to Fort St. George at Madras. For ten years he administered the affairs of that station with great credit to himself and the Company, becoming generally known as "The Great President" or "The Great Pitt."

Pitt's memory is associated with the great diamond which was long named after him. It came from the famous Golconda mines and he bought it from a Deccani merchant for £12,500. In 1717 he sold it to the French Regent, the Duke d'Orleans, for £135,000. At the time of the French Revolution the Orleans Diamond, as it was renamed in France, was valued at £500,000, and its value to-day is at least quadrupled, as it is deemed the purest and most brilliant gem in the world. At one time Thomas Pitt used to wear the gem fixed in his hat, and his portrait was painted in that costume, but he was too practical a man not to turn it to better account when he got the offer.

On the whole the Company were very fortunate in the choice of the men to whom they delegated the controlling power over their interests in India. At Surat, Nicholas Aldworthe, Sir George Oxenden, Gerald Aungier, and Sir

John Child, of whom the last three held in turn the rank of President of Surat, the head station of the Company in Asia, were all men of worth. On the transfer to Bombay Sir John Child was styled Governor-General, being the first and only occasion on which the title was applied until revived in the case of Warren Hastings. They looked after the commercial interests of the Company, and did not concern themselves with politics, as soon as they were relieved from apprehension of the rivalry and intrigues of the Portuguese, and in a minor degree of the Dutch. In Sir Josiah Child, the President of the Court at home, the Company was directed by a man of great political sagacity, with a wide outlook and a sound financial grasp of the problems of the time.

CHAPTER II

THE MOGUL DYNASTY

BEFORE passing on, some account is necessary of the Mogul dynasty which the English, on their first arrival, found installed in India as the dominant power.

The Mongols came at three different epochs into contact with India. On the first occasion, in the thirteenth century, the hosts of Genghis merely passed by the North-west frontier on their return to Mongolia from Persia through Afghanistan. On the second occasion, under Timur in the fourteenth century, they crossed into the Punjab and completed their triumph by the sack of Delhi. It is declared that that ruthless conqueror feasted for five days in that ancient capital while his soldiers butchered the inhabitants, so that the dead were piled high in all its streets. Those conquerors were not Mahomedans, but they found Mahomedan rulers installed in power in North-west India. The third invasion was of a very different character. In the interval, too, the Western Mongols had been converted to Islam.

Baber, fifth in descent from Timur, ruled over the region watered by the Amou and Syr Daryas, and was known at different times as Prince of Ferghana and King of Samarcand. Very ambitious and energetic, he attempted before he was twenty-one to subject the whole of Turkestan to his authority, but in the end he was beaten and fled across the Oxus into Afghanistan. His personality was so engaging that he attracted many to his side, and establishing himself at Kabul, he made it the centre of a considerable power. He gradually extended his authority over the whole of Afghanistan, and by 1525 he was ready to undertake the invasion of India. It is said that he began his march with not more than 5,000 men, but considerable numbers rallied to his standard after he crossed the Indus.

At that moment North-west India was ruled by the Moslem dynasty of the Lodis of the Afghan race, but although they held the Imperial city of Delhi their power was not

formidable. Still they were not prepared to yield to an invader without a struggle, and their King Ibrahim placed himself at the head of his forces and advanced to Panipat, the historic battlefield of India. On 21st April, 1526, the two armies clashed at this spot, and Baber gained a complete victory, Ibrahim Lodi being left among the slain. Delhi surrendered, and a few weeks later Agra shared the same fate. At this critical juncture the Rajput Princes, who had turned a deaf ear to Ibrahim's request to join him, advanced to repel the invader. Their fortune was not equal to their spirit, for they suffered a rude defeat at Kanwa on 16th March, 1527. Baber, having made sure of his new possessions as far as Agra, returned to Kabul, which he preferred as a place of residence, and where he devoted himself to the task of writing his Memoirs. He visited India periodically, and during one of his journeys he died at Agra in 1530. He had proclaimed Agra his capital instead of Delhi.

Of his two sons, Humayun was left the Indian possessions and Kamran received Afghanistan. Humayun at once set himself the task of extending the Mogul dominions, and for a time he met with considerable success, annexing Gujerat on one side and reaching Benares on the other. But at this point his good fortune deserted him. There was a Mahomedan dynasty established in Bihar under what was called the Sur dynasty, and its ruler Sher Khan had the good fortune to possess the ablest general of the period, Himu by name. The fortune of war turned steadily against Humayun, and he was driven back step by step until he found himself again in Afghanistan, which was the realm of his brother. The Mogul dynasty seemed to have come to an abrupt end.

Even in Afghanistan Humayun had to struggle to maintain his footing against Kamran, and for a time he had to seek shelter in Persia. The aid in men and money he obtained in that country enabled him to renew the contest with his brother, and eventually he succeeded in making himself master of Kabul.

After fourteen or fifteen years he found his position

sufficiently restored to allow of his thinking of recovering what had been lost in India. In 1554 he advanced to the Indus, and the next year he recovered Delhi without any severe fighting. His success was mainly due to the fact that he had discovered a skilful general in Bhairam Khan. Humayun was contemplating further efforts in 1556 when he fell down the stairs leading from the roof of his dwelling and broke his neck.

His son Akbar, born in Sind in 1542 during the darkest period of Humayun's career, succeeded him, but it was Bhairam Khan who upheld the fortunes of the family, and once more they were threatened with eclipse, for the army of the Bihar ruler, led by the valiant and skilful Himu, had reached Delhi. It was on the plain of Panipat once more that the fate of India was to be decided between these two great military leaders. The struggle was severe but short, as the capture of the wounded Himu decided the day. Mercy was unknown, and he was promptly executed. In the very year of his accession, 1556, the youth Akbar thus owed his salvation to the soldier Bhairam Khan. But the young prince was anxious to rule for himself, and in 1560, when he was only 18, he dismissed his champion and began to rule in person. His successes were many and rapid. He conquered Kashmir and Sind. By the year 1567 he had vanquished all his enemies and placed the Mogul throne in a strong position.

Akbar has been rightly called the true founder of the Mogul dynasty. He was not merely a great military leader, but a wise law-giver and social reformer. His aim was to be a popular prince and to draw the subjected races towards him. He was the originator of the system of employing the natives of the country in the highest posts without regard for their race and religion. Having extended his conquests to the Bay of Bengal, he relied for their consolidation not on the terror of his arms but on the astuteness of his policy. He set himself to the task of winning over to his side not only the noblest but the most exclusive race and caste of India, the Rajputs of Rajasthan. They had preserved throughout all the national misfortunes of their country an

unblemished reputation for personal courage and chivalry, but with Roman fortitude they had refused to mix with other races, or to allow their daughters to marry any outside the caste.

Akbar had set himself the task as the crown of his greatness of gaining a wife from one of the princely Rajput families, and at last the Maharaja of Jaipur, the Chief of Mewar, consented to the marriage of his daughter with the Emperor. As it turned out, Akbar obtained more than a wife, for her brother, Raja Man Sing, proved himself to be the most skilful and successful of his military leaders. The opinion has been expressed that Raja Man Sing was one of the greatest generals India ever produced, but it is at least curious that the same century saw two others, in Himu and Bhairam Khan, of equal merit. Akbar took his ministers as well as his soldiers from the Hindus. Todar Mull is still regarded in India as among the greatest financiers and lawgivers of all time. But while he favoured the people of the country he did not neglect his own chosen followers, and in all matters of State it was to Abul Fazl that he turned for counsel and explanation. Abul Fazl was the learned author of the Ain-i-Akbari, which set forth day by day the acts of his master, and explained his policy. Almost the first act of Akbar's successor was to put this enlightened minister to death.

During the reign of this prince it certainly came to the knowledge of Akbar that there was in the Far West a country ruled by a Great Queen who was his own contemporary. In 1583 three Englishmen named Fitch, Newbury and Leedes reached Agra and resided there for some time. One was taken into the Imperial service as a jeweller. From them Akbar learnt much about England, and if an ambassador had only arrived during the reign of this enlightened prince he could have counted on a good reception and enduring results might have followed. The closing years of Akbar's reign were embittered by the plots of his sons who sought to shorten his days in the hope of bringing themselves to power. But they were baffled by the loyalty of his ministers and servants, and when they resorted to force

his generals defeated them. But Akbar was merciful as well as powerful, and when these ingrates were brought before him he pardoned their offences.

In the year 1605 the Emperor Akbar died with such suddenness that poisoning was suspected although it remained unproved. He was succeeded by his son Selim, the one who had given him most trouble in life. Selim, who was born in 1569, took the name of Jehangir on his accession, and his reign was a brilliant continuation of his father's. He showed much prudence in his conduct of affairs and did not attempt to extend the Mogul dominions, resting content with what he inherited. It was in his reign that the first two English embassies visited his Court. In 1608 Captain John Hawkins was the first to arrive, and on his return after a three-years' residence at Agra he gave a very interesting description of the Mogul Empire, which may be summarized as follows.

The Mogul Empire, he told us, was divided into five kingdoms, viz. the Punjab, Bengal, Malwa, Deccan and Gujerat. It contained much of the most productive ground in the world; its soil admitted of two harvests. The revenue of the country exceeded the equivalent of fifty millions sterling, a total surpassing anything known in Europe. The Emperor had in his Treasury an incalculable collection of gold and silver coins, besides countless chests filled with gems of all kinds. His resources in men and material were then recited. His permanent camp or capital contained 200,000 armed men. There were 40,000 elephants, half of them trained for war, and Hawkins added, in his quaint language, " of all animals the most understanding."

The information acquired by Sir Thomas Roe during his two years' residence at Jehangir's Court was to the same effect. He declared the Mogul's territory to be far greater than the Persian, and almost, if not quite, equal to that of the Turks. He estimated its extent at 2,000 miles square, that is to say, 2,000 miles long and 2,000 miles broad. Within those limits were many petty kings who were his tributaries rather than his subjects. Whereas much of the Turk possessions were barren desert or mountain waste, the

greater proportion of his land was productive, and it included some of the most fertile areas in the world. Sir Thomas Roe compared these parts with Mesopotamia. His revenue was stated to be immense, being derived from the land, the custom of presents, and the inheritance of all man's goods. The last system was peculiar. All property passed on the death of the owner to the Crown, jagirs were granted only for one life; merchants, no matter how rich, and some left one or two millions sterling, were stripped of their belongings. Then there was redistribution. The Emperor assigned what he thought to be sufficient for the widow and the family. Then he made grants of his favour to those on the waiting list, retaining the rest for himself. This varied in proportion to the needs of the State, and sometimes there was nothing left over for favours. But there was one item which the Emperor always retained, and that was jewels. Jehangir in particular made it an offence for anyone to withhold jewels from him. Not to give him the first choice or refusal by any of the merchants was a criminal offence. There was a story current at the Court that some merchants intended to conceal a very fine ruby from him, but his informers brought him news of their acquisition. The merchants learning of this, hastened to the next durbar to show it to the Emperor, who drily remarked to them, " You are lucky ! "

There were no written laws at this period, and the Emperor administered justice at a durbar held weekly for the purpose. His governors, by virtue of the authority vested in them by Imperial decree, did likewise in their divisions of the Empire. Civil cases and commercial actions seem to have been deemed beneath their notice, and were left to either caste juries (punchayets) or trade guilds. The Emperor and his delegates received petitions at all the durbars, the petitioner being expected to present a gift according to his station and means before he was entitled to be heard. Petty crimes were left to the judgment of the village headmen. The system, loose as it may appear to us, worked fairly well. It was only the passage of an army that disturbed the serenity of Mofussil life.

Jehangir's favourite wife was Nur Jehan, a Persian whom he married in 1611. Sir Thomas Roe tells a dubious story that he first saw her at one of the weekly receptions he gave to the women of the market, when she attracted his attention. Whatever her origin, she proved worthy of her high station, and to the end of his life she retained her influence over her husband. She extended her protection to Sir Thomas Roe, and was in favour of granting his request for trade facilities for the English. She saved Jehangir's life towards the close of his reign by a stratagem in which she displayed equal courage and skill when his general, Mahabat Khan, revolted and made his sovereign prisoner while on his way to Kabul in 1627. Shortly after this incident Jehangir died near Lahore.

Although Jehangir is said to have committed many acts of cruelty, as they would be termed in these days, he was very affable and of a cheerful countenance without pride. He was the first of the Mogul Emperors to devote his attention to architecture, and this was the more noticeable because for political reasons he allowed the old Hindu cities to fall into decay. But he erected a fine tomb to his father at Sikandra, outside Agra, and much of the fortresses and palaces at Agra and Lahore was built under his direction. He also caused serais or rest-houses for travellers to be placed at intervals of ten or twelve miles along the main route from Ajmere to Lahore. It will thus be seen that while much of his time was given to pleasure and sport, he did not wholly neglect the affairs of state, and his governors who ruled by his firman or letter of authority followed the example he set them.

Jehangir was succeeded by his eldest son Prince Khurram, who assumed the style of Shah Jehan. He ruled for a little more than thirty years, was supplanted in 1658, and died in 1666. His principal wife was the beautiful Mumtaz Mahal, "the exalted of the Palace," to whose memory he erected the divinely beautiful Taj at Agra. She died in 1629, too early in his reign to exercise the influence over her husband's fortunes that Nur Jehan had possessed with his predecessor, and the tomb was not completed till 1648.

That was not this Emperor's only contribution to Indian architecture. The fine Palace of Shahjahanabad and other buildings at Delhi remain to testify to his magnificence. In this reign Delhi began to revert to its ancient position as the Indian capital.

The reign of Shah Jehan was not so tranquil as that of his predecessor. It would be going too far to say that there were signs of the Empire cracking at that early date, but the ruling family had become divided by the rivalries of its members, and the authority of the Emperor could not be restored to its full vigour until one of its members had proved himself stronger than all the others. For some years after Akbar's death the idea of extending the Mogul authority over South India had been toyed with, and on the southern frontier there had been desultory fighting during the whole of this period. Both Jehangir and Shah Jehan had entrusted their sons with commands in that quarter, and their rival pretensions and jealousies had disturbed the peace of mind of both those rulers. But while Jehangir had been too strong to be trifled with, Shah Jehan proved himself to be more indulgent and consequently less feared. In addition he had more sons and they all pretended to be his successor. All these princes had armies under their orders, and there was no central force under the direct control of the Emperor to keep them in check. He could send them paternal remonstrances, but he had no force to compel obedience.

Among these princes Aurangzeb was the most capable. He was the first to perceive that the strife among the brethren might go on interminably with fluctuating fortune unless one of them could exercise the Imperial authority in his own person. He left the frontier and hastened to Delhi, and his plans were so well conceived that he succeeded in deposing his father without any bloodshed, and in installing himself in his place. This event occurred in the year 1658. Having thus asserted his supremacy, and made sure of the family treasures, he took the field against his brothers, whom he subdued in their turn. The struggle lasted till 1661, by which time not one was left to dispute the palm

with Aurangzeb. His father's death in 1666 freed him from all apprehension as to an attempted restoration, and he was thus able to turn his full attention to the absorption of southern India.

As already mentioned, there had been going on for some time a lingering and irregular war in that quarter. The Hindu Kings of Bijapur and Golconda were defiant, relying on their strong hill forts and imagining, from the little progress made up to that time in their direction, that they must be secure. Aurangzeb was set on the subjection of these defiant princes, and latterly an additional reason to make the southern frontiers secure had been provided by the successes of Sivaji at the head of the Maratha hordes, representing a kind of Hindu national revival. To the prevailing confusion there was now added a lurking danger, and Aurangzeb displayed only reasonable prudence as well as political sagacity in deciding to put an end to all the uncertainty. He has been blamed for attempting too much, but if his position is rightly measured he had really no alternative.

The task that lay before Aurangzeb was more difficult than he had conceived. In the first place, the military forces at his disposal were ill suited for the kind of fighting that confronted him. The bulk of his army was composed of cavalry, and his artillery consisted of culverins carried on the backs of elephants, while the elephants themselves were expected to break the ranks of the opposing forces. Armies thus composed were formidable on the plains of the Punjab, but they were not at all adapted for warfare in the regions lying south of the Nerbudda. His light artillery was innocuous against the strong stone forts in the hills, his elephants could never come into action, and his cavalry were reduced to the rôle of spectators until their time arrived to butcher the garrisons forced at last to surrender by starvation. Thus sieges were long—one is said to have lasted eight years—and progress slow; but, however slow, the Mogul frontier was pushed forward.

It might have advanced more rapidly but for troubles behind the line. His necessities, or it may be his wrath

at meeting with such stubborn resistance from the Hindu kings in the south and the Marathas, compelled or induced him to depart from the tolerant attitude of his predecessors, and when the Rajput princes displayed an inclination to join hands with his external foes he became very angry and resorted to severe reprisals. More than once he had to suspend operations at the front to reduce the chiefs of Mewar and Marwar to subjection. As the result of these complications, Aurangzeb rightly began to regard all Hindus as his enemies, and in 1675 he decided to place a poll tax upon them. This departure from the traditional policy of his family, which had been indulgent and tolerant, made him unpopular, and has been turned to his detraction by Hindu writers. But it may have been inspired as much by the heavy cost of the great war, as by any settled policy of humiliating the Hindus. Still, whatever his motives, there was no one in Hindostan who would think of challenging his decrees or opposing his orders. The sporadic attempts of the Rajputs were promptly brought to naught.

The Emperor's persistence won in the end. Despite delays he pushed his way onwards; if he was not able to sweep obstacles away he removed them; and time worked on his side by reducing the number of his opponents. In 1680 Sivaji, the most formidable of them, died, and the Emperor held his heir as hostage, thus securing tranquillity at least in that quarter for the remainder of his reign. In 1686 he finally overthrew the King of Bijapur and annexed his kingdom. In the following year he absorbed Golconda. After that the rest was easy, and the Mogul authority was extended to its most southern point in Tanjore.

Aurangzeb introduced the system of entrusting the administration of the dependent provinces to governors bearing the title of Nawab Nazims; but in the course of time, and chiefly on account of the difficulty of keeping up communications with the metropolis, these Nawabs became more or less independent and established dynasties of their own. But as long as Aurangzeb lived they had to keep their proper places.

One incident of the closing years of his reign claims notice

here. Aurangzeb received the second ambassador sent by England to the Mogul Court. Reference has been made to the New or English Company. In its programme for obtaining equal rights with the old, or London Company, it included a special mission similar to that of Sir Thomas Roe. William III was nowise averse to afford his countenance to a company that had come into existence under his patronage, and accordingly letters patent were issued accrediting Sir William Norris as Ambassador Extraordinary to the Mogul Emperor. Sir William Norris was a man of good family and had been Member of Parliament on several occasions. But while his qualifications were good his temper was bad and his tact unequal to the difficult and delicate task with which he was entrusted. He quarrelled with those representatives of the Company with whom he should have co-operated, and whose better knowledge of the country would have assisted him. He conceived it to be part of his duty to disparage and attack the older Company which his was trying to supersede. When he reached Agra in April, 1701, Aurangzeb was absent engaged in the siege of Panalla, one of the Maratha forts, and before the Emperor returned Norris had succeeded, by his superciliousness, in giving umbrage to all the officials with whom he came into contact.

On the Emperor's return, audience was granted and Norris was courteously received, and he was encouraged to think that his requests might be granted. But when it came to business the discussions took a different turn and revealed many difficulties. The Governor of the Company at Surat had given, before the Ambassador's arrival, a light promise that if the Company were granted a licence to trade it would suppress piracy in the Indian Ocean—a matter in which the Emperor was deeply interested on account of the pilgrim traffic to Mecca. Norris, on being asked if he would subscribe to this condition, hesitated and then refused, knowing it to be impossible for the Company to fulfil it, He was then informed that the licence could not be granted. Sir William Norris endeavoured to devise a compromise, but it was not easy to satisfy the Court officials. They also

represented that they could not understand the necessity for a new Company when there already existed another, and an old Company which had held a licence for so many years, and with which the Mogul's representatives had had amiable relations for a considerable period. Still if his Company would undertake to put down the piracy upon which the Emperor set so much store, the licence would be issued. The negotiations broke down at this point, and in November, 1701, Sir William Norris received his dismissal without a farewell audience. As he died at sea on his way home the full details of his mission were never published. The failure of this costly undertaking led the directors of the new Company to admit that they had no better course than to combine with the old.

Aurangzeb died in 1707 after a reign of over forty years. He extended the Mogul Empire to its farthest limits, and he is justly considered to be, after Akbar, the greatest ruler of his dynasty. When he expired he left the Mogul Empire at the height of its power and fame, and no one could have suspected at the moment that it was on the eve of a rapid decline. It is proper at this point to come to a conclusion, reserving for later chapters the story of its decline and fall.

Up to this point the English never thought of opposing the Emperor or his representatives. They were in the country by his favour and authority, and they were very careful to keep within the terms of their licence. If anyone had suggested to them that they should attempt to dispossess the Emperor and to take his place, the person would have been deemed a madman. Hawkins, Roe, and others, all agreed in their accounts of the magnitude of his resources and the magnificence of his Court. Within the Indian realm his power seemed irresistible, and indeed there appeared for the moment to be no one with any pretension to oppose him. But neither magnitude of resources nor the magnificence of a Court has ever saved a country from its enemies. For preservation the strength of iron is needed more even than the brightness of gold or the flash of precious stones.

CHAPTER III

ANGLO-FRENCH RIVALRY

THE trade competition between the English on the one side and the Portuguese and Dutch on the other has been described. Anglo-French rivalry was to prove of a very different character. Yet it is quite true that the French came to India in the first place as traders like the others. The French in point of time were not so far behind the English in making a start, for it has always been believed that under the influence of Henry IV and his great Minister, Sully, the city of Rouen despatched two ships in 1603 for India. If it did there was no result. In 1642 Richelieu founded the first French East India Company, but his death in the same year brought the project to naught, and the credit of founding the Society belongs to Colbert, who in 1664 obtained from Louis XIV a Charter covering a period of fifty years. He extended to it all the support in his power, and it was under his influence that France obtained her first stations in India at Pondicherry and Chandernagore, which she still retains after a chequered interval of more than 250 years.

If the early history of Pondicherry were examined it would be found that it possessed three very able governors in Caron, Martin, and Lenoir, who made it one of the most flourishing centres of European activity in the East. Chandernagore was not so prosperous, and Dupleix first displayed his talent in his ten years' administration by restoring its finances and reviving its trade before he was transferred to Pondicherry as a reward for these earlier efforts. Further stations were acquired later at Mahé, Karikal, and Yanaon, and they still complete the French possessions in India. All these places were active centres of trade, and no one thought in the first half-century of their existence of investing them with any political importance. Even though the two countries were often at war in Europe, there was no collision between France and England in India until events

now to be related arose. The French and English Companies attended to their own business, there was no clash between them, and the warlike incidents that had occurred with the Portuguese and the Dutch were completely absent, and so things might have continued but for the ambition of Dupleix.

In 1741 Dupleix was transferred to Pondicherry with the rank of Governor. Although they were not in such a bad state as those of Chandernagore, the finances of Pondicherry were at that moment in an unsound condition, and grants in aid had continually to be made by the Home Government. The contrast with the English was very marked, for all their stations and factories were not merely self-supporting, but furnished the Company at home with no small profit out of which the annual dividends were paid. But there was one matter in which the French were immeasurably ahead. They had begun to train the natives as soldiers, and their sipahis were the first of the kind in India. There was no apparent intention of employing them against the English. It accorded with the military spirit and traditions of the French people to experiment with the aptitudes for war of the country in which they had settled. When Dupleix reached Pondicherry he found there a body of trained men totalling not less than 5,000. As he reviewed them his ambition became active, and although he was not a soldier he longed to find an opportunity of turning them to account.

He was the more desirous of utilizing the corps because he became quickly alive to the fact that "Madras overshadowed Pondicherry." The commercial ascendancy of the English seemed to him to be assured, but he was not disposed to admit that they possessed any political importance or military power. With regard to military power he counted his battalions and felt reassured. With regard to political importance it was also quite clear that at that moment the English were in an inferior position. The French had ingratiated themselves with the Chiefs, understood their relations with one another, and had persuaded all their neighbours that they could be very useful to them

if they only chose, and if it were made worth their while. Dupleix was the very man to take advantage of this situation and to turn it to account. On the other hand, the English only bought and sold; but they had twenty stations to every one of the French, and their vessels sailed and arrived with complete regularity, so that their engagements were never in doubt.

The occasion for bringing the two opposing systems into collision arose in 1742, on the outbreak of the war of the Austrian succession, when France and England took opposite sides. Dupleix, on receiving the news, wrote to Governor Morse, of Madras, proposing that hostilities should not ensue between the two neighbour European communities, and that as between them the war should be treated as non-existent. He did not use the argument, but this was the proper course, as neither the English nor the French were in possession of sovereign rights, being merely the guests of the Emperor of India, who had conceded to them stipulated trade privileges. They had no right to fight with one another on Indian soil.

Governor Morse made a very guarded reply to the effect that he must await the instructions of the Court, but that as far as he was concerned he had no intention of attacking Pondicherry. As he had not the means of doing so he could not doubt that for that reason, if for no other, he would be believed. But Dupleix, wanting time to mature his plans, was not satisfied, and he appealed to Anwar-ud-Din, the Emperor's Governor in the Carnatic, to forbid Governor Morse from embarking on any hostilities against the French. Anwar-ud-Din complied. The request accorded with his view of his own dignity and duties, and moreover he had found the French very pleasant and ingratiating in their dealings. Governor Morse accordingly received a very peremptory order to refrain from all military operations on Indian soil, and to support his order the Nawab moved a force towards Madras. Governor Morse felt the slight, but he had no course except to express his intention to obey.

Dupleix had been playing for time. He wished to obtain the support of his Government for his ambitious plans to

establish French supremacy in India, and also to receive some naval and military force by means of which he might the more certainly hope to realize them. The latter could be procured nearer than Europe, and he wrote to the Governor of the Isle of France or the Mauritius to provide it. The Governor of that French possession at the moment was La Bourdonnais, an officer of high character who had already distinguished himself in India, more especially at Mahé. La Bourdonnais, fully apprised of the war in Europe, had no compunction in complying with his colleague's request, but knowing that there was an English squadron off the coast of Coromandel under the command of Commodore Peyton, time was necessary for him to make his preparations, and for a considerable period Dupleix had to restrain his impetuosity.

Before he could sail for India La Bourdonnais had to provide for the security of the Mauritius, which he had raised from a condition of great depression and confusion to one of remarkable prosperity and good order. Although Dupleix had applied to him in 1743 for aid, more than two years elapsed before he could render it, but at last he was in a position to do so, and accordingly set out early in the year 1746. The squadron he had collected was numerous, but of mixed quality. It should have been no match for the more powerful squadron of Commodore Peyton, and La Bourdonnais believed that his best chance of reaching India was by evading it. This he failed to do, but in the encounter the French held their own, and Commodore Peyton drew off his ships to refit on the coast of Achin in Sumatra. He seems to have been indifferent to the fact that by so doing he left Madras uncovered.

Now, whatever was the doubt about the French squadron holding its own at sea, there was none whatever about the fighting strength of the land forces it conveyed. These were of an estimated strength of 1,500 men, and the English at Madras had nothing comparable to them. La Bourdonnais did not agree with Dupleix, and their differences soon became acute, but the former moved on to attack Madras. Governor Morse, deprived of naval support, had

no means of defending the town, and in his extremity he sent a request to the Governor of the Carnatic to order the French to refrain from hostilities against him, as he had himself strictly observed the Governor's injunction to keep the peace. For some unknown reason Anwar-ud-Din did not comply, and it was suspected that Dupleix had gained him over by a promise of half the plunder of the English factory.

Encountering no obstacle, La Bourdonnais proceeded to bombard Madras, and in a few days Morse had no alternative but to surrender. Honourable terms were granted by the victor, and Madras was to be restored on the payment of a ransom. There seems no doubt, also, that La Bourdonnais was to receive a sum of money for himself. The negotiations completed, he thought of nothing else than as speedy a return as possible to the Mauritius, before the English fleet should come back in increased force. Some of his ships also had been sunk in a heavy storm, and the return of Commodore Peyton might be expected very shortly—so he hastened his departure, declaring that he wished he had never come to India. The breach between himself and Dupleix was complete, with dire results to La Bourdonnais, who after a term in the Bastille died a ruined man.

Dupleix now remained in sole and undisputed command, and his first step was to repudiate the convention with Governor Morse, and to retain possession of Madras, where he set up his own residence. This step was too much for the Mogul authorities. Anwar-ud-Din had not intervened to stop the French from attacking Madras, but he was not going to tolerate their remaining there, if he could prevent it. He ordered Dupleix to restore Madras to the English. Dupleix made a haughty refusal, whereupon the Governor of the Carnatic despatched an army to enforce his orders. Dupleix having thrown off the mask sent all the troops he could gather to meet it. In addition to the trained sepoys there was a corps of French troops, and the commander, a Swiss in the French service named Paradis, was a soldier of courage and capacity. On the one side were numbers, on the other were discipline and superior

armament. It was the first test on a large scale of their comparative merits on the soil of India, and for that reason the encounter was to mark an epoch in the transfer of power throughout the Peninsula.

The battle was fought at St. Thomé, and the result was the complete overthrow of the Mogul forces. An immense army of many thousands with a considerable artillery carried on elephants, was speedily routed by a small but cohesive force with a few field pieces. The issue proved that trained sepoys were of greater value than untrained, and this was a lesson as easily read in the capitals of India as in the camps of the Europeans.

Dupleix was delighted with the result, and imagined that his triumph was assured. He proclaimed the annexation of Madras to France, and carried off the English residents to swell his triumph on returning to Pondicherry. But he did not secure all of them, as the more active made good their escape to Fort St. David. Among them was Robert Clive, a young writer, who in 1847 had been given a commission as ensign in the Company's service because of his markedly martial disposition, and it was also added that he had " distinguished himself as a volunteer in some recent engagements," presumably the defence of Madras. In his exultation Dupleix gave orders to attack Fort St. David never doubting that its capture would be easy and speedy and he left the task to Paradis. But here he had not to deal with Indian soldiers modelled on a past age, but with Europeans fighting for their lives. Paradis delivered two assaults, and in both he was repulsed with heavy loss. The French had to retire from the scene, and at that moment naval reinforcements began to arrive from England. First Admiral Griffin arrived in time to save Fort St. David, and very soon afterwards came Admiral Boscawen. Not less important the Company sent out a body of trained soldiers, and a very capable officer, Major Stringer Lawrence, to command all their land forces. The balance of power on land between the French and English was again equalized, but at sea the latter were once more supreme.

Major Lawrence took the field at once after his arrival,

and in January, 1748, he gained a success at Cuddalore; but soon afterwards he was taken prisoner while laying siege at Ariakuram. This mishap left Boscawen in undisputed command on land as well as at sea, and whatever his capacity on the latter element he did not display much judgment on the former. He decided to attack the French at Pondicherry, and thus to end the struggle in a brilliant manner. But Dupleix, aided by Paradis, made a stout defence, and after the siege had gone on for six weeks, Boscawen was compelled to draw off with the loss of a thousand of his men. On the French side, the brave Swiss, Paradis, was slain while leading a sortie. The object of the attack on Pondicherry was to free Madras; it was accomplished in another fashion, for the news of the peace concluded at Aix-la-Chapelle compelled Dupleix to give it up, and also to release his English captives—the general situation being thus restored to the *status quo ante*.

The first period in Anglo-French rivalry ended at this point. Peace had returned, but not the old relations. Each looked on the other with distrust; the incidents of the first conflict could not but create resentment, and neither side could count with any degree of confidence upon a triumph. Dupleix may be described as baffled in the open, but he had sketched out for himself a new policy and a new rôle behind the scenes. He could not act for his King, but he could by himself provided he could make a private war payable out of his own resources. Stringer Lawrence was a little unjust when he wrote down at this period that "the whole country round us is at war, the French Governor, M. Dupleix, is trying all the villainous low methods to involve us in it." What Dupleix did was to try and benefit his country and himself by taking a hand in the general strife going on in his neighbourhood. If he succeeded he would have become supreme, and this, no doubt, would have been a menace to the English. Hence the ire, not free from apprehension, of Major Lawrence.

Dupleix, better than anyone else, had grasped the best way to intervene for his own advantage in the quarrels of the local Governors. He controlled a large body of disciplined

troops, and he would sell their services to the highest bidder. It was the application of the system of Hawkwood and his Free Companies in the Middle Ages to India. The occasion was furnished when the Nawab of Arcot was killed during a fight at Ambar with claimants to his place and power in Chanda Sahib and Muzaffir Jung. They secured Arcot, but only for a brief space, for Nasir Jung, the son of Anwar-ud-Din, Governor of the Carnatic, and the Emperor's viceroy for the Deccan, appeared upon the scene and drove them out. They found refuge at Pondicherry. In reply the English took up the claims of Mahomed Ali, son and legitimate successor of the deceased Nabob of Arcot, who had taken shelter in Trichinopoli. An English expedition sent to his aid miscarried, and the French fell upon and crushed Mahomed Ali while Nasir Jung, in spite of his lofty station, was surrounded by traitors. His murder by one of them cleared the ground for the return of the conspirators, Muzaffir Jung being proclaimed Governor of the Carnatic, and Chanda Sahib Nawab of Arcot. With the exception of the abortive expedition to Trichinopoli, the English had not stirred.

At this moment Muzaffir Jung was slain, and the French recognized his uncle, Salabat Jung, as his successor. Mahomed Ali, although humbled, was still in Trichinopoli; and the English, irritated by the French seizure of Masulipatam, decided to take up his cause as the legitimate heir. The two Companies thereupon became involved in a state of war. A small English garrison was placed in Trichinopoli, but a reinforcement was defeated on its way to that place at Volconda. It looked once more as if the French must prevail.

One man, inspired by a flash of genius, changed the whole situation. Robert Clive saw that the opponents were strongest before Trichinopoli, and that Arcot was left practically undefended. He hastened back to Madras from Volconda to impress on the Governor his plan for saving Trichinopoli by seizing Arcot, and holding it as a base for further operations. It was fortunate that Governor Thomas Saunders was a man of courage, and free from prejudice,

for no other would have sanctioned the plan of a young man without any military training. He gave him all the men he could spare, 200 English and 300 natives. Arcot fell without a blow, and Clive hastened to improve its defences. But the French officers refused to be drawn off from Trichinopoli, and for a time Chunda Sahib yielded to their representations that the town must soon surrender. But when it did not the call to recover his capital became irresistible, and he marched off with his own forces and a portion of the French contingent. Things thus fell out exactly as Clive had conceived, but the final test of success was to be his ability to hold Arcot.

All did not go well with him in the interval of suspense. Sickness enfeebled his men, and disease carried off many of them, but his efforts to put the place in the best position for defence never slackened. Provisions alone ran short, and there was no means of obtaining fresh supplies. At last Chunda Sahib appeared before Arcot, and his forces with their numerous elephants made an imposing spectacle, but the defenders stood undaunted. All the assaults were repelled, but for seven weeks the army of Chunda Sahib remained outside in the hope that either starvation or fear would drive the garrison to surrender. At last the besiegers were compelled by their own necessities to move off. They had suffered heavily, disease was prevalent among them, and rumours of approaching reinforcements for the garrison were prevalent.

Chunda Sahib withdrew to the banks of the Arni, where he awaited help from the French. Clive had shown himself great in defence, he was now to show himself not less able and energetic in offence. Reinforced from Madras by the energetic measures of Governor Saunders, he advanced on the Arni and attacked the hostile camp. Chunda Sahib had been joined by a numerous French contingent, but Clive, nothing daunted, led the charge, and had the satisfaction of seeing the routed foe flee before him. This seems to have been the first occasion on which the English and the French came into direct collision in India. A second victory was scored at Kaveripak, and then Clive had the satisfaction

of destroying the monument and the city which Dupleix had erected under the name of "Dupleix Fattehabad" two years before. The title signifies, "the city of the Victory of Dupleix." That was the crowning incident of the year 1751.

In 1752 Stringer Lawrence returned to assume the command, and Clive, in his turn, proceeded to Europe for reasons of health. The centre of the conflict was transferred to Trichinopoli, still besieged by the French, but succoured from time to time by the English. Lawrence harassed the besiegers, but could not drive them off, and finally Dupleix, collecting all his available forces, hastened there in person in the hope of accomplishing something signal as a set off to the English successes elsewhere. But fortune was unkind. His great effort failed, and his own employers in Paris repudiated his acts and recalled him, because his private war had failed to secure the success he had so often promised. Chunda Sahib was taken prisoner and assassinated. Morari Rao with his Maratha horse joined the English and Trichinopoli was finally relieved. The contest between the English and French on the coast of Coromandel between 1751 and 1753 was an unofficial and indeed an unauthorized war. It was entirely the personal adventure of Dupleix. Had it been successful its irregularity would have been forgiven, and Dupleix would have been the hero of the day; but having failed he was left to pay the full penalty of what was called his rashness. More fortunate than some of his contemporaries, he escaped the Bastille, but only to die a few years after his return in penury and despair. He cannot be robbed of the distinction, for as much as it may be worth, of having originated the political rôle of Europeans in the troubled period that set in in India with the decline of the Mogul dynasty.

Peace in those times between England and France was rarely of long duration, and in 1756 began the Seven Years War. The French Government was not indifferent to the achievements of Dupleix and Bussy, the latter of whom was supreme in the councils of the Governor of the Carnatic, who became better known as the Nizam, and did not overlook

the possibility of a French triumph in India. A force of nearly 3,000 good troops represented by the two famous regiments of Lally and Lorraine—the one composed of Irish emigrants, the other of Lorrainers—was despatched to Pondicherry under the command of Count Thomas Arthur Lally, a distinguished and experienced general. He reached Pondicherry in 1758 at a favourable moment for the success of his plans, because the English in Madras were weak and unprepared. Clive was away in Bengal, and too heavily engaged to think of returning to the south. Lally began his operations by capturing Fort St. David, which had to surrender, and then he turned his attention to Madras. Reinforced by Bussy, who brought down a considerable body of trained sepoys from Hyderabad, it looked for a time as if a signal success would crown his efforts. But the intended campaign was compromised by the differences that arose between Lally and Bussy. The former was a brave soldier and skilful leader, but he did not know India. Bussy knew India as thoroughly as anyone. He was brave also, but not a skilful leader. He was corrupt, no one knew better how to " shake the pagoda tree." Lally was honest, proud of his honour, a true cavalier, and disdainful towards those of whose conduct and principles he disapproved. It is small wonder that the two men became bitter enemies.

In the summer of 1759 it looked as if the fate of Madras was sealed; but at this critical moment Clive, although unable to come himself, sent his best colleague, Eyre Coote, with as many troops as he could spare to save it, and the expedition arrived in time to accomplish its purpose. Its operations were simplified by the defeat Admiral Pocock inflicted on the French covering squadron under Admiral D'Ache. But the struggle for power had to be decided on land.

Lally had still 1,500 good troops with him, and Bussy had brought 4,000 trained sepoys. Against these Coote had 2,000 Europeans and 3,000 Indians. After several retreats and advances the two armies faced each other at Wandiwash on 21st January, 1760, and no one present could have felt sure of the issue. Lally had chosen a strong

position, and his left wing rested on a hill where he had placed his chief battery, manned by French sailors from the fleet. On his right he stationed a small body of European cavalry, in which arm Coote seems to have been quite deficient. It was noted afterwards that while the action remained hot the Indian sepoys on both sides looked on, showing that they left the fate of their country to the others.

Lally hoped to secure an initial advantage by means of his cavalry. It was but a small body, but as the foe had none he thought that if he could throw their ranks into disarray, it would greatly encourage his own side. He placed himself at the head of his men and sounded the charge, but they refused to follow him; three times did he persist, and when at the third attempt they did advance the charge was not pressed home. The cavalry attack having failed, the action became general, and at the very beginning a great misfortune befell the French. A lucky shot blew up the powder magazine on the hill, eighty sailors were killed, and the whole battery was put out of action. Soon after this calamity Bussy was captured, but the French troops fought stubbornly in the open, and it was only after many hours' fighting that Lally retreated to find shelter in Pondicherry. He defended the French capital in India for nearly twelve months, only surrendering on 7th January, 1761, after the garrison had been reduced to the lowest straits. After the restoration of peace Lally and the survivors of his force were sent back to Europe. Less fortunate than his men, Lally was thrown into the Bastille, and executed in 1766 after the most iniquitous semblance of a trial. The French East India Company itself was dissolved a few years later.

Although the serious phase of Anglo-French rivalry in India may be said to have concluded with the failure of Lally's expedition, several incidents claim some brief notice. In 1780 during the American War of Independence, a strong French fleet was sent to the Indian seas to co-operate with Hyder Ali. It did nothing to disturb the condition of things left after the battle of Wandiwash, but it inflicted heavy losses on the English marine both

commercial and combatant. The French Admiral Suffren was a naval leader of conspicuous ability, anticipating some of the principles of Nelson. Bussy remained on at the Nizam's Court till his death there in 1783, but the control of events had passed into new hands, and other contestants had appeared for supremacy in South India. In their proper place other remarkable French adventurers will be named, but they fought or schemed not so much for their nation as for the Indian rulers and leaders who employed them. The five possessions of France in India remain to-day very much as they were left in the eighteenth century, survivals of a tragic period when the fortune of war still remained uncertain and the future inscrutable.

CHAPTER IV

THE ACQUISITION OF BENGAL

WHILE the events described in the last chapter centred in Madras, Bengal had been the scene of other occurrences of greater pregnancy for the future of the English in India. The sixty years following the edict of the Emperor Aurangzeb had been marked by unbroken peace, and trade had developed in a very encouraging fashion. The Company looked on this quarter of India as the one that caused it the least anxiety, and brought it the greatest profit. A sharp change took place in the year 1756.

The Emperor's Viceroy in Bengal bore the title of Nawab Nazim, and the seat of his authority was at Murshidabad. Outside the town were the foreign factories on the island of Cossimbazar, which was the busiest commercial city of India at that period. All went well till the death of Ali Verdi Khan in 1756, and the succession of his grandson, Suraj-ud-Dowla. The new Nawab was in great need of money. He had always been extravagant, and long before he came into power he had accumulated debts which his grandfather had settled. His first measures as ruler were those of wholesale confiscation. He seized the jewels of several of the Begums, he removed the old officials, and appointed new men to squeeze his subjects to the last anna, and then he turned on the Europeans. During a visit to Hughli in 1752, he had received rich presents, and he had formed an erroneous view of the wealth of the English merchants. What wealth there was was not of a portable character. Advancing as an excuse that the English were fortifying their factory, he attacked Cossimbazar and plundered it. The plundering was not confined to the English houses, all the others belonging to Europeans were sacked. Emboldened by this easy success, Suraj-ud-Dowla proceeded against Calcutta, captured it, and seized Fort William. Here also he plundered everything he could lay his hands on.

There had been no attempt at defence. The Governor and many others took refuge on the ships, and when the Mogul forces approached, sailed down the river to Hughli. But the others, 146 in number, with Mr. Holwell, Member of Council, were brought before the Nazim, and addressed in scurrilous terms. His wrath was increased by the smallness of the treasure he had found. Still he promised them that their lives would be safe, and his interests pointed in that direction, for he might naturally look for a ransom being forthcoming, and having done this, he retired for his siesta.

Thereupon his underlings forced these 146 Europeans into a small room in the factory, which was known as " the Black Hole," as it had been used for the detention of a few prisoners. Having forced these unfortunates into this den, the satellites refused to refer to Suraj-ud-Dowla for fresh orders on the ground that he was asleep. In the morning the survivors, twenty-three in number, were released, but several of them died afterwards or were bereft of reason. Attempts have been made to extenuate the crime of the Nawab, but in its main features the story as first narrated stands unrefuted. The tragedy of the Black Hole remains one of the blazing incidents in the story of the English in India.

This tragedy, and the loss of the factories in Bengal, caused a great sensation at Madras, where Clive had just arrived from England with greater powers and renewed health and energy. His new appointment was as Governor of Fort St. David, but every one in the south agreed that he was the only man to retrieve the situation in Bengal. In December, 1756, Clive arrived in the Hughli, and he was accompanied by a strong squadron under Admiral Watson. In the interval since his occupation of Calcutta Suraj-ud-Dowla's confidence had increased, and he conceived that he had nothing to fear. He had also realized, however, that by suppressing the English factory he had lost a sure and productive source of revenue. For this reason he was disposed to restore Calcutta where his garrison remained, and to grant fresh facilities for trade. He was even willing

to compensate the members of the Calcutta factory for their losses and sufferings. The survivors among the English merchants were quite willing to meet him half-way. They had withdrawn to a place of safety in their ships, and now that the hurricane had passed over their heads, they were willing to return on the Nawab's terms to resume their ordinary pursuits.

Both Suraj-ud-Dowla and the English merchants counted without Clive. They did not realize that a new spirit had come over the controllers of English policy in India. Bengal had been peaceful for so long that no one reckoned on so complete a change as followed. Clive captured Hughli, and disposed of its garrison. Fort William was recovered, Calcutta re-occupied. Suraj-ud-Dowla intrigued with the French at Chandernagore, and promised large rewards for their aid. Clive, ignoring formalities, swept down upon the place and captured the French garrison of 500 men. At this juncture some of his ministers and officers began to turn against Suraj-ud-Dowla, whose conduct and extravagances alienated their allegiance. Clive saw his chance and fomented their intrigues. Mir Jaffir, the commander of the Nazim's army, was the ringleader. He was closely connected with the ruling house, having married the sister of Ali Verdi Khan. He was still wavering when he was publicly insulted in Durbar by the Nawab and deprived of his command. The great banker, Jaget Seth, was insulted in a similar manner, and thus both the financial and military supporters of the State were alienated. Clive's agent was a man named Omichand, and he was to be rewarded in accordance with the result, but unfortunately, as it turned out for him, no precise sum or proportion had been named.

The plot progressed, and the details of action were arranged when Omichand threatened to divulge it unless his share was fixed at 30 lakhs or the enormous sum of £300,000. There was no alternative between the failure of the plot and agreement. Clive agreed, but at the same time he resolved to baffle Omichand by resorting to a piece of chicanery. An agreement was drawn up, but Clive had two copies prepared—one on red paper, and the other on

white. The former contained the promise to Omichand, but was fictitious, and bore the forged signature of Admiral Watson, which Clive had not scrupled to perpetrate himself. The white treaty was the genuine one, and was only produced when Omichand asked to be paid after Plassey had been won. Clive's only defence for his conduct in this matter was to the effect that "delay and chicanery is allowable against those who take advantage of the times, our distresses, and situations," a sentiment worthy of Machiavelli. Perhaps it would have been better to have paid Omichand his price, however excessive it may have appeared.

The conflict had still to be decided by the sword. On 13th June, 1757, Clive left Chandernagore at the head of a force composed of 1,000 Europeans, including the 39th regiment, and 2,000 trained sepoys. His artillery consisted of 8 six-pounders and 2 howitzers, to which was attached a body of 100 English artillerymen. In addition there were fifty sailors from the fleet. The Nawab's army took up its post at the village of Plassey on the left bank of the Bhagirathi. It mustered 35,000 infantry, 15,000 cavalry, and not fewer than 53 field pieces. In addition there were fifty French soldiers under M. St. Frais, who occupied a strongly entrenched post near the river bank. The army was arrayed in five divisions under as many commanders, of whom Mir Jaffir was one. The plan agreed upon was that when the action commenced he should come over to Clive's side; as a matter of fact he only drew his troops apart.

Clive was on the right bank of the river, and when he perceived the imposing array of the Mogul army he called a Council of War. The only officer present in favour of immediate attack was Eyre Coote. Clive himself hesitated between the two opinions, and the others were against it. Clive withdrew from the Council to snatch some brief repose. He rose refreshed with his vision clear and his energy restored. Remembering the old saying that "Councils of War never fight," he issued orders that by daybreak the troops should be across the river by means of the boats that had accompanied the force up from Chandernagore. At 1 a.m. the advanced guard had seized the village

of Plassey. At 8 a.m. the English army was within the shelter of the famous mango grove, and at the same time the Nawab's forces having come out of their entrenched camp to the north, formed up in a semi-crescent on the flank of the English. Their artillery began to fire, and the English skirmishers were compelled to retire into the grove with the loss of a few men. The artillery action then continued on both sides for some hours, during which the Nawab's best general was mortally wounded. A storm of rain came on, and it was said that it spoilt the Nawab's powder, whereupon the army withdrew into their entrenchments. Clive then gave the order for the whole force to advance towards them, and the Mogul army, seized with panic, evacuated the camp and fled in confusion. Their prince himself had fled some hours earlier, and escaped the next day from Murshidabad for the upper country. But he was captured a few days later, and when he reached Murshidabad as a prisoner he was murdered by Miran, the son of Mir Jaffir. No one pitied him, for he was only served as he had served so many others.

The loss of the Mogul army was not very heavy—about 500 killed, but its morale was destroyed, and the impression produced throughout Northern India was immense. The spoil of the camp was beyond calculation, and when the treasure vaults in the palace at Murshidabad were searched it was found that they contained 40 lakhs in gold and silver, and an immense collection of precious stones. But this was not all. An inner and secret treasury contained eight crores, more than eight millions sterling at that period.

When the Mogul army moved back to its camp as described during the battle, Mir Jaffir advanced to join Clive, but his movement was misunderstood, and Clive sent a detachment to oppose him. On his soliciting an interview, he was informed that Clive would receive him on the morrow. The interview took place at Dadpur, where Clive saluted him as Nawab Nazim of Bengal, Bihar, and Orissa, and urged him to hasten to Murshidabad to secure the city.

The immediate territorial reward to the East India Company for this victory was not much. For the chief part of

its possessions south of Calcutta it paid a rent to Mir Jaffir. The pecuniary reward was a sum of £800,000 as its share of the Bengal treasures for the expenses of the war. The most striking result of all was that the prestige of the English became as great in North, as it was already in South India. They were no longer regarded as merchants, but as warriors and conquerors.

Clive did not rest upon his laurels. He saw that he must strike hard and fast to complete his triumph. He sent a body of troops under Major Forde into the Northern Circars to pacify it, and when he heard that Shah Alum, the son and heir of the Mogul Emperor, was besieging Patna and likely to capture it he hastened with all the troops he could collect to its relief. The Mogul army retired as he approached at the mere terror of his name, and Mir Jaffir in his gratitude for being saved from impending extinction, assigned to him the jaghir of the Calcutta Zenimdaries, commonly known as the 24 pergunnahs. This grant Clive found it discreet to transfer to the Company for the purpose of establishing a Pension Fund for the Services. Still, apart from that transfer, Clive was able to write home that "the Nawab's generosity has enabled me to live with satisfaction in England."

But notwithstanding his generosity, Mir Jaffir was uncertain in his sentiments and conduct. The English had set him up, but he began to fear that they might cast him down, and some bad adviser at his elbow, inflaming his fears, urged him to discover some other Europeans whom he could play off against the English. The French were gone from Chandernagore, but the Dutch remained at Chinsura. Intrigues began, and negotiations followed. The Dutchmen at Chinsura wrote to their Governor of the Indies at Batavia, assuring him that a golden opportunity presented itself to establish Dutch predominance in the Gangetic Delta by the favour of the Emperor's delegate. The English forces they declared had been all withdrawn to Madras to fight the French, and a very little push was all that was required to bring about their overthrow.

The Governor of the Dutch Indies approved of the

design, which was a very strange proceeding, considering that peace prevailed between England and the Netherlands. He may have satisfied his conscience by pretending that he was not going to fight the English but to help the Mogul. A very strong squadron was got together, and 1,500 of the best Dutch troops were put on board, and they sailed for the Bay of Bengal. They were unconscious of any risk as they entered the Hughli. But Clive had discovered the intrigue, and he fully realized the peril if the Dutch forces were allowed to reach Chinsura, and to ally themselves with the Country Powers. He determined that they should not reach their destination. He collected all the naval force he could, he strengthened the batteries at Calcutta, and then when the Dutch squadron appeared in the river below Fort William he fell upon it with shot and shell and completed his victory by boarding those vessels that he failed to sink. The Dutch expedition was scattered to the four winds of heaven, just as completely as the Moguls had been. Clive crowned the achievement by imposing on the Dutch at Chinsura as the condition of their remaining that they were never to interfere in political affairs again. It was the boldest deed associated with Clive's name in India, and after that occurrence no foreigner has ventured to challenge the British position in Bengal.

Clive after these successes returned to England, but before he left Mir Jaffir paid him a ceremonial farewell visit at Calcutta. Although Mir Jaffir granted the Company the privilege of establishing a mint for the coinage of gold and silver pieces equal to those current within his jurisdiction, and this after Clive's departure, Mr. Holwell, the head of the committee of affairs, did not regard him favourably, and when the Nawab's son, Miran, was struck dead by lightning, he openly concerted with the Nawab's son-in-law, Mir Kasim, to depose him. But this proved to be a serious blunder, for Mir Kasim turned upon the Company, murdered two English factors, and demanded various sums from the Calcutta Council. On this defiance war was declared in July, 1763, and Mir Jaffir was brought from his place of retirement to be reinstated. The Emperor Shah Alum and

the Wazir of Oudh took up the cause of Mir Kasim, and furnished him with some troops, but his army was routed at Buxar by Major Munro on 23rd October, 1764. The victory of Buxar has always been considered the complement of that of Plassey. After several other defeats, and abandoned by his allies, Mir Kasim became a fugitive, and died in misery.

During this period Clive returned to India for the third and last time. He obtained from Mir Jaffir's son and successor, Najim-ud-Dowlah, the grant of the Dewanni for Bengal, Bihar and Orissa, which signified the surrender of the administration of the three provinces to the Company. This grant was made in accordance with the terms of an Imperial firman issued in the year 1765. It was considered that the gradual surrender of authority was completed by the year 1793, when the whole of the civil and criminal jurisdiction, and the control of the revenue and military department had passed into the hands of the representatives of the Company. None the less, the title of Nawab Nazim of Bengal was retained by all the successors to the Musnud until the death of Feredun Jah in 1881. His son and successor, Ali Kadr, was granted by Sanad the new title of Nawab Bahadur of Murshidabad, which is the present style of this great historic family.

At this point, when the great struggles with Hyder Ali and the Marathas are about to commence, it will be opportune to say a few words about the decline of the Mogul Empire, which was still titularly supreme throughout the peninsula. Five Emperors had ruled in the century and a half from Humayun to Aurangzeb. Eight Emperors succeeded one another in the next half-century, and of that period Mahomed Shah accounted for twenty-nine years. Owing to their position these rulers were exposed to the first brunt of foreign invasion, and their misfortunes began with external attacks and the ensuing calamities. As the Moguls had come themselves from Central Asia and Afghanistan, they ought to have been alive to dangers from the same quarter, where hordes of wild warriors under no restraint were ever ready for an inroad upon the fertile plains and rich cities of India.

Besides, Herat and Kandahar were disputed possessions between the Persians and the Moguls. Persia was then at the height of her power, and waged war more or less successfully with the Turks. The final result might indeed have gone against her if she had not found a leader of exceptional merit in Nadir Kuli, better known as Nadir Shah. This extraordinary man, who described himself as one of "the scourges of God" sent to chastise mankind, routed the Turks at Bagdad, and then turned his attention to India.

With an army composed of Afghans and Turcomans, as well as of Persians, he crossed the Indus in 1739, and marched on Delhi. Terror spread before him, and he reached the capital without encountering any serious resistance. Behind him his track was marked by destroyed cities and their massacred inhabitants. The Emperor of the day, Mahomed Shah had no means of defending Delhi, and no time to summon aid from the Rajputs and Marathas, even if they had been willing to come to his aid, for Nadir Shah had advanced with the speed of the storm. The unfortunate ruler sent out his chief Mollahs to beg the invader to halt in the name of their common religion, and to retire satisfied with an ample ransom. To this appeal the conqueror gave the uncompromising answer that he knew no pity, and that he came from God to punish mankind. Delhi entered, was handed over to be sacked by his rapacious soldiery. The scenes of slaughter recalled the age of Tamerlane, and the Persian conqueror carried off with him a fabulous amount of treasure in gold and silver and all the jewels of the Imperial Treasury, including the famous Peacock Throne, and the still more famous diamond called the Koh-i-nor or the "Mountain of Light." Baber had found this jewel in the Lodi treasury when he captured Delhi, and till this incident it had ranked among the Mogul family jewels. It returned to India when Runjit Sing acquired it from the fugitive Afghan prince, Shuja-ul-Mulk.

What further triumphs and enormities might have been associated with Nadir's name if his career had not been cut short cannot be guessed, but in 1747 he was assassinated by one of his Afghan officers. His power in the field passed

to one of the ablest of his lieutenants, the Afghan, Ahmed Shah, who founded the Durani monarchy. In 1752 this ruler annexed the Punjab, and after he had added Kashmir thereto his proximity to Delhi constituted a perpetual menace to the Emperor in his Palace. But Ahmed Shah was at least more deliberate in his movements than his predecessor had been, and thus afforded the Emperor Shah Jehan with some breathing space to provide for his own defence. But the Emperor had no means of his own. His forces had been defeated at Patna by Major Carnac, and the Rohillas, fierce Afghan tribes settled in Oudh, had been alienated from his side. His only chance of keeping Ahmed Shah at bay lay in discovering some extraneous defenders, and among such possible champions, even if they had been willing, the English were too far off to count.

At this period the Marathas had attained the height of their power. Their confederacy was united under the sway of the Peshwa, their great Chiefs were his devoted lieutenants, and their armies were confident from long continued success. They were moved to take up the Mogul cause not by devotion to the Emperor, but by the desire to make him their puppet, and to rule Hindostan in his name. When it became known that Ahmed Shah was making preparations to cross the Sutlej and sweep down on Delhi, the Marathas collected all their forces and moved northwards to prevent him. They advanced as far as Panipat, 45 miles north west of Delhi, on the road to Lahore, and took up their position on the historic battle ground of India.

The Maratha army on this occasion presented the most splendid appearance that could be conceived. The Chiefs carried all their wealth with them, and they rivalled each other in the display of their apparel. Their elephants were decorated with the jewels of the several States. Musicians, jugglers, and dancing girls were in such numbers that the scene resembled a gigantic fair, rather than the field for a life and death struggle. It was said that there were 200,000 fighting men, and certainly there were more attendants and followers of all kinds than warriors. All the Maratha Chiefs were present—Holkar and Sindhia, Dhar and the

Gaekwar, and although the Peshwa remained in Poona, he had sent his youthful heir and entrusted him and his treasure to Holkar's charge. This vast body of men and women required a camp which attained the dimensions of a great city, and herein were feasting and riotous living, contests between savage animals, the mad intoxication of human beings day after day during the weeks marking the close of the year 1760. As time passed the need to change the camp, to seek fresh ground, arose, the air became fetid, dysentery and fever broke out; and at that moment the enemy arrived.

Unlike the showy Maratha forces, Ahmed Shah's army had no impedimenta. It was equipped for war, and not for amusement or parade. Its strength lay in its light cavalry, swift moving and elusive, and above all in its disciplined infantry, a force of picked Afghans, men of exceptional physical strength. The Maratha army tried to break up its camp, but wherever it turned it found the Afghan cavalry in front of it, and being unable to deploy, had to retire within the camp. The elephants on which so much reliance was placed were worse than useless, they were an obstacle to egress. By this time the insanitary condition of the camp had become aggravated, supplies were scarce, water fit to drink was unobtainable, and soon it became clear that there was no alternative between death by pestilence or a desperate attempt to break through. Numbers were still on their side, and so in January, 1761, the Marathas rushed out of their camp and attacked the enemy in front of them.

The impetuosity of their charge was not without some measure of success, and the Afghan army began to give way. But the tide soon turned. The elephants were thrown into confusion, breaking the Maratha ranks instead of the enemy's, and then Ahmed Shah, availing himself of the disorder thus caused, brought up 10,000 of his chosen infantry, and after some stubborn fighting the melée became a veritable slaughter. It was said that 60,000 Marathas were slain, and 20,000 taken prisoners. The spoil captured was immense, and the power of the Marathas as a cohesive

confederacy was very much reduced. This great reverse shattered the hopes of the Emperor Shah Jehan II, who died soon afterwards, but Ahmed Shah contented himself with his plunder and withdrew into the Punjab.

The battle of Panipat ends the period of decline of the Mogul Empire. It continued to exist, but its authority was shattered. To the Afghans it had lost the Punjab and Kashmir, while the Marathas and the Rohillas had become independent of its control. All the Nawab Nazims had broken away, and many of them had founded dynasties of their own. The terrific blows dealt by the two conquerors, Nadir and Ahmed Shahs, had shaken its power to the base, and its effective strength no longer had any reality. The great Mogul Empire had become the shadow of a name, and other races decided its affairs without any reference to or regard for its titular head in Delhi.

But there was another side to the battle of Panipat. By undermining the central authority in the peninsula vested in the Great Mogul, and by diminishing the military power of the Maratha confederacy, it paved the way to the British conquest of India. At the moment of its occurrence the English were still struggling to consolidate their position in Bengal, and any outside intervention might have undone the work accomplished by the victory at Plassey. At the least Panipat left them a free hand to deal with their formidable opponent Hyder Ali in Mysore.

CHAPTER V

THE STRUGGLE WITH HYDER ALI AND TIPU SULTAN

IN 1767 Clive wrote to the Bombay Council, when they were urging him to take up the problem of dealing with the Marathas, as follows: "The chief strength of the Marathas is cavalry; the chief strength of Hyder Ali is infantry, cannon, and small arms. From the one you have nothing to apprehend but Ranajee's plundering and loss of revenue for a while; from the other extirpation."

A new character had suddenly appeared on the Indian stage in the person of Hyder Ali, and he and his son Tipu Sultan were to fill it for nearly forty years.

The ancient kingdom of Mysore possessed a history going back to the earliest times of Hindu mythology, but in the fifteenth century it passed under the Wodeyar dynasty which still fills the throne. The fortunes of the State were changeable after the Mogul invasion, but on the whole it preserved its integrity, and it was from it that the English received the charter allowing it to establish its factory at Madras. Even when the Marathas made their first inroad in 1696 the Mysoreans were strong enough to defeat them before Seringapatam. Internal divisions and rival factions proved more serious in their effect on the power of the King than foreign foes, and Mysore, like other States in their decay, contributed to its own downfall.

Amid these disorders a soldier of fortune found his opportunity, and it was certainly strange that he belonged to another race and religion than the people of the soil. At the siege of a petty fort in 1749 a soldier named Hyder Ali greatly distinguished himself by his courage, which decided the day. The Raja, struck by his prowess, gave him an independent command, and as his successes continued, rewarded him with the jaghir of Bangalore. Notwithstanding the benefactions he had received from his prince, Hyder Ali was consumed with a boundless ambition

and aimed at nothing short of supreme power; and the attainment of this end was helped by the further invasion of the Marathas in 1759, who imposed onerous terms of peace which materially reduced the Raja's resources. In the following year Hyder Ali had taken over the practical charge of the administration, placing the Raja in confinement, but not deposing him. It was at that moment that Count Lally, hard pressed in Pondicherry, solicited his aid against the English, but Hyder Ali was too much occupied with his own affairs at that juncture to pay any heed to the appeal, although after its surrender he took many Frenchmen into his service.

In 1763 he captured the fortified town of Bednur, one of the ancient capitals of the kingdom, and in its treasury he is said to have secured the immense sum of twelve crores, or over twelve millions sterling. To this prize he always attributed his subsequent success. At Bednur he established an arsenal with French artificers, and a mint issuing coins in his own name. At this moment he was threatened by a new danger in invasion by the Marathas and the Nizam combined, when he showed that he possessed the skill of a diplomatist as well as the courage of a soldier. He bought off the Marathas after being defeated by them at Rattihali in 1765, and concluded an alliance with the Nizam for an offensive war with the English. His success with the Nizam, who had shaken off the supremacy of the Mogul Emperor in 1709, and proclaimed the independence of his dynasty, was mainly due to the influence of the French officers, Bourquin and Bussy, who had trained the Nizam's army.

In 1767, the year of Clive's letter, Hyder Ali entered the Madras territory at the head of a large force strong in cavalry and guns, and at the same time the Nizam's foreign-trained army advanced for the same purpose. The English, although taken by surprise were not wholly unprepared, and successfully defended several of the border posts, notably the fort of Changama. A battle was fought near Vellore on 26th September, 1767, when the armies of the two allies were defeated with considerable loss. Hyder Ali

was also worsted in minor affairs at Vaniambadi and Singarapetta, and he was nearly taken prisoner at the latter place.

By this time the Nizam had become sick of the war and drew off his forces. Peace followed with that potentate leaving matters where they were. Hyder Ali, however, was not done with. In January, 1768, he descended from the Ghats at the head of 30,000 cavalry, besides other troops, and hastened by rapid marches towards Madras. Even then he might have been held in check if the English forces had been concentrated and properly handled. But the disastrous experiment of allowing civilian politicians to interfere with and control military operations was resorted to with the inevitable consequences. Two members of the Madras Council accompanied the force in the field, and confusion followed from divided counsels. Such fighting as took place was marked by alternate successes, but Hyder Ali, evading the defending forces, appeared at the gates of Fort St. George with an overwhelming army. The Council, panic-stricken, acceded to the terms dictated by the invader, and the Agreement of 29th March, 1769, was their formal embodiment. Not since La Bourdonnais' capture of Madras had the English received so rude a blow in Southern India, and the reputation of Hyder " the Lion " was raised to the highest point.

No practical purpose would be served by speculating as to what might have happened if the English and Hyder Ali had been left alone to fight out their quarrel. But Hyder Ali had formidable foes to contend against in the Marathas. They did not regard Hyder Ali's advancement with a friendly eye. They wished to hold him more or less in subjection by tribute, and their policy under Brahmin influence was always anti-Moslem, whether the potentate to be curbed was the Emperor or the Nizam or Hyder Ali. After the humiliation of the English in Madras they decided to administer a check to Hyder Ali, and in 1771 they again invaded Mysore in great force. Hyder Ali's army was heavily defeated on 5th March, 1771, and although the war continued throughout that year Hyder Ali had to purchase

peace in June, 1772, by the payment of a heavy indemnity. These events effectually deterred Hyder Ali from prosecuting any fresh schemes against the English for some years.

But he had not abandoned them, and French advisers, as well as his own ambition, prompted him to resume his efforts to become the supreme ruler of Southern India. In 1778 Louis XVI declared war upon England in order to help the American colonists who had been driven into rebellion, and it was hoped that Hyder Ali with some aid and more encouragement would prove a very useful ally in Southern India. There is no evidence that the French seriously thought of restoring their own power on the coast of Coromandel, but they undoubtedly conceived that a strong native power in that quarter would serve as a counterpoise to the English elsewhere. With that end in view they sent a strong naval force under Suffren, one of their ablest admirals, to the Bay of Bengal.

He arrived at the scene of action in 1780, and his presence gave Hyder Ali so much confidence that in July of that year he invaded Madras without any warning or formality. Suffren also had taken the English by surprise, and driving off the small squadron in the roadstead captured several minor places with his landing parties. He had four months of impunity before the arrival of Sir Edward Hughes, with a squadron equal to his own, restored the balance of power at sea. Even then Suffren was not overthrown, and he preserved his ships by skilful manoeuvring from destruction until peace was restored three years later.

But the struggle between Hyder Ali and the English was to be decided on land and not at sea. The English forces were assembled at different points, but the intervals between them offered tempting opportunities to a daring leader. Moreover, there was no commander of marked capacity or one vested with supreme control of the operations to turn the superior valour of the well-trained troops to good account. A force of nearly 8,000 men under Colonel Baillie was directed to join another corps, and on their unopposed junction the fortune of the war really depended. The operation was attended by a number of petty mistakes,

the worst being the encampment of one of the English armies on the wrong side of a river, which left it fully exposed to the enemy instead of having it as a defence. Hyder Ali saw his opportunity and fell upon it, but during the first day's fighting his attacks were repulsed. If Colonel Baillie, the English commander, had only continued his march during the intervening night he would certainly have been able to join hands with the second corps which held a position but a few miles distant. Colonel Baillie, however, did not move, and the next morning Hyder Ali renewed his attack with increased vigour. The ranks were broken, and the butchery began, which was only arrested by the efforts of two French officers in Hyder Ali's service, one being Lally, a nephew of the Count. The result of this disaster was that while 700 Europeans and 5,000 sepoys were killed, 2,000 Europeans remained prisoners in the hands of the victor. This battle was fought on 9th and 10th September, 1780.

Warren Hastings, on learning of the arrival of the French fleet, had at once grasped the full danger of the situation. By his efforts Sir Edward Hughes' squadron was equipped to take the sea, and Sir Eyre Coote induced, however reluctantly on account of his age, to assume the command in the field with such reinforcements as could be sent with him. Although the courage of the veteran commander was unimpaired, age had somewhat diminished the vigour and activity of the hero of Wandiwash, and moreover the enemy was far too strong and numerous to admit of the hope that a single victory would decide the matter. On his arrival at Madras in November, 1780, Sir Eyre Coote found a state of panic prevailing at Fort St. George, the town of Wandiwash on the point of surrender, and the French fleet in the offing covering the attack on Cuddalore. He decided that the first step was to relieve Wandiwash and to draw Hyder Ali away from Madras. With this object he made a skilful march round Pondicherry, relieved Wandiwash and Cuddalore, and took up a strong position at Porto Novo.

Believing that he had to deal with a commander like those he had recently beaten who stood upon the defensive,

Hyder Ali imagined that he was about to confine the English general in his defensive position as he had done Baillie and Hector Munro. He summoned his forces from all sides to take part in the promised orgy, but suddenly, to his intense surprise, on the morning of 1st July, 1781, he saw the English army issue from its entrenchments and advance to the attack, thus reversing the intended rôles. The English force numbered 9,500 men with 55 field pieces; the Mysore army 80,000 and a large force of artillery, many of the guns being of heavy metal. The result was a brilliant victory for the former with a loss of 500 men, while Hyder Ali left 10,000 of his best troops on the ground. A second battle was fought at Vellore, when Hyder Ali was defeated with the loss of 5,000 men, but the consequences of these two victories were not as complete as they were expected to be and Hyder Ali still kept the field.

But unbeknown to his adversaries, Hyder Ali's spirit was broken by these reverses, for he could not but see that his resources were no longer equal to his ambition. He might gain some successes, but they could not affect the main result. These were the thoughts that preyed upon his mind, and suddenly he fell ill in his camp near Arcot, where he died in 1782. Authorities differ as to his age, most fixing his birth in 1722, but others five years earlier. There is general agreement that Hyder Ali was the best soldier and leader of armies that India produced in modern times.

He was succeeded by his son Tipu Sultan, who, although less able than his father, possessed all his courage and ambition. The war continued, but not for long. In 1783 peace was restored between England and France, and Suffren returned to Europe. In the following year Tipu concluded a peace with the English, withdrawing into his own dominions, and the survivors of the Baillie force were released, among them the David Baird who had his revenge in the storming of Seringapatam sixteen years later.

Tipu Sultan, far from giving up the ambitious courses of his father, sought the means of giving them effect. He relied very largely on the advice and promises of the French in his service, and sent an embassy to Paris in 1787 to

arrange a formal alliance. Louis XVI gave it an honourable reception, but declined to do more than utter vague promises. At Constantinople, also, Tipu's envoy had previously met with complete failure, so that nothing came of his efforts to interest Europe in his projects. On the French Revolution breaking out he declared himself a Republican, and took the name of Citizen Tipu. A body of Frenchmen resident in Mysore even planted a Tree of Liberty in the centre of Seringapatam. But there was one thing he wanted more than advice and assurance and that was money. This he could only acquire by plundering some of his neighbours, and he fixed upon Travancore as the most promising field for his activities. Without a word of warning he sent his cavalry into that State with instructions to lay their hand on everything that was portable. But Travancore was under the protection of the English. He may have wished to precipitate a fresh struggle with them, but he certainly had failed to take note that their power was much greater and his much less than in his father's time.

The Marquis of Cornwallis was Governor-General at the time, and being a soldier he decided to take the command of the army in the field in person. He had served in the United States, and he believed that it would be advantageous when the time arrived for a settlement that the supreme political as well as military power should be on the spot. But what was not in the general order of things was that he decided that his presence should be publicly notified by the magnificent scale on which his camp was to be maintained. The pomp of his movements resembled an Imperial progress.

But at the same time he was not unmindful of the necessities of the serious business he had in hand. He left nothing to chance. His army was considerable in itself, but he induced both the Marathas and the Nizam to co-operate as his allies. A large army moved down from Poona, and with it a considerable detachment of the Bombay army. The Nizam also put a large contingent in the field. Tipu Sultan had raised a greater storm than he had anticipated, but his spirit did not quail.

What is called the Third Mysore War began in 1790, and it went on for over two years. The campaign of the first year was indecisive and no marked success occurred for either side. The Marathas were not very keen about the business, and differences soon arose among the allies, but Lord Cornwallis bestirred himself in 1791, and inflicted several heavy defeats on Tipu. Finally, he was brought to see that the only way to escape from complete destruction was to conclude peace on the best terms he could obtain. The peace of Seringapatam compelled him to pay an indemnity of three crores and to make some important cessions of territory, and he had also to surrender his two sons as hostages for the fulfilment of the terms.

It might have been conjectured after such a rude experience that Tipu would have seen the wisdom of keeping the peace permanently, but his hatred of the English was so intense as to destroy his reasoning power.

And this was the more surprising because his sons had been returned in 1794, and they could only report to him that they had been treated in the kindest and most honourable manner—a foretaste of their subsequent existence as pensioners of the English. But nothing could affect his morbid imagination. News came in 1798 of the French having landed in Egypt, and the genius of Napoleon Bonaparte had become one of the fascinating influences of the age. The English themselves were perturbed, why should not their old foe be inspired by the hope that at last the fortune of war would change in his favour ?

Tipu Sultan had also some substantial facts to go upon. He knew that the Alliance of 1790 against himself would not be revived, as the Marathas were restive and quite as likely to join him as not. The Nizam might also be ruled out, as his French-trained regiments had been decimated when Sindhia's army under De Boigne routed Raymond in 1795. To a sanguine mind such as Tipu's these changes seemed to open the door to success, and then there was the fresh factor in Napoleon's genius which might give Asia a new conqueror.

Again he tried to secure French co-operation by sending

in January, 1798, an embassy to the Mauritius, proposing an alliance on a large scale, but all it effected was to bring back a promise to send on Tipu's proposals to Paris. Tipu was revolving these projects in his mind and trying to decide the moment when it would be proper for him to throw off the mask—and then suddenly a new personage appeared who took the option out of his hands.

A new Governor-General came out in 1798 in the person of the Earl of Mornington, better known by his subsequent title of Marquis Wellesley. He came with distinct instructions to place the relations with Mysore and the Marathas on a definite basis of friendship or enmity, and the Mysore case was to come first. While Tipu was preparing for war he received a curt ultimatum calling upon him to disarm or to take the consequences. Whether the ultimatum would have been quite so abrupt if Napoleon had not been in Egypt is legitimate matter of conjecture, but the last invasion of what was called the Mahomedan dominion in Mysore was carried out with surprising suddenness. At the same time it cannot be disputed that Tipu's intrigues with France as a country with which England was still at war constituted a legitimate *casus belli*. Lord Wellesley, not being a soldier, did not take the command in person nor did he think it necessary to be present, but he entrusted the control of operations to very capable officers in General Harris and David Baird, with the result that the campaign was soon brought to a victorious conclusion by the victory of Malavali and the storming of Seringapatam, Tipu himself being killed at the entrance to his own palace. This event occurred on 4th May, 1799, and brought to an end the hard struggle with Hyder Ali and his son, which had gone on for nearly forty years.

The British Government decided to restore the ancient dynasty to the throne, and Lord Mornington entrusted to his brother Arthur Wellesley, who had distinguished himself during the war, the difficult task of reorganizing the administration for a new start. He performed it with equal celerity and success, thus giving the first proof of those qualities of mastery of detail and of common sense in solving difficulties

which were his chief characteristics, when, as Duke of Wellington, he had to deal with world-shaking problems in the Great Wars.

At this point it is necessary to make a retrospect, and to show what had been happening in respect of the consolidation of the Company's internal administration, and the provision of a system of civil and judicial government throughout that part of India which had passed into its hands. Warren Hastings, who had had a long acquaintance with the situation in his capacity of manager of the Dewanni at Murshidabad, was selected by the Court in 1772 for the Governorship of Bengal, with explicit instructions to carry out the necessary reforms. They were to the effect that "The Company has decided to stand forth as Diwan and to take upon themselves by the agency of their own servants the entire care and administration of the revenues." Such was the order of the Court, but how it was to be carried out rested with the man on the spot.

To give Hastings greater authority he was raised in 1774 to the rank of Governor-General (of Bengal), a title previously used as mentioned in the case of Sir John Child. Clive's system had been of dual form, the revenue being collected for the greater part by farming districts to natives. At the same time that the Company controlled the revenue it left the administration of justice to the officers of the Nawab Nazim. The system produced an era of corruption in which the English were as deeply involved as the Indians. It was necessary to effect a radical change, and Warren Hastings can never be deprived of the credit of having carried it to completion. He removed the Dewanni office from Murshidabad to Calcutta, divided the civil servants into collectors and assistant collectors, and invested them with judicial powers, thus providing the basis upon which the Ind an Civil Service developed.

In carrying out these reforms Hastings encountered the bitterest attacks and was exposed to the most virulent calumnies which resulted in his impeachment after his return home. He was exonerated at the time after a trial that went on for seven years, and every subsequent

examination of the contemporary records has gone to disprove the charges brought by his enemies and represented by Edmund Burke with his accustomed rhetoric and extravagance.

At the same time Hastings had to obtain the funds necessary to consolidate the Company's position. This involved a continuous struggle in different parts of India, and without the provision of the means it could not have been successfully consummated. Warren Hastings was given fixed and binding instructions, but he alone had to find the means. In this respect the Company gave him no support. He had in addition to keep the Court in good humour by seeing that its dividend remained unaffected by whatever he undertook.

Hastings had to find the means for many wars although he was essentially a man of peace and did not go out of his way to cause trouble. He found the means in several distinct fashions. In some instances, as in the Rohilla war, he caused the expense to be paid by the Chief benefited—in that instance the Nawab Nazim. He fined rebellious or treacherous potentates like the Raja of Benares and the Oudh Queen mother. He cut down the pensions fixed in the first period of Clive's conquest. He sold provinces, like Allahabad and Kora, that he did not want. He withheld from the Emperor the tribute of 26 lakhs which had been paid to him after 1765. At the same time, the general revenue of the Presidency showed a marked increase upon the old. Those were the resources that enabled Hastings to carry on the costly wars with Hyder Ali and the Marathas. If they had not been obtained those wars could not have been carried on, and the result would have been that the English power in India would never have been consolidated.

The measures taken by Warren Hastings to obtain the funds necessary for the predicaments of the time may, in some instances, be challenged on the ground of high morality, which had no practical meaning in his day, but it cannot be said that any other course was open to him if he was to carry out the instructions of the Court and to preserve the small European community from being submerged.

It was a remarkable feature of the case that all these exactions were carried out without the employment of force. Earlier conquerors in India had done far worse. They had not only taken everything but they had destroyed the value of what remained. Warren Hastings aimed at establishing security, order, and justice. The emissaries of destruction were on every side. Hastings repressed them, and reduced their capacity for wrong-doing and exaction. He took something from the great ones of the earth, but it was only to add to the safety and prosperity of the mass of the people for whom no previous conqueror had shown the least regard. Finally, he took nothing for himself, and he was the first to purify the public service.

CHAPTER VI

THE WARS WITH THE MARATHAS

AFTER the death of Sivaji and the retention of his son and heir by Aurangzeb as a hostage, the affairs of the Marathas passed under an eclipse, but his family continued to rule in the hereditary capital of Rajghur. During this period internal fermentation went on which gave the policy of the confederacy a new orientation. On the one hand, the military Chiefs set up separate dominions, on the other, a new dynasty was established at Poona. It is true that the Peshwas, as the latter were styled, did not claim a sovereign position, and at each succession they went through the formal ceremony of investiture by the Raja at Rajghur, or his other place of residence, Sattara. But none the less for this informal position they exercised all the practical power, and the military chiefs who formed a sort of Council of State rendered them implicit obedience. Moreover, all the neighbouring governments, including the English and the Portuguese, recognized them as exercising the Sovereign power, and carried on diplomatic and other business with them.

The first of the Peshwas was Balaji Vishvanath, or Balaji I, who having first acted as Minister for the successors of Sivaji took upon himself the supreme government in 1720, and held it down to 1740. In that year he was succeeded by his son Baji Rao I, who in his turn had as his successor Balaji II. These three men were all of commanding ability, and so was the fourth, Madhu, but he died young through an accident, and after that event Poona witnessed the scenes and troubles usual in periods of disputed succession and divided authority.

The Peshwas were Brahmins, forbidden by their caste to shed blood, not quite priests, and yet sacrosanct in the eyes of their inferiors. But if bloodshed was prohibited to them there never was a body in office who possessed in a higher degree the art of making others shed their blood

for their exaltation and advantage. In its inception the Maratha confederation was martial, its leaders ruled by the sword and flourished by overcoming their weaker or less combative neighbours. The Peshwas would have been soon swept aside if they had endeavoured to impress upon them that there was only one duty in life, which was to stay at home and keep the peace. They were the salt of the earth, proud and exclusive, it was no part of their teaching "to love one's neighbour as oneself." They had as keen a desire as any conquerors ever had to subdue their neighbours, and to reduce them to a state of servitude, but they had to work through others.

Therefore they gave the military chiefs a free hand to go forth and conquer in their name, on the condition that the Peshwa, as representing the central authority, was to share in the plunder. Thus it came to pass that one leader named the Bhonsla, and he, too, a scion of the Sivaji family, set up his administration in Berar, another who took the name of Sindhia in that part of Central India of which Gwalior is the centre, a third named Holkar in Malwa, and a fourth called the Gaekwar in Baroda and Gujerat. There were other chiefs, but these were the principal. Their conquests extended across India from Sind to Bengal, and from Agra and Delhi in the north to Tanjore in the south. On the morrow of Panipat a fresh army, more efficient and less showy than its predecessor, was sent to make headway against Ahmed Shah, who did not reappear, and the new Emperor Shah Alum was forced by his circumstances to accept the protection of Sindhia, and to admit a Maratha garrison within the walls of Delhi.

It was immediately after these events that the English came into contact with the Poona Government. The particular English concerned were those of Bombay, which they had then held in sovereign possession for a century.

But Bombay was a very cramped position. It was by itself but a small island, and Salsette, another island in the Bay, was held by the Marathas, while Bassein, the town on the mainland, was added to their dominion in 1750. This annexation was the more unpleasant because the

Portuguese, from whom the Marathas took it, had promised it as part of the Queen's dowry at the same time as Bombay. The Marathas were thus the closest and most powerful neighbours of the English in Bombay, who when they wrote of the "country powers" referred solely to them. They were concerned not with the affairs and authority of the Emperor who was remote, but with those of the Peshwa at Poona who was so near. These were the reasons that led to their attempt in 1767 to interest Clive in their position. He had dealt the Pirate Chief Angria a rude blow on passing to Calcutta, why should he not alleviate their cramped position by proceeding against the Peshwa on his return? In his outspoken manner Clive told them that Hyder Ali came first, and that the Marathas must wait.

But the relations between Bombay and Poona could not be left in suspense, and various treaties or arrangements were come to for the carrying on of the Company's trade. None of them related to political affairs, and it was quite understood on both sides that the Peshwa's authority was supreme, and that the English only expected to meet with no hindrance in their commercial operations. There is no doubt, however, that the successes in Bengal and Madras inflamed the imagination of the Council at Bombay, and led them to imagine that they could emulate the example of the others. Moreover, Bombay was still the senior station of the Company, and quite independent of the other Presidencies. It could take action of a momentous character if it chose to run the risk of being blamed or repudiated by the Court in London, which was always indulgent to success especially if the price of it did not reduce their dividends.

In 1775 Raghoba or Raghonath who had appropriated the office of Peshwa without the suffrages of the Chiefs, was expelled from Poona and fled to Surat. The Bombay authorities conceived that a good opportunity had arrived to attain their wishes, and sent an agent to Surat to come to terms with the fugitive. Raghoba had not much chance of restoration except through the English, and he was consequently in a mood to listen to their overtures. An agreement was promptly concluded to the effect that the

English were to reinstate him at Poona, in return for the cession of Salsette and Bassein. As soon as the Treaty of Surat was signed, the Bombay authorities hastened to occupy those two places. At the moment of triumph Bombay received a blow from an unexpected quarter. The Maratha question had begun to attract attention in Calcutta, and Warren Hastings, who had just been created Governor-General, sent a special envoy to Poona to conclude a fresh treaty. Raghoba thus learnt that there was a greater power in India than the Bombay Council, and a fresh treaty was signed at Purandhar, which restored the *status quo ante*; the effect of this was the restoration of Salsette and Bassein to the Marathas.

But Raghoba, in fear of Sindhia, had to flee once more from Poona, and Bombay, seeing much profit from the adventure, decided to set him up again. In 1778 a British force marched over the Ghats, and it was accompanied by two members of Council charged with the attendant negotiations. But this time the Maratha military chiefs were close at hand. They first harassed and then surrounded the English force, the civil and the military leaders differed, and the former insisted on accepting the best terms offered to escape as they thought from complete destruction. The march to Poona terminated with the ignominious convention of Wargaon, but the humiliated British force was allowed to return to Bombay.

The news of this reverse made a great stir through India, and Warren Hastings decided to retrieve it. He had recently raised ten fresh battalions, and his financial resources at the moment were sufficient. So he determined to despatch an army across India, which at that time was a difficult and in every sense of the word a remarkable undertaking. The command of this force was entrusted to Colonel Goddard, one of the best officers in the Company's service. Thanks to his able arrangements, the operations proved completely successful. Colonel Goddard brought his march to a victorious conclusion by the capture of Bassein, and his lieutenant, Captain Popham, carried Sindhia's strong fortress of Gwalior by storm. The negotiations for

peace to cancel the Wargaon Convention were carried on not with the Peshwa but with Sindhia, and the Treaty of Salbai in 1782 was the result. By this all conquests were to be restored with the exception of Salsette. The contest then concluded is generally termed the Second Maratha War; that terminating with the Wargaon Convention having been the first.

In 1796 Baji Rao II, Raghoba's son, became Peshwa, and other changes in the leading personalities of the Maratha Confederacy followed. Among the great chiefs, Madaji Sindhia and Tukoji Holkar died. The former was succeeded by his adopted son Dowlut Rao, but the latter left several sons who disputed between themselves for the succession. The predominance of Sindhia was thus established the more effectually by the disunion in the only Maratha family that could have held him in check. By a series of minor events, which do not call for description, two claimants to the Holkar Chiefship alone survived, one, Kashi Rao, becoming the dependent of Sindhia, and the other, Jeswunt Rao, passing into temporary exile. The authority of the Peshwa was completely overshadowed by that of Sindhia, but Baji Rao adapted himself to the situation, and might have continued to rule as his nominee but for the sensational resuscitation of Jeswunt Rao Holkar. After six years' adventures, that young prince had succeeded in getting round him a large army with which he gained many victories, crowning them with the sudden capture of Poona, and the defeat of Sindhia's forces in the neighbourhood. In October, 1802, Jeswunt Rao was master of Poona, and Baji Rao fled, like his father, to the English. He signed a new treaty at Bassein, pledging himself to surrender that place to the English, and also to follow their advice in his internal affairs, including the creation of a contingent to be officered by Englishmen, as the price of their replacing him on his gadi in Poona.

Jeswunt Rao retained possession of Poona for six months. He had set up a Peshwa himself in the person of a brother of Baji Rao's, and as his quarrel with Sindhia was acute the Marathas were like a house divided against itself.

Despite Holkar's phenomenal success, it was Sindhia who possessed the superior military power. Much of his army had been trained by De Boigne, a French officer of proved merit, and although he had before this returned to Europe his place was filled by the not less able Perron. Sindhia's forces, however, were scattered over a wide extent of territory, and the bulk of them were nearer Delhi than Poona. Sindhia wavered between his animosity to Holkar and his dislike of the terms of the treaty of Bassein, which substituted English influence for his own. He did not hesitate from the first to take up a high line, representing that as the Treaty of Salbai had been signed by him he had every right to be consulted before that of Bassein could possess any validity. Sindhia was not alone in his dislike of the establishment of English influence over the Peshwa. All the great Chiefs held the same view, but at first Holkar may have thought that he would be able to prevent Baji Rao's return to Poona, and that in this way the new treaty would become inoperative.

But when he learnt of the great preparations of the English, of the force advancing from Bombay, and of the army coming up from the Deccan under Sir Arthur Wellesley, he conceived that it was an occasion to display discretion as the better part of valour, and evacuated Poona, retiring to his possessions on the northern side of the Nerbudda. It was said that Amrut, the substituted Peshwa, intended to destroy Poona by fire, but Wellesley's forced marches at the head of his cavalry brought him there in time to defeat this intention and save the capital. He entered that city on 20th April, 1803, nearly six months after Holkar's capture of it, and a fortnight later Baji Rao, escorted by the Bombay forces, arrived and was restored to the seat of his ancestors.

A lull followed, but every one realized that great events were about to occur. The Marathas were girding up their loins for a life and death struggle; the English authorities, the Marquis Wellesley as Governor-General and his military commanders, Lord Lake and Sir Arthur Wellesley, were completing their preparations for a severe campaign. In July, 1803, the Marquis issued a Proclamation calling upon

all British subjects in the service of any of the Maratha States to quit their employment and to return to British territory at once, guaranteeing them the equivalent of their emoluments. This was followed up by a second notice offering the same conditions to the French and other foreign officers in the service of the Chiefs. These terms were accepted by all with hardly a single exception, and thus the effective value of the Maratha armies was greatly reduced. There could no longer be any doubt that the third Maratha War was about to begin.

Meanwhile there was much activity between the different camps and capitals. Secret negotiations were being carried on all round, and even Baji Rao took means to let it be known that he objected to the Treaty of Bassein which he had only signed under duress. Sindhia and the Bhonsla formed a defensive-offensive alliance, and they both endeavoured to bring in Holkar, whose force of cavalry and skill in leading them made him an invaluable ally. Holkar listened to their suggestions and prolonged the discussions. He demanded a very large sum of money before he moved; when it was promised he did not move. He may have distrusted both his would-be partners, but it is more likely that his judgment was influenced by the conviction that he would be only playing his chief rival's game. If the war proved successful he felt sure that Sindhia would get the greater reward, and that his ascendancy would be firmly established. On the other hand, in the event of defeat he felt sure that he would suffer most, and that he would lose the whole of the State that he had succeeded in reuniting. His final decision then was to hold aloof, and to be no more than an onlooker, but down to the very last moment he played with the others, and led them to hope that he would strike in on their side.

It was said that Sindhia and the Bhonsla, on finding that Holkar was not likely to join them wished to draw back, but it was too late. The time granted in Wellesley's ultimatum had expired. It only remained for the sword to decide. There were two distinct fields of action, one in the north with Delhi as its centre, the other in the Deccan.

In the former Lord Lake had the chief command, in the latter Sir Arthur Wellesley. The bulk of Sindhia's forces opposed Lake; a strong corps also combined with the Bhonsla against Wellesley, and a great part of the Peshwa's liegemen rallied to this force. The cavalry attached to it under a Chief named Gautky was said to number 50,000 men, but its discipline was inferior, and no absolute reliance could be placed upon it in battle. It might charge or it might hold back, as the mood of the men impelled them.

It was on 23rd September, 1803, that Wellesley attacked the Bhonsla army at Assaye. The Maratha force was computed to number 50,000 men exclusive of Gautky's cavalry, and Wellesley had only 4,500 men, of whom 2,000 were Europeans. The battle was one of the most stubbornly contested struggles in the modern history of India. The French trained sepoys, although their officers were gone, fought to the last, dying in their ranks. More than once Wellesley was doubtful of the issue, and it was said that it was one of the rare occasions when he felt compelled to draw his sword. Gautky's cavalry were either too far off to hear the order to charge, or they refused to obey it. They quitted the field intact when the infantry fight was over. In his final comment Wellesley praised the valour of the foe, adding " Perhaps it was as well that the French officers were not present."

The war went on. It needed more than one defeat to break the spirit of the stubborn enemy. Many of the hill forts had to be captured before Wellesley could bring the Marathas to a fresh action. He at last came up with them at the village of Argaum on 29th November, 1803. This battle, although much less severe in regard to the character of the fighting was as decisive as Assaye, and it put an end to the fighting power of the southern Maratha armies. One incident may be mentioned. Gautky's cavalry which had held back at Assaye charged home to the very bayonets of the English infantry. After this defeat the Bhonsla parted from Sindhia and sued for peace.

Meantime Sindhia with his main forces in the north had fared no better at Lord Lake's hands. Having lost Delhi

in September and Agra in October, 1803, Sindhia concentrated all his forces at Laswari for a final stand. Lake attacked him in his strongly entrenched position, and after a stubborn struggle drove him from the field. This battle was fought on 1st November, and after the news came of the battle of Argaum in the south, Sindhia notified his desire to end the war. Terms of peace were drawn up and duly signed after two months' negotiations at Boorhanpore in February, 1804. The terms were not very severe, but Sindhia lost Agra, and the Maratha garrison in Delhi was superseded by an English. But although a treaty of peace had been signed it remained unratified, and the British agent was carried about as a hostage by Sindhia from camp to camp for nearly two years. The cause of this strange proceeding has now to be explained.

When Sindhia retired from the scene Holkar made his appearance. This strange man of genius, who had refused to associate himself with the confederates, had persuaded himself by some subtle reasoning that he might succeed where they had failed. Perhaps he also imagined that the English were exhausted by their campaigns with Sindhia. Some said that having studied the subject he had come to the conclusion that the right way to fight the English was to avoid pitched battles, and to have recourse to irregular warfare for which his strength in horse pre-eminently fitted him. Whatever his reasons his action was clear and uncompromising. He sent his vakils to Lord Lake demanding a reward for his neutrality in the late struggle. He wrote to Sir Arthur Wellesley a half friendly, half boastful letter, stating that " the Marathas had no equals in plundering and laying waste a foe's country by day and night."

The English authorities may have been surprised, but they were also indignant. They dismissed the vakils, and prepared to attack Holkar. They had no doubt that his overthrow would be complete and speedily attained, and in that view they parcelled out his possessions, assigning to Sindhia the largest share. Both Lord Lake and the Marquis Wellesley were very sanguine characters, they lacked the cold common sense of Arthur Wellesley. Lord Lake, a

gallant but reckless cavalry officer, lacked also the tactical training for the conduct of war. To these causes more than to Holkar's skill must be attributed the length of the struggle and the dubious character of the victory.

A plan of campaign was drawn up for the combination of several separate armies, and it looked very well on the map. But Arthur Wellesley, who for some reason was not consulted, caustically remarked, "These pretty looking combinations do not often come off," and so it happened on this occasion. Lord Lake at the head of the Grand Army advanced into Malwa. Another corps under Colonel Monson coming up from the south was to take Holkar in the rear, and yet another corps marching eastwards from Baroda under Colonel Murray was to complete the chain of encirclement. Neither Monson nor Murray had any cavalry, but Sindhia had promised to supply this want by a corps under the command of his kinsman Bappooji Sindhia.

Lord Lake advanced into Malwa, and as he advanced Holkar retreated. Their forces never came into contact, but Lake received a warning of what was coming when a force bringing up his supplies was surprised and destroyed by Ameer Khan, Holkar's Mahomedan lieutenant. This was not the only check. Murray, owing to the holding back of Sindhia's cavalry, felt obliged to halt, and then to retire behind the Myhe. He only resumed his advance at the peremptory order of Arthur Wellesley to move forward and occupy at all costs the strategical point of Ougein.

The campaign began in the hottest months of the summer, and soon the main army was exhausted by a fruitless pursuit, and Lord Lake felt compelled to retire to Agra, where the efficiency of his army might be restored. He wrote to the Governor-General expressing his belief that Monson's force was "equal to anything that could be brought against it." But he omitted to take into account the fact that Monson had no cavalry, and that Holkar had under his orders 40,000 of the best light cavalry in India, and moreover that he was a leader who had shown that he knew how to use them. The first sign of what was coming was when Monson began his retreat with the view of putting

the Chumbul between his force and his active opponent. He had by this time been joined by a corps of Irregular Horse under Lieutenant Lucan and Bappooji Sindhia's contingent.

Monson began his retreat on 8th July, leaving the cavalry to follow him at a short interval. Monson's force totalled 4,000 fighting men, and it was accompanied by at least 6,000 non-combatants, including women and children. It could only move very slowly, being burdened with its train. After several hours, fugitive horsemen, who had escaped from the carnage, arrived to inform Monson that the cavalry had been overwhelmed, and that Lucan, severely wounded, was a prisoner in the hands of the victor. Bappooji Sindhia's body had remained idle spectators of the fray, and then ridden off. Monson's only course was to hasten his retreat, and on 13th July he succeeded in crossing the Chumbul without molestation, but he was far indeed from being safe.

Holkar had been delayed by the necessity of bringing in his numerous scattered detachments, and in collecting his artillery, strengthened by two guns that Monson had left behind him at Kotah. But he came up with the English officer as he was in the act of crossing the Bunas river. To save the bulk of his army Monson had to sacrifice one of his best battalions and four of his guns, to hold the enemy in check at all costs. The duty was nobly performed, and Holkar himself was compelled to halt to await reinforcements. But his halt was brief. He was soon close on Monson's heels again. Desertions from the English force were frequent, and finally the wrecks of Monson's army reached Agra in inextricable confusion. It was the greatest disaster that had ever befallen an English army in northern India.

Lord Lake again took the field on 1st October, and Holkar resumed his former tactics, retiring as the English advanced. At this moment he made a descent upon Delhi, which he would certainly have captured if it had not been ably defended by Colonel David Ochterlony. But Lake's turn had arrived. General Fraser, his second in command, inflicted a crushing defeat on Holkar's infantry corps in

a strong position outside Deig, recovering eight of the guns lost by Monson, and capturing besides the greater part of Holkar's artillery. A few days later Lake in person, by one of the most rapid forced marches on record, beat up Holkar in his quarters at Ferruckabad, almost captured the Chief himself, and disposed of 3,000 of his choicest cavalry. These two brilliant successes showed clearly what the military result of the war must be. However elusive Holkar's movements might be there could be no doubt that as an opponent in the field he had ceased to be formidable.

The war which had commenced in April, 1804, went on till the end of 1805, but it is unnecessary to follow its vicissitudes in detail. The end was foreshadowed when in December of the latter year Sindhia ratified the long suspended Treaty, and the Sikh Chiefs, instead of granting the aid that Holkar craved from them, signed treaties with the English. By that time the East India Company was as anxious on financial grounds for peace as Holkar, whose military resources had been entirely dissipated. The Marquis Wellesley had gone home, and his successors were men of peace. The Marquis of Cornwallis, who succeeded him, had explicit orders to arrange an honourable peace, and when he died Sir George Barlow, the soundest financier in the service, hastened to attain it. He modified the terms to Holkar to the extent of leaving him in the undisturbed possession of all the hereditary estates of his family.

The peace attained in December, 1805, left the situation very much where it had been in 1803 with the following exceptions. Sindhia lost Agra and Broach, and was excluded from Delhi. Jeswunt Rao lost nothing but a few tributaries, and he was recognized as the head of his State. But the military power of both Chiefs was reduced, and each was prohibited from employing any Europeans in training their armies. With regard to the Bhonsla he also escaped any serious diminution of authority, beyond having to admit the presence of a Resident at Nagpur. The Peshwa reverted to his position as an English dependent chafing at the constant restraint and lamenting the loss of his past fortunes. So ended the third Maratha war.

Central India, although undisturbed by any serious war, became after these events the field of depredation for groups of disbanded soldiers and other lawless persons, who were known as Pindarries. Each group had its own chief, but some of the larger bands were attached as irregulars to the armies of Sindhia and Holkar. At the end of ten years they had become more numerous, and their depredations covered a wider field. It began to look as if they might in turn constitute a formidable power by attracting to their side all the numerous turbulent elements in Central India. In the time of the Marquis Hastings (1813–23) the decision was formed to put an end to their organization by breaking up the bands.

Lord Hastings began by endeavouring to form a league among all the States upon whose borders the Pindarries roamed. As they had no territory of their own it followed necessarily that they were either given or seized the right of domicile within some of them. In reply to his circular letter the Rajput Chiefs promptly agreed, so did the ruler of the Mahomedan State of Bhopal, and Sindhia also committed himself by promises. But neither the Bhonsla nor Holkar replied. The Bhonsla referred to his helpless condition as an excuse, and the Holkar State was in such confusion among opposing factions that no one would venture to make a positive decision. Jeswunt Rao died mad in 1811, and during the minority of his son, Mulhar Rao, the administration was conducted by his favourite widow, Toolsa Bai. She was in favour of complying with the Governor-General's request, but she had no money to pay her semi-mutinous soldiers, and as they had no hope of payment, save by plunder, they naturally sympathized with the Pindarries.

It is not probable that they would have resorted to absolute opposition but for the intrusion of an outside influence. The Peshwa Baji Rao had long been restive, and latterly the bonds in which he was held by the English had been drawn tighter by a fresh Treaty signed at Poona. His mysterious influence still pervaded the Maratha Confederacy, and both Nagpur and Holkar were encouraged by

his emissaries to think that a fresh effort might be made to drive out the English. Baji Rao was prepared to take the risk of striking the first blow if only the others would do their part, but he failed to make any impression on Sindhia. As far as could be seen, apart from a general insurrection, the only military force upon which he could count in a struggle with the English were the Pindarri bands and the Holkar army. But the latter could or would not move without money, so he sent them a considerable sum and promised more. This decided the mercenaries in Holkar's service to resist the English. They murdered Toolsa Bai, and prepared for war.

They had not long to wait, for the Governor-General, becoming impatient at the long delay in coming to a decision, had ordered the army under Sir Thomas Hislop to enter the Holkar State. The battle of Mehidpore followed on 21st December, 1817, and although the Holkar army fought better than was expected, it was defeated and scattered. Peace with Holkar was signed at Mandisore on 6th January, 1818, the effect of which was to greatly reduce the territory of that family. The Peshwa kept his word to take an active part in the affair, but he was overthrown without much difficulty, and compelled to seek safety by flight. After a long pursuit he was eventually captured and placed in honourable confinement at Benares. Baji Rao was the last of his family to rule at Poona. Thus ended the famous dynasty of the Peshwas, and most of their dominions passed into the hands of the English. Before the year 1818 closed all the Pindarri bands had been broken up, with which result the fourth and last Maratha war came to an end.

CHAPTER VII

EXTERNAL MOVEMENTS

WE have now reached a period when incidents outside the limits of India, but subject to the control of its Government, were of greater moment than anything happening within its borders. A first indication of the fact that India was being drawn out of her limits to take a part in general international affairs was afforded when an Anglo-Indian expedition was sent in the year 1800 under General Abercrombie to Egypt. The results of that experiment were in every respect encouraging. It was then made clear that Indian troops could be sent over the sea and usefully employed against the forces of other nations.

The long war with France contributed to develop the movement. Napoleon being at the height of his power, and having as was said placed the Continent under his feet, the slightest indication of his intention to revive the earlier projects of his predecessors in Asia became invested with special significance. His activity seemed directed in the first place to Persia, and in the second to the Dutch colonies in Malacca and Java, as the Netherlands was then attached to France in a political sense. France also possessed Mauritius and Bourbon, which islands furnished a shelter and rallying point for her fleet on the route to either India or the Sunda isles. Nothing seemed impossible for his genius, and even after Trafalgar, apprehensions were rife lest with the co-operation of Turkey, whose alliance he had secured, he might not succeed in making his way overland to India. Every previous conqueror had come that way; it was idle to speak to the impressionable peoples of India about the mysteries of sea-power.

As a first step towards securing a counterpoise against Turkey as the ally of France it was decided, both in India and in London, to break ground in Persia where the Shah as a Moslem potentate was hardly the inferior of the Sultan. Very shortly after the Egyptian expedition Captain John

Malcolm was accordingly sent as special envoy from the East India Company to Teheran. He was well received, and his mission was completely successful. He returned to India with two treaties, the one political and the other commercial. It is only necessary to refer to the former. By its terms the Shah engaged to devastate the country of the Afghans if ever they attempted to invade India. He also bound himself to prevent the French from settling or residing in Persia. By the latter condition Persia seemed to be definitely closed to Napoleon as a jumping off place against India. On the other hand, Persia was promised military assistance if either France or Afghanistan attacked her. No other Power was named.

In 1805 Russia invaded Georgia and gained several successes over the Persians. In his distress the Shah appealed to the English for help on the ground of what he chose to call the Treaty of mutual defence. He sent an Ambassador to India, and by the customary usages in the East his expenses were at the charge of the Company. He was very extravagant and the charges mounted up. He had to be got rid of, and he returned with hostile views to his master, who on his advice applied to France for help. Napoleon was so far interested that he sent General Gardanne in 1807 to report on the situation. For the moment the French officer did not feel able to commit the Emperor to any formal arrangement, and consequently the French mission was a failure, but this result was not known in either India or England, where the reported presence of French officers at Teheran created little short of consternation. It was decided to nullify its effect by deputing a counter mission, and unfortunately, as it turned out, envoys were sent at the same moment from both London and Calcutta to the Persian Court.

Sir John Malcolm, who had been knighted for the previous occasion, was sent by the Company from India, and Sir Harford Jones was despatched from England as the King's representative. Malcolm arrived first on the scene, but from slights he met with on the journey to Teheran he concluded that there was no use in prosecuting his journey

any farther, and retracing his steps he returned to India, where he recommended the Governor-General to send an expedition to the Persian Gulf, and to occupy the island of Kharrack, whence it would be possible " to negotiate with dignity or to act with vigour should war be necessary." The Governor-General approved of this plan, but at this moment Sir Harford Jones, *en route* for Persia, reached Bombay. His instructions were, if Sir John Malcolm had been either partially successful or altogether rebuffed to proceed to Teheran, and he was unable to understand the motives that had led to Malcolm's dignified withdrawal. He continued his journey to Persia.

He was decidedly fortunate, for when he reached his destination he found a radical change in the situation. The French officers had gone, and the news had arrived that France had concluded at Tilsit an alliance with Russia, the only enemy that the Shah greatly feared. Harford Jones was, therefore, received with open arms, and a new treaty was signed in March, 1809. This abrogated all treaties previously in force between Persia and all European Powers. The Shah engaged to prevent the passage of any European army through his dominions. The British Government engaged to assist him with troops or a subsidy if he were attacked by any European Power. The English were, however, to take no part in any quarrel between Persia and Afghanistan, the explanation of this change being that negotiations were pending with the latter country.

Notwithstanding this result the situation was not cleared up so far as British diplomacy was involved. Lord Minto ratified Sir Harford's treaty, but he recalled that envoy and again appointed Sir John Malcolm to take his place and to convey the ratified copy of the Treaty to the Persian Court. It was but a small return for the slight that had been put upon that officer. But the Governor-General again found himself overruled by the Foreign Office. A new Ambassador, Sir Gore Ouseley, was announced as being on his way out with powers superseding those of both Sir Harford Jones and Sir John Malcolm. Sir Gore Ouseley concluded in 1812 a fresh treaty amplifying and explaining that of 1809.

A great change had again taken place in the international situation. The Russo-French alliance had been dissolved, and again Russia and England were on the footing of Allies. The treaty of 1812 was submitted for ratification in London, and as the result of further negotiation a definitive and final treaty was concluded in November, 1814. By one of its clauses the British Government bound itself to assist Persia against any European assailant by despatching a force from India or by a large subsidy. It also undertook to use its friendly influence with Russia to bring about a satisfactory settlement of the frontier left vague by the Treaty of Gulistan. The Persian incident claims notice because the result was the exclusion of the Indian Government from the scene—although the party chiefly concerned—and the introduction of the supreme control of the Foreign Office in London over Persian questions which has been maintained to the present day.

The Earl of Minto was a man with a rare capacity for judging the merit of others, and with a receptive mind for their ideas and views when they appealed to his sentiments and judgment. He is one of the least appreciated of the Governor-Generals, yet he had the rare merit of always completing what he commenced. He, like others, was alive to the possibilities and risks of French aggression when inspired by such a genius as that of Napoleon. His incursion into Persian affairs was one proof of it. He had satisfied himself that the best way to protect India was to create barriers to approach at the farthest distance possible from her borders, and at the same time to deprive the potential enemy of any intermediate stations in its possession. The first objective in the realization of this programme was Persia; the second was the Mauritius.

Originally discovered by the Portuguese, taken from them by the Dutch and then abandoned, Mauritius had been a French possession from 1721 under the name of the Ile de France. La Bourdonnais had made it a flourishing possession and a strong base for military expeditions, and at the point we have reached Napoleon had despatched General Decaen to look after its fortifications and to prepare

for its defence. Decaen was accompanied by 1,400 troops and proceeded in the first place to Pondicherry where, despite the peace of Amiens being in force, the Anglo-Indian authorities would not permit him to land. He thereupon sailed for the Ile de Bourbon, which it was proposed he should also put in the best posture of defence. There is no doubt that Decaen carried out his orders in a very creditable manner.

In January, 1806, after Decaen had completed his task, Sir Home Popham and Sir David Baird wrested the Cape of Good Hope from the Dutch, and thus began the operations that Lord Minto had to continue. He reached India in the summer of 1807, and about the same time several men-of-war under the command of some of Nelson's best captains were sent to account for Dutch men-of-war wherever they might be found. This had become necessary because Napoleon had first made his brother, Louis, King of the Netherlands, and then deposed him to rule in his own person. As he had sent Decaen to the Mauritius so he now sent the Dutch Marshal Daendels to Java to put it in a fit state to resist and keep out the English. There was therefore no possible room to doubt that the old schemes had not been abandoned, and that the English were within their rights of legitimate defence in adopting counter measures.

In March, 1810, Lord Minto sent a small expedition to capture Bourbon as the first step towards seizing the Mauritius. It was completely successful, but when Admiral Bertie went on to attack the larger island he found to his cost that Decaen's position was too strong for his mall force. Four ships were lost in the attempt and the Admiral withdrew to Bourbon to await reinforcements. Lord Minto had made preparations for such an emergency, and raising the expedition to a strength of 10,000 men he entrusted the command to Sir John Abercrombie. In face of such an overwhelming superiority Decaen had no alternative but to accept the honourable terms offered him, and the Mauritius passed into the English hands permanently.

The way was now cleared for the great enterprise against Java. It was well known that the island was held by a

large garrison trained and led by French and Dutch officers, and with a very capable commander in General Janssens, who had succeeded Marshal Daendels. A very large expedition had to be fitted out on this occasion, and the best way for its despatch was made the subject of elaborate investigation. Lord Minto had no superior authority to support him in this undertaking, and if it had failed he would have received no consideration at home. He had in the first place to make sure that there was a sufficiency of funds in the Company's Exchequer to defray the cost of so onerous an enterprise, and then in the second place to obtain the best information about the islands and peoples of the Eastern Archipelago. That task he committed to Sir Stamford Raffles, who discharged it with consummate ability.

The expedition to Java was composed of the largest military force that had up to that time quitted India on active service. It numbered 12,000 combatants, conveyed on fifty-seven transports, and convoyed by more than forty ships of war, great and small. The fleet started from Malacca on 11th June, 1811, and on 4th August the whole force was anchored in the roadstead of Batavia. The military commander was General Sir Samuel Achmuty. The landing of the troops was effected without any opposition or loss, but the strength of the force had been reduced to 9,000 men by much sickness. It soon became known that General Janssens, with the whole of the garrison, held a strongly-fortified position at Cornelis, about seven miles south of Batavia. The Franco-Dutch army totalled 17,000 men, with a powerful artillery of 280 guns, and its commander was very confident that the invaders would fail to carry the position. His withdrawal from the capital was due to his conviction that an invading force must be decimated by disease in its vicinity, when it would fall an easy prey to his arms.

The operations began with an attack two days after the English had landed on the strong advanced position of Weltevreeden, which was stormed with a loss to the defenders of 500 men and of only 90 men to the English. A

fortnight was then passed in almost daily skirmishing while the heavy guns were being brought up from the fleet. On 24th August the batteries had been placed in position and began to fire at a distance of only half a mile, but it was on a general assault that the English commander mainly relied for victory. He was not disappointed in the quality of his troops or in the feasibility of such an attack. English and Indians vied with each other in intrepidity and carried everything before them. The pursuit was vigorously pressed. Five thousand prisoners, including a battalion of French voltigeurs, were secured, and at one blow the defensive power of the Dutch under their French leaders was completely shattered. On 18th September, Janssens, who had escaped from Cornelis, made his surrender in person. The conquest of Java thus achieved was among the most brilliant feats of war in the English annals, and it was also in its results the most creditable to British administration.

For this the praise must be given to Sir Stamford Raffles, but he could not have accomplished what he did without the whole-hearted support of Lord Minto. Moreover, Lord Minto was alone responsible for disobeying the Company's orders, which were that he should evacuate Java as soon as he had destroyed the French power in the island, and leave the disarmed Dutch in presence of the infuriated natives, with whom they were at that time most unpopular. That policy was not even humane, but in not obeying their orders Lord Minto ran the greatest risk of censure and recall by the Court. The Court was fortunately moved by Lord Minto's arguments, and fell in with his policy. The success of the Java expedition served to revive the old schemes for making the Spice Islands a centre of British trade and influence, and as there was much evidence available to show that it was likely to prove a profitable undertaking, their occupation fell in with their general scheme of political action. But the Foreign Office did not regard the retention of Java with favour, and proof of this was afforded five years later.

The administration of not only Java, but of all the islands

of the Eastern Archipelago during five years by Sir Stamford Raffles, is one of the most remarkable achievements in government by peaceful means on record. He gained the sympathy and support of the Malay princes which the Dutch had never possessed; he attracted the goodwill of the Dutch themselves; he developed the resources of the islands; he promoted trade, and he sextupled the revenue. In everything he did he assumed that British rule was permanently established in Java at least, and that his plans for elevating the Malays to their old supremacy would be sanctioned. But on his return to England in 1816 to advocate this course he found himself in a different atmosphere. The Company, although irritated by his action in liberating slaves, would have supported his views, and indeed did so in a lukewarm fashion. But the Government had taken over the question with the Dutch. The Cape of Good Hope was retained, but Java and the other islands were restored to them.

After the return of Lord Hastings in 1823 the Earl of Amherst was appointed Governor-General. He had been Ambassador to China, but his mission had proved abortive through the obstructive attitude of the Chinese officials. Although Lord Amherst's stay in India was marked by internal peace, it fell to his lot to order the third external movement by waging a war across the seas. The East India Company had had some relations with Burma before the close of the seventeenth century, and they developed during the eighteenth century, although the efforts made to establish trade intercourse could only be deemed fitful. In 1754 they gave some aid to the Emperor Alompra in expelling his enemies and received in recompense the right to establish a factory. At the beginning of the nineteenth century the Burmese Empire attained the height of its power, annexing Manipur and Assam, and threatening the British border regions at different points. They even invaded Kachar and Chittagong, and obtained some successes in the Gangetic delta. The menace to the peace and security of India from this entirely unexpected quarter had to be met. It was decided in March, 1824, to declare

war upon the Burmese and to send an expedition to the Irrawaddy, thus striking at the root of the enemy's power. This seemed the surest way of compelling them to evacuate the Indian districts.

A combined force, including five European battalions, was despatched from Calcutta and Madras, and the command was entrusted to Sir Archibald Campbell. The escorting men-of-war were under Commodore Grant. The Burmese were unprepared for this vigorous proceeding, and after a brief bombardment Rangoon was occupied on 10th May, 1824. The Burmese having recovered from their first alarm, put up a fierce resistance. They made a vain attempt to destroy the fleet by fire-ships, and they offered a vigorous defence of various stockades on the river above Rangoon. Large bodies of troops came down from Upper Burma, but a considerable success on 8th July, when the Burmese General was killed, restored confidence in the final result. The movements of the British force were hampered by the want of suitable transport, and operations had to be held up for a time. It was the worst season of the year for operations in the river estuary, and the health of the troops became seriously affected. During the remainder of the year General Campbell confined his attention to the coastal places, Tavoy, Martaban, and Mergui, all of which surrendered without serious opposition. Pegu was also occupied and these successes compelled the return to Ava of all the forces holding Assam and Manipur. The diversion to the Irrawaddy had thus been completely successful in clearing the frontiers of Bengal.

In the Irrawaddy valley itself operations remained suspended until 23rd October, 1824, by which time the Burmese had collected all their forces. They numbered about 40,000 men led by their best generals, men of no little skill and of undaunted courage. Fortunately only half their men were armed with muskets, but still they outnumbered the Anglo-Indian expedition by four to one. Bandula, the conqueror of Assam, announced that he would recover Rangoon and drive the English into the sea. After some preliminary skirmishing, in which the advantage was

sometimes on the side of the Burmese, the Burmese army sat down before Rangoon on 1st December and pushed forward their trenches to within 300 yards of the Shwe Dagon Pagoda, which formed the centre of General Campbell's position. The Burmese general displayed no inconsiderable skill in his measures, and planted batteries on the river bank to bombard the ships.

In preparing to make this final attack in the hope of carrying the town by storm the Burmese exposed their left flank towards the river, when the ships shelled them and a column of British troops drove them back and captured that part of their position. This success compelled the Burmese to deliver their assault in front, with the result that they were repulsed with heavy loss, and the whole army retreated to Donabeu, where it took up a strong position among the old fortifications. A garrison of between 12,000 and 15,000 men, with 140 guns of all sizes, in addition to Chinese jingals mounted on the walls, was left in the place, while the rest of the army retreated further north for the purpose of reorganizing their forces. As Donabeu lies 60 miles north of Rangoon it was not believed that the English would advance so far. General Campbell was not to be so easily checked, and he pushed forward with one part of his army on land and the other with the fleet on the river. The latter were under General Cotton, who arrived before the land column, and attacked an advanced stockade on 7th March, 1825. He met with a repulse and then withdrew a short distance down the river to await General Campbell's arrival.

This corps did not come up till the 25th of the month, and then had to carry out many minor operations before it could establish contact with General Cotton's column. All the arrangements for assaulting the lines of Donabeu were completed by 8th April, but before the attack took place it was discovered that the enemy had lost heart and evacuated his strong position. Later on it was learned that the cause of the flight was that their great General Bandula had been killed by a shell while walking on the ramparts. The men could not be held together after this mishap, and

dispersed to their homes although their losses had been small.

General Campbell moved his troops to the other side of the river (left bank), and having been reinforced from India, advanced on Prome, where he met with no resistance. The rains having set in, operations were suspended and negotiations were commenced. These resulted in an armistice prolonged till November, 1825, but the King refused the terms offered, declaring that he would neither cede territory nor pay an indemnity.

Hostilities were at once resumed, and the Burmese, whose courage and numbers had been restored, advanced towards Prome. Their army had been largely increased by Shan tributaries, some of them women who led their men under fire. In the preliminary skirmishes the British were worsted on several occasions, but General Campbell, to put an end to this desultory and unsatisfactory fighting, decided to deliver an attack in force, supported by his artillery and the river flotilla. It took him four days to carry the main position at Nat-padi, but that accomplished, the struggle ended, for the Shan levies of their own accord decided to return to their homes. In this fight the British lost 180 men, including 12 officers, and the Burmese some thousands. A final battle was fought at Pagan with almost decisive results, and General Campbell then pushed on to Yandabu, only forty-five miles from Ava.

The Burmese Court was by this brought to a reasonable frame of mind and accepted the terms previously offered, viz. the cession of Arakan, Tavoy, Mergui, and Ye opposite Martaban, and the payment of an indemnity of two millions sterling. The Treaty of Yandabu, signed on 24th February, 1826, contained specific mention of the fact that Assam was not within the dominions of Burma, and also barred the King from any interference in Kachar, Jyntia, and Manipur. After the first quarter of the indemnity had been paid Rangoon was evacuated, and Moulmain was selected as the head station in the ceded portion of what was Burma. The war cost the British Government five millions sterling and 4,000 lives, of whom the greater number

died of disease. A commercial treaty concluded in November, 1826, produced no results, and although hostilities had closed for that period the Burmese Government maintained a sullen attitude, and revealed no desire to have any dealings with the new neighbours installed on Burmese soil. The subsequent developments of the Burmese problem, not solved for sixty years after Yandabu, will be matter for later consideration and description.

The four external movements entailing the despatch of Indian troops across the seas, viz. to Egypt, Mauritius, Java and Burma have been now passed in review. The three first may be classed as falling within the needs of the general policy of the British Empire, and not involving any special Indian interest except in so far as the maintenance of British authority was necessary to her own safety. But the expedition to Burma was essentially an Indian affair. India had been wantonly attacked, her soil invaded, and some of her natural possessions taken from her. Whatever Indian Government existed at the time would have been bound to resent this attack and to have driven out the invaders. Whether Mogul or Hindu it could not but retaliate on those who committed the outrage unless it were willing to pass under the subjection of the invaders. From this point of view it is rather curious that the Burmese wars have not been made the subject of closer study than they have been. The Burmese proved themselves to be men of courage and tenacity, their physique was above the ordinary, and when it is remembered that they were poorly armed, their resistance must be pronounced highly creditable and remarkable. It is not desirable to overdraw the picture, for they had a formidable ally in the unhealthiness of the Irrawaddy delta, and a flotilla of sailing ships had only a restricted range of action within the river estuary. Due allowance for the mitigation of those factors will have to be made when the later campaigns have in their turn to be described.

CHAPTER VIII

INTERNAL PROBLEMS

WITH the exception of the Burmese War, India enjoyed peace for twenty years after the dispersal of the Pindarri bands. During that period the great problem was to keep the expenditure within the revenue, and at the same time sustain the average of the Company's dividend. For reasons that must now be touched upon the latter consideration had been rendered more difficult of attainment, and yet it could not but seem the matter of chief importance in Leadenhall Street. The Company had gone to India in search of a profitable trade; political and administrative responsibility had been forced upon it to a certain degree against its will, but it would never have accepted the heavy charge of government if it had not felt that its profits were assured for continuance, if not increase. For a long time it was trader as well as ruler, but latterly it had been shorn of some of its commercial privileges, and others were threatened, and then to aggravate the situation fresh responsibilities were thrust upon it, and it was warned to govern in such an altruistic fashion as no commercial body ever aspired to attain. The subject must be probed more closely.

The earlier history of the East India Company down to the amalgamation of the two Companies has been described. On several occasions during the eighteenth century attention was called to the Charter of the East India Company, and among other matters curiosity was expressed as to the extent of its privileges and the length of their tenure. The Company enjoyed an exclusive right to trade, in other words, a monopoly, and the outsiders regarded this arrangement with dislike and disapproval. They disliked it the more because China, as well as India, was closed to them. The East India Company, as it were, held the commerce of India and China in fee.

The Charters of William III and Queen Anne left the

period during which the privilege or licence was to continue unspecified, and consequently vague. Some regarded it as permanent because undefined, but this view, whenever challenged, could not have been sustained. It was soon established that Parliament had the right to intervene to fix the period, to place limits on the privileges, and even, if necessary, to terminate them. In 1773 the question was brought before the House of Commons in a formal manner, and after some debate the Company's Charter was renewed with the express limitation of twenty years. This intrusion of Parliament into the Company's affairs was very much resented at the time, but the indignation was mild in comparison with that which Pitt's India Bill aroused ten years later. The Act of 1784 created a Board of Control with a President, who had generally a seat in the Cabinet, and six members, taken from various bodies or professions, who had knowledge of Asiatic affairs to instruct or prompt the President who had none. It served as an intermediary between the Governments at home and in India, and sometimes it carried the right of interference to a degree beyond its warrant. This check upon the autocratic sway of a Governor-General was clearly the first step in the evolution of Parliamentary control. But it was long indeed before the House of Commons displayed any wish to carry the matter farther.

At the end of the first stipulated period in 1793 the Charter was renewed for another twenty years, without any modification, and almost without discussion. But at the end of the second, in 1813, while it was again renewed, it was only granted with one very important change. The monopoly of trade with India was withdrawn, and the traffic and commerce with that country was thrown open to the whole community. This was a second warning that the old state of things must before very long pass away altogether. As proof of the slowness with which the question progressed, the monopoly of trade with China was left intact in the hands of the Company.

This was the more remarkable because the desire among merchants generally was greater to trade with China than

with India at that period, but the Company's advocates laid so much stress on the fact that the profit out of the tea trade with China was the only resource it possessed to enable it to pay the shareholders' dividend, that its continuance was sanctioned for another period. This profit was estimated at one million pounds sterling, and it was derived almost exclusively from tea, the trade in opium not having been started in 1813.

As the date approached for a fresh renewal of the Charter the agitation to end the monopoly of trade with China increased in volume. There were great expectations of an important development in that direction. Despite the fact that no Treaty had been concluded with the Chinese Government the volume of trade was growing at a rapid rate, and the opening of China to Western influences was confidently predicted as certain to follow from throwing open the trade to the entire commercial community. Petitions were presented to Parliament as early as the year 1829. A select committee was appointed in the following session, the Government, being absorbed in the Reform Bill, disclaiming all intention of interfering in the matter, and leaving the decision to the calm and dispassionate judgment of Parliament.

But the reference to the Committee was not confined to the subject of the China trade. It included the Company's general administration and political action. For the first time the point came up for consideration whether the best was being done for the peoples of India, and whether the Company was capable or even desirous of meeting its obligations to the races under its Government. In 1830 this was an entirely novel proposition, for up to that period nothing at all had been said as to the rights and opinions of the peoples of India. The Court had evidently some inkling of what was coming, for in 1828 it had sent out Lord William Bentinck as Governor-General to inaugurate an era of reform.

The Committee was appointed to " inquire into the present state of the affairs of the East India Company, and into the trade between Great Britain and China, and to report

their observations thereon to the House." As Mill said, the question to be considered "involved the whole character of the Government of India, the mode in which it might best be administered for the prosperity and happiness of the people, the reputation of the Legislature, and the dignity and rights of the Crown." The general impression at the time of the Committee's creation seems to have been that the days of the East India Company were numbered, but a succession of unforeseen incidents prolonged its life.

The Committee had only just begun its sittings when the death of George IV caused the dissolution of Parliament and its own. Reappointed in February, 1831, after the General Election, a fresh appeal to the country had to be made a few months later, and the Committee was not reconstituted till the month of June. There was a third appeal to the country in October of the same year, and in January, 1832, the Committee was finally reconstituted, and was then able to bring its labours to an end, presenting its Report to Parliament in the month of August. The House of Commons was able to consider the report and the immense collection of evidence during the winter months prior to the decision at the opening of the new session in 1833. The information contained in the evidence and opinions of the principal witnesses from India was interesting and sometimes contradictory. It was said that it did not greatly affect the decision of Parliament which had already made up its mind on the two principal points, viz. the trade with China and the administration of India. No one expected the former monopoly to be continued, and indifferent as the House of Commons was to Indian questions, it did not minimize their difficulty, and for that reason continued to shrink from the responsibility of dealing with them.

The more thorough consideration of all the points involved in the question had been carried on by confidential negotiations between the Government and the Court of Directors, and the Bill presented to Parliament on its reassembly in February, 1833, was based upon them. The first clause laid down that "the China monopoly was to

cease." The arguments for and against this decision had been discussed in every minute detail during the negotiations referred to. On the one hand, it was alleged by the Government, on the strength of the Report of the Select Committee, that the profit of the China trade, which exceeded one million sterling annually, was derived from a tax both unjust and unpopular which was paid by the British consumer, and that this was proved by the lower prices paid for tea on the Continent. It was also alleged that the cost of maintaining the Company's establishment at Canton contributed to make the price of tea excessive. The Court disputed these contentions, alleging on their side that the lower prices on the Continent were due to the inferiority of the article sold, and also that their profit from the trade had been much exaggerated. But although they adhered to their view of the case the Court did not persist in fighting what they realized would prove a hopeless battle, and accepted the first clause abolishing the China monopoly in deference to public opinion, and confined themselves to stipulating for a brief respite to enable them to dispose of the stocks which they were bound to keep on hand.

The second clause of the Bill proposed that the East India Company should continue to be entrusted with the political and administrative control of India for a further period of twenty years. As it was quite clear that this concession was only made because the British Government was not prepared to take upon itself that responsibility, it was natural that the Company should feign reluctance to accept this heavy administrative task when its commercial privileges were to be so seriously curtailed. In support of their reluctance, the Court was able to show that the revenues of India had not sufficed by themselves to defray all the expenses of governing it, and that the deficit had only been made good out of the profits of the commercial operations of the Company. It followed as a necessary consequence that if these operations had to be abandoned the deficiency would have to be made good from some other source, as every one connected with the Company agreed that competition with private traders would be ruinous, and therefore

was out of the question. Practically speaking, the whole question turned on this point, for although there was difference of opinion as to the extent to which the Indian revenues were deficient, and as to whether that deficiency was likely to prove permanent or not, there was complete agreement as to the fact that the dividends of the Company's stock were paid not out of Indian revenue, but out of the profits of the China trade. If that trade were abolished it was necessary to ascertain whence the Company was to obtain the funds for its dividend, as it could not be expected to perform the onerous task of governing India without some tangible reward.

As to the deficiency of the Indian revenue, some figures will be useful to reveal the whole truth about the situation. From 1823–4 to 1828–9, the average annual deficit had been not less than £2,878,000, and spread over a longer period back to 1815 the total deficiency had amounted to nearly twenty millions sterling. These figures resulted from considering the proper revenues of India as the Company's sole financial resource, and confirmed the assertion that the Indian revenues alone were for that period unequal to the charge of administering the affairs of the country by means of an European staff and organization. This serious deficiency had been met by a considerable allocation of the trade profits to the task of administration and by public loans guaranteed by the Company. It was neither unfair nor unexpected that the East India Company should ask, before accepting the political direction of India during a further period of uncertainty, for some guarantee as to a portion, at least, of the funds required to meet all the attendant expense.

While there was no reason to dispute the main fact of a deficit, it by no means followed that all the contentions put forward in consequence of it by the Company were well founded. Its advocates made a great point of the question of the home remittances which at that time amounted to three millions sterling, alleging that under the proposed change there would be much difficulty in providing for their easy and punctual discharge. The *modus operandi* of the

Company had been simply to purchase goods in India and China, and to dispose of them in the London market, applying the proceeds to the payment of the home charges. When the commercial department was closed they represented that they were at a loss to discover an alternative arrangement. Experienced bankers and merchants had no difficulty in showing that the transmission of the necessary funds by bills would be easy, and it may be remarked that this arrangement worked very well, and is still in practice.

The company was also on weak ground when it assumed that because the revenue of India was insufficient for its purposes in 1829, it must necessarily always be so. Indeed Lord William Bentinck was proving the contrary by turning an annual deficit of over a million into a surplus of nearly two millions. This result was due to the preservation of peace, and the surplus disappeared when the expenses of the wars in Afghanistan and the Punjab had to be met. But none the less no one felt any serious doubt that the revenues of India, properly husbanded and directed, were fully equal to meeting all legitimate demands, whenever things settled down on what might be termed a permanent basis. Moreover, new openings for the trade of India, ensuring an increase in the revenue, were certain to be discovered, and were indeed found within a very short period after the renewal of the Charter in 1833. Besides, no allowance was made for the effects of economy, and for the wide scope left to ingenuity and science to develop the natural resources of India.

But the question of the dividend of the proprietors of the Company's stock lay apart from that of the administration of India, and on this point they could claim every consideration. As the discussions finally resolved themselves into deciding what should be done to meet the reasonable expectations of the Company and its shareholders, it is only necessary to summarize the arrangement eventually concluded. The first proposition of the Government was that the payment of the dividends to the proprietors should be regarded as an annuity chargeable on the territorial revenue of India, and redeemable after a period to be decided on

at the option of Parliament, by a payment of £100 for every five guineas of annuity. The total of the annuities amounted to £630,000 annually, and it was proposed that all the commercial assets of the Company should be converted into cash with which a sufficient amount of Indian territorial debt should be purchased to produce an income of £630,000 a year. Estimates varied as to the value of the commercial assets, but the lowest put them at £12,676,000, which at 5 per cent would produce an income of over £630,000 a year. The proposal of the Government, therefore, amounted to an act of substitution, the revenue of India bearing the responsibility of paying the interest on the Company's stock, and the Company assigning its property to the reduction of India's liabilities by a similar amount, so that there would result no addition to the burden borne by its taxpayers.

As the Company's possessions would alone suffice to produce a sum sufficient for the payment of the annual dividend or for the redemption of the principal at twenty years' purchase, and as its right to its commercial assets was indisputable, the proposition of the Government did not meet with much favour. But the Government knew its strength and the comparative weakness of the Company, and it brought the full pressure of its strength and authority to bear upon the Court of Directors.

With regard to the statement of the value of the Company's property, it replied that the proper valuing and realization of its possessions would take several years, and that the renewal of the Charter had to be settled one way or the other within a few months. Therefore, if the Charter was to be renewed at all the Company must accept the terms of the Government. Intimidated by this ultimatum the Court gave way, and agreed to the suggested transfer between commercial and territorial claims. At the same time it begged the Government to arrange for some collateral security to be provided for the payment of the dividend. Even to this suggestion, which was highly natural under the circumstances, the Government gave but a reluctant consent. After other proposals had been considered and

rejected it was agreed to by both parties that the sum of £1,300,000 should be taken from the commercial assets, invested in British Government Stock, and with accumulated interest allowed to form a fund which would cease to operate on its attaining a total of £12,000,000. Even this was not considered very generous, as the personal property of the Company furnished the basis of the arrangement. The Court decided to submit the proposal to a general meeting of the proprietors, whereupon the Government agreed that the fund should start with the abstraction of £2,000,000 instead of £1,300,000. The proprietors, finding that they could get no better terms, sanctioned their adoption at a public meeting held in April, 1833, and as a parting concession the Government withdrew the veto it had proposed to vest in the Board of Control on the subject of the recall of Governors and military commanders —a proposition which injured the self-respect of the Company, and threatened to reduce its authority to a mere shadow. The Government and the Company having come to terms, it was no longer necessary to defer presenting the Bill to Parliament. It passed through both Houses without any serious opposition, and on 20th August received the Royal Assent.

It was said at the time that the absorbing interest taken in the first Great Reform Bill prevented that full attention to the Indian Bill which might have resulted in the revocation of the Charter, but the assumption was probably originated by the enemies of the Company, who desired not so much to benefit India as to profit by the increased trade that seemed likely to ensue with China from the Company's overthrow. But there was another and more definite reason to explain the difference between the energy with which the downfall of the Company was demanded in 1829, and the apathy with which its Charter was extended four years later. That reason was the good work that the new Governor-General, Lord William Bentinck, was accomplishing in India during that period. He was giving proof that the Company was quite capable of introducing reforms and governing the country in the interests of its people.

The Marquis of Lansdowne, the leader of the Whig Party, referred during the final debate in 1833, in the House of Lords, in eloquent language to the good work Lord William Bentinck had done in India, to whose "vigour and judgment," he went on to say, it was due that the expenses of that country had been reduced to such a point as to show that its government could be carried on by means of its own natural revenue, apart from any trade advantage. The admission of the natives of India to a larger share in the administration, and the unrestricted entrance of Europeans into the country with rights of domicile, pointed to increased economy and development, and those innovations had no more consistent or powerful advocate than the Governor-General of the day, who saw in them the only way of establishing an equilibrium between revenue and expenditure in India.

His direct participation in the renewal of the Charter did not transpire, although his indirect influence on the progress of the discussions cannot be doubted. His economies and his confident belief that the Indian revenue would bear the whole cost of administration supplied the Government, on the one hand with its main reasons for entertaining the same belief, and on the other the East India Company with an additional motive for accepting and clinging to the government of the country when there seemed no longer any pecuniary advantage to be derived from the connection. Whatever part Lord William Bentinck may have played, and did undoubtedly play, behind the scenes, his only public act in connection with the renewal of the Charter was to order a notice in the Calcutta *Gazette* in October, 1833, "calling for a grand illumination and a display of fireworks to celebrate the renewal of the Charter."

If the only possible verdict about the renewal of the Charter of the East India Company in 1833 for another term of twenty years is that the result was a foregone conclusion in that the Company could not hope to retain the monopoly of the China trade, and that the Government were resolved not to take over the Indian Administration,

it must still be regarded as a turning point in the political evolution of India. The most unfriendly critic of the Company could not deny that it had rendered its country excellent service. It had increased its trade in every quarter of Asia. The skill and determination of its representatives had driven a powerful rival from the field in France, a service especially valuable at a time when on the Continent of Europe French arms were the more fortunate of the two. In the blackest days of the American Revolution there never failed to come some cheering news from India reviving the courage of the nation. In fact, for the better part of a century the Company had provided the material for the greatest national satisfaction in adding alike to the self-respect and financial prosperity of the country at large.

The Company had also begun to reveal its full intention to meet the higher expectations revealed by English public opinion as to the duties it had to discharge towards the peoples of India. For that purpose Lord William Bentinck had been appointed Governor-General with a programme of reform even before the first whispers had been spread about to the effect that changes were likely to ensue, and that some bitter adversaries were thirsting for the Company's destruction. If the Government had decided to take over the administration in person it could not have done more for the people of India than had been commenced without its interference by the Company. The progress of reform is necessarily slow, and whether the Crown or the Company exercised authority, neither could neglect to meet the ordinary obligations of government based primarily on security, good order, and the protection of property. Lord William Bentinck's administration crowned one of the brief periods of internal and external peace prior to the Mutiny. He turned it to the best possible account by introducing necessary economies, by carrying out essential reforms, by spreading education, and by introducing the natives of the country to an honourable and useful share in the task of governing their own country. The Company, which sanctioned and encouraged these measures, shared in their credit, and it would have been inconsistent and ungrateful to decree the

death of a great institution at the very moment that it was affording proof of its worthiness to live, and of its vigour in the execution of reforms.

Before taking up the description of Lord William Bentinck's work as Governor-General, it will be pertinent to give a brief account of his earlier career. William Cavendish-Bentinck, the second son of the third Duke of Portland, and Lady Dorothy Cavendish, the only daughter of the fourth Duke of Devonshire, was born on 14th Sept., 1774. The family of Bentinck in his generation assumed the double name of Cavendish-Bentinck, in commemoration of the marriage just referred to, but as a matter of fact the Governor-General was himself generally known by his original patronymic alone. He was destined for a military career, and served in the Netherlands, but his more important acquaintance with the great war then raging throughout Europe was acquired with the Russian army under Suwarrow in Switzerland, and with the Austrian army at Marengo. In the summer of 1803 he was nominated by the East India Company Governor of the Presidency of Madras, a remarkable appointment, seeing that he was not yet 29 years of age.

The first introduction to Indian affairs was not altogether happy, and Lord William Bentinck suffered as a victim of circumstances in which he had no part. The incident referred to is known in history as the Mutiny at Vellore. The sons and other members of the family of Tipu Sultan resided at this town, which was also a military station. In 1806 the introduction of various innovations caused much discontent among the sepoys, and this culminated at length in a refusal to wear a new kind of turban. For insubordination twenty-one soldiers were court martialled, two were severely punished, and the remainder pardoned. The discontent continued, and at last, on 10th July, there was an open mutiny. Several English officers attacked by surprise while unarmed were murdered, and an English cavalry regiment arrived only just in time to avert a general massacre of the Europeans. The mutineers were then attacked and dispersed. The captured men were brought before a court martial and summarily dealt with.

Sir Thomas Munro, who knew Madras better than anyone else, declared that "the turban grievance" was the sole cause of the mutiny, and Lord William Bentinck sharing this view, cancelled the objectionable dress orders. But the Court in London was very angry with everybody concerned, as well as much alarmed by the possible consequences of the occurrence. It censured everybody, but it recalled Lord William Bentinck in a most summary and inconsiderate manner. In his own words, he had been "condemned as an accomplice in measures with which I had no further concern than to obviate their ill consequences." The Court rejected his petition for a fair investigation, and after that everyone would have declared that wherever else he might gain fresh distinction, Lord William Bentinck would not be provided with a fresh opportunity of doing so in India.

Lord William Bentinck then returned to military service, and was sent to Madrid on a special mission to organize Spanish resistance to the French. The appearance of Napoleon in person brought this effort to an end, and the British expedition retired on Corunna, where Bentinck commanded the infantry brigade that bore the brunt of the fighting. Shortly after that affair he was appointed commander of the forces occupying Sicily, where he organized an Italian army of about 10,000 men, while the English garrison mustered half as many more, but before any plan for turning this force to military account could be evolved a troublesome political situation had to be composed. He found a solution to this problem by deposing the Queen of Naples, and inducing the King to resign in favour of his son, while a Sicilian Parliament was created to carry on the Government in a constitutional form. He then took up the question of Italian liberation, and may be regarded as the first Englishman to propose and agitate for the restoration of Italy to its historic position in Europe, with sympathy and energy.

But the forces under his orders were required in Spain, and Wellington was calling for the long promised diversion it was to make in Catalonia on the French flank. Lord

William Bentinck reached the scene of action in the autumn of 1812, but was unable to accomplish anything of importance, and was fortunate in being able to get his men away in safety from the French under Marshal Suchet. His final military experiences were gained in the Italian campaign of 1814, but his political views were not agreeable to the interests and demands of the Austrian and Bourbon ruling families.

In 1819 he was offered the Governorship of Madras for a second time, but he declined it on the ground that it would be no adequate reparation for the wrong done him twelve years before. In 1822 he made a representation of his claim to the Governor-Generalship to the Prime Minister, but although his name was submitted to the Court as Lord Hastings's successor, he took no step to press his claims, and was passed over in favour of Lord Amherst. James Mill " thought him the best candidate, and so did every one else, but feared he had no chance." However, the sequel brought him the long sought for and much desired compensation for the slur passed on his character and conduct during the Vellore Mutiny, which everyone felt that he had not deserved.

CHAPTER IX

THE FIRST ERA OF REFORM

LORD WILLIAM BENTINCK arrived in Calcutta in July, 1828, twelve months after his appointment as Governor-General. He brought with him many exhortations, but no orders as to how the new programme was to be carried out. The Court of the East India Company had been constrained by the course of events and the assertion of Parliamentary control to recognize that changes of system were imminent, but it had no suggestions of its own to offer as to how they were to be met, or as to what reforms were desirable or feasible. These matters were left to the judgment of the new Governor-General, and with the more readiness because the whole of the responsibility in the event of their failure would thus devolve on his shoulders. In one matter the Court was emphatic. The financial position had to be improved, a deficit had to be converted into an equilibrium, but the only definite proposal it made to that end was that the military allowance known as batta was to be reduced.

It seems probable that the Court was led to this conclusion by the heaviness of the charges under this head in the cost of the Burmese war, which had been the most disturbing occurrence for a long time on the political horizon of India. That unexpected and unsought for adventure had upset all pre-existing calculations, and disturbed the peace of mind of the authorities in London. Before anything else, Lord William Bentinck was to reduce, if he could not abolish, batta, and the moment was declared opportune for doing so because peace again prevailed. On several previous occasions the Court had proposed this reduction, but it had been opposed by the Governor-Generals of the day, whose representations had prevailed. The time had now come when its orders were to be obeyed without demur, and Lord William Bentinck was charged with the settlement of this matter before anything else.

Batta is a Hindi word meaning "extra pay," and the

Company had granted it to its military officers immediately after the creation of its regular army. Full batta was allowed within the Company's territory, but only half batta when quarters or cantonments were provided. Outside the Company's territory on active service the allowance was increased to double batta. This advantage had been continued so long that it was generally assumed to be a permanent addition to the regular pay, and great was the consternation when Lord William Bentinck's proposal to tamper with it became known. But the orders of the Court were inexorable. Batta was halved, but the annual saving was only £20,000, and the controversy on the subject raged for two years. In the meantime economies had to be practised in other directions.

Lord William Bentinck found them in two opposite directions. They were possible in the land administration, and in that of Justice in the Provincial Courts. A considerable saving was also effected by the closing down of the costly settlements in Sumatra, that island being exchanged with the Dutch for their possessions on the Malay peninsula. These measures were followed by the abolition of the costly Provincial Courts of Appeal and Circuit as the preliminary to the introduction of a new Indian justiciary body. At the same time, a serious effort was made to reduce the Sepoy army, which had been allowed, especially under the Marquis of Hastings, to attain excessive dimensions. It was estimated that these administrative changes, civil as well as military, would result eventually in a reduction of expenditure by nearly a million per annum. How far these measures would have succeeded without the radical reform of admitting the Indians to a larger share in the administration may be doubted, but the consideration of that question may be deferred, so that it may be discussed in conjunction with the allied problem of education.

More important even than the question of economies in expenditure was that of discovering fresh sources of revenue. The land of India has always provided the main supply on which all her Governments have had to depend, but land revenue, to give its maximum of sustained productiveness,

must be based on sound principles of settlement, and implies integrity in levy. In Bengal the Permanent Settlement of Lord Cornwallis tied the hands of Government, but in the North West Provinces they were free. A resettlement on improved lines was effected there, and a separate Board of Revenue was set up at Allahabad. This measure, from which the greatest benefits accrued, was carried out under the direction of Mr. R. M. Bird, and it was said, not unjustly, to be " completed upon principles equally conducive to the improving resources of the State, and the growing prosperity and happiness of the people."

To an increased land revenue in this important quarter of India, which next to Bengal formed the most valuable part of the Company's dominion, was added a larger control over the opium produce of the country. That of Bengal was a Company monopoly, and entirely under its control, but the same situation did not obtain in Central India where a large number of self-ruling States still existed. The poppy had always been cultivated in Malwa, and with the establishment of internal peace by the suppression of the Pindarris the cultivation had largely spread. But it was to the advantage of the merchants, if not of the producers, to export the article through non-British territory and ports. This was perfectly feasible at the time because a succession of independent States occupied the route to Karachi. By this means Malwa opium not merely contributed nothing to the revenue of the Indian Government, but it entered into competition with that of Bengal in the China market. The transport of the Malwa product after its arrival at Karachi was effected in vessels flying the Portuguese flag from Diu and Damaun, which was exceedingly disagreeable to the merchant shippers of Bombay. Lord William Bentinck succeeded in inducing the Princes concerned to become parties to an arrangement by which the export of opium was to be under licence and to Bombay only, thus ensuring that one class of Indian opium did not compete with another. As the arrangement increased the revenues of the Princes concerned it met with no opposition, and continued in operation for over seventy years. This measure

led to another in the relaxation and diminution of the internal transit dues which hampered trade, and lent themselves to many petty and illicit exactions.

Allusion has been made to the suppression of the Pindarris, bands of organized plunderers not easily distinguishable from armies. They had as successors other bands who worked not in armies but in small companies, and who were scarcely less formidable to the general community. Moreover they were too scattered and too elusive to be dealt with by means of an army. The slower methods of special police organization had to be brought into play against them.

These bands were denominated Thugs. They were robbers of the highway who operated solely by murder. That is to say, they never robbed until they had killed. Thugs had existed in India for centuries, and Tavernier, the great French traveller of the seventeenth century, mentioned " the stranglers of the highways " as one of the chief dangers to travellers in the time of the Great Mogul. During the troubles of the eighteenth century they had greatly increased in numbers, and the cessation of the Wars in the Deccan and Central India had brought them many recruits.

The Thugs, who were more correctly known as " phansigars " from the " phansa," noosed rope or scarf, which formed their weapon, were a fraternity or secret society bound together by sacred oaths and initiated from childhood into the methods of their profession. They had only one method of procedure, and having found it effectual, they never departed from it. If an unfortunate traveller was murdered in some other fashion than theirs, it could be safely concluded that the murderer was a mere dacoit and not a Thug. Their mode of murder was by strangulation, and it was executed with such skill as in most cases to leave no external sign of the fatal cause.

According to their own version they originated with seven tribes dwelling near Delhi, and certainly to the end of their activity the art and secrets of initiation were deemed the exclusive possession of certain families. According to the later evidence of some prisoners under trial they were

Moslems, but this was refuted by all the ascertained facts, for their rites were of Hindu character, however corrupted by pagan practices. It is not impossible, however, that they may have had as their remote progenitors some members of that strange race known as Zingaris or gipsies, who roamed over Asia as well as Europe. They always kept themselves aloof from the rest of the community, and were most careful to avoid strangers, unless they had marked them down as their prey, having devised a very elaborate system of secret signs as well as pass words to allow of their identifying one another. By the same code all acts of treachery were punishable by death, and once the sentence had been passed it became the first duty of every member of the fraternity to execute it on the traitor.

Their mode of procedure has been described as follows; "After performing certain propitiatory rites of a quasi-religious character, and having obtained some favourable prognostications as to the result of their enterprise—for the fatalism which characterized their religious belief, and gave fortitude to their proceedings was largely tinged with superstition—they set out along one or other of the main roads frequented by merchants and other travellers. To all appearances they were a party of unarmed and harmless men either pursuing their business as traders, or returning to their native village from a pilgrimage. In those days of open highway robbery by bands of dacoits or disbanded soldiers, travellers were only too glad to meet with companions, and Thugs never experienced any difficulty in picking up one, or more than one, unsuspecting wayfarer *en route*. There was nothing in their demeanour or conduct to excite suspicion. At the well or the caravanserai they seemed like the most inoffensive of travellers, and the only ground for suspicion was that which least arouses it, a special cheerfulness of manner and conciliatory attitude towards all strangers. Having once selected their victim their patience in waiting for the most favourable moment to strike the blow was remarkable, and constituted the main secret of their power and protracted impunity. Sometimes they would deem it expedient to strike at once, but more often

they would perform a journey of days and weeks together with their intended victim before they would deliver the fatal blow. But in nearly all cases it was done at a moment when the victim would be least prepared and most off his guard—either engaged in his prayers or at ablutions—and the noose was always used with such deadly precision that the murdered person never had a chance of raising an alarm. The larger proportion of victims were single individuals, but if the gang were sufficiently numerous, and sometimes the Thugs travelled in bands of sixty or seventy, they would not be afraid to entice a considerable body of travellers, and to murder as many as a dozen at a single massacre. In all cases they resorted to every precaution to prevent surprise from interruption, and with such success that no instance of failure is recorded."

Lord William Bentinck decided that this formidable confederacy of secret assassins must be broken up, and as Central India was the scene of their greatest activities, although they extended from Oudh to Hyderabad, he delegated the task to Mr. F. C. Smith, who held at that time the post of Agent-General in the Nerbudda Territories. As his assistant Major Sleeman was entrusted with the difficult mission of tracking and hunting down the offenders, and his name is more closely associated by the public with the suppression of Thuggi than that of his Chief. The operations covered a period of six years, during which 2,000 Thugs were captured and placed on trial. Some of these gave information and were pardoned, but at least 1,500 were sentenced either to death or to long terms of imprisonment. This result caused much satisfaction throughout India. No one felt the smallest sympathy with the Thugs, whose cold-blooded proceedings excited horror and not a little fear as to who might be their next victims.

Concurrently with his measures against the Thugs, Lord William Bentinck took up his second great reform of a humanitarian order. This was the suppression of the custom known as *sati*, or widow self-immolation. There was one radical difference between the two undertakings. In the former the Governor-General was supported by the

unanimous opinion and desires of the whole community; in regard to the latter he was opposed by a large and influential section of the nation. He proposed to abolish a practice sanctioned by the religion of the Hindus, and firmly established by the usage of centuries. It was no light matter to forbid, by a Government order, a religious rite which was represented to be the crown of a virtuous life, and previous reformers had dropped their project through fear of the consequences that might ensue from tampering with a custom which, to all appearance at least, was supported by the unanimous consent and approval of the Hindus.

The term *sati* or suttee, strictly speaking, does not apply to the rite, but to the person who performs it, for it means "a pure and virtuous woman." The rite is called Sahagamana, and signifies the widow accompanying her husband's corpse to the pyre, thus completing a life of uninterrupted conjugal devotedness. This self-immolation was always represented to be voluntary, and in many cases it was so undoubtedly. But evidence was not wanting to show that frequently the widow was the victim not of her own infatuation, but of priestly intolerance, and that she had to be assisted by drugs or force to mount the pyre. As the ceremony was performed in public, and never failed to attract enormous crowds, more especially when the scenes were enacted on the banks of the Ganges, the details were closely followed, and often gave rise to displays of emotion that produced a public scandal. It is not surprising that a practice so repugnant to European feeling, and so harrowing to the feelings of any observer not impregnated with religious frenzy, should have been denounced by English observers from their first acquaintance with the custom, but the orders of the Company had always been imperative that "all the customs of the natives should be scrupulously respected, and that nothing should be done to give umbrage to their religious sentiments."

Even among Hindus there was a reaction against this barbarous custom before Lord William Bentinck's arrival. Enlightened men like Dwarakanath Tagore and Rammohun

Roy opposed the practice on humanitarian grounds, and contended that it had no place in the code of Manu. According to them it was an innovation intended to denote the inferiority of woman, and to foster the pride and selfishness of man. But it would have been dangerous for foreigners to attempt to teach the Hindus the ethics of their own religion. If the question had been fought on that ground it could only have fomented the opposition that any interference by the Government was certain to provoke.

In the time of the Marquis Cornwallis, British officers, although forbidden to prevent the ceremony, were ordered on all occasions to withhold their consent to its performance whenever their acquiescence might be invited. They were to show by this attitude, and in the plainest words, that while the British Government did not actively intervene to stop the sacrifice, it regarded the practice with emphatic and unequivocal disapproval. His successor, the Marquis Wellesley, went further, and wished to treat it as an offence under the common law, contending that it was tantamount to murder or manslaughter. He submitted his view to the Nizamat Adalat, but the judges did not fall in with it on the ground mainly of expediency. They considered that the abolition of *sati* might be effected within a reasonable time by some slight and progressive innovations. So far as it was a religious observance they proposed to respect it, but they thought that the innovations and abuses which had grown up round the original ceremony might be removed. For instance, they would have made it a penal offence to drug an intending *sati*, or to have any part in forcing an unwilling woman to mount the funeral pyre, and they seemed to anticipate that in consequence of such regulations the custom would die a natural death from the absence of voluntary self-immolators, but they overlooked the inevitable irritation and disputes any interference of that limited character must produce. Such half measures could not but have aggravated the evil. By omitting from incorporating them in a law, it was concluded that the British Government felt itself unable to adopt any effective measures and the practice continued without any check or diminution.

Lord Minto carried the question one stage further in 1813 by introducing the proposals of the Nizamat Adalat into Circular Instructions issued to all judicial authorities. These ordered all British officers to abandon their attitude of abstention from interference. In place of withholding it, their consent was made essential to the performance of the rite. Information of any intended *sati* had to be given to the nearest magistrate or police officer who, prior to giving their sanction, had to be satisfied that the woman was acting of her own free will without any form of compulsion. No widow also was to be immolated if she were under 16 years of age, or happened to be pregnant. The use of drugs was strictly prohibited, and the police were to be present at the sacrifice to afford the victim up to the very last moment the opportunity of changing her mind.

These instructions were well-intentioned, but they failed in attaining their end. The practice of *sati* continued with undiminished vigour, and its attendant abuses, far from disappearing, were as notorious as before. The police were often in full sympathy with the promoters of the sacrifice, and a little ingenuity sufficed to baffle inquiry as to the age and condition of the victim, and the use of intoxicants. According to many the compulsory consent of the British representatives was regarded as official approval of the custom, and the hold acquired on the minds of its devotees was strengthened by the priests, who were able to represent that the British Government had made itself a party to its observance. Whatever the explanation, this change of policy produced no diminution in the number of immolations. They rather tended to show an increase, and in the Lower Provinces of Bengal alone the annual average for a period of ten years exceeded 600. It must be borne in mind that the practice prevailed all over India, wherever the Brahmins were in the ascendant.

Fear of the possible consequences to internal peace, as well as to the assured discipline of the Indian army had prevailed over the desire to respond to the dictates of humanity. Lord Hastings had written: " I was aware how much danger might attend the endeavour to suppress

forcibly a practice so deeply rooted in the religious belief of the natives. No men of low caste are admitted into the ranks of the Bengal army. Therefore the whole of that formidable body must be regarded as blindly partial to a custom which they consider equally referable to family honour and to points of faith. To attempt the extinction of the horrid superstition without being supported in the procedure by a real concurrence on the part of the army would be distinctly perilous. I have no scruple to say that I did believe I could have carried with me the assent of the army towards such an object. That persuasion arose from circumstances which gave me peculiar influence over the native troops."

The highest authorities in British India had, therefore, been in full agreement in recording their conviction and deliberate opinion that the practice of *sati* was an act of barbarous inhumanity, and that it ought to be abolished, at the same time that they admitted that the danger of arousing native distrust and hostility by an act interfering with this religious custom was exceedingly great, and they shrank from making the experiment. They declared that they would have faced the opposition of the community but for their fear that it would be accompanied or followed by the mutiny of at least the Bengal army. As Lord Amherst put it, "Nothing but apprehension of evils infinitely greater than those arising from the existence of the practice should induce us to tolerate it for a single day."

Such was the position of the question when Lord William Bentinck decided in the summer of the year 1829 to deal finally with it. He described his feelings and views on that eventful decision in eloquent terms.

"Whether the question be to continue or to discontinue the practice of *sati* the decision is equally surrounded by an awful responsibility. To consent to the consignment year after year of hundreds of innocent victims to a cruel and untimely end, when the power exists of preventing it, is a predicament which no conscience can contemplate without horror. But, on the other hand, if heretofore received opinions are to be considered of any value, to put

to hazard by a contrary course the very safety of the British Empire in India, and to extinguish at once all hopes of those great improvements—affecting the condition not of hundreds and thousands, but of millions—which can only be expected from the continuance of our supremacy, is an alternative which even in the light of humanity itself may be considered as a still greater evil. It is upon this first and highest consideration alone, the good of mankind, that the tolerance of this inhuman and impious rite can, in my opinion, be justified on the part of the Government of a civilized nation. While the solution of this question is appalling from the unparalleled magnitude of its possible results the considerations belonging to it are such as to make even the stoutest mind distrust its decision. On the one hand, religion, humanity under the most appalling form, as well as vanity and ambition—in short, all the most powerful influences over the human heart—are arrayed to bias and mislead the judgment. On the other side, the sanction of countless ages, the example of all the Mussulman conquerors, the unanimous concurrence in the same policy of our own most able rulers, together with the universal veneration of the people, seem authoritatively to forbid, both to feeling and to reason, any interference in the exercise of their natural prerogative. In venturing to be the first to deviate from this practice it becomes me to show that nothing has been yielded to feeling, but that reason and reason alone has governed the decision."

As a preliminary Lord William Bentinck decided to ascertain, as far as possible, the trend of opinion in the Bengal army, and for that purpose he addressed a confidential letter of inquiry to forty-nine well-placed officers to express their opinion as to the effect of prohibition on the native army. Their replies were in the following senses —five opposed any interference at all, twelve favoured abolition, but not by the direct authority of the Government, eight supported abolition through the intervention of magistrates and other public officers, and the remaining twenty-four favoured the total immediate and public suppression of the practice. But they all agreed in representing that the Sepoy was far less interested in the practice of *sati*

than had been assumed. The best information went to prove that *sati* was almost unknown in the ranks of the Bengal army, and that any interest the Sepoy might feel in the matter must be indirect and impersonal. The preliminary examinations thus carried out showed that the contingent perils to a measure of reform had either been much exaggerated or were altogether non-existent. The proof of their unreality removed the last obstacle in the path of progress. Almost at the same time as this military investigation was taking place, the five Judges of the Nizamat Adalat, or the High Court, fully realizing that their first proposals had proved ineffective, decided unanimously that the time had arrived for the complete and permanent abolition of *sati*.

After a full debate in the Governor-General's Council, where the principal incident was furnished by the reading and consequent discussion of Lord William Bentinck's Minute, a Regulation known as No. XVII, and dated 4th December, 1829, was enacted "declaring the practice of *sati* or of burning or burying alive the widows of Hindus illegal and punishable by the Criminal Courts." The Regulation went on to state that "the practice of *sati* is revolting to the feelings of human nature, and nowhere enjoined by the religion of the people as an imperative duty. The Government has been forced to come to the conclusion that no other remedy is left but to abolish the practice altogether, and that this course is demanded by the paramount dictates of justice and humanity."

The new law made the practice of *sati* a crime of culpable homicide, punishable with fine or imprisonment, or both. The Courts had the reserved right to pass a death sentence, and all persons were called upon under heavy penalties to give the authorities immediate information of any intended cases coming within their knowledge. The Regulation applied at first to Bengal alone, but in 1830 it was extended to the other Presidencies of Madras and Bombay. The new law met with no opposition, nor did any public disorder follow its enactment. But some of its old supporters did submit petitions to the Crown, and a test case was brought before the Privy Council. The case was considered from a

legal standpoint alone, and after long and patient investigation the appeal was dismissed, and the Regulation thus received a formal legal ratification by the highest tribunal.

With regard to Lord William Bentinck's part in the matter it may be recorded that his objects were, in his own words, "to wash out a foul stain upon British rule," and to free himself from a charge of being indifferent to "a crime of multiplied murder." But in acting upon his own responsibility in coming to a positive decision to end the matter, he ran no inconsiderable risk personally. Things turned out well, the end was satisfactory, but the issue might have been different. The latent hostility of the Hindus might have been aroused, disturbances might have ensued, a popular agitation might have been stirred up against English rule, and as he observed he might again have been, as in the affair of the Vellore Mutiny, "the innocent victim of a catastrophe." Lord William Bentinck cannot be deprived of the credit of having carried a necessary measure of reform and progress to a successful and final conclusion. Nearly a century has passed since this great measure became law, and it is not conceivable that any Hindu would wish things to revert to the old practice of which, in these enlightened days, they could not but feel ashamed.

CHAPTER X

THE NEW DEPARTURE

IMPORTANT as were the reforms already described, they fade into insignificance beside those relating to public education and the public services which marked a new departure in English policy and procedure in India. Allusion has been made to the uneasiness which had begun to be revealed in English public opinion as to whether everything were for the best in India, and as to there not being some higher responsibilities than securing a dividend and promoting trade. These doubts were strengthened by the discovery of the fact that a purely English administration was too costly to be borne indefinitely by the indigenous population, and, if too costly, it was clear that such an administration could not be regarded as soundly established or destined to prove permanent. Sentimental and economic reasons combined to make the closer co-operation of Englishmen and Indians in the administration of India more necessary and even indispensable. The choice lay between the assertion of an exclusive privilege, discontent, and in the end bankruptcy on the one hand, and useful and harmonious co-operation on the other. Lord William Bentinck not merely decided for the right course, but he originated the movement of ultimate reform by laying down principles of government which cannot be disregarded or departed from.

But there was one prior question to be settled. Co-operation in the tasks of administration and justice could not be fruitful and certainly could not endure without community of language. If English and Indians could not be brought together on a common platform in this respect, it was clear enough that they would not associate in any other. It was essential not merely for their mutual understanding, but also to give full effect to the decrees and decisions of the Executive and the Courts that there should be uniformity in the language employed. At that time it did not exist.

The language of princes and diplomacy was Persian, Sanscrit and Arabic were employed in the Courts of law and in matters of religious disputation. English was supreme in commerce but in every other respect it did not count, and Englishmen had to learn and use one or other of the classical Oriental languages, and also one of the vernacular tongues, Hindustani, Hindi, Telugu, or Tamil, as the scene of their labours required. Among the Oriental tongues themselves there was no uniformity; no one stood supreme and of general value to be placed in contrast with English. The choice, therefore, lay between several Oriental tongues as against the English language alone and by itself. Moreover English was the language of the dominant Power, of the supreme Government. There was no example in history of the governing class abandoning its own language for that of the governed. It would have been against all nature to have expected such a surrender.

Notwithstanding these considerations, which might well have been deemed self-evident and unanswerable, the proposed introduction of English as the official language and the vehicle of education encountered strong opposition, not on the part of Indians, but of English scholars who constituted themselves as the champions of Orientalism. The East India Company had not only respected the religions and customs of the people, but also their languages, and the critics of the Bentinck reforms predicted nothing but evil and misfortune from the latest of them. The substitution of English for Persian in particular was certain, they represented, to excite unpopularity and probably bitter animosity. These scholars who had devoted their lives to the acquisition of Oriental tongues were unable to see how the question interested the ordinary man who was not a pundit, and they wished to compel every servant of the State to devote years of study to one or other of the tongues of India which were mutually unintelligible, and non-interchangeable. Their strongest argument was that the change would be not merely an innovation, but a breach of the accepted policy of the Company in regard to non-intervention which they extended from religions and racial customs to language.

In their arguments they confounded two matters. It was not proposed to force a language on the community or on any part of it. What was intended was to decide the qualifying language for those who desired to enter the State service, and eventually to participate in its government. Could there ever be joint participation without a single language, and what other could that language be but English? That was the question.

The subject was brought for the first time in a definite form before the General Committee of Public Instruction. The question in immediate discussion was the allotment of Government subsidies to the different colleges established by English initiative, including the Calcutta College, the first of them founded by Warren Hastings in 1781. The main principle involved was that relating to the language in which instruction had to be given, and the first clash between Orientalists and Anglicists has been epitomized as follows: "Half of the Committee called the 'Orientalists' were for the continuation of the old system of stipends, tenable for twelve or fifteen years, to students of Arabic and Sanscrit, and for liberal expenditure on the publication of works in those languages. The other half called the 'Anglicists' desired to reduce the expenditure on stipends held by 'lazy and stupid schoolboys of thirty and thirty-five years of age,' and to cut down the sums lavished on Sanscrit and Arabic printing. At this juncture Government requested the Committee to prepare a scheme of instruction for a college at Agra. The Committee were utterly unable to agree on any plan. Five members were in favour of Arabic, Persian, and Sanscrit learning, and five in favour of English, and the vernacular, with just so much of the Oriental languages as would be necessary to satisfy local prejudices."

So far as this result could be trusted it showed that the Orientalists were strongly entrenched and that any change of system would meet with vigorous and influential opposition. The efforts of one of Lord William Bentinck's colleagues raised the discussion to a higher plane, and gave a new turn to the whole controversy. By the renewed

Charter Act of 1833 the Council of the Governor-General was to be strengthened by the addition of a Law Member, and the post was given to Mr. Macaulay, who had taken the most prominent part in the debates in the House of Commons. On his arrival at Calcutta at the end of the year 1834 he took over the control of the discussion of this burning question in the Council. At his invitation the opposing parties submitted their arguments and views in the form of letters. The Orientalists were veterans, men of a certain age and long residence in India. They were distinguished as scholars and polyglots. The Anglicists were younger men, more practical and less wedded to tradition. They realized that India had reached a turning point in her evolution, and they were able to adapt themselves to a new situation. The former might be respected for their character and attainments, but the current of opinion was with the latter. These letters were read by the Council on 21st and 22nd January, and ten days later Mr. Macaulay replied to them in the form of a minute which has become historic as laying down rules and principles that have never since been departed from. Its concluding paragraphs must be quoted—

" We have to educate a people who cannot at present be educated by means of their mother tongue. We must teach them some foreign language. The claims of our own language it is hardly necessary to recapitulate. It stands pre-eminent even among the languages of the West. In India English is the language spoken by the ruling class. It is spoken by the higher class of natives at the seats of Government. It is likely to become the language of commerce throughout the seas of the East. It is the language of two great European communities which are rising, the one in the south of Africa, the other in Australasia ; communities which are becoming every year more important and more closely connected with our Indian Empire. Whether we look at the intrinsic value of our literature, or at the particular situation of this country, we shall see the strongest reason to think that of all foreign tongues the English tongue is that which would be the most useful to

our native subjects. To sum up what I have said, I think it clear that we are not fettered by any pledge expressed or implied, that we are free to employ our funds as we choose, that we ought to employ them in teaching what is best worth knowing, that English is better worth knowing than Sanscrit or Arabic, that the natives are desirous to be taught English, and are not des rous to be taught Sanscrit or Arab c, that neither as the languages of law nor as the languages of re igion have the Sanscrit and Arabic any peculiar claim to our encouragement, that it is possible to make natives of this country thoroughly good English scholars, and that to this end our efforts ought to be directed."

As it might be thought that the men of the greatest distinction in the Indian service leant towards the side of the Orientalists as against new-comers in the persons of Bentinck and Macaulay, the opinion expressed by Sir Charles Metcalfe, the most distinguished public servant of his time, must be considered: "The English language seems to me to be the channel through which we are most likely to convey improvement to the natives of India." Other distinguished Anglo-Indians to support this conclusion were Sir Charles Trevelyan and Mr. Russell Colvin.

The adoption of English as the official language of India was declared by the celebrated Regulation of 7th March, 1835. The Orientalists had prided themselves on being the better friends of the Indians because they had persuaded themselves that the supersession of their classical languages would injure their interests and cramp their political future. It may be doubted whether this opinion was ever reasonably tenable, but at least experience refuted it. There can be no doubt that students of Sanscrit and Arabic would never on that account have been admitted to the same share in the government as has devolved upon them through being fluent masters of the English language. Rightly considered the Orientalists were the enemies of the Hindus, and the Anglicists were their true friends. The latter were right in another sense in anticipating that the peoples of India, speaking of course of the educated classes, but

confined to no single race or religion, would master English with ease and assimilate its merits.

Even if the result had been less complete or satisfactory the policy could not have been arraigned, for it was the only one that would satisfy the requirements of an alien dominion, and at the same time preparing the way for the peoples of the country to take a legitimate share in their own government. Of necessity there must always be some bond of union, some connecting link, between the ruling power and the subject if their relationship is to prove enduring, and neither racial nor religious accord would apply to the position of things in India. Language alone was left, and it cannot be doubted that if English had not been placed in a superior position there would have remained a wide and unbridgeable gulf between the rulers and the ruled. The educated Indian, whether he be Mahomedan or Hindu, now speaks English with the same fluency as any other British subject, and there can be no doubt that to this circumstance more than any other is due the increasing conviction that their interests are in the main identical. On no other hypothesis could the peoples of India have secured the right to enter the public service as a whole, and to be admitted to the highest stations in the dispensation of justice. The settlement of the language question was the essential preliminary to the enjoyment of that privilege and right.

The Parliament Act of 1833 contains a clause proclaiming the right of all natives of India, so qualified, to admission to the higher appointments in the services. This clause was inserted at the suggestion and recommendation of Lord William Bentinck, but its efficacy was dependent on the condition that the English language was adopted, for otherwise the qualification could not have been satisfied. If it had not been adopted the clause in the Act of 1833 would never have acquired force, and it would have become a dead letter. There would have been no possibility of the admission of Indians to the higher branches of the service in which they have since displayed such conspicuous ability. The advocacy of the only possible common language formed

part of the policy of education and enlightenment which is rightly associated with the name of Lord William Bentinck, and was the consummating act in his promotion of a knowledge of English literature and science among the educated classes of India. As a result it was said of his policy that "the scale of estimation in which natives were held by Europeans was advanced by Lord William Bentinck."

The improvement was rendered the more apparent by the marked decline in the consideration in which Indians were held that followed the departure of Lord William Bentinck. A reaction on the part of the privileged classes was inevitable, and could not have been averted by any human device. They had of course not approved of the new policy, and a long interval was necessary before they could be brought to admit not merely its merits, but its inevitable character. Twenty years after these occurrences Sir Charles Trevelyan, giving evidence before the Parliamentary Committee on the occasion of the final renewal of the Charter, paid the following high tribute to the memory of his departed Chief: "To Lord William Bentinck belongs the great praise of having placed our dominion in India on its proper foundation in the recognition of the great principle that India is to be governed for the benefit of the Indians, and that the advantages which we derive from it should only be such as are incidental to, and inferential from that course of proceeding."

Lord William Bentinck was a convinced supporter of the freedom of the Press. An intelligent historian has stated that "the Press had been practically free for the whole period of Lord William Bentinck's administration," and this notwithstanding that it was fettered by the Press Regulations of 1823. In only one instance had he availed himself of them to close discussion. That was on the occasion of the issue of the final order abolishing the practice of *sati*. That step was not taken to prevent discussion during the development of the question, but to signify that the decision of the Government was final and not to be challenged. His general attitude towards the Press was marked by great liberality, and by a breadth of view which

was not common even in England at that time. His sentiments were revealed in his public declaration: "I know of no subject which the Press might not fairly discuss." His orders on the agitation arising from the reduction of batta have been cited against his consistency, but that was a movement of quasi-mutiny, and that outbreak of military dissatisfaction with the orders of the Government could not involve the precious principle of free discussion. It was a proper occasion for the assertion of the reserved power of intervention in matters affecting the exercise of its authority that all Governments must retain.

In the three great questions which were dependent on the selection of English as the language to be used by the Government and its agents Lord William Bentinck took the most active part on the side of Indian progress. Those questions were the admission of Indians to the higher grades of the public service, the dissemination of modern culture among the upper classes of India with a view to their closer association on terms of friendship and equality with Europeans, and, thirdly, the emancipation of the Press for the purpose of creating and strengthening a healthy public opinion. It is impossible to measure the extent of the service Lord William Bentinck conferred on the peoples of India in all these matters. The only serious criticism that could be passed on his proceedings was that he was unduly anticipating events, and inaugurating a policy before its time had become due. But principles have to be laid down before fruition, and a code of conduct has to be defined before it can be set up for example. It may be said that Lord William Bentinck arrived before his time, but it cannot be denied that he originated the work which his successors during a whole century have been striving to complete. He laid the track, others have followed in his footsteps.

But against the suggestion of precipitation must be placed the argument of necessity. There was one matter that could not wait, the financial exigencies of the Company. It was absolutely necessary to establish an equilibrium between receipts and expenditure and Lord William

Bentinck attained it. He accomplished this result by economies in one direction or another. The greatest and most lasting of these economies was the introduction of Indian officials where Europeans had claimed a monopoly. Salaries and pensions were reduced; the augmentation of the staffs rendered necessary by increased work and wider responsibilities became possible without imposing too heavy a charge on the exchequer. The financial position of the East India Company with its annual deficit and increasing responsibilities forbade the postponement of the admission of Indians into the regular civil and judicial administration of the country. It was absolutely unavoidable that the only men who could work for a reasonable local payment, at the same time that they possessed a thorough knowledge of the character and customs of the governed classes, should be employed. Persistence in keeping the Indian administration as the exclusive monopoly of the nominees of the East India Company could only have ended not merely in the alienation of the two races but in public bankruptcy. In the major part of his reforms, therefore, Lord William Bentinck did not act too soon. He opened the doors of the public service partly because he saw that it was an impossible policy to exclude the Indians from a fuller share in the government of their country, and partly because it was necessary to reduce the cost of the government. Both English and Indian interests were benefited in the long run, and the service he rendered his own country was not less real if less apparent than that he did to the cause of Indian tranquillity and progress. India and England have travelled very far together since the days of Lord William Bentinck, but his example and efforts serve as a beacon to illumine and direct their course.

Although Lord William Bentinck's administration was essentially peaceful and undisturbed by any serious external complication, some interesting matters presented themselves in regard to the self-governing States which occupied so large a part of the Indian territory. After the departure of Lord Hastings the Company had issued imperative orders that they were to be left in undisturbed exercise of their

sovereign rights and that no interference in their internal affairs was to be attempted. The policy of non-intervention was in full force when Lord William came into office. He even emphasized it by abolishing the practice of present-giving which had hitherto been in vogue. No doubt the practice had been abused, but it was in perfect harmony with Oriental tradition and expectation. A transitional measure of reform had been introduced by requiring residents and agents to pass into their public treasuries whatever presents they might receive from Chiefs or others. But a long time elapsed before it could be said with truth that the practice had been wholly abolished.

The situation in two of the States of Southern India gave rise to some anxiety and resulted in active intervention. After the overthrow of Tipu Sultan the family of the old Maharajas was restored, and for thirty years things went on satisfactorily. For the first half of that period the minister, named Purnea, raised the finances of the State to a highly flourishing point, and during his life the people were prosperous and contented. But his successor had no ability, and in the end, after the taxes had been increased and the Treasury emptied, the people rose in revolt, and all the efforts of the State forces to suppress the movement failed. Troops had to be sent from Madras to put an end to the disorders, and the justice of the popular grievances being established it was deemed necessary to depose the Maharaja and to appoint a Commission to re-establish the administration on a sound and durable basis. This control was exercised for fifty years, and it was not till the year 1881 that it was deemed prudent to restore the old dynasty and to replace the Maharaja on the Gadi.

A second centre of trouble presented itself in Coorg, where the Raja, for some unknown reason, assumed an attitude of defiance and refused to hold any intercourse with the British Government. The general opinion was that he had been smitten with insanity, but there was no way out of the dilemma than to send an expedition into his country for the purpose of bringing him to reason. Coorg is an exceedingly difficult region, and the means of communication were then

primitive. Lord William happened to be staying at Ootacamund at the moment that the trouble became acute, and he took charge of the operations in person. Four divisions advanced into the State from as many sides and occupied the capital, but with this exception the progress of the force proved slow, and it was feared that the operations might become protracted. Fortunately the Raja was alarmed by the loss of his chief town, or perhaps he began to see things in their true light, and surrendered. He was deposed, deported to Benares with a suitable pension, and Coorg, with the declared assent of its people, was annexed to British territory. Thus, notwithstanding the explicit injunctions as to non-interference, two important principalities had to be absorbed in the British dominions, one for a period only, but the other permanently.

The most important question in the external relations of the Company during this period related to the Punjab, where Runjit Sing had built up an imposing power. That dominion had been created at the expense of the Afghans, whom he had expelled from that great province and also from Cashmere. He came first into relations with the English at the time of the war with Holkar in 1805. Some years later a mission under Sir Charles Metcalfe visited his camp, but it had no definite result, "jealousy, distrust, and suspicion" prevailing. At that time Runjit Sing had secured the services of some French officers who had fought under Napoleon, and he may have thought of creating a disciplined army on the European model. But the Sikh sirdars chafed at the regular drill he sought to subject them to, and in its larger purpose the project never bore fruit. Runjit Sing then endeavoured to absorb the Sikh principalities on the left bank of the Sutlej, but their chiefs did not relish losing their separate autonomies to pass under the yoke of the great Maharaja. They consequently solicited the protection of the British, and Runjit Sing was warned that if he persisted in his purpose war must ensue. He had the wisdom and self-restraint to draw back, and his relations with the British assumed an amicable character which endured, as will be seen, till the day of his death.

Among the minor instructions of the Company to the Governor-General was a recommendation to take steps to acquire the control of trade on the river Indus. The lower and middle course of the Indus was held by the Amirs of Sind, while Runjit Sing, after his capture of Peshawar, held both banks of its upper course from the point where their authority ceased. To this end Lord William Bentinck began negotiations in both directions. The negotiations with the Amirs of Sind proved slow, but they resulted in a Treaty signed in April, 1832, and a commercial agreement was concluded in December, 1834.

In the meantime progress towards an understanding had been more rapid with Runjit Sing, who had cast aside some of his reserve and suspicions. In July, 1831, Alexander Burnes was sent to Lahore, and the Maharaja gave him a very gracious reception, perhaps on account of his bringing with him a friendly letter from William IV, accompanied by a present of horses sent out from England The immediate result of this mission was that Lord William Bentinck and the Maharaja met in a ceremonial durbar at Rupar on the Sutlej. The consequences of this interview were happy, and the intercourse between the British and the principal Sikh ruler became of a friendly character, as was shown by the commercial Treaty signed in December, 1832, and confirmed by subsequent events in Afghanistan.

At this time happenings outside India reacted on the position in these frontier States which formed a considerable barrier between British India and what has been generally described as Central Asia. Afghanistan had long been a scene of intestine strife, and the legitimate representative of the Durani Monarchy, Shah Shuja-ul-Mulk, had been compelled to seek a place of refuge in the Punjab at the Court of Runjit Sing. He was well received because the Sikh ruler fully realized that the security of his own possessions was much increased by a state of civil strife and disunion in Afghanistan. For this reason Shah Shuja's hopes and plans for the recovery of his throne were encouraged. When the Afghan fugitive arrived at Lahore he was advised to present his case to the Governor-General,

and to solicit his aid in recovering what he had lost. He accordingly wrote in this sense to Lord William Bentinck, representing at the same time that he had need of assistance for his own needs and for the support of the faithful followers who had shared his exile. The Governor-General evaded the question for support, but complied with the request for assistance by making a generous grant, and giving him permission to take up his residence at Loodihana, within the Company's territory. Although the details are unknown, there is no doubt that the situation in Afghanistan, and the case of Shah Shuja in particular, formed a prominent topic in the discussions at the Rupar durbar. From them Runjit Sing formed the conclusion that any help he might render Shah Shuja in the recovery of his rights would be regarded by the British with a more or less friendly eye.

In the summer of 1833 Shuja-ul-Mulk, having collected some funds here and there, of which the British pension provided the nucleus, and having been promised a larger sum by Runjit Sing, declared that he was ready to make a bid for power in his own country. The Amirs of Sind, influenced by Runjit Sing, had promised him free passage across their territory to Kandahar, supplies and even some money. It certainly looked as if the Shah had a very good chance of success. The materials must always be lacking to establish the causes why this bright prospect was never realized. Shah Shuja was a man of ability, and the failure of his enterprise seems to have been rather his misfortune than his fault.

Although his pecuniary needs for the moment were fully supplied, his armed forces at the hour of departure were exceedingly limited. When he left Loodihana it was said that he had but three hundred men in his company. But it was known all along the frontier that the Afghan prince was coming to reclaim his own, and the prestige of the chief great-grandson of Ahmed Shah was still high. By the time he reached the Indus his 300 had swelled to 30,000. It is hardly necessary to add that the discipline of such a body of men would be lax, and that they would be amenable to little control. The Amirs of Sind had promised supplies, but

they had not reckoned to feed a host of 30,000 men. We do not know whether this horde decided to feed itself, or whether the Sind authorities refused to supply it. At all events there was a sharp collision at Rori on the Indus, the Sindians had the worst of it, and the Afghan adventurers passed over the river, and in due course reached Kandahar. For a brief space it looked as if Shah Shuja would succeed. At least he laid siege to that city and it seemed likely to fall.

When the Durani prince fled to India the ruling power in his kingdom passed to the Barukzai family, represented by a band of brothers who, in their turn, quarrelled among themselves. Even to oppose Shah Shuja they could not unite, and that discord seemed to furnish his best chance of success. Of these brothers Dost Mahomed was by far the ablest, and he held possession of Kabul. When he heard of Shah Shuja's intentions in the summer of 1833 he sent a mission to India offering his services, and requesting an alliance with the British. Being committed to the cause of the Shah Shuja it is not surprising that the proposal was declined, and as little was then known of the writer it was believed that Shah Shuja would prove triumphant. Kandahar was closely besieged and on the point of surrender when Dost Mahomed arrived to relieve it. A battle ensued, but the greater part of the Shah's army fled without fighting, and the prince fled with them. Whatever his ability may have been in other respects, Shah Shuja was no warrior, but several good authorities like the French traveller Ferrier have vouched for his personal courage, so he may perhaps be given the benefit of the doubt. He succeeded in reaching his former place of shelter at Loodihana, his pension was renewed, and it would have been well for everyone concerned if he had never been allowed or induced to quit it.

Lord William Bentinck's name was associated with two other matters of what might be termed minor importance. He took a leading part in the conversion of Simla into the summer residence of the Governor-General and the seat of Government in the hot weather. He secured by purchase

the site on which Darjeeling, the hill-station for Bengal, was founded. He also displayed much interest in the establishment of communication by steam with the Red Sea, and revealed keen foresight as to the importance of bringing India and Europe nearer together.

In 1825 a small steamer named the *Enterprise*, using sails as well as steam, accomplished the first long sea journey from England to India in four months, but as this time had often been equalled by sailing ships the result was considered disappointing. In 1829 attention was turned to the Red Sea by the success of the *Hugh Lindsay* steamer in performing the journey from Bombay to Suez in a month. Lord William Bentinck took up the question in an energetic manner and ordered several steamers to be built for this portion of the journey, at the same time strongly recommending the Company to complete the connection by establishing a line of steamers between England and Egypt. That was the beginning of the overland route, which continued down to the construction of the Suez Canal. Lord William took a very broad view of the matter, as is shown by the following extract from a speech he delivered in the House of Commons after his return—

"It is through the means of a quite safe and frequent communication between all India and England that the natives of India in person will be enabled to bring their grievances and complaints before the authorities and the country; that large numbers of disinterested travellers will have it in their power to report to their countrymen at home the nature and circumstances of this distant portion of the Empire. This result, I hope, will be to rouse the shameful apathy and indifference of Great Britain to the concerns of India, and by thus bringing the eye of the British public to bear upon India it may be hoped that the desired amelioration may be accomplished."

The more thoroughly Lord William Bentinck's work in India is considered, the stronger will be the conviction that his tenure of office marks a clear epoch in the history of modern India. He instituted many useful reforms, he laid down a system of government that modified the autocratic

rule previously in force, he secured the recognition of principles that had been disregarded or violated, and every step subsequently taken by the Government of India in extending the branches of the service open to Indians has been the direct consequence of his policy.

CHAPTER XI

THE FIRST AFGHAN WAR

On Lord William Bentinck's resignation in March, 1835, Sir Charles Metcalfe, as senior Member of Council, assumed by prescription charge of the duties of Governor-General. In all those trying seven years he had been Lord William's right-hand man, and the retiring Governor-General had publicly declared that he had " never met with the individual whose integrity, liberality of sentiment, and delicacy of mind excited in a greater degree his respect and admiration." He seemed marked out to be Lord William's successor in a permanent sense, and the Court of Directors favoured his appointment. But however great as an administrator, and able as a negotiator, this " political " was unknown to the politicians at home, who preferred to benefit one of their own set with the best paid post at their disposal than to reward honourable service, and secure for India the benefit of the guidance of a man of ripe experience and ample knowledge. Never had favouritism a more disastrous sequel.

To the recommendations of the Court the Government of the day replied in grandiloquent terms that they did not " deem it advisable to appoint any servant of the East India Company to the highest office in India," and that they had accordingly appointed Lord Heytesbury to succeed Lord William Bentinck. So far as their particular nominee was concerned he disappeared quickly from view, for, a change taking place in the Government, the new Premier annulled this appointment, and nominated Lord Auckland in his place. Lord Auckland had one advantage over Lord Heytesbury. He was the nephew of the Earl of Minto, who had been one of the most respectable Governor-Generals on the list.

Sir Charles Metcalfe officiated for a year, handing over the reins of power to his successor on 4th March, 1836.

In the interval, he had passed into law the new Press Regulations, giving full liberty to the Press, and cancelling the autocratic right of the Government to deport European journalists who earned its displeasure by expressing their own opinions too freely. At the latter concession the Court subsequently manifested some displeasure, and Metcalfe, who had been appointed to the North West Provinces, availed himself of the opportunity to send in his resignation. His subsequent career as Governor of Jamaica confirmed his reputation as an able administrator, and gained for him a peerage.

Whatever might have been prophesied of the part Lord Auckland would take in Indian affairs, no one would have predicted that he would make himself responsible for a great war carried on far beyond the then frontiers of British India. He was reputed to be a man of common sense, to whom any suggestion of adventure would have been uninviting. The course he pursued could not have been his own choice. He must have passed under some sinister influences. It will be necessary to show how he was led on step by step to his own undoing. But his first acts as Governor-General tended to confirm the impression that his administration would be devoted more to home questions than to foreign affairs. A serious famine in the North West Provinces in the year 1838 was dealt with in an energetic fashion, and Lord Auckland is entitled to the credit of having been the first to establish relief works on a large scale. As a more permanent remedy he set on foot the construction of the Ganges canal, which served the double end of averting the evils of drought and improving the means of communication.

The old fear of French rivalry, natural enough when it is considered how closely they ran the English for supremacy in the peninsula, had given place after the fall of Napoleon to a greater fear of Russia, and this fear was becoming acute in Lord William Bentinck's time. The Russians were then beginning to absorb the Steppes in their progress towards the Aral and the Jaxartes, and above all, they had acquired by two wars and their ensuant Treaties of Gulistan and

Turkomanchai a grip on Persia that effaced all the impression left by the earlier diplomatic efforts of the English. To give increased impetus to the tendency, some one at this time published for the first time the alleged Will of Peter the Great, which contemplated the conquest of India, and then to complete the shock, rumour spread the report that Russian travellers and envoys were about to penetrate into Afghanistan.

There is no wonder then that Lord William Bentinck, in his soldierly character, which was so happily effaced in India, drew up a minute, a few days before his departure as a kind of farewell, dealing with the only real danger of invasion, that coming from the North West. It is unnecessary to analyse this minute except to say that the author conceived it to be quite possible for a Russo-Persian force to reach the Indus. It is immaterial to discuss the comparative merit of opinions, but any expression of opinion then sufficed to show that the Russian menace was in the minds of men at that period.

To add to the anxiety a state of confusion prevailed in Afghanistan. The Durani monarchy had been ejected, and in its place several brothers of the Baruckzai family held divided sway. Of Dost Mahomed, the youngest of these, who held Kabul, Alexander Burnes, who visited the Afghan capital in 1832, brought back a very favourable account, and he recommended our concluding an alliance with him as a *de facto* ruler. The authorities did not look upon this proposal with favour, and indeed it would have been difficult for them to do so, seeing that they were at that very moment entertaining the exiled Shah Shuja as their guest. The lamentable failure of his personal effort in 1834, already described, might well have caused reflection, and given rise to a new orientation.

Some impression must have been made, for in 1837 Lord Auckland took the first step towards the plunge by authorizing Burnes to proceed again to Kabul, this time as an accredited envoy instead of a lone traveller. Unfortunately his instructions were not clear, and although it was well known that Dost Mahomed required the restoration of

Peshawar by the Sikhs, the envoy was vested with no powers to propound a suitable equivalent. That being the case it was waste of time and money to send him at all. Burnes in his official capacity came to the same conclusion as he had done in his private, that Dost Mahomed was an able man, and that no one else was so likely to reunite Afghanistan as he was. But when he endeavoured to turn these impressions into a formal agreement he was informed in a despatch from Lord Auckland, that the utmost the British Government would do for Dost Mahomed would be to restrain the Sikhs from attacking him on the condition of his holding no relations with either Persia or Russia. On learning this the Amir abruptly broke off discussions with Burnes, and gave him his dismissal. A great deal was asked of the Dost, and in return he was to get nothing. The Afghans would have been only too delighted if the Sikhs had attempted to invade their country.

Lord Auckland's haughty instructions reached Kabul at a particularly bad moment, for a Russian officer was there, lavishing promises all round, and whispering in the ear of the Amir that he could rely upon Russia to support him against the English. Burnes was lucky to escape from Kabul with his life, for the excited Kabulis were carrying the Russian officer through the streets in triumph the day that he departed. This officer was named Vickovitch, and he drew up the terms of very flattering treaties with Dost Mahomed and his brothers, and then he departed for Russia to obtain the ratification of his Government. He, too, was fortunate in the moment of his departure, for hard upon his heels came the news that the Persians, despite Russian aid, had been repulsed at Herat by the courage and resource of an English officer. When Vickovitch reached St. Petersburg the official views there had changed. Afghan adventures were out of favour, and when he presented his card to Count Nesselrode, the Foreign Minister, he was informed that " the Minister knew no such person except an adventurer, who had been lately engaged in some unauthorized intrigues at Kabul and Kandahar." The unhappy officer went to his hotel and blew out his brains.

It will be of interest to describe briefly the abortive siege of Herat just mentioned, as it formed a kind of curtain-raiser to the drama of the Afghan war. At this time Herat was in the possession of Kamran, Shah Shuja's nephew, and it formed the last possession of the Sudozai family in the State. But Herat had at times been Persian, and it was long a disputed possession between the two countries. The Persian ruler, Mahomed Shah, was incited by Russia to avail himself of the opportunity afforded by the troubles in Afghanistan to seize Herat, and believing the moment to be favourable on account of Kamran's weakness and isolation he advanced at the head of a large army to besiege it. The siege began at the end of November, 1837, and it was not expected to last very long.

Although the Afghans were always sure to fight well, they had not much military skill, and as a matter of fact, the successful defence was due to the accidental presence of a young English artillery officer named Eldred Pottinger. After an adventurous journey from Kabul he had reached Herat in August, 1837, and as the Prince was absent he awaited his return. When he came back the Persians were at the gates, and Pottinger had perforce to remain. From the beginning he took part as a combatant in the defence, but it was only when the situation began to look serious that the Afghans came to him with a request that he should take over the defence, which he did. After many months' desultory fighting, numerous minor attacks and responding sorties, the Persians delivered their grand assault on 24th June, 1838. This was repulsed in brilliant fashion, and although the Persian army remained entrenched before Herat for three months longer the crisis of the siege was over. The withdrawal of the Shah's army was brought about by events elsewhere. In June a British expedition was sent to the Persian Gulf, and occupied the island of Karrack, and on the Shah hearing of this he declared that he would not have a war with England, and broke up his camp.

In May, 1838, Lord Auckland wrote a minute to the effect that the most promising mode of settling the affairs of Afghanistan was to "grant our aid and countenance, in

concert with Runjit Sing, to enable the Shah Shuja-ul-Mulk to re-establish his sovereignty in the Eastern division of Afghanistan under engagements which shall conciliate the feelings of the Sikh ruler, and bind the restored monarch to the support of our interests." In this recommendation of aid and countenance it does not appear that the despatch of an English army into Afghanistan was originally contemplated. It seemed to be deemed that a generous subsidy and the loan of a few officers would be quite sufficient to enable the Afghan prince with the active co-operation of the Sikh army to regain his throne. If this expectation was really indulged, and if it was seriously thought that the Khalsa army would go into Afghanistan to fight for one Afghan against another, there would be room to suspect Lord Auckland of a Machiavellian desire to weaken two of his neighbours for the benefit of his own side. The truth was that Lord Auckland and his advisers deemed it prudent to reveal their own plans by degrees, so as to avert serious opposition to them in England. To restore Shah Shuja by undefined steps did not cause any anxiety; to despatch armies could not but raise opposition and criticism, and so the plan was revealed by slow stages.

One thing was promptly made clear. The Sikh army would not enter the passes, and their active part in the adventure was soon reduced to the most modest limits. In this way Lord Auckland was confronted with two alternatives, either to abandon the cause of Shah Shuja or to take up his cause in earnest, and support it with a British force. The whole of the summer of 1838 was passed in difficult and delicate negotiations between the three parties, and Shah Shuja was not the most easy person to negotiate with. He knew his countrymen, and he declared that unless he had an army of his own he would be regarded as the mere tool of the English, and that his chances of success would be nil. He also stipulated that no interference was to be attempted in regard to his relations with his tribe and household. The English officers were also surprised to find that he was a great stickler for his own dignity, and that the lowness of his fortunes did not diminish his claim to

regal deference and consideration. It was an unfortunate beginning that not sufficient pains should have been taken to spare his susceptibilities. He was deemed and treated as a puppet; yet that relationship would be fatal to his chances of success, and he alone knew it.

The situation was extremely unfortunate for everybody concerned. Out of Afghanistan, and there only dubiously, Shuja-ul-Mulk had no following of any strength. The largest subsidy would not have enabled him to raise an army of any value. The experience of 1834 proved it. Nothing would induce the Sikhs to take his burden on their shoulders. The utmost they would do was to give free passage, not to a British, but only to the Shah's army, place a strong garrison in Peshawar, and provide for the line of communication as far as the near side of the Khyber. There remained the English, and everyone marvelled why they should take the whole burden and risk of the adventure on themselves. History contained many records of the invasion of India from the North West, but none of any of the rulers of India hazarding an advance through the mountains that fringed Afghanistan. Moreover, the English seemed to have less reason than any of their predecessors to do so, for they did not even touch those mountains. Between them intervened the Punjab and the Khalsa army, which could not be pushed forward, but was quite ready and capable of putting up a strong defence whenever the Afghans might be disposed to attack them. What malign influence prompted the English to take steps which were costly to India and injurious to themselves? At all events it could not have been regard for Shah Shuja for at every turn they contemned and derided him.

The excuse given for the British Government taking upon itself the whole burden and cost of the expedition was that it was necessary to counteract the presence of a Russian emissary in Kabul, and the siege of Herat under Russian incitement by a display of military power that would impress Central Asia with the invincibility of the Anglo-Indian army. That was the mood in which the Simla manifesto was launched in October, 1838.

On its heels came the news that the Russian officer had departed, that the Persian army had retired from before Herat, and that the Shah of Persia desired peace and not war. All the excuses for the Simla manifesto seemed disposed of. Lord Auckland was provided by Providence with a justification for throwing over his advisers and revoking their decision. But he proved as soft as putty in their hands. He yielded to their representations that having made a declaration he must go on to the bitter end. Unfortunately there was no telegraphic service in those days with England to bring in the necessary control and veto.

The only effect of the occurrences mentioned was that it was decided to reduce the force to be employed to half the original number From a grand army of 20,000 men the total was reduced to 9,500, and the command was transferred from Sir Henry Fane, the Commander-in-Chief, to Sir John Keane. The former had always opposed the undertaking, and the latter was not very enthusiastic about it, but the Politicals, with Sir William Macnaghten at their head, held Lord Auckland in the hollow of their hands.

The incidental movements were unhappy. Runjit Sing confined his assent to the passage of an army to the small body accompanying Sir Claude Wade, who was attached to the Sikh forces closing the Khyber. Sir Claude Wade could not very well have accompanied Shah Shuja as he was an avowed champion of the policy of breaking up Afghanistan into several principalities. After a grand review of the British and Sikh forces at Ferozepore on 10th November, the expedition began its march through non-Sikh territory for the Indus early in December. It was like the movement of a horde, for the 9,500 fighters were accompanied by 38,000 followers, including women and children !

The force had thus to traverse the territory of the Amirs of Sind, and the attendant incidents were, to say the least, unfortunate. By an agreement to which the British were a party the independence of the Amirs was guaranteed on their paying the sum of twenty lakhs, to be divided equally between Runjit Sing and Shah Shuja. But Runjit Sing

was not satisfied with his share, and claimed and received fifteen lakhs instead of ten, thus leaving only five for Shah Shuja, who was told that he might take as much more as he could extort from the Amirs. They refused to pay, and produced two receipts given by that prince in redemption of all claims on the Amirs as his former tributaries. The justice of their case was endorsed by Sir Henry Pottinger, but it was in vain. They were informed that, unless they satisfied Shah Shuja and assisted the passage of the army to the fullest extent, they would be treated as an enemy. They yielded to these threats, but they did not forget the treatment as was subsequently shown.

It took this unwieldy expedition of nearly 50,000 souls three months to traverse the distance from Ferozepore to the eastern entrance of the Bolan pass which leads to Kandahar, and that city was occupied without resistance on 25th April, 1839. There had been a heavy loss of baggage; animals and supplies had run short on the march. No enemy had, however, been seen, but Shah Shuja's arrival in the southern capital excited little interest, and nothing is more disconcerting to an expectant monarch than a cold and chilly reception. Three months were passed in Kandahar and then it was decided to march northwards to Kabul. A sufficient garrison was left in the south, together with the siege train, which was not taken, as expedition was necessary. The march began on 27th June, and no opposition being met with on the way the army arrived before Ghuzni on 21st July. Sir John Keane at once recognized that it was "a place of great strength both by nature and by art." He then regretted the absence of his siege guns, and but for an unexpected piece of information he might have adopted Shah Shuja's proposal to leave Ghuzni alone and pass on to Kabul. Before he had come to a decision a deserter from the town, who was none other than one of Dost Mahomed's nephews, brought him the information that while all the other gates were blocked up and strongly fortified, the northern gate leading to Kabul had been left open as a means of exit. Encouraged by this intelligence the English commander decided to carry the place by storm.

A small party led by four engineer officers, under the command of Captain Thomson, succeeded in their mission of blowing up the Kabul gate, and the storming party forced an entrance. The Afghans fought desperately, realizing that their avenue of retreat was cut off, and 500 of them were slain and 1,600 taken prisoners. Some hundreds sought safety by throwing themselves over the walls, but few escaped from the pursuit of the cavalry. The spoil was considerable, and an army of observation in the neighbourhood under the command of the Dost's eldest son, abandoned its camp and retreated precipitately to carry the bad news to Kabul.

The capture of the strong fortress of Ghuzni in the manner described was a brilliant feat of arms, and made an immense impression throughout the country. Dost Mahomed still decided to make a fight for his capital, and collecting all his forces he marched out to Urgundah. But his troops were disheartened, and refusing to obey his orders, dispersed in all directions. Then the Amir fled with a few followers for the Bamian Pass into Turkestan, narrowly escaping from the pursuing cavalry. On 7th August Shah Shuja entered Kabul in triumph, riding through the streets to his old Palace in the citadel of Bala Hissar. A few weeks later communications were established through Jellalabad, with the Sikh force holding the Khyber. Then was the moment to have concluded the affair. The British Government had replaced Shah Shuja on the throne of his fathers, it had not bound itself in any way to keep him there. It was for him to maintain his position, or to throw up the game and return with his protectors to India, and probably if he had seen them go he would not have been slow to follow.

The military success at that moment was complete and without a flaw. But the Politicals were not satisfied, they demanded that it should be crowned by one of policy as well. What was the use, they asked, of marching to Kabul and then marching back again, if they did not leave a stable government under the Durani Shah behind them, and as they now saw quite clearly that Shuja-ul-Mulk had no hold on his countrymen they realized that the departure of the

troops would mean his downfall, with damaging effect to their own personal reputations, for they were committed to his cause. Therefore they proclaimed that as long as Dost Mahomed was at large raising unknown forces behind the Hindu Kush, and perhaps receiving illicit aid from Russia, the army could not be withdrawn. Sir William Macnaghten, with whom the supreme direction rested, and who had been appointed agent at the Court of Shah Shuja, retained his influence over the Governor-General. By such a phrase as "the Afghans are gunpowder and the Dost is a lighted match," Lord Auckland allowed himself to be over-persuaded. He refrained from recalling the army. But Sir William omitted to explain how, if the Afghans were so hostile and the Dost so formidable, a stable government could be set up by Shah Shuja, even with the support of British bayonets.

While assent was given to the continuance of the adventure it was decided that a great portion of the army must return to India, and with it went the victorious commander, Sir John Keane. One of the reasons of this step was that Runjit Sing had died in the summer of 1839, and that things were not going on as smoothly with the Sikhs as they had in his lifetime. Sir John Keane took a very just view of the situation. Far from being carried away by his military successes he declared to a brother officer, "It will not be long before there is here some signal catastrophe!"

During the winter of 1839–40, Kabul being found too cold, Shah Shuja and the British Headquarters were removed to Jellalabad. A garrison was left in the Bala Hissar, and a mixed force was stationed in the Bamian Pass. Operations being practically impossible, the winter months passed quietly on all sides. At Jellalabad big projects were being discussed for the coming spring, and Shah Shuja succeeded in convincing Macnaghten that for his complete success it was necessary to occupy Herat. But Herat was held not by Dost Mahomed, but by his own nephew Kamran. The reduction in the army of occupation, the dubious situation in the Punjab, did not interfere with this castle-building, which went on till the spring of 1840 produced realities to

occupy the attention and disturb the complacency of the dreamers.

After having remained quiet for many months Dost Mahomed in the summer of 1840 gave signs of renewed activity. When he fled north of the Hindu Kush in the autumn of 1839 he decided to visit Bokhara, and to endeavour to obtain aid from its ruler on the ground of their common religion. He did not meet with the sympathy he expected, and he conceived it to be prudent to seize the first opportunity he could find to recross the Oxus. Among the Usbegs, who had been the subjects of the Durani kings, he found more sympathy, and lured by the prospect of spoil he succeeded in gathering round him a force of five or six thousand men. With this body he hoped to overwhelm the troops guarding the Bamian Pass, whereupon he confidently expected that a general rising of the Afghans would follow. In the first brush with the outposts in the pass his attack was partially successful, and an Afghan regiment in the service of Shah Shuja went over to him. But the Bamian Pass was held in stronger force than he knew, and when he came in contact with the main body he met with a rude repulse. The Usbeg levies broke under artillery fire, and suffered heavy loss from the pursuing cavalry. Dost Mahomed escaped. with the rest of the fugitives, only to find himself exposed to a new danger. The Usbeg Chief not merely abandoned his cause, but proposed to make his peace with the English by surrendering him as a captive. He may possibly have heard that a reward was offered for the Dost's capture.

A timely warning enabled the Amir to escape, and he sought refuge in the hilly country of Kohistan, lying north-east of Kabul. Instead of being farther off he had thus drawn sensibly nearer to Kabul, and he was no longer among strangers, but among his own Afghan people. It was deemed necessary to send a force from Kabul to deal promptly with this new danger from an unexpected quarter. Sir Robert Sale took the command, and captured some of the hill forts, but Dost Mahomed kept the clans together, and at last drew them up in battle array in and round the village of Purwandurrah. This was on 2nd November,

1840, and Sir Robert Sale advanced to attack him. A cavalry engagement ensued due to the precipitancy displayed by the horse on both sides. An Anglo-Indian cavalry regiment moved forward, and the Amir ordered his horse to charge for the honour of Islam. The two bodies seemed likely to clash in mortal encounter when for some unaccountable reason the cavalry flinched, wheeled right about, leaving their five English officers to carry out the charge alone. Of these officers three were killed. Although the action would have been renewed on the following day by the infantry and artillery this mishap was disconcerting, and went to prove that the Amir was still a doughty opponent.

But Dost Mahomed saw things more clearly than his antagonists. As he looked down on the field of this encounter he realized that he was engaged in a hopeless struggle and that, for that period at least, he was in no position to continue it. Then he formed a dramatic and remarkable decision. Bidding the clansmen to return to their homes he rode away with a single companion for Kabul, and meeting Sir William Macnaghten outside the city, surrendered to him in person. This fine act accomplished with real dignity evoked a responsive tribute of admiration for a chivalrous enemy, and it was then remembered to his credit that the Amir had observed all the rules of honourable warfare. He was spared every form of humiliation, removed to India in an honourable way, and accorded a suitable pension while waiting for the day when " the whirligig of time would bring its own revenges."

A second opportunity was thus afforded for the withdrawal of the Anglo-Indian expedition from Afghanistan. " The lighted match " was extinguished, Dost Mahomed was in the hands of the English, and no other leader of the Afghans was visible anywhere. The English had replaced Shah Shuja on his throne, his only formidable rival was removed, what more could he expect from them ? At that moment, too, came the news that the Russian expedition against Khiva had completely failed, and that General Peroffsky was retreating under great difficulties to the Ural. As Sir Henry Durand subsequently wrote : " No more striking event than

the Dost's surrender could be conceived for an honourable termination to the armed occupation of Afghanistan, and for the triumphant return of the Anglo-Indian army to its own frontier. By furnishing so unhoped an occurrence, Providence removed all reasonable ground of excuse for hesitation, and afforded the Indian Government the very moment which it professed to await." Not a single soldier was in favour of prolonging the adventure, but Sir William Macnaghten decided that weather conditions precluded a retirement on the eve of winter, and so the question of withdrawal was shelved till the spring of 1841.

By this time the prolonged occupation of Afghanistan was beginning to attract some attention, and to arouse not a little anxiety in London. The Secret Committee of the East India Company drew up a report on the situation, clearly examining the position of affairs in both their military and political aspects, and recommending the immediate adoption of one of two courses. Their conclusion was that there was no alternative between a prompt withdrawal and the immediate increase of the garrison in Afghanistan. It is not clear why the Company failed to send orders to the Governor-General to the same effect. It could, on occasions, be very peremptory about obedience to its decrees, and this was certainly a time when it might well have shown some firmness as a contrast to the feebleness of Lord Auckland. The Governor-General, availing himself of what he considered the loophole left to his discretion, referred the matter to Sir William Macnaghten as the man on the spot, but with regard to one of the alternatives he declared it would not be possible on financial as well as military grounds to send any more troops from India. If Sir William Macnaghten decided to remain it must be on the understanding that the force with him could not be increased.

In 1839 Sir William Macnaghten had decided for the continuance of the occupation through apprehension of Dost Mahomed's return; in 1840, he justified the same decision by the lateness of the season when Dost Mahomed surrendered, but that extension of the occupation was only to apply till the following spring. When the spring of 1841

arrived all was calm, and apparently Afghan opposition had come to an end. If ever Shah Shuja could be left to his own devices that was the moment, but Sir William seemed rooted to the ground, He deferred any decision till September, when it was getting late to move a large force and an unwieldy train of non-combatants, although there was still time to get clear of the passes by a quick departure, and then he informed the Governor-General that in his opinion a third winter might be passed in perfect safety in the country. It does not appear that he gave any reasons for this strange decision beyond the fact that everything was quiet, and that he could not discover danger in any direction. That very circumstance should have been the determining reason for his departure. He was only there to help Shah Shuja, and if there was no one visible against whom he might require help, why then should the British army of occupation remain?

It was said that Sir William Macnaghten remained on in the hope that his more ambitious projects would be adopted. His new desire to restore the Durani dynasty over the whole of Afghanistan remained unabated. He saw in his dreams Shah Shuja riding at his side into Herat; he longed to plant the Union Jack on the banks of the Oxus. But Lord Auckland had never encouraged this larger programme, and Macnaghten often lamented that he had not a Wellesley or a Hastings to back him up. But after all those ambitious satraps exercised some amount of reason in their designs. They would not have expected to find revenue-producing provinces amid the snows of the Hindu Kush or in the deserts of Seistan, and without that inducement either of those resolute men would soon have clipped the wings of Macnaghten's "high-vaulting ambition," and brought down his fantasies to cold mother earth.

CHAPTER XII

AN EPOCH OF MISFORTUNE

ON the very morrow of the decision to remain in Afghanistan for another winter came the first warning of the coming storm. The events described in the last chapter related to Kabul and Northern Afghanistan, but it will not have been forgotten that when Sir John Keane marched to the north in 1839, he left a small garrison at Kandahar. That force under the able command of General William Nott, with the co-operation of Major Henry Rawlinson, as political agent, had maintained peace and good order in that part of the country which was bounded on the west by the river Helmund. Neither of these officers encouraged adventures beyond that limit, and the tranquillity and prosperity of the Kandahar province furnished the one bright spot in the Afghan position. Notwithstanding this calm both these officers were vigilant, and Major Rawlinson sought information from every possible source as to what was happening beyond the Helmund where the Abdali tribe, of which the Barukzais of Dost Mahomed's family formed part, were supreme.

During the winter of 1840–1 rumours reached Major Rawlinson that a national insurrection was in course of preparation, and he passed on the information to Sir William Macnaghten, who made light of the warnings. He found in the defeats inflicted on the first bands of Abdalis and Ghilzais to threaten Kandahar, an argument to support his optimistic view that the Afghan tribes were not, and would never be, a match for trained soldiers. But he was to receive a rude awakening from his over-confidence at Kabul.

The Intelligence Department in the north was very defective, and even Shah Shuja, with no hold on the people who regarded him as a puppet of the English, was unable to supply news. No one had the smallest inkling of what was happening beyond the line of sentries or even in the city of Kabul itself, where the treasury of the army was deposited

in the Bala Hissar with but a small garrison. The troops, 6,000 in number, and over 12,000 followers, occupied a cantonment two miles outside the city. Unbeknown to all the authorities a great plot was being hatched to surprise the Treasury, and although Shah Shuja believed that something was on foot he had no clue or positive information, and in face of vague rumours the best was hoped for and nothing was done to avert a surprise. The view seems to have prevailed that to make any precautionary movement by changing the position of the troops would be attributed to a feeling of apprehension.

The plot revealed itself on 2nd November, when the people of Kabul rose in arms and attacked the Treasury. Here Sir Alexander Burnes had his quarters in contrast with Sir William Macnaghten, who resided in the Cantonment. It was considered that the presence of Shah Shuja, in his palace in one part of the Bala Hissar, furnished a guarantee for the security of the Treasury in another. At first the commotion in the city was not regarded very seriously, but it soon attained such dimensions as to call for immediate and vigorous action if it were to be suppressed. The mob, deriving confidence from their numbers, attacked and stormed the Treasury. Sir Alexander Burnes, his brother, and another English officer were murdered, the small garrison was annihilated, and the Treasury plundered. Great as was this blow, it was converted into a moral disaster by the apathy shown by the military leaders in the Cantonment and the hesitation exhibited as to what measures should be taken to punish the assailants and to destroy the effect of their success. There were six thousand British troops within two miles of the Treasury, and incredible as it seemed to every intelligent observer, the troops moved out of their lines and then marched in again without attempting anything. When Shuja-ul-Mulk heard that the British had remained inactive under this affront he exclaimed that " the English must have gone mad."

The command of the British troops had passed at this time into the hands of General Elphinstone, a timid and incompetent officer, for whom the only excuse that could be

offered was that he was elderly and in bad health. He relied entirely on Sir William Macnaghten who, if not a physical coward, had certainly the most puerile ideas of how to grapple with a crisis. Their apathy when confronted with such a tragical catastrophe was doubly extraordinary because it might have been assumed that the murder of their colleague Burnes and his comrades would have stirred the least-spirited man to action. They seemed to be as indifferent to their fate as to their own peril. Prompt and vigorous action during the day of the tragedy would have strangled the insurrection at its birth, but the opportunity once lost, the riot of the Kabulis quickly developed into a national rising throughout the country.

At this junctuie the Afghans found a national leader in the person of Akbar Khan, the eldest son of Dost Mahomed. He had been living in Bokhara for some time, but none the less was he an attentive observer of affairs in his own country, and at last the spirit moved him to make a bid for power. He had no great hopes of success where his father had failed, but he was young and energetic. There is no reason to think that he was concerned in the Kabul rising; he only saw in it a favourable accident that improved his chances. The character of this remarkable man has been described by Sir John Kaye in the following terms—

"He was a man of an eager impetuous nature; susceptible of good and of bad impulses, but seldom otherwise than earnest and impulsive. His education had been neglected; in his youth he had been unrestrained, and now self-control—a virtue rarely exercised by an Afghan—was wholly foreign to the character of the man. He was indeed peculiarly demonstrative and sudden in his demonstrations, passing rapidly from one mood to another—blown about by violent gusts of feeling, bitterly repenting to-day the excesses of yesterday, and rushing into new excesses to-morrow. He was one of those fiery temperaments—those bold dashing characters—which in times of popular commotion ever place their possessors in the first rank. But in seasons of repose he was one of the most joyous and light-hearted of men; no man loved a joke better; no

man laughed more heartily or seemed to look more cheerfully on the sunny side of life."

But Akbar Khan was a great deal more than this picture would convey. He was a born leader of men, and in a leader the qualities required are the same, whether those who follow are Afghans or Britishers. He forced his way at once to the front as the national champion against the foreign intruders, and when his qualities came to be compared with those of Elphinstone and Macnaghten he shone by contrast.

The capture of the Treasury was followed by the confinement of the troops within the limits of the Cantonment, and it was soon discovered that it was too large for effective defence with the very limited artillery available. The Afghan forces surrounded the Cantonment, having first captured two outlying forts which had served as granaries. This was not the only reverse outside the camp. The garrison left at Charikar to hold the Kohistan region in check consisted of a Goorkha regiment. Its water supply was cut off, and after a brave defence it was annihilated. The Bala Hissar would have made a far better place of defence than the Cantonment, but it was evacuated, Shah Shuja deciding to remain there to meet his fate whatever it might prove to be. A final catastrophe occurred when on 23rd November the British army was defeated in a stiff action at Behmeru, when if they had only pressed their advantage it was held that the Afghans could have stormed the Cantonment. By this time the troops were thoroughly disheartened. They had no confidence in their generals, and the generals had lost all confidence in themselves. Never was an army that had imagined itself to be invincible reduced to such a shameful state of degradation in three short weeks.

As the commanding officer had not the courage to shut himself up in the Bala Hissar, or the resolution to move to Ghuzni, still held by a British garrison, or the boldness to make a dash for Jellalabad before the winter snows closed the passes, there was no alternative to attempting to negotiate with the enemy for a safe passage back to India.

Elphinstone had expressed the opinion in his official despatches "that it was no longer feasible to maintain our position in this country," but he took no steps to extricate the army committed to his charge from impending destruction.

Sir William Macnaghten, still hoping, in his own words, that "something might turn up," was averse to these negotiations, and resorted to many devices to improve the position even after he had begun them. He attempted to bribe some of the Afghan chiefs to lend their aid to the British, or at least to remain neutral. This attempt was legitimate, if it revealed little acquaintance with the character of the people with whom he was dealing. But another measure was indefensible. He sanctioned, if he did not originate, a plot for the assassination of the Afghan leaders, promising a reward of 10,000 rupees through Mohun Lal, the Government agent, for the head of every leader of note brought in to headquarters. The statement would be deemed incredible if it did not rest on unimpeachable evidence. Two chiefs were murdered to gain this blood money, and it can scarcely be regretted that this infamous machination recoiled on its principal originator a few weeks later. At least some allowance must be made for Akbar Khan when Sir William blindly placed himself within his power.

The negotiations began before Akbar assumed their direction, and the first demand of the Kabuli leaders was for the unconditional surrender of the English army. This proposal was at once rejected. It was then that Akbar Khan took up the matter. The negotiations proceeded slowly, and all the time fighting went on in a desultory fashion round the Cantonment. Nothing of an encouraging nature happened to give fresh courage to the troops or to inspire them with any greater confidence in their commanding officers. The brigade sent to Jellalabad under Sir Robert Sale was summoned back to Kabul, but its commander declared he could not move, among other reasons because the tribes in his neighbourhood were reported to be restive. General Nott, at Kandahar, sent off a force of his own accord to endeavour to reach Kabul, but its

commissariat broke down when it had got as far as Khelat-i-Ghilzai. It made a timely return to its base, leaving a small garrison at that place. Had Elphinstone made a rapid movement to Ghuzni in November the two corps might have joined hands in that strong position, and thus secured a line of retreat for the united forces to the more open country round Kandahar. At last on 8th December Elphinstone decided that there must be no further delay in negotiating for a safe retreat to India by way of Jellalabad.

Notwithstanding this order from his Chief, Macnaghten began negotiations with Akbar Khan not for an immediate retreat but for the force to remain where it was until the arrival of spring. Akbar Khan at once feigned consent to this arrangement. He would join hands with the English, he said, and act as Vizier for Shah Shuja. It seems incredible that an experienced officer, and one so versed in chicanery as Macnaghten had shown himself to be, could have believed in such a proposal. Even General Elphinstone, old and foolish as he was, would not accept it as being one made in good faith.

On 23rd December Sir William Macnaghten accompanied by three officers rode out to meet Akbar Khan in final conference for the signing of this compact. The discussion had not got very far when the Afghans attempted to seize and disarm the British officers. Macnaghten turned on Akbar Khan, but was immediately shot dead, one of his companions also was killed, the two others being made prisoners. It was unfortunate that Macnaghten's political devices and shifty expedients should have given Afghan treachery a colour of justification.

The escort which had remained near the place of meeting fled at once on hearing the reports of firing, and the two regiments stationed outside the Cantonment as a support withdrew into the camp without firing a shot. To excuse inaction an attempt was made to throw doubt on Sir William's fate, and to represent that he had been merely carried off into the city.

When the murder could no longer be concealed Eldred Pottinger, the hero of Herat, was appointed Macnaghten's

successor, with instructions to resume the negotiations for a safe retreat. Although suffering from a severe and recent wound, his high courage and good judgment urged him to represent that it would be far wiser not to negotiate at all, but to fight their way into the Bala Hissar, or back to Jellalabad. For a moment Elphinstone's courage seemed to return, but none of the officers consulted would support this resolution. All were disheartened, if not demoralized. The negotiations for a safe retreat were resumed and completed. On 1st January, 1842, the ratified copies of the new Treaty bearing the seals of eighteen Afghan chiefs were exchanged. Again came warnings from different quarters that their promises were not to be trusted, and that treachery was intended. It was even reported that Akbar Khan had declared that he would destroy the whole English army with the exception of one man, who should bear the tidings to India.

By the terms of this agreement the English were to hand over their artillery, with the exception of six pieces, and on the other side that the sons of the Afghan chiefs should be given as hostages for the good faith of their fathers until the army reached Jellalabad. The former condition was fulfilled, the latter left unfulfilled. It was said that the long beleaguered army was in such a hurry to be off that it started on its journey without waiting for the Afghans to fulfil their part of the bargain! It was not, however, until 6th January that the force moved out of the Cantonment, so there appears to have been ample time for the Afghans to have kept their word if they had so desired. At that moment snow had been falling for three weeks, the track was rendered almost impracticable for wheeled vehicles, and farther on the passes were closed to all traffic except on foot.

The column was composed of 4,500 fighting men and 12,000 followers. The latter suffered greatly from the cold and were in a state of indescribable panic, interfering with the movements of the troops, and throwing the whole line into confusion. Such resistance as the troops might have offered was greatly hampered by this intermingling of non-combatants, men, women, and children. The Afghans

began at once to harass, and attack with increasing numbers and confidence, the retreating army, which in Kaye's words soon became "a rabble in chaotic flight." On the third day the outlook was so desperate that the English ladies and children were handed over to what seemed the dubious protection of Akbar Khan, who, however, in this matter kept his faith. At the same time Elphinstone and Shelton, his equally incompetent second-in-command, were made prisoners during a conference with that chief. They, too, found this mishap fortunate, for they thus escaped sharing the fate of their men.

No equally kind Providence looked after the safety of the brave officers and soldiers whose military ardour had been first restrained, and then broken by the incompetence and pusillanimity of their generals. They met their fate, and were gradually exterminated in the passes, leaving out of a total force of over 16,000 human beings but one Englishman, Dr. Brydon, to reach Jellalabad with the tale of the dreadful work that had been done since the army quitted Kabul. This retreat has been compared with that of the French army from Moscow, but it was far more discreditable. The French were vanquished by Nature alone, whereas the British owed their misfortunes to the shortcomings of their generals and the moral degeneration of their men.

Thus was expiated in a colossal disaster, far-reaching in its consequences, a policy which has been termed "truthless and unscrupulous," and which from a practical point of view was both unwise and premature. Lord Ellenborough has been censured for his criticism of Lord Auckland's policy, but he was near the truth when he described "the Afghan disasters as unparalleled in their extent unless by the errors in which they originated."

Amid the gloom of the situation in the north of Afghanistan there was one gleam of light. Some weeks before the murder of Sir Alexander Burnes a brigade had been detached from the Kabul force under the command of Sir Robert Sale to prevent the Khurd Kabul and Jugdulluck Passes being closed, and to curb the clans in their vicinity. This task was accomplished after some fighting, and the

force halted at Gundamuck. Sir Robert Sale had been in command of the operations in Kohistan, which culminated in the affair at Purwandurrah and the subsequent voluntary surrender of Dost Mahomed. After the murder of Burnes, and when matters began to look serious at Kabul, Elphinstone recalled Sale, but that officer instead of obeying orders pushed on in the opposite direction to Jellalabad, thus widening the gap between the two sections of the army. This refusal to obey orders was inexcusable, but it provides a faithful indication of the state of indiscipline with which the army of occupation was permeated.

The general opinion was that if Sale had returned to Kabul the whole force would have been saved, but at the best Sale's indecision of character, as revealed during the siege of Jellalabad, would not have imparted the required vigour and courage to the councils of war over which Elphinstone presided. There is no instance on record of one weak man helping another weak man out of a difficulty. Excuses may be found for every action, and Sale put forward many, when later on his conduct was questioned. The number of his sick and wounded, the want of baggage animals and similar causes rendered his return to Kabul, he declared, impossible, but these embarrassments and deficiencies had not prevented his pushing on and reaching Jellalabad, at an equal distance. But a more difficult question to answer was why did he not remain stationary at Gundamuck, where he was in command of the two most difficult passes, and whence he could certainly have given a helping hand to any body of troops retreating from Kabul. His answer to this charge was that provisions and even water were unattainable there, and that he was in danger of being hemmed in by hostile tribes. By occupying Jellalabad he represented that he obtained a position which he said he could hold until either the Kabul force retired on him or reinforcements came up from India. This plausible excuse, however, was weakened by his eagerness to capitulate when the pinch came at Jellalabad, which was only frustrated by the courage and resolution of Major George Broadfoot and a small minority on his council.

When this brigade reached Jellalabad the place was in no condition to stand a siege or keep out an enemy, but fortunately Broadfoot did not lose a day before he began to strengthen its defences. The walls were repaired, trenches dug, gates fortified, and provisions gathered in from all quarters and at every possible opportunity. When the enemy appeared, instead of tamely awaiting attack, a part of the garrison moved out and, assuming the offensive, dispersed the gathering bands. The courage of the garrison was thus sustained, while by the same stroke that of the foe was lowered. It was well that this was so for the moral courage of the garrison was to be subjected to a severe and continuous strain. At the end of January, 1842, Afghan officers arrived bearing a written order from General Elphinstone to surrender Jellalabad to them! At that moment it was not known what had happened at Kabul, but compliance with the order was put off until the Afghans should furnish satisfactory security for the safe journey of the garrison back to India. That security was never forthcoming, and a week later Dr. Brydon was seen approaching, the solitary bearer of the dolorous tale of the tragedy at Kabul.

At this time no one knew whether the Indian Government could, or would, send a relieving force to extricate the garrisons. The situation was rendered the more dubious by the attitude of the Sikhs, and by the fact that the Punjab intervened between British India and Afghanistan. Kabul and its garrison being lost, it seemed doubtful, assuming that succour was being organized, whether it would be deemed worth while to proceed farther, seeing that only the small garrison at Jellalabad had to be rescued. That was the mood of Sale and the majority of his council, showing how insidiously and rapidly moral degeneration proceeds. Sale was not old, nor was he physically a coward, yet he was beginning to verge on the imbecility of Elphinstone. At this moment of doubt and despondency a letter came from Shah Shuja, calling upon the British to evacuate Jellalabad, and among other cogent reasons he alleged that the refusal to do so would imperil the lives of all the English prisoners,

including the women and children, in the hands of Akbar Khan. Sir Robert Sale and the majority of the council were for surrender. The warning of Kabul passed unheeded; the tale of Dr. Brydon fell on deaf ears. But fortunately for the honour of his country, and for the safety of the garrison, there was Broadfoot. He showed not less skill in influencing the minds of his colleagues by argument and debate than in improving the defences of the town. He succeeded in inducing the council to defer surrender till they received some security for their march. When the Afghans would not give any the hollowness of their promises was exposed, and Broadfoot no longer found himself unsupported in the Council. Precious time was thus gained, and in a short space came the cheering news that troops were collecting at Peshawar for a forward movement to their aid. Then Sale and the others returned to their proper selves, and all were in agreement that Jellalabad should be held to the last man.

At the same time aid was at a distance and danger at the door. Akbar Khan was approaching at the head of all the clans who had shared in the massacre and plunder of a British army, and he promised them as much more from the spoil at Jellalabad. But Broadfoot had never relaxed in his efforts to strengthen that place, and even when an earthquake demolished much of his work he succeeded in restoring it to its original condition within a fortnight. Much as he relied on ramparts and trenches for defence, it was not to them that he looked for victory. On 11th March the Afghans came closer and manifested an inclination to attack. Did he wait? No, he sallied forth and dispersed them in the old style before trench warfare was invented to dull the intelligence of generals and to break the dash of troops. Thereupon Akbar sat down before the place, hoping to starve out the garrison. A month passed away, and then the news came that the relieving force had entered the Khyber. Sale, with all his confidence restored, felt that the time had come to strike a signal blow. He marched out with his attenuated brigade, and put to the rout Akbar Khan's picked force 6,000 strong. Thus the

garrison of Jellalabad, which had been twice on the eve of surrender through the momentary pusillanimity of its general, accomplished its own deliverance, and had the honour of inflicting a signal defeat on the main Afghan army, which had been allowed by the craven spirit of Elphinstone and Shelton to overwhelm the whole of the Kabul Division, which was four times the strength of the brigade that held Jellalabad! The new Governor-General, Lord Ellenborough, a master of rhetoric, never used a happier phrase than when he styled it "The Illustrious Garrison."

There had been another bright spot amid the prevailing gloom of discredit and disaster. Kandahar had been held inviolate, and all the clans of south and west Afghanistan kept at bay by General William Nott, and his political colleague, Major Henry Rawlinson. Both thoroughly distrusted the Afghans, and placed no faith in their promises even when supported by oaths. Nott, proud of and confident in "his beautiful sepoy regiments," never doubted that they would be a match for any number of Afghans. From the very beginning of the troubles Nott never allowed any body of Afghans to come near the city without marching out to attack and disperse them. Thus the confidence of the garrison was sustained, and that of the enemy never allowed to rise.

When Elphinstone under his convention with Akbar Khan sent orders to Sale to give up Jellalabad, he despatched a similar command to Nott to evacuate Kandahar. Nott's reply was brief. He would negotiate with no one on such a subject except by the express orders of the Government of India. As communications between Kandahar and India were then broken this meant that Kandahar would not be given up. But wars are won and fortresses held by other means than actual fighting. Armies must be fed, and the resources of a poor country, such as Afghanistan is, are limited. Kandahar had to be provisioned.

It was necessary to take steps to that end in good time. Some of Shah Shuja's so-called army had been left at Kandahar. A regiment mutinied, it was disarmed and dealt with, and all the others were treated similarly. No dubious

friends could be left within the gates. A careful computation was made of the available supplies. It was found that they were insufficient to meet the needs of the townspeople and the garrison. The former, to the number of 1,000 families, were expelled. These precautions completed, General Nott, on learning that a considerable body of Afghans were concentrating at a certain place, decided to make an attempt to surprise them, leaving Major Rawlinson with a small force to defend the city. It appeared that the rumoured concentration was a ruse to draw a large part of the force outside, and thus enable the Afghans to carry the city by a sudden assault.

Fortunately Major Rawlinson was on his guard, and observing bodies of men assembling in the old city he took all the precautions he could and sent off express messengers to recall General Nott. The Herat Gate was not blocked up, and consequently Rawlinson constructed an inner defence there as well as time would allow, and placed two of his guns charged with grape in position. He had rightly divined that this would be the point of the principal attack, which was delivered during the night of 10th-11th March. The Herat Gate was carried, and the Ghazis rushed in, expecting to storm the city, but Rawlinson's surprise answered its purpose. The assailants were overwhelmed by an incessant stream of grape shot. Six hundred of their best fighting men fell in the breach, and the rest hurriedly dispersed. With this episode the defence of Kandahar may be said to have closed in triumph, for the Afghans never dared to resume their attack.

In the meantime a change in the directing power had taken place in India by Lord Auckland's resignation, and the arrival of Lord Ellenborough as his successor in February, 1842. At first it was supposed that the new Governor-General intended to confine his action to bringing back the garrisons of Jellalabad and Kandahar, and the ostensible object of General Pollock's march through the Punjab was to relieve the former. But a brief consideration of facts, of which Lord Ellenborough had no cognizance until he reached Madras on his way to Calcutta, convinced him that

more was required to redeem the past and re-establish the prestige of the Indian Government. But at the same time he showed no unnatural caution in leaving as much as possible of the responsibility to the commanders in the field. He was new to the situation, and he found himself in the environment of persons who had committed or sanctioned one blunder after another. But there was one class of offenders with whom he had no hesitation in dealing summarily. The Afghan war was the handiwork of the officials styled Politicals, who had come to the front in the time of Lord Hastings He suppressed them by a stroke of the pen.

The first modification of his views was to allow General Pollock to continue his march beyond Jellalabad and to advance as far as Kabul. This allowed of an effort being made to rescue the prisoners whose lives it was hoped Akbar Khan had spared. It would also impress the Kabulis with the fact that their success was ephemeral and that retribution would always be exacted from them. But at first this order did not apply to the force at Kandahar, which had been reinforced by a brigade from Bombay, and it was supposed that it would have to retire to India through the Bolan Pass. But until the advance towards Kabul had been finally arranged it had to stand fast In July Lord Ellenborough sent General Nott fresh and final instructions. They contained this passage—

" Nothing has occurred to change my first opinion that the measure commanded by considerations of policy and military prudence is to bring back the armies now in Afghanistan at the earliest period at which their retirement can be effected consistently with the health and efficiency of the troops," but General Nott was authorized, if he thought fit, to retire by way of Kabul. The practical meaning of this arrangement was that the two English generals had leave to converge from their different starting-points on Kabul and to join hands in the Afghan capital. General Nott, having sent the sick, wounded, and surplus stores to India by the Bolan, started on his long march northwards. He defeated Afghan forces in two serious encounters,

recaptured Ghuzni, which had surrendered during the winter, and arrived at Kabul on 17th September, finding General Pollock already in possession. General Nott brought from Ghuzni the supposed gates of the great Hindu Temple at Somnath, in Gujerat, which Mahmud of Ghuzni had carried off in the eleventh century.

A few lines will suffice to describe General Pollock's march. His first and most difficult task was to restore the courage and confidence of the sepoys who dreaded an advance into Afghanistan, where so many of their comrades had fallen. Having accomplished this necessary preliminary, and being joined by the artillery and cavalry assigned for the expedition, he at once entered the Khyber Pass, the terrors of which were especially appalling to Indian soldiers in those days. The pass was strongly held by the Afridi clan, and had been fortified at different points, including the naturally strong fort of Ali Musjid. Pollock was too prudent to risk a frontal attack, and it was by clever outflanking that he drove them out of their positions in succession. By occupying the heights he commanded the track through the passes. On 5th April Pollock reached Jellalabad, where a prolonged halt was made pending the Governor-General's final decision. On the same date Kabul had witnessed another in its long list of tragedies.

After the retreat of the English, Shah Shuja, the cause of the war, had been left undisturbed during these months in the Bala Hissar, which he rarely quitted. At last he was induced to accept an invitation from one of the local chiefs, and when he reached the city wall on his way to his abode some one shot him. Probably it was so arranged. With his death the famous Durani monarchy came to an end, and the Sudozai family passed out of history. According to his admirers, he was born under an unlucky star, which in their reasoning explained all his misfortunes.

On 23rd August General Pollock renewed his advance towards Kabul, dispersing the tribes as he advanced. But Akbar Khan felt bound for honour's sake to make a final stand. He collected all the men he could and offered battle on 13th September at Tezeen. The challenge was accepted.

A well-contested action followed, but the British victory was decisive. Akbar Khan fled beyond the Hindu Kush. In one respect he had behaved like an honourable foe. His prisoners had been treated as well as circumstances admitted, and they were released to join General Pollock on his reaching Kabul. Among them was not General Elphinstone, who had died of natural causes. Before the troops evacuated Kabul, the Grand Bazaar was demolished as an act of retaliation for the murders of Burnes, Macnaghten, and other officers.

The return of the army to India was effected without any noteworthy incident, and it was followed by a Proclamation enunciating the new policy that the Government of India intended to observe towards Afghanistan.

"To force a Sovereign upon a reluctant people would be as inconsistent with the policy as it is with the principles of the British Government, tending to place the arms and resources of that people at the disposal of the first invader, and to impose the burden of supporting a sovereign without the prospect of benefit from his alliance. The Governor-General will willingly recognize any Government approved by the Afghans themselves which shall appear desirous and capable of maintaining friendly relations with neighbouring states."

One final scene remained. Dost Mahomed, the Barukzai Amir, was released. His authority was recognized by his people, and gradually he extended it over the whole of the kingdom until a united Afghanistan was revived. The Barukzai dynasty is still seated on the throne of Kabul.

CHAPTER XIII

THE FIRST SIKH WAR

LORD ELLENBOROUGH, like Lord William Bentinck, went out to India on a peace mission, but unlike his predecessor he arrived there, not while peace prevailed, but during a costly and troublesome state of war. His instructions were to get the troops out of Afghanistan and back to India as quickly as possible, but at the moment they were given, none of the concluding disasters had occurred. We have seen how Lord Ellenborough, not precipitately, but deliberately, departed from them to provide a better and more dignified conclusion to the Afghan adventure. His plan was to restore Peace to Asia, and at that moment there was serious trouble with the Chinese Government as well as at Kabul.

A brief sketch of his career prior to his arrival in India seems called for, and this is the more opportune because it will reveal how and why he had an intimate acquaintance with Indian questions before he was entrusted with the highest office in the State. From an early age he had followed a Parliamentary career, and through his brother-in-law, Viscount Castlereagh, the famous Foreign Secretary and Ambassador at the Vienna Congress, he had been initiated into the secrets and modes of the old statecraft. He was also the trusted friend of the great Duke of Wellington who found in him a neophyte after his own heart. Perhaps that influence explained his leaning to soldiers, and he never concealed his regret that his early desire to follow a military career had been thwarted. But as a speaker he attained a high place in the House of Commons, and after his elevation to the House of Lords on his father's death he was regarded, during forty years, as one of the most brilliant orators in a period when oratory had reached its zenith.

After holding several minor posts Lord Ellenborough

was appointed President of the Board of Control in the year 1828, and during the Charter Debates of 1832–3, he never concealed his opinion in favour of the immediate transfer of India to the Crown. But as President he is better remembered for a passage in a private letter to Sir John Malcolm, then Governor of Bombay, which was published in a public despatch by the indiscretion of a clerk. The matter in discussion was the strengthening of the Bombay High Court by the addition of two Puisne Judges to act with the Lord Chief Justice, who was strongly opposed to the measure. Lord Ellenborough compared the Chief after this measure passing to "a wild elephant betwen two tame ones." It was considered that this language in the mouth of a responsible Minister referring to a high legal functionary was somewhat indecorous, but brilliant orators often allow their facility of language to carry them away.

Shortly after this incident, although it does not appear to have been due to it, Lord Ellenborough quitted the Board of Control in 1830, only, however, to return to it for a second time in December, 1834. On this occasion, owing to changes of Government, he only held the office till April, 1835. He was appointed President for the third time in September, 1841, but in the following month the Court of the East India Company elected him by a unanimous vote to the high office of Governor-General of India as Lord Auckland's successor. Lord Ellenborough's qualifications for the post were that, as President of the Board of Control, he had been more or less behind the scenes for a period of thirteen years in regard to Indian affairs, and that he had shown himself in favour of all the measures taken during that period to speed up the progress of India in moral and national enlightenment.

It was his misfortune and not his fault that his first acts after his arrival in India gave umbrage in many quarters. His abolition of the class of Politicals, who flattered themselves that they were the salt of the Civil Service, displeased the whole body, who saw in it a contraction of their privileges and opportunities. The marked favour he exhibited towards military officers in employing them in posts which

had always been reserved for civilians intensified this feeling. But his colleagues on the Council more deeply resented the secrecy with which he guarded his own policy and intentions from them especially during the summer of 1842, when the final decision about Afghanistan had to be taken. He did not let them into his secrets, nor did he even show them the despatches he wrote to Generals Pollock and Nott during that period. He justified this procedure by alleging that if he had, his intentions would have been at once divulged to the Press with which they were generally believed to be in close communication. The explanation was a further exasperation, and at the same time it irritated the Press. He gave the newspapers more direct cause of irritation by his Circular of 26th May, 1842, making it a punishable offence to divulge or publish official secrets. After this it was quite certain that Lord Ellenborough would receive no more editorial compliments. Lord Ellenborough carried his head too high for his associates, and of all the British rulers of India he was the one who moved and acted most in splendid isolation.

Among the questions in which Lord Ellenborough had revealed great interest before he could have thought that the day would arrive for him to give effect in India to his own wishes, was the opening of the river Indus to commerce. He had urged Lord William Bentinck to take up this matter with the result that a Treaty was concluded with the Amirs of Sind. The incidents that occurred with them during the Afghan campaigns have been recited, and in the opinion of the Resident, Sir Henry Pottinger, harsh treatment was meted out by his Government to these rulers who at the beginning of the century had succeeded in throwing off the yoke of the Durani kings. But it must be allowed that they had little taste for trade, and no appreciation of the convenience of the great river that traversed their territory as an avenue of commerce. For these reasons they neglected to fulfil the conditions of the engagements of 1832 and 1834, and they turned sullen under the pressure employed to compel them to do so.

After the withdrawal of the army from Afghanistan of

which only a small portion, and that of no formidable appearance, returned through Sind, they deemed it safe to treat the promises relating to the Indus as non-operative, and when the Indian Government sent ships up the Indus they met with interference and obstruction. The matter might have been arranged by further negotiation, but some of the Amirs inexcusably attacked the British Residency in the capital city of Hyderabad (Sind). The Resident of that time was James Outram, and his defence of the Residency against a sudden and furious attack was regarded with universal admiration. Sir Charles Napier, the Commander-in-Chief during the ensuing campaign, described this feat as " the extraordinary defence of the fearless and distinguished Outram."

The attack on the Residency removed the question out of the realm of discussion into that of arms. Sir Charles Napier was despatched from Bombay with all the troops that could be hastily collected to bring the Amirs to reason, His total force was under 3,000 strong, and the Sindhis had got together a formidable force of not less than 30,000 men. These included many Baluchis from the right bank of the river, admirable fighting men, but ill-armed. They determined to stand on the defensive and took up a strong position at Miani protected in front by a ravine, and no each flank by a dense wood through which cavalry could not pass. Notwithstanding these natural advantages which were increased by entrenchments in which fifteen guns were placed to enfilade the assailants, Sir Charles Napier, by the sustained fire of his artillery during two hours, and the skilfully directed advance of his infantry under cover of the guns succeeded in driving the Sindhis out of their position, leaving all their guns and stores behind them. The war ended with this signal victory. The Amirs as representing a single State disappeared from history, but as individuals many of them retained their possessions. Sir Charles Napier, in notifying the successful close of the campaign to Lord Ellenborough, is said to have used the single word " Peccavi " (" I have sinned " (Sind)), but some doubt has been cast on the origin of the phrase by its

having appeared in *Punch*. But in another letter to the Governor-General, Napier, in describing the vicissitudes of the battle, stated that "the want of European officers in the native regiments at one point endangered the success of the action"—an admission in its way of the severity of the encounter.

With regard to the war in Sind it was possible to represent it as the inevitable sequel of the Afghan expedition once it became clear that the Indus would not be opened to navigation except by force. But after Lord Ellenborough had taken measures to place fifty-six steamers and other vessels of suitable draught on the Indus, he gave expression in his despatches home to his confident belief that an era of peace had at last dawned.

This expectation was falsified from internal and not external causes. After the pacification of Central India in the time of Lord Hastings, the policy of non-interference in the internal affairs of the independent States was rigidly enforced. They were treated as Foreign States, and their relations with the British Government were deemed to be those defined in their respective treaties. Among the rights which they were supposed to have retained in undiminished force was that of adoption, failing a legitimate male heir. It was conceived at that period that the British Government had no other option than to recognize the heir adopted by the family whoever he might be. Such was the course followed and observed by long prescription under the religion of the Hindus, and if the practice had never failed to give good results probably no change would have been attempted.

But at this period the results had been unfortunate in several States, and in none more so than in Holkar's State of Indore. A boy was adopted in proper form in Lord William Bentinck's time by the ladies of that family, and then formally recognized as Ruler by the British Government. Despite that recognition the British Government acquiesced in his being deposed by force by another member of the Holkar family and driven into exile. This not merely introduced a period of trouble in the affairs of that

important State, but it shook faith in the inviolability of a British pledge. The success of this pretender, who could have been promptly suppressed by the intervention of a few hundred cavalry, was a rude blow to the assumed infallibility of the right of adoption. After ten years, marked by more or less confusion, had passed, it became necessary to find a fresh heir to the Gadi. Lord Ellenborough intervened on this occasion with the view of superseding the old right of adoption by a new practice of British nomination. This, it cannot be denied, was a high-handed proceeding, for the proposal to regard the State of Indore as an escheat when many members of the Holkar family were available for the succession, exceeded the limits of moderation. The conclusion, so far as Indore was concerned, was a compromise between adoption and nomination.

Lord Ellenborough did not limit his claim to intervention in the internal affairs of Treaty-bound States to cases of dubious succession. He formulated a new departure of permanent and far-reaching importance in his minute of 1st November, 1843, asserting for the British Government the right to interfere in the internal affairs of autonomous States, on occasions of which it was to be the sole judge. The important passage in the text ran as follows: "The British Government, as the guardian of the Peace of India, is concerned in the internal order even of Independent States and may justifiably interfere in the interests of the general peace to repress misgovernment and disorder." This minute introduced an entirely new line of policy and asserted an authority over the self-ruling States that was never expressed or contemplated in the binding treaties between them. The practice thus introduced on the personal authority of a Governor-General, and without any orders to that effect from the Company, has passed into the force of an unwritten law, after having had an unopposed currency of more than eighty years.

A practical case soon presented itself for the application of this principle in the important State of Gwalior, the principality of the House of Sindhia. After the peace of

1805 the relations between this State and the British Government had been perfectly satisfactory. The prince, Dowlut Rao Sindhia, who signed that treaty, continued to reign down to the year 1827, and in his time every difficulty was smoothed over and cordiality prevailed. He left no direct heir nor had he adopted a son; therefore his widow, Baiza Bai, adopted one of his nearest kinsmen, who mounted the Gadi under the style of Jankoji Rao Sindhia. His maternal uncle, known as the Mama Sahib, acted as Regent, and under his administration things went on in a fairly satisfactory manner. Jankoji was morally and physically a weakling, and when he died in February, 1843, he left no heir, and had made no adoption. His widow, Tara Bai, thereupon adopted a distant cousin of her husband's, named Babajee Sindhia, who succeeded to the Gadi under the style of Jayaji Rao Sindhia. The Mama Sahib on account of his experience was again appointed Regent, but as Tara Bai had fallen under the malign influence of an adventurer known as Dada Khasgi-wala he soon found it impossible to remain in office, and retired. Thereafter things became very confused, and as the money was never forthcoming for the payment of the contingent kept up under the Treaty for the pacification of Malwa, the British Resident, Colonel Sleeman, after many remonstrances and warnings, left Gwalior and returned to British territory.

An intimation was then sent to Gwalior that as the state of the country was one of disorder through the incompetence of Dada Khasgi-wala, he must be dismissed from his post, and for security surrendered to the English. This was the first application of the principle embodied in Lord Ellenborough's minute. The prevailing state of disorder was held to be a sufficient justification for intervention, although the general peace was not disturbed outside the Gwalior State. However great the mistakes of the Dada may have been, no one ever suggested that he intended to challenge the supremacy of the English, or to oppose them by force of arms. The intervention in the name of "the general peace" was destined on its first application to cause an unsought for war with a State that

had kept the peace for forty years, and in the course of that period had exhibited a general and constant friendliness. It is perhaps as well that there were no Leagues of Nations or Hague Courts in those days to fix the balance betwen right and wrong.

The Gwalior Durbar failing to kiss the rod with the desired promptitude, it was decided to make a military demonstration, and the Commander-in-Chief, Sir Hugh Gough, moved to the frontier with a considerable force, and he was accompanied by Lord Ellenborough in person. It was confidently expected that this imposing demonstration would bring the Gwalior Durbar speedily to its knees, but it had rather the opposite effect, as the Gwalior regiments of the contingent from their European training believed that they might prove a match for the British. It was defiance and not surrender that their attitude revealed, whereupon Sir Hugh Gough crossed the Chumbal river and marched on Gwalior. Even then there was no sign of giving way, and on 29th December the two forces clashed at Maharajpur and Punniar, two separate actions fought on the same day. The result, as might have been expected, was the complete overthrow of the Maratha army—the last to take the field—and the conclusion of a new treaty by which Gwalior surrendered territory sufficient to provide for the regular payment of the contingent, and with it the removal of this troublesome cause of dispute from the field of controversy.

Although Lord Ellenborough had been only two years in India he was by this time entirely out of favour with the Court. His independence in action, consulting his superiors in London as little as he did his colleagues in India, had given much umbrage, and as complaints were received from almost everyone with whom he was associated in the public service, that he took no man's counsel and followed his own bent, the Court at last decided to recall him, a very severe and quite undeserved method of expressing its displeasure. There was much in Lord Ellenborough's administration to deserve commendation, but he had no supporters in the Press. At least he is entitled to the credit of having opposed further adventures beyond the frontier.

The Company made a strange selection for his successor. At the moment that it was insisting on the wisdom and essential need of peace it appointed a soldier with no administrative experience outside his profession to discharge the difficult duties of Governor-General of India. Sir Henry Hardinge was a chivalrous soldier, and he possessed the favour and confidence of the Duke of Wellington whom he was destined to succeed in 1852 as Commander-in-Chief of the British Army. In 1842 he had been invited to go out to India as Commander-in-Chief to direct the operations in Afghanistan, but private reasons had then prevented his acceptance. In 1844 he was able to accept the offer of the higher post which was pressed upon him.

At a banquet given in his honour before departure the Chairman of the Court of Directors expressed their views of the situation in India in the following words—

" By our latest intelligence we are induced to hope that peace will be preserved in India. I need not say that it is our anxious wish that it should be so. You, sir, know how great are the evils of war, and we feel confident that while ever ready to maintain unimpaired the honour of the country and the supremacy of our arms, your policy will be essentially pacific. It has always been the desire of the Court that the Government of the East India Company should be eminently just, moderate and conciliatory; but the supremacy of our power must be maintained when necessary by the force of our arms."

The last passage explained Sir Henry Hardinge's appointment, for clouds were gathering on the North-west frontier much nearer the seat of power than Kabul and Kandahar. The first six months of his tenure of office were devoted to peaceful measures, such as the increase in the facilities for education with the promise of assured employment for successful students in the public service. The effect of this resolution was to popularize English education, and then for the first time the Bengalis threw themselves with ardour into the new quest for knowledge under English teaching and example. Sir Henry Hardinge was not less appreciative than Lord William Bentinck of the possible

to deal with a civilian Governor-General he might have acted in his own fashion and had a ruder experience than befell him some years later at Chillianwala. But fortunately he was restrained by Sir Henry Hardinge, and the attack postponed till the fresh forces arrived to support the much tried troops who had fought at Mudki.

The fiercely contested and almost desperate battle of Ferozeshah was fought on 21st-22nd December. It presented many varying features, and some of the incidents of the encounter were not very creditable to either the steadiness of the Sepoys or the intelligence of their leaders. If the latter made mistakes it was fortunate that the Sikhs made greater and showed an inability to assume the offensive, but it was noted with some surprise that their artillery far overmatched that of the British army. On the second day the Sikhs retreated leaving their fortified camp in the hands of the victor. None the less this success, bought at heavy loss, did not create a feeling of confidence in the final issue of the war, and during the next two months preparations were made on both sides to bring up all available forces to decide the contest.

In February, 1846, the main Sikh army, 50,000 strong, with eighty or ninety guns, took up its stand in a fortified camp at Sobraon to defend the crossing of the Sutlej. On 6th February the campaign opened with an encounter, with a subsidiary Sikh army at Aliwal, where Sir Harry Smith defeated it and captured fifty-two guns. Those of the Sikhs who escaped from this battle retired to Sobraon to join the others, and then Sir Harry Smith also joined the main British force that was assembled before that place. The battle of Sobraon, fought on 10th February, was one of the most remarkable battles recorded in Anglo-Indian history. Again the Sikh artillery revealed its superiority, and it was subsequently declared that in calibre and range it was better than that of any European army of that period. It is unnecessary here to give the details of the tremendous struggle that ensued. The Sikhs displayed splendid courage and tenacity, but the Sepoys, having regained their confidence, were in no respect behind

them. The Sikh army suffered heavily and lost all its guns. Driven across the Sutlej their invasion of British territory, begun two months earlier, was brought to an end. So also was the war. It only remained to dictate the terms of peace.

Sir Henry Hardinge reached the neighbourhood of Lahore on 18th February, when Gulab Sing, the acting Minister, accompanied by the young Maharaja paid him a visit in his camp. It was then announced that the Punjab would not be annexed and that the Maharaja's rule would continue to be recognized. In proof of this the Maharaja was escorted by British cavalry to his Palace in the city. The Treaty of Lahore was signed on 9th March, and its principal conditions were the following. The Sikhs surrendered a strip of territory between the Beas and the Sutlej, and they had to pay an indemnity of one and a half millions sterling towards the cost of the war they had provoked. They were not to maintain a larger army than twenty-five battalions of infantry and 12,000 cavalry. Finally, Gulab Sing was to be allowed to found an independent State between the Indus and the Ravi which included the beautiful province of Cashmere. For this he paid a sum of three-quarters of a million, which went further towards meeting the heavy cost of the war. The Punjab was not annexed, but the first step had been taken in the disruption of the dominion which Runjit Sing had so laboriously created in his time.

In December, 1846, the conditions of the first Treaty were modified by the conclusion of a second Treaty, also signed at Lahore. A small British garrison had been left by the former at the wish of the Sikhs in Lahore, but no interference was to be made in the administration, and the troops were not to remain beyond the current year. But plots continued to be carried on, and a recrudescence of trouble was threatened. It was, therefore, agreed that the British force was to be increased and to occupy such towns and forts as might be deemed necessary during the minority of the young ruler. The civil administration was to be carried on by a Regency composed of eight of the principal

Sirdars, assisted by the British Resident who was to act as President. It was assumed that the presence of the troops would prevent internal strife, and give moral force to the decisions of the Regency.

For the Sikh war Sir Henry Hardinge was created a Peer, with the rank of a Viscount, and a similar honour was conferred on his impetuous colleague, Sir Hugh Gough. His tenure of the office of Governor-General was not long prolonged after the Treaty of Lahore, and in the autumn of 1847 it became known that he would return home as soon as his successor, the Earl of Dalhousie, should arrive. In January, 1848, the new Governor-General reached Calcutta, and it is said that Lord Hardinge gave him the parting assurance that "it would not be necessary to fire a gun in India for seven years to come!" thus affording another instance of the danger of political prophecy.

CHAPTER XIV

THE ANNEXATION OF THE PUNJAB

THE new Governor-General, James Ramsay, tenth Earl of Dalhousie, was in his thirty-sixth year when he arrived at Calcutta to assume the duties of Governor-General. He was the youngest on the list since Clive; and his family connection with India was confined to the fact that his father had commanded the forces there for a brief period. But in Parliament and the Ministry he had made a great reputation as a debater and hard worker in such offices as were assigned to him. Already it was predicted that he was destined to become, one day, Prime Minister. He belonged to the Conservative Party, led in those days by Sir Robert Peel, but it was the Whig Premier, Lord John Russell, who offered him the post of Governor-General in succession to Lord Hardinge. The compliment paid to his merit was the more remarkable in those days when Party divisions were acute, and desirable posts were strictly reserved for those within the separate fold. The Dalhousie family were not well endowed with this world's goods, and the Governor-Generalship of India offered a splendid and unexpected prize to this young statesman. His friends were confident of his success, but none would have ventured to predict the remarkable character of his long rule in India.

When Lord Hardinge left India, the eight years' period of British control over the Sikh administration in the Punjab had run its course for twelve months. The British Resident, Sir Henry Lawrence, was autocratic, and gave his orders like Imperial Caesar, but the visible force under his command was slender, and the Sikhs were skilful in reckoning up odds. Their numbers had been reduced, so also their artillery; but their system remained unimpaired. The Sirdars held their lands by military tenure, the organization on which their power reposed continued, and the brotherhood remained intact. It was true that the enemy was installed

in their midst, but on closer inspection he did not appear so very formidable, especially in numbers. Moreover, it was strongly suspected that the power of the East India Company was on the wane, and ignorance prevailed as to the inexhaustible resources of England which lay behind it.

The task of controlling the Sikh Chiefs entrusted with the Regency, and of putting an end to the incessant plotting of the Rani, who was styled the Messalina of the Punjab, proved altogether beyond the powers and influence of the British Resident. Sir Henry Lawrence flattered himself that he was succeeding when every one else on the spot knew that he had failed to accomplish the only object that justified his presence. The Province seethed with discontent and enmity, intrigues were in active progress with the Afghans for their aid, and the Sikh Sirdars scarcely affected to conceal their desire for a fresh appeal to arms. Yet all the while the orders of the British Resident were couched in imperious language exacting implicit obedience without demur. It is possible that a more careful handling of the Sikh Regents, proud and impetuous men, and more carefully considered language in the requests and edicts of the English controller, might have put off a second collision for some years, and perhaps even for the limited period fixed by the second Treaty of Lahore for British supervision. But whatever the faults of the British representative in chief may have been, and they were rather in form than in substance, after events made it clear that the peace was hollow, and that a second war with the Sikhs, however long put off, could not be avoided.

The crisis was precipitated by what seemed to be a trivial occurrence. The Governor of Mooltan, a fort on the south-west frontier of the Province, a Sikh named Moolraj, had come under Sir Henry Lawrence's suspicion for peculation. It appeared that he was a great trader as well as a Governor, and his accounts had seemed to the Resident to be somewhat confused, and intentionally mixed up with those of his business. He was called upon to give an explanation, but instead of complying he sent in his resignation, which was accepted. Thereupon two English



From the painting in *The National Portrait Gallery*

officials, Mr. Vans Agnew and Lieutenant Anderson were sent with a small escort to take over the strong fort of Mooltan pending the appointment of a new Sikh Governor. On their arrival Moolraj expressed his readiness to comply with the order, and admitted them to the fort. As the number of men with them did not admit of their holding it they regarded the surrender as a form, and returned to their camp outside the place. It will never be known whether the events that followed were purely accidental or part of a plot. But it was quite clear that the supersession of Moolraj was an affront to himself and his supporters, and that it was committed by a mere handful of men.

On their way to the camp the two Englishmen were attacked and wounded. Their escort succeeded in bringing them to the shelter of a mosque, and Vans Agnew at once sent off messengers to Bannu and Lahore describing their position, and requesting immediate help. The following day, 18th April, 1848, the guns of the fort commenced firing on the mosque, and quickly destroyed it. When the mob, led by the Sikhs, broke in, they found Vans Agnew sitting on the bed of his more seriously wounded comrade. Both were murdered in cold blood, Vans Agnew using with his dying breath the words, "We are not the last of the English."

For the moment the significance of the Mooltan incident was not realized. A disposition was shown to regard it as merely a local affair, but events moved very rapidly, and then the full extent of the trouble was quickly revealed. When Lord Gough in his camp at Ferozepore received the call for aid he declined to move. He was 200 miles distant from Mooltan, and he had other imperative duties nearer at hand. His refusal to march is generally considered justified, and so it was held to be by Lord Dalhousie. The appeal to Bannu was opened half-way on its journey at Dera Ghazi Khan by Herbert Edwardes, who collecting all the forces he could locally, some 400 men altogether, hastened off at once to Mooltan. But before he could reach that place he heard that the officers, and the loyal part of their escort had been wiped out. Hard upon this intelligence

came Moolraj in person at the head of an army, hoping to overwhelm the relieving column, and thus to complete his triumph. But in Herbert Edwardes he had to deal with an astute and able commander, who held him at bay by skilful manoeuvring, comparing himself to " a terrier barking at a tiger." The news of his stout resistance induced several of the Moslem Chiefs of the neighbourhood, and notably the Nawab of Bahawalpur, who bore the Sikhs no love, to come to his assistance, and with their aid Edwardes had the satisfaction of defeating Moolraj in two encounters in the open, driving him into Mooltan, and there beleaguering him. Without siege guns, however, the place could not be captured. The summer was drawing to a close before they arrived. The usually impetuous Lord Gough had held back in the opinion that Moolraj was of no importance, and that Mooltan would fall of its own accord, notwithstanding that Edwardes never ceased to demand succour before events made it too late.

But everyone had underrated the strength of Mooltan. It was only when Major Napier, subsequently Lord Napier of Magdala, viewed it, that realizing its formidable character he declared that it could only be captured after a siege in regular form. At that moment the Sikh subsidiary force under Sher Sing, which had been sent from Lahore to assist Edwardes went over to Moolraj, and instead of a siege of Mooltan the British forces were themselves besieged in their own camp. In due time they were released from their awkward position by an army sent up from Bombay, but the centre of the drama had shifted by then from Mooltan to Lahore.

Lord Dalhousie had become restive at the dilatory proceedings of the Commander-in-Chief, and rapidly diagnosing the situation as foreboding a general Punjab war he hastened in person to the Sutlej, declaring that " if our enemies want war, war they shall have, and with a vengeance." By this time the whole of the Punjab was in open rebellion, and the Khalsa army reappeared in full strength. Lord Gough and others with him were convinced that it could not have become very formidable in such a brief period since the

campaign of 1845–6, and anticipated a speedy and easy success. Once more over-confidence was to provide a costly and perilous experience.

Lord Gough, with 20,000 men and 100 guns under him, advanced with precipitation to find the enemy. His cavalry fell into a trap at Ramnagar, and suffered severely. A few days later, on 3rd December, his infantry fought a very doubtful battle at Sadullapur. These rude experiences showed that the Sikhs were not to be despised, but the faults that caused them were not repaired. There was no attempt at reconnoitring, the Sikhs when found were to be attacked in disregard of numbers, position, and even of the condition of the troops, upon whom the burden of the attack might fall. A general plan of campaign had not been thought out. All was left to chance, and as it turned out, chance was on the side of the Sikhs.

Under these circumstances it was held that a single great battle would restore the confidence of the troops, and establish British predominance. It was fought at Chillianwala on 13th January, 1849. This village lies to the north-west of Lahore, on the Grand Trunk road. The Sikhs were strongly entrenched with sixty guns in position. The Anglo-Indian army arrived before it late in the afternoon. Lord Gough decided that there was still enough light left to win a battle without waiting for the morning, as prudence dictated. The consequence was that the battle was commenced without the preliminary bombardment of an entrenched position, which his lieutenant, Colin Campbell, declared to be necessary. Apart from that error of judgment, which was, however, irremediable, the attack was well conceived and boldly delivered. The division, led by Colin Campbell, attained complete success, reaching the centre of the Sikh position and capturing thirteen guns, but the second division under Pennycuik, met with a repulse, which was not less unqualified. The honours of the fight, as a stern human encounter, were thus divided, and the fall of night precluded the renewal of the struggle.

The British loss, especially in officers, was very heavy, one regiment was practically wiped out, and there was

nothing in the story to relieve its dismal character. When the news reached England it caused a panic. The Duke of Wellington, despite his eighty years, expressed his willingness to go to India to save the situation, and Sir Charles Napier was despatched as his substitute to replace Lord Gough, whose methods of battle-fighting seemed to belong to the days before gunpowder was invented.

Lord Dalhousie saw at once that the most strenuous efforts were necessary to remove the impression of this drawn battle, and more especially because it soon became known that the Afghans were hurrying up to join the Sikhs under the terms of a secret treaty. The situation was somewhat relieved by the fall of Mooltan and the surrender of Moolraj about a week after the battle. This freed an army of 17,000 men, with a strong corps of artillery, and it at once hastened northwards to reinforce Lord Gough, who thus commanded a more numerous army than at the beginning of the contest. Impressed at last by his misfortunes he was willing to listen more graciously to the representations of those under him, and when he reached the second position of the Sikhs at Gujerat he consented to the long preliminary bombardment recommended by Colin Campbell. The new position of the Sikhs was stronger than the first, but the heavy guns and mortars brought from Mooltan enabled the British for the first time to overwhelm the Sikh artillery.

The battle of Gujerat was fought on 20th February, 1849. The Sikhs had been decimated and disheartened by the artillery fire, and although they continued to resist bravely they were no match for the British infantry, which carried every line in their defences with the bayonet. Then the cavalry, which had been held in reserve, pursued the fleeing troops for miles over the plain. A body of Afghan horse, under the command of Afzul Khan, father of the future Ameer Abdul Rahman, fled from the field as soon as the tide of victory turned against the Sikhs. Lord Dalhousie was by this on the spot, and announced that " the war must be prosecuted now to the entire defeat and dispersion of all who are in arms against us, whether Sikhs or Afghans."

To that end he despatched on the day following the battle a lightly equipped force of 12,000 men, mainly composed of cavalry and horse artillery, to follow the enemy in hot pursuit, and he entrusted its command to Sir Walter Raleigh Gilbert, the most dashing cavalry leader in the Army.

The pursuit was one of the most rapid marches on record, and it only ceased at the mouth of the Khyber, where the survivors of Afzul's force only escaped from their pursuers by a narrow margin of time. It was said of the Afghans by the people of the Peshawar valley that they " came down from the pass like lions and ran back into it like dogs." On the way Gilbert received the formal surrender of the relics of the Sikh army at Rawalpindi, the men laying down their arms alongside the road as he passed onwards. On the following day Colin Campbell arrived at the same place with a supporting force, and he described the scene as follows—

" On the road to Rawalpindi we passed the greater portion of the Sikh army with its chiefs, who had laid down their arms the day before. They were without food, and also without ammunition. The high priest or Guru, who took the chair on the right of General Gilbert after laying down his arms, said to him in a loud and firm voice, ' The injustice of the English drove me to take up arms, they confiscated my property in the Jullunder Doab amounting to five lakhs annually. Poverty, starvation, and want of ammunition have obliged me to surrender. These wants have brought me here. But for these wants we should have again tried the fortune of war. I do not regret what I have done, and I would do the same to-morrow if it were in my power.' "

It was not an inappropriate dirge for the disappearance of the great Khalsa army from the scene. Another spectator of the occurrence completed the description : " Each man as he laid down his arms received a rupee to enable him to return to his home. The greater number of the old men especially, when laying down their arms, made a deep reverence or salaam as they placed their swords on the ground with the observation, ' Runjit Sing is dead to-day ! ' "

At last, after five years of more or less incessant strife, peace descended over the Punjab. How was it to be made secure and permanent? That was Lord Dalhousie's first great problem. He began by announcing the formal annexation of the Punjab, which carried with it the deposition of the young Maharaja Dhulip Sing, who was assigned a pension of £50,000 a year, and sent eventually to England.

The annexation of the Punjab was opposed by Sir Henry Lawrence. He was doubtful about its justice, but he was convinced that it was inexpedient, yet he could not deny that the Regency, over which he had presided, had been a disastrous failure, culminating in a second war. His brother, John Lawrence, took the opposite view, and held it to be both just and expedient. Lord Dalhousie had formed his own view without the aid of these experts. In his despatch to the Court before the campaign ended he had declared, "There never can be now any guarantee for the tranquillity of India, until we shall have effected the entire subjection of the Sikh people, and destroyed its power as an independent nation."

He was also opposed to the continuance of a fictitious government in the name of the Maharaja. He declared that "by maintaining the pageant of a throne we should leave just enough of sovereignty to keep alive among the Sikhs the memory of their nationality, and to serve as a nucleus for constant intrigue. We should have all the labour, all the anxiety, all the responsibility which would attach to the territories if they were made actually our own, while we should not reap the corresponding benefits of increase of revenue and acknowledged possession."

The annexation of the Punjab was approved by every responsible person in England, and Sir Henry Lawrence, who had in a moment of pique sent in his resignation, withdrew it and consented to become a Member of the Board created to carry out Lord Dalhousie's policy and orders. This policy was the more difficult of execution because the Lawrence family, represented by three brothers, and a considerable band of henchmen who looked to their favour for promotion monopolized the best posts in the Province,

and anticipated that theirs would be the influence and authority to control its administration. At least it was clear that no one within the range of their authority would attempt to restrain or guide them. But they found their master in Lord Dalhousie.

Lord Dalhousie entrusted the first administration of the Punjab to a Board of three members. He did so because he felt that a Board would answer his purpose better than an individual. He appointed John Lawrence because he agreed with the annexation policy, Henry Lawrence for his past position, and Mr. Charles Greville Mansel, as a balance between the Lawrences, to compose the Members of the Board. On the whole the Board did its work effectively and well, "aided by the best men in India," whom Lord Dalhousie gradually and systematically drafted into the Punjab. John Lawrence, who was an excellent revenue officer, reorganized the land tax and fiscal system to the advantage of the tenants as well as the Government. Mr. Mansel quietly but effectively dealt with the changes necessary in the judicial administration. Henry Lawrence attended to the military department and to the relations with the Chiefs and Sirdars who had fallen into penury. But his disputes with his brother were frequent, and only partially composed by the friendly efforts of Mr. Mansel. He chafed at what he felt to be his effacement, and more than once Lord Dalhousie had to remind him that he was not the ruler of the Punjab, but only a high official to carry out the orders of the Government.

With regard to the formation of a body of assistants composed of "the best men in India" to work under the Board, Lord Dalhousie made the selection without their being consulted. He appointed fifty-six commissioners and Deputy Commissioners—twenty-nine military and twenty-seven civil officers—to control and be responsible for as many districts. He ordered a general disarmament east of the Indus, the landholders by military tenure were deprived of their lands, not a trace was to be left of the old system out of which the Khalsa army had risen. Peace and order were to be maintained by a police force of 10,000

men, and in this were absorbed some of the best elements of the old army. At the same time the military instincts of the Sikhs were conciliated by permission for suitable men to enlist in the Sepoy army. The Military Police formed as a Frontier Guard was largely composed of Sikhs. It was raised to a strength of 7,000 foot in six regiments, and 2,700 horse in twenty-seven troops, but its control, against the opinion of Sir Charles Napier, who had reached India too late to supersede Gough at Gujerat, but not too late to succeed him as Commander-in-Chief, was left to the Civil power. But at the same time Lord Dalhousie provided for the defence of the frontier by constructing military roads and cantonments along the eastern bank of the Indus. The army of occupation was fixed at 50,000 men. Three years after the annexation the Board was able to report: "In no part of India has there been more perfect quiet than in these territories so lately annexed."

The root reform in regard to the established order of things was undoubtedly the abolition of military fiefs, and it was in reference to this question that Lord Dalhousie clashed with Sir Henry Lawrence more perhaps than in any other. Lord Dalhousie ordered that these fiefs should be cancelled, and their holders dispossessed. He wrote: "Nothing is to be granted to them but maintenance. The amount of that is open to discussion, but their property of every kind will be confiscated to the State. Let them be placed somewhere under surveillance, but attach their property till their destination is decided. If they run away our contract is void. If they are caught, I will imprison them, and if they raise tumult again I will hang them as sure as they now live, and I live then." This was the order that never received Sir Henry Lawrence's full-hearted accord, and he writhed under the imperious tone which was a fresh warning to him that he had no other course than to obey.

John Lawrence, however, entirely agreed with the Governor-General in thinking that these men had no claim to tender treatment, and as they had proved themselves to be the most formidable foes in the past, so would they continue to be a constant focus for hostility unless their

system and organization were dissolved. Instead of regarding the step as a full and durable remedy Henry Lawrence had persisted wilfully in describing it as an injustice that would provoke irritation and create more trouble. But it was reserved for John Lawrence to expose the fallacy of this view after the order had been carried out. He wrote to Lord Dalhousie thereupon: "The arrangements regarding jaghirs as lately received from your lordship have given much satisfaction, and have exceeded all expectations. A Sikh Sirdar remarked to me that they had got more than Runjit Sing ever would have given them, and that, too, free of all service." This admission made it clear that severity in principle had been tempered by generosity in the treatment of the individual.

The reform of the administration of justice in the Punjab was an imperative necessity. The system favoured by Runjit Sing was extremely lax. In the Civil Courts corruption prevailed. Judgment was given for the highest or the most discerning briber. In criminal cases, which were decided by or referred to the Maharaja in person, he had instituted a curious system of retribution which savoured more of savage Africa than civilized India. He did not favour capital punishment, but, on the other hand, he would not incur the expense of building or supporting State prisons. Crimes were, therefore, punished by mutilation, which was graded to meet different offences from nose-splitting to hand-cutting. Notwithstanding the deterrent effect of mutilation, crime was very prevalent throughout Runjit Sing's dominion, and not the least common was that of infanticide which went practically unpunished.

It was necessary to provide the Punjab with the Courts and complete judicial machinery existent in India generally. That was Mr. Mansel's part in the reorganization of the great province, which was twice the size of Great Britain. Well begun by him it was completed by his successor, Sir Robert Montgomery. The whole system of taxation had to be remodelled. Under Runjit Sing there were forty-eight forms of taxation; these were reduced to six. All the cultivated lands in the Province were surveyed anew, their

extent and limits defined, their ownership critically examined, and then recognized as placed on a firm basis. All these facts were set forth and preserved officially in a "Record of Rights." The peasant and farmer knew exactly where they stood, so did the Government. It was only natural, as the sword had been turned into the ploughshare, that the revenue should increase by leaps and bounds. The State was willing to lend its aid to the deserving in the reclamation of waste lands. Money where necessary was lent to cultivators for the purpose. The Government did not confine its co-operation to this eleemosynary side of the problem. It completed the Grand Trunk Road to Attock on the Indus, and after that was accomplished it took up the construction of branch roads radiating in all essential directions. It built canals, notably that called the Bari Doab, which extended eventually to a length o. over 1,200 miles, and which then watered half a million acres. If the Sikhs had been deprived of their only profession of arms they had in compensation secured the opportunity of adopting many others not less congenial to their tastes, and more profitable to their material interests.

Sir William Hunter has well described what Lord Dalhousie did for the Punjab in the following passage: "These measures formed part of a complete scheme of consolidation designed by Lord Dalhousie, and worked out by his lieutenants under his watchful eye. Lord Dalhousie was not content with throwing a paper constitution at the heads of his subordinates. He dealt personally, indeed, with his own pen, with each question as it arose; personally inspected each part of the province; and personally resided for many months in the year at the comparatively new hill station of Simla within it. He found the Sikh territories disunited by a confusion of civil and criminal laws, by a confusion of coins, by a confusion of taxation and finance, by a confusion of languages, and by the absence of roads and means of communication. He bound them together, those disunited territories, into the British Province of the Punjab by uniform systems of civil and criminal justice, by a common system of taxation and finance, by a single coinage, by a

recognized language for public business in each of the natural divisions of the country, and by the strong cohesive force of roads and highways. Whatever might be the constitution of the local Punjab Government, whoever might be the members of the Board, or whether there was a Board at all, Lord Dalhousie's policy of consolidation brooked neither interruption nor check."

In 1852 Lord Dalhousie decided to change the system of administration first set up in the Punjab after annexation. He dissolved the Board, made the Punjab a Chief Commissionership, and appointed John Lawrence as its first incumbent. Henry Lawrence he transferred to the Agency for the States of Rajputana, where his favourite system of feudal rights and tenure prevailed. It was a congenial atmosphere, made not less congenial because the Governor-General arranged that in his case there should be no diminution of salary. The change in the form of administering the Punjab was natural, because the Board had achieved its purpose in the organization of the different departments necessary for a stable administration. But that accomplished, there was no need to continue an exceptional and costly system. A single representative in chief control under the Supreme Government sufficed, and by this time John Lawrence knew exactly how far he might venture to go in his relations with Lord Dalhousie.

CHAPTER XV

THE SECOND BURMESE WAR

FROM the north-west to the east of India Lord Dalhousie's attention was turned by events that cannot be ignored, and by a political problem of a singularly fascinating character. In every essential characteristic the Burmese and the Indians are like opposite poles, and yet they have been neighbours for countless centuries. The Burmese have at long intervals made attempts to encroach on Indian territory, but there is no record within the historical period of any retaliatory action on the part of those responsible for India, prior to the first Burmese war in the time of Lord Amherst. A brief summary of the circumstances preceding the second war is necessary for its comprehension.

King Bagyidaw, it will be remembered, had ratified the Treaty of Yandabu, and he had also consented to a commercial agreement intended to promote trade with and through Rangoon. Under these terms Colonel Burney was appointed British Resident at the Court of Ava, and in 1830 he proceeded to the Burmese capital to take up his post. But although his entry was not opposed, his presence was ignored, and the King refused to give him audience. As for the commercial treaty it became practically a dead letter, such trade as could be carried on passed through Arakan and Tenasserim, and not by the Irrawaddy. But Colonel Burney was a man singularly endowed with tact and patience. He waited on in the hope of bringing about a change in his favour, and he was not unsuccessful in his efforts to make himself agreeable to the Ministers, and to render the Burmese such slight services as came within his reach. Thus, for instance, he secured possession of the Kubo Valley on the borders of Manipur for Ava, and in return the King sent a letter of thanks by his envoys to Calcutta. Burney's efforts might have borne greater fruit but for an untoward event.

In 1832 Bagyidaw became insane, it was said from long brooding over his humiliation, and shortly after this event Colonel Burney removed from Ava to Rangoon. A regency was set up and acted for five years, when the King's brother, Tharawaddi, appeared upon the scene, and formally deposed Bagyidaw, and placed himself on the throne. The deposed monarch was kept in honourable confinement, eventually dying from natural causes in 1845. In the same year as this new succession (1837) Colonel Burney's health broke down while residing at Rangoon, and he left the country.

The Government of India then made an attempt to establish friendly relations with Tharawaddi, and in 1838 sent Colonel Benson as its special envoy to his new capital at Amarapura. But his reception was not encouraging, the King refusing to receive him in his official capacity, although he expressed his willingness to do so as a private individual. Colonel Benson thereupon went back to Rangoon, leaving his assistant, Capt. McLeod, behind him to look after British interests, although they had no real existence at the moment. In 1840 McLeod also withdrew. In the meantime Tharawaddi's attitude towards the British had become "offensively contemptuous." Fortunately, at that critical moment, he also became insane and had to be put away.

His son and successor, Pagan-Min, at first gave promise of better things, but in a little time it became evident that he was worse than his predecessors, leaving the local governor at Rangoon full liberty to harass and plunder the few English traders who had ventured to establish themselves at that port. This unfriendly treatment, in flagrant contravention of the Treaty of Yandabu, went on for over ten years, becoming worse with the lapse of time, and the evidence of what looked like British helplessness to deal with the Burmese ruler. At last the merchants of Rangoon felt compelled to lay their grievances before the Governor-General, and to petition him for assistance in getting redress. They represented that "affairs have now arrived at such a crisis that unless protected your memorialists will be obliged to leave the country, and in doing so must sacrifice

their property. Neither life nor property is safe here, as the Governor of Rangoon has publicly declared to his dependents that he has no money to pay them for their services, and that he has consequently given them his permission to rob the inhabitants, and to get money how they can. Your memorialists are here under the provisions of the Treaty of Yandabu, and beg to state with all due deference and respect that they claim to seek your protection." Two specific cases were given of the Burmese Governor having seized the masters of English merchantmen on board their vessels, and only releasing them on the payment of a heavy fine.

No Governor-General could turn a deaf ear to such a statement, and Lord Dalhousie at once sent Commodore Lambert in H.M.S. *Fox*, accompanied by the war steamer *Tenasserim* to remonstrate and demand an indemnity. The Governor Maung Ok represented that no one but the King could give a reply to such a request, and that the letters would be sent to Amarapura. In due course a reply arrived from Pagan Min. It was enclosed in a red velvet wrapper with an elephant's tusk serving as the envelope, and it was carried by a special delegation of high officials all bearing yellow umbrellas, the insignia of a royal envoy, on board the *Fox*. The letter expressed the King's desire to preserve friendly relations with the British, and stated that he was removing Maung Ok, and sending down another Governor to Rangoon. When the new Governor arrived it was found that he was accompanied by an army of 30,000 men. The hostile intentions of the Burmese ruler were still more clearly revealed by his sending another force of 20,000 men to Bassein, and a third army of 30,000 strong to Martaban. Pagan Min scarcely attempted to conceal his determination to repudiate the Treaty of Yandabu altogether.

By this time the squadron at Rangoon had been strengthened by the arrival of H.M.S. *Hermes*, with Commodore Lambert on board, who as senior officer took over the command. An appointment was made to meet the new Governor of Rangoon on 5th January, 1852, but when Commodore Lambert arrived he was told that the Governor was asleep, and his reception was generally discourteous and

disrespectful. The Commodore, finding no better means of retaliating handy, seized and carried off the king's war boat, whereupon the Burmese began to fire from their batteries. These were promptly silenced by the superior fire of the British men-of-war. The second Burmese war had begun.

On 15th March, 1852, Lord Dalhousie, having completed the preparation of the necessary expedition, sent an ultimatum to Pagan Min to the effect that war would be declared unless the king apologized for the uncivil action of his Governors, and also promised to receive a British Resident and to pay an indemnity of ten lakhs. The ultimatum was to expire on 1st April, and as no reply had been received, one of the ships was sent on that day to Rangoon to ascertain whether any answer was forthcoming. The Burmese batteries fired upon it.

By this time an expeditionary force of over 8,000 men, under the command of General Godwin, with a strong covering squadron capable of providing a naval contingent of 2,500 men, had assembled at the mouth of the Irrawaddy. On 5th April Martaban was taken and held against a resolute attempt to retake it. Meanwhile Rangoon itself fell on 12th April. The Burmese stood resolutely to their guns against the heavy bombardment from the fleet, and the fight only ended when a lucky shot exploded their principal powder magazine. On land a stockade known as the White House was captured, but only after such a determined resistance that the general refrained from attacking the more formidable Shwe Dagon Pagoda until his siege guns had been brought up. The defenders of this immense temple fort, erected on a lofty mound of earthwork and solid brick, numbered 18,000 strong, and included the chosen guards designated " the Immortals of the Golden Country," pledged to die where they stood sooner than yield to an enemy. It was also said that Pagan Min, in order to ensure the devotion of the main body of his forces, had retained their wives and children with the threat that if they did not fight well these unfortunates would be massacred. With regard to those who had no relations to serve as hostages they were to be chained to their guns in the batteries.

The attack made under a broiling sun was not remarkable for any skill or forethought in its execution. It was a frontal attack made without any effective artillery preparation, just as if the Burmese guns were firing pellets instead of bullets, and while the troops were advancing across the open the toll levied was heavy. When they reached the broad and lofty steps that led up to the Pagoda the Burmese seemed unable to deflect their guns, and as the troops rushed up with loud cheering they were seized with an uncontrollable panic, and fled by the back exits. It was a piece of good fortune, for the place would never have been carried by the primitive mode of attack adopted. The Immortals were said to have been the first to flee. Not many prisoners were taken, and these consisted largely of those who were chained to their guns. As far as language could convey, the spirit of the Burmese was not broken by the loss of Rangoon. The Governor, after his expulsion from the Pagoda, sent in a haughty message to the British General to " retreat while he could."

It is appropriate at this stage to describe Lord Dalhousie's part in the organization of the expedition to Burma. While he left all strategical and tactical questions to the military leaders, he held himself responsible for the organization and equipment of the force. He carefully studied the details of the first war, and it was not difficult for him to arrive at the conclusion that the principal cause of the heavy losses and expense on that occasion arose from bad food, imperfect transport organization, and neglect of the health of troops employed in a region where malaria and ague prevailed. He determined that these defects should not recur, and he made it his personal business to remove them.

He realized that the men engaged on such a task must have good food, and plenty of it. The store ships assembled in the estuary of the Irrawaddy were imposing in number, and constantly passing to and fro with their bases at Calcutta or Madras. He realized that the men would require cover, and as tents were unsuitable, or unobtainable, he arranged for skeleton wooden huts to be prepared on reaching the coast, and sent forward, with the necessary number of

carpenters to put them together quickly, as the troops advanced from one stage to the next. Bake-houses for the first time formed a definite part of the field equipment of an army, and hospitals were prepared at Amherst in Pegu for the reception of the sick and wounded. The General in command wrote, "The care and provision which have been shown to enable us to meet the climate are parental, and by a generous supply of meat and bread the Governor-General has helped us to abolish the morning dram." Not content with the initiation of this unheard of consideration for troops in the days before the Crimean War, Lord Dalhousie went himself to Rangoon on four separate occasions to see how his orders were being carried out, and in what manner his plans were working in practice. The consequence was that the mortality among the troops, especially from sickness, showed a remarkable diminution as compared with what had happened during the previous war.

After the capture of Rangoon Lord Dalhousie sent a second ultimatum to the King. By this the cession of the Negrais or Diamond Islands, where the Company had had a factory from 1709 to 1759, and of the Martaban districts round Moulmein in Pegu was demanded, besides an increased indemnity, and failing immediate compliance the King was apprised that "the Burmese forces will be defeated wherever they stand, and the British army will march to your capital." To this demand the King made no reply, and the operations were perforce resumed.

In the early autumn of 1852 General Godwin advanced up the river as far as Prome, where he found the Burmese army in position. Although in great numbers the Burmese made but a slight defence, retreating precipitately, but still the King gave no sign of yielding to the victor. As Prome afforded convenient and healthy quarters it was decided to advance no farther until the policy to be followed had been definitely decided upon, for Lord Dalhousie had at an early stage of the question arrived at the conclusion that it would be unwise to occupy any territory that he was not prepared to retain. The vanity and self-deception of the King of Burma was such that he would regard any partial

withdrawal from his lost territory as proof of the invader's weakness. Therefore, Lord Dalhousie laid down the axiom, "We must retain what we hold," and for the same reason he ordered the expeditionary force to halt on reaching Prome.

The scene of war was not confined to the Irrawaddy. At an early stage a large Burmese army had been sent to beleaguer Martaban, and the greater part of the Madras contingent, under General Steel, had been sent to hold Moulmein and its neighbourhood, including the sanatorium at Amherst. About the same time as the battle of Prome the whole of the coast of Pegu had been secured from Bassein to Moulmein, but hovering about in the interior were 30,000 Burmese, principally Shan warriors. Whatever hopes Pagan Min continued to indulge of turning the scale of victory against the hitherto successful invaders lay in this direction, and early in December, 1852, it became known that a large Burmese army was moving south by a route east of the Irrawaddy river to attack and recover the posts in Pegu. It was proposed that, while General Steel should stand on the defensive, General Godwin should march in a south-easterly direction to attack the Burmese rear and cut off their retreat.

The plan of campaign was excellently conceived, and promised to afford a signal success, but the execution was faulty. General Godwin, having relieved Pegu Pagoda, did not wait for the arrival of the land column marching from Rangoon, with the result that the Burmese succeeded in escaping before the projected net could be drawn tightly round them. The most favourable opportunity of inflicting a crushing blow on the Burmese ruler, which the loss of an entire army must have signified, and one, moreover, on whose success he was counting so much, was thus lost, and the war continued to drag on to an inconclusive and inglorious end. The one fact clearly established was that Lord Dalhousie showed prudence in assigning a limit to the military operations, thus averting any possibility of a repetition of the Kabul disaster. The war had now gone on for eight months, a large portion of the Burmese kingdom had been occupied,

and Lord Dalhousie saw the wisdom of ending the affair. But how?

The Secret Committee, which may be termed the Foreign Department of the East India Company, had authorized Lord Dalhousie, if his demands were not complied with, to advance to the Burmese capital, but the Governor-General, remembering his own axiom, was averse to advancing so far. He may have felt that Burmese capitals being so transitory in their existence, he might only reach Amarapura to find that the capital had flitted somewhere else, and that he would thus be drawn into the vast and unexplored regions of Upper Burma. He expressed this view as follows: "To march to Ava will give no peace unless the army remain at Ava, in other words, unless we absorb the whole Burmese Empire. That is of vast expanse, and its administration would carry an illimitable responsibility. The necessity to annex may come some day, but I sincerely hope it will not come in mine." Still it was necessary to arrive at a decision, and not leave a haughty but beaten monarch in possession of the field. If he would not speak that was his affair, but he could be compelled to listen, he could be forced to recognize facts. Lord Dalhousie took up the stand of actual possession; he applied the rule of *uti possidetis* to the problem. On 30th December, 1852, a few days after the Burmese forces had been driven out of Pegu, he issued the following Proclamation annexing the Provinces of Lower Burma to the Indian Empire—

"The Court of Ava having refused to make amends for the injuries and insults which British subjects had suffered at the hands of its servants, the Governor-General of India in Council resolved to exact reparation by force of arms.

"The forts and cities upon the coast were forthwith attacked and captured. The Burmese forces have been dispersed wherever they have been met, and the Province of Pegu is now in the occupation of British troops.

"The just and moderate demands of the Government of India have been rejected by the King. The ample opportunity that has been afforded him for repairing the injury that was done has been disregarded; and the timely

submission which could alone have been effectual to prevent the dismemberment of his kingdom is still withheld.

"Wherefore in compensation for the past and for better security in the future, the Governor-General in Council has resolved, and hereby proclaims that the Province of Pegu is now and shall be henceforth a portion of the British territories in the East.

"Such Burman troops as may still remain within the Province shall be driven out. Civil Government shall be immediately established, and officers shall be appointed to administer the affairs of the several districts.

"The Governor-General in Council, having exacted the reparation he deems sufficient, desires no further conquest in Burma, and is willing to consent that hostilities should cease.

"But if the King of Ava shall fail to renew his former relations of friendship with the British Government, and if he shall recklessly seek to dispute its quiet possession of the Province it has now declared to be its own, the Governor-General in Council will again put forth the power he holds, and will visit with full retribution, aggressions which, if they be persisted in, must of necessity lead to the total subversion of the Burman State, and the ruin and exile of the King and his race."

Pagan Min would not make peace with the English, and he thus evaded the personal ignominy of admitting himself to be beaten, but he could not escape his fate. A few weeks after the Proclamation quoted, he was deposed as the result of a Palace plot led by Mindon Min, who took up a less pronounced attitude of hostility, and expressed his desire for peace. Notwithstanding this desire, and some diplomatic intercourse, a formal treaty was never signed, and the nearest approach to a common settlement was the setting up of a stone pillar a little north of Prome, near the village of Myede, and the tracing of a line east and west of it along the same parallel. Mindon Min sent a mission to Calcutta in 1854, but when the envoy alluded to Pegu, Lord Dalhousie abruptly silenced him. In the following year the Governor-General sent a return mission to Amarapura, but it accomplished nothing, and the only piece of

information it brought back was that the King was busily engaged in transferring his capital to a new site at Mandalay.

Lord Dalhousie entrusted the task of providing the part of Burma detached from its King with an administration that would afford some consolation for the sentimental loss inflicted on its inhabitants by severance from the rest of the nation, to Arthur Phayre, who eventually became the first Chief Commissioner so-called. He had to expel the roving bands of armed Burman troops, and when this was accomplished to stamp out the popular pastime of dacoity. He then had to introduce means of honest labour, and to instil habits of thrift and industry among a population that had thought only of the day, and nothing of the morrow. The administration of justice had to be placed on a firm but intelligible basis, as it was absolutely unknown among the masses, authority of all kinds being as they had seen it nothing but a form of extortion and cruelty. The clearing out of the creatures sent from the capital to plunder the toiling classes was a point in favour of the new-comers, but for a long time the people could not realize that law and order had become a fixed condition of their existence. It took Sir Arthur Phayre ten years to lay even the first foundation of the new system.

Lord Dalhousie deserves all the praise he has received for his work in Burma, which may in every respect be compared to that he performed in the Punjab. In both cases he evolved good out of evil, they were not barren conquests that he promoted and sanctioned, the population benefited as much as the new Government. His moderation in halting in Burma when he did revealed wisdom. Yet he foresaw that "the necessity of absorbing the whole of Upper Burma will arrive some day," and it gave him much satisfaction to feel that, whenever it did arrive, he had contributed materially towards its simpler execution, for as he proudly exclaimed, when he ordered the suspension of operations, "I feel that I hold Upper Burma in the hollow of my hand."

One minor incident completes the list of annexations outside the frontier, and it was but a small affair. The

Hill-state of Sikkim, wedged in between Nepal and Bhutan, had been saved from absorption by the Gurkhas in 1814, and the Raja had been profuse in his expressions of gratitude for the service. As some return for this he had granted the site on which Darjeeling was to stand in return for a small annual rent. This was in the time of Lord William Bentinck. Nothing unpleasant had occurred in the official relations of the two States, but unfortunately the people of Sikkim had one very bad habit. They were slave dealers, and they indulged in the practice of raiding the border villages of the British territory to kidnap the Hindu inhabitants. Despite frequent remonstrances the practice was continued, and at last the demand for punitive action became very general. The Raja instead of giving way to these threats, and promising redress, was seized with the mistaken idea that if he could only secure some Englishmen of note as hostages, he would be able to induce the British authorities to stop complaining, and allow him to follow his own bad courses.

At that moment it happened that two distinguished Englishmen, Dr. Campbell, Resident at Darjeeling, and Joseph Hooker, were botanizing in the hills of Sikkim, and the Raja gave orders for their arrest and incarceration. This happened in the year 1849. The meekest minded Governor-General would not have submitted tamely to such an outrage, and Lord Dalhousie at once ordered a small force to release the prisoners, and bring the Raja to reason. Campbell and Hooker were released after six weeks' incarceration, and as a punishment a strip of territory in the Tista terai was taken from the Raja, and at the same time the rent or pension for Darjeeling was cancelled. Whether it was the fault of the Raja or not, slave raiding continued for many years, but there was no further seizure of distinguished Englishmen in the expectation that they might prove useful as hostages.

An event occurred at this time outside India that cannot be omitted from any record of her history. In 1853 the time had come round again for the renewal of the Charter of the East India Company. The period of twenty years

from its last renewal in 1833 was on the eve of expiration. The question was no longer complicated by the intermixture of any commercial matter. All the trade monopolies or privileges had gone, and the point at issue was merely as to whether the Government of India was to be left for a further period in the hands of the East India Company with which had been associated for seventy years that Department of State styled the Board of Control.

For this reason the Government measure brought in, in the early part of the Session of 1853, was entitled the " Government of India Bill " without any direct reference to the Company's Charter. The Minister entrusted with the charge of the Bill was naturally the President of the Board of Control. At that time the President was Sir Charles Wood, afterwards created Viscount Halifax, and the grandfather of the present Viceroy of India. The Bill proposed the continuance of the existing state of things for a further period, which was left unspecified, but which by assumption, as nothing was said to the contrary, was to run for another twenty years. The measure proposed a few unimportant changes, none being of a radical character. The Court of the East India Company was to be modified by a reduction in number, and by the inclusion of some members nominated by the Government from persons who had served in or who were well acquainted with India. At the same time, the privileges of Members of the Court in respect of nominations either to the Service direct or to the Academies of Haileybury and Addiscombe were curtailed. The two great educational institutions preparatory for Indian service were thrown open to competition, and merit alone was to bear the palm.

In the course of the debates which began on 3rd June and went on intermittently till the end of August, the critics called attention to the anomalous character of the Company's rule, the numerous wars that had taken place since the last renewal, and the considerable growth of the Indian debt. But whenever a definite proposal was made that the authority of the Crown should be substituted for that of the Company, the motion was negatived. Whether from lack of

knowledge, or fear of fresh responsibility, the Home Government were resolute in their decision not to take over the direct control of Indian affairs at that period. But while the proposal was negatived the general feeling seemed to be growing that the change was inevitable. But no one had the foresight to anticipate the occurrence of the tragic events that were to bring it to pass.

CHAPTER XVI

ADOPTIONS, LAPSES, AND ESCHEATS

HAVING dealt with the external annexations carried out during Lord Dalhousie's tenure of the post of Governor-General, we have now to consider those effected by his authority within the boundaries of the East India Company. These were not brought about by force of arms, they were the consequence of the application of principles of law and policy which had been enunciated before Lord Dalhousie set foot in India. Those principles related to the right of adoption, and reacted in their consequences on the thorny problem of lapses and escheats. Few questions have given rise to more bitter or protracted controversies, and the critics of the course pursued have been as numerous and loud-spoken as its upholders. Here it will be sufficient to deal with facts, and to exclude as far as possible all controversial matter.

The practice of absolute and undeviating acceptance of the adoption made by Hindu rulers, great and small, in default of male heirs had latterly been subjected to closer scrutiny, with the result that important modifications were gradually introduced. The explanation has been offered, for what was tantamount to a new procedure, that after the Company in 1833 had accepted the proposition that " India was to be governed for the good of India," it turned a more critical eye on the happenings within the feudatory States with the implied observation, " If we are ourselves to reform then these representatives of native rule shall be also reformed."

Now it may be frankly admitted that the practice of adoption, which has never obtained among Moslems, is not merely liable to abuse, but contains in itself no assurance of a permanently satisfactory system of government. More especially has this been apparent when the adoption has not been made by the heir-less prince, but after his demise by the women within the secret places of the palace. The

process of selection was always controlled by unfathomable motives and very often proved the result of illicit intrigues. In its application it always produced a degeneracy in the ruling family which became more marked after several successive instances. In 1834 the East India Company ordered that " this indulgence should be the exception and not the rule, and should never be granted except as a special mark of favour and approbation."

The obvious consequence of limiting the right of adoption to the inheritance of family property and of withdrawing from it succession to the sovereignty, was that lapses must increase in number with the ensuant escheats of States by the paramount Power. In 1841 the Company made a further declaration which plainly revealed its intentions : " It is necessary for us to persevere in the one clear and direct course of abandoning no just and honourable accession of territory or revenue, while all existing claims of right are at the same time scrupulously respected."

These positive directions by the Company were submitted of necessity to the legal luminaries in India for consideration as to the best way of executing them. The rights and circumstances under which the Hindus themselves had exercised the custom of adoption were examined with more care and deeper analysis than had yet been given to the subject. The following conclusion evolved from this examination—

" When the Hindu is a prince holding his principality subordinate to, or as a gift from, a paramount State, it is a condition of succession to the principality that the adoption be made with the consent of such paramount State. His private property will pass to the adopted son whether the paramount State has or has not consented to the adoption, but in the absence of such consent the principality reverts to the paramount State."

This definition by its wording did not apply to States that existed prior to the establishment of the English as the paramount power, or even to those that were more or less contemporaneous with them, and which down to 1840 at least were always described in official records as Foreign Powers. It was also vague as to what constituted " private

property." Until a comparatively recent period, and always with rare exceptions, ruling chiefs made little or no distinction between their private and public property. They were the State, and their treasures and jewels were deposited in the State Treasury. This system did not of course apply to deposed princes like the ex-Peishwa Bajee Rao, who became a pensioner of the British Government. Before passing on, it is appropriate to record that the Mogul Emperors, who were the immediate predecessors of the British, never withheld recognition in its fullest degree of a properly constituted adoption. Their practice was to require for their favour an increase of the *nuzzerana* always paid on the accession of a dependent prince, and from this source they derived no inconsiderable augmentation of revenue. Many Anglo-Indian statesmen of the older school advocated the revival of this practice in lieu of enforcing an escheat.

The first occasion for the application of the new rule related to a State of minor importance in the political scale, but of exceptional interest in the personal and historical. It was that of Sattara, where the lineal descendant of Sivaji, the founder of the Maratha confederacy, resided. That dynasty had been superseded by the Peishwas in the earlier half of the eighteenth century, but although set on one side for worldly affairs the Rajas, as they were called, were maintained as a pageant. It was in their favour that they had never taken part in any of the Maratha wars with the English, and no one had ever accused them of promoting any of the current intrigues. When the Peishwa's territories were annexed in 1818 Sattara was left by the British as an autonomous State with the Raja and for his family. Was this act a reconstitution by the British Government, or merely a recognition of what had been in existence since the close of the seventeenth century? Under circumstances now to be described the former view was taken by the Government, but there were many good authorities who adhered to the latter, and it must be acknowledged that sentiment, at least, was in their favour. But when a paramount Power desires extension of authority, sentiment counts for little or nothing.

The succession in the Sattara State as reconstituted was defined as belonging to " the sons and heirs and successors " of the Raja recognized in 1818, who by the way was not a new Raja but one in possession by inheritance. From the definition the conclusion seems unavoidable that adoption was included, otherwise the use of the term " successors " would be supererogatory.

In 1839 the same prince still reigning was deposed, for misrule and misconduct, by the British Government. There is no dispute that he brought this punishment on himself. His brother was then acknowledged as his successor, and for his period he governed the State sufficiently well and did not repeat the errors of his predecessor. After some years, finding himself without a son, the Raja petitioned the Government to allow him to adopt a son, and then to complete the ceremony by its recognition of that son as his heir to the Raj. This favour was refused, and no one who examines the grounds advanced for the refusal will consider them sufficient. In 1848 the Raja, before his death, none the less adopted a son. All the main circumstances took place before Lord Dalhousie's arrival, although the actual adoption was made a short time after he took over the charge of public affairs. The Sattara affair was really his first internal problem, and it assumed more importance than was anticipated by the Supreme Government from the different views expressed on the subject by some of its own subordinates, and those of no small right to express an opinion.

Lord Dalhousie, fresh in his post and with a unanimous Council, argued that the instructions of the Company left them no option but to withhold recognition of the Raja's adopted son as his successor to the Chiefship of the State. His inheritance of the private and personal property passing of course unchallenged, as would have been the case with the humblest individual. The Governor of Bombay, Sir George Clerk, an official of high distinction, while recognizing the validity of many of the arguments in support of the lapse, expressed the opinion that in this particular case the adoption should have been held good to " the sovereign

rights of the Sattara Rajas." Sir George Clerk could not forget the hereditary claims of the Raja going back to Sivaji's coronation at Rajghur, but the Company would not regard him as more than a dependent prince set up by themselves in 1818. Its final decision was conveyed in the following terms—

"The result of our deliberations is that concurring with you (Lord Dalhousie) in opinion, we are fully satisfied that by the general law and custom of India a dependent principality like that of Sattara cannot pass to an adopted heir without the consent of the paramount Power, that we are under no pledge direct or constructive to give such consent, and that the general interests committed to our charge are best consulted by withholding it. The pretensions set up in favour of the adopted son of the ex-Raja being wholly untenable, and all claims of collaterals being excluded by the fact that none of them are descended from the person in whose favour the principality was created, the ex-Raja Pertab Sing, it follows that the territory of Sattara has lapsed by failure of heirs to the Power which bestowed it, and we desire it to be annexed to the British dominions."

The next important case related to Jhansi, which formed part of the territories surrendered by the Peishwa in 1818. The governor of the district was then placed in authority with the rank of Raja, and his status was entirely dependent on the good will of the British Government without any reservation or qualification whatever. This Raja died childless, and Government refused to recognize an adopted son as his successor.

In this case it did not annex, but it selected one of his uncles to succeed. The choice did not prove happy. The new ruler governed badly, got heavily into debt, and then fled the country. He had no son, and under the circumstances could not make any adoption. Again the Government selected a new Raja, and to give him a fair start took over the administration for a limited term, and improved its financial position. This Raja proved a competent ruler, but when he died in 1852 he had no male heir. He had, however, adopted a son without Government sanction, and

the point had to be decided whether this adoption should be recognized. It was vetoed and Jhansi lapsed to the British Government. At the same time a suitable pension was granted to the widow Rani, of whom more will be heard.

The third important lapse related to Nagpur, and so far as extent of territory went it was the most important of all. The State of Nagpur had been one of the most important in the Maratha confederacy. The ruling family was known by the style of the Bhonslas, and as it was descended from Sivaji it was held in superior consideration to that of either Sindhia or Holkar. Its acquisitions had been made at the expense of the Gonds, and they presented a more consolidated form than the conquests of the other Maratha chiefs, which were and are still widely scattered.

The Bhonsla had joined Sindhia in the anti-British league of 1803, but after the defeat at Assaye, by Arthur Wellesley, he had retired from the contest. But in 1817 he had again responded to the Peishwa's call and made a treacherous attack on the British Residency. He was pardoned, but revolted the next year, when he fled from his State. The Marquis of Hastings thereupon annexed the greater part of his territory, but converted Nagpur city and district into a dependent principality over which a youthful scion of the reigning house was proclaimed Raja. During his minority the State was administered by an experienced British officer and prospered. The young Raja came of age in 1830 and was duly installed, but, unfortunately, the record of his rule, which continued down to the year 1853, proved exceptionally bad. He was recklessly extravagant and soon exhausted the treasure accumulated during his infancy. To find the means of continuing his debaucheries, he levied fresh taxes and resorted to every form of extortion to plunder his subjects. He was in the habit of saying to his ministers on appointment: "Study the provisions of the Treaty so that they may be enforced to permit me the enjoyment of those pleasures of dancing and singing that I have loved from my boyhood." In 1853 the Raja died, leaving no son, and without making any adoption, although the Resident had been urging him to do so during the last

two years of his life. This was a rather curious proceeding on the part of the Resident, who was none other than the moderate and amiable Mr. Mansel from the Punjab, but he held that " while the Raja possessed no right to transmit his kingdom except to the heirs male of his body lawfully begotten it might be well to create artificially an heir by consenting to an adoption by one of the widows."

Mr. Mansel had described the Raja's system of government in scathing terms, and as they were written about the time of the Raja's death his proposition to prolong the existing form of administration came at an unfavourable moment for official acceptance. His description of the Raja's rule had been given in the following terms—

" Of late years all the anxiety of the Raja and his favourite ministers has been to feed the privy purse by an annual income of two or more lakhs of rupees from nuzzurs, fines, bribes, confiscation of the property of deceased persons, the composition of public defaulters, or the sale of their effects. The Raja has been led on by his avarice to discard all feeling and to throw himself into the hands of the most unprincipled of his servants, who plundered the country and put justice up to sale for profit, but of this only a slender part reached the Raja. He has done many cruel deeds and even carried war into the country of his feudal dependents on the representation of parties tempted by the offer of a nuzzur. All this has been aggravated by the low tone of mind of the Raja. His choicest amusement is an auction sale, when some unfortunate widow is ruled not to be entitled to her husband's estate."

Mr. Mansel by this exposure of the facts relating to the internal affairs of the Nagpur State contributed materially to the rejection of his proposed fresh adoption. Lord Dalhousie brushed it aside, and decided that the Nagpur Raj had become a lapse and must be treated as any other escheat. He wrote : " We set up a Raja at Nagpur. We afforded him every advantage a native Prince could command. His boyhood was trained under our own auspices ; an able and respected Princess was his Guardian and the Regent of the State. For ten years while he was yet a

youth we governed his country for him. We handed it over to him with an excellent system of administration in full and practised operation with a full treasury and a contented people. Yet after little more than twenty years this Prince, descending to the tomb, has left behind him a character whose record is disgraceful to him alike as a sovereign and as a man. So favoured and so aided he has nevertheless lived and died a seller of justice, a drunkard, and a debauchee. What guarantee can the British Government now find for itself or offer to the people of Nagpur that another successor will not imitate this bad example? And if that should be the case, what justification could the Government of India hereafter plead for having neglected to exercise the power which it possessed to avert for ever from the people of Nagpur so probable and so grievous an evil."

In one important particular Lord Dalhousie differed from the Company. The Court of Directors considered that the personal property of the Raja, having been acquired by him from State revenue, might fairly be considered to belong to Government. Had this view prevailed the Raja's widows would have been left without provision. But Lord Dalhousie was more just. He proposed that jewels and furniture and other personal property suitable to their rank, having been allotted to the Ranis, the value of the rest of the jewels and other property should be realized, and the proceeds constituted into a fund for the benefit of the Bhonsla family. This arrangement was confirmed, and an adequate provision thus made not only for the Ranis, but for the late Raja's other relations and dependents.

We have now to consider a lapse or forfeiture of a different character to which subsequent events gave a dramatic and even sinister importance. In 1818 Baji Rao, the last of the Peshwas, was assigned after his surrender a pension of £80,000 a year, and he continued to enjoy it for thirty-three years until his death in 1851. There can be no question that this was a personal pension unaccompanied by any territorial grant and paid for out of the Government Treasury. In the course of his long life Baji Rao made considerable savings, and he bequeathed not less than 28 lakhs

to his family. He had no sons of his own, but he had adopted his nephew, a young man known to all time as Nana Sahib. On the death of Baji Rao this young man claimed the continuance of the pension. The evidence was irresistible that this was only a life pension. Baji Rao could not bequeath it, and as a matter of fact made no attempt to do so. By the ordinary law relating to private property, Nana Sahib inherited his share, practically the bulk, of the ex-Peshwa's savings, and as a favour he was left in possession of the jagir or grant of land at Bithoor, in the North West Provinces, where Baji Rao had latterly resided and where he died. Although the Peshwa-ship had been abolished in 1818, the Nana affected to consider himself the political heir of the long-deposed potentate. The cessation of the pension assigned in the year 1818 was effected in the ordinary course of things, and the Nana had no claim whatever to any special consideration unless, indeed, he could have persuaded the British Government to annul the arrangement of 1818, and to revive the Peshwa dynasty—an expectation that was obviously absurd. The course and development of the Nana's discontent will be related farther on.

A somewhat similar case arose in the Madras Presidency, where the Nawab of the Carnatic, after the withdrawal of his political authority in 1801 had retained by Treaty some of the rights and privileges he had enjoyed under that authority. The terms of this concession were not set forth with adequate clearness, but when the Nawab, in power at the time of the Treaty, died in 1819 his son and successor was allowed to retain them, but at the same time he was informed that the Treaty made neither title nor privileges hereditary. On his death in 1825 his son and successor was again permitted to succeed, and this, the third, Nawab lived on till 1855. When he died he left no child, and the rights of the family under the Treaty, continued by favour on two occasions, lapsed. Unfortunately for any chance of further renewal, the record of this prince was exceedingly bad. The Madras Government, which was directly concerned with the affairs of the family, took the lead in

opposing the continuance of the old privileges by the artificial creation of a successor. Lord Harris, the Governor of the day, opposed it on the following grounds—

"First, on the general principle that the semblance of royalty without any of the power is a mockery of authority which must be pernicious; second, because though there is virtually no divided rule, or co-ordinate authority in the government of the country, for these points were finally settled by the Treaty of 1801, yet some appearance of so baneful a system is still kept up by the continuance of a quasi-royal family and Court; third, because the said family claimed exemption from our Courts, and were not amenable to the law; fourth, because the pageant of such a Court may at any time become a nucleus for sedition and agitation; fifth, because that Court itself had become a sink of iniquity."

Lord Dalhousie concurred in these views, and the Company refused to revive the title and status of Nawab of the Carnatic, but at the same time liberal provisions were granted to the different members of the family, and their principal representative, who was an uncle of the last Nawab, was declared to be honorifically "the first Native nobleman of Madras."

The principal cases of lapses and escheats have now been enumerated, but it so happened that during the same period there were also many minor instances. These numbering at least eight and possibly nine, were of too small an extent to call for details, but they each contributed to swell the total of what were in the outcome absolute additions to the British raj. The causes may have been legitimate, the application of the extreme remedy just in law, and sound in policy, but the hard fact remained, so far as public comprehension carried, that the local rulers were disappearing to give place to British officials, and there was a general and increasing apprehension that the process would only stop when all the surviving autonomies had been absorbed. The rights of adoption had been reduced, by that reduction lapses necessarily increased and excuses for escheats were multiplied. In every Indian State, great or small, the

question was being asked, where would the process of absorption stop?

If the despatches of the East India Company to the Governor-Generals after 1841 down to the end of Lord Dalhousie's administration are carefully examined and compared, they leave the impression that their chief wish was that absorption should continue to its natural end. They seemed to have convinced themselves that thus only could their obligations to the inhabitants of the whole peninsula of India be discharged, and at the beginning of his administration Lord Dalhousie seemed to share this view in its largest extent, although even from the first he made some reservations. To that effect he wrote in one of his despatches home—

"I cannot conceive it possible for anyone to dispute the policy of taking advantage of every just opportunity which presents itself for consolidating the territories which belong to us already by taking possession of States which may lapse in the midst of them; for thus getting rid of those petty intervening principalities which may be made a means of annoyance, but which can never, I venture to think, be a source of strength, for adding to the resources of the public treasury, and for extending the uniform application of our system of government to those whose best interests we sincerely believe will be promoted thereby. The government is bound in duty as well as in policy to act on every such occasion with the purest integrity and in the most scrupulous good faith. Whenever a shadow of doubt can be shown the claim should at once be abandoned."

Even at this early stage of his acquaintance with India and her problems Lord Dalhousie made two reservations. The policy was to get rid of "petty intervening principalities," and it was only to be applied with "the purest integrity" and "most scrupulous good faith." The former attribute will never be challenged, but how and by whom is "scrupulous good faith" to be measured?

One thing is perfectly clear. When Lord Dalhousie set out on the course of executing the Company's policy with regard to lapses he did not realize the extent to which it

might have to be carried by himself personally. When a principle has been defined and set up as an example of the conduct to be followed, it cannot be limited without falling to the ground. The limitation of the right of adoption, with all its consequences, could not be confined to "petty intervening principalities." It was of general application or of none. Lord Dalhousie very quickly grasped the point, and he proceeded to make a new definition of the States to which it would be proper to apply the regulation of a lapse in all its stringency.

He divided Indian States into two categories. There were first of all the Sovereign States originating during the Mogul period or even earlier. No precise date was fixed for the termination of this period, but perhaps it would be safe to imagine that he fixed it at 1780. In the second category he placed the dependent native States, created or reconstituted in subordination to the British Government, but as none of these sub-creations began before 1818 it followed that there were creations or formations of States covering a gap of close on forty years that were not included in either category. Lord Dalhousie took antiquity into the weightiest account. For this reason he exempted all Rajput States from the new limitations imposed on adoption, but he overlooked the fact that there are many more Rajput States than are to be found in Rajputana, and also that adoption in its widest acceptance is more of a Rajput right and tradition than in any other community of India.

His exemption of Rajput States received a practical demonstration in the case of Kerowli which, after many vicissitudes, passed into British hands on the final break up of Maratha power in 1818. At the end of the seventeenth century Kerowli, an ancient Rajput principality, was conquered by Aurangzeb and incorporated in his dominions. Later on the Marathas became its master and imposed a tribute on its Rajas. In 1818 the British came into possession, and they left the Raja, ex-tributary of the Marathas, on the Gadi. In 1852 the descendant of the Raja died without heirs and without adopting a son, and the question came up for consideration, what arrangement was to be

made for its future? As far as available evidence went the lapse was incontestable, but Lord Dalhousie advanced the plea for its preservation that it was a "Rajput principality with the claim of antiquity in its favour." The Company hesitated, but it yielded to his argument and the separate existence of Kerowli under its hereditary Rajas was prolonged.

Probably Lord Dalhousie was not prepared for the numerous cases of lapse with which he was called upon to deal, and he may have perceived that however good the motives, and however justifiable recourse to the alternative of absorption might have been, it would surely be misjudged at the bar of Indian opinion. He, therefore, attempted to reduce the number of applications by the methods described. He excluded from the operation of the regulation of restricted adoption all the sovereign States and all the ancient States, to wit those of Rajputana. That allayed the growing apprehension in those quarters. He expressed this view in the formal form of a State paper. He declared that "my opinion was restricted wholly to subordinate States, to those dependent principalities which either as the virtual creation of the British Government or from their former position stood in such relation to that Government as to give it the recognized right of a Paramount Power in all questions of the adoption of an heir to the sovereignty of the State. The opinion I gave referred exclusively to subordinate States, to a dependent principality like that of Sattara, and others I have named." But the attempt to assign a limitation by words to a political dogma gives poor consolation to the dispossessed, and no sense of security to those who apprehend inclusion within its range.

The final conclusion, arrived at in no carping spirit, cannot be avoided, that considering the many other causes of internal unrest and trouble which were on the eve of disclosure, it was particularly unfortunate that so many cases of lapse and escheat should have risen up in the time of Lord Dalhousie. No doubt the ostensible object in the amelioration of the people's lot under neglectful or

incapable rulers was laudable, but in none of the cases cited did the subjects complain of their princes or clamour for their removal. They seemed content, they were certainly passive, and the British intervention always lacked the support of the one compelling and unassailable argument of a public call to curb the prince and save the people. No Government ever sits in judgment on itself, and it is easily persuaded that whatever it does must be for the best, and when the hour arrives to reveal how baseless were its assumptions and how inoperative its remedies it complains of the ingratitude of the people, and expatiates on the hopelessness of conciliating races who have little or nothing in common, and who have been brought up under customs and traditions that are mutually unintelligible.

CHAPTER XVII

THE ANNEXATION OF OUDH

Two of the most important and extensive annexations made by Lord Dalhousie, one in a veiled and the other in a positive form, were brought about in a different manner from those acquired by lapse. As they related to Moslem States they were not concerned with the question of adoption. They resulted from the application of superior force and power, if the admission has to be made that the deed was done under irritating circumstances and considerable provocation. Still, however it was brought about, the form employed was compulsion. The victims of this coercion were the two highest Moslem potentates in the Peninsula, viz., the Nizam of Hyderabad and the King of Oudh.

In 1805 a force raised for the Nizam's service was created under the name of the Hyderabad Contingent. It was officered by Englishmen, paid for by the Nizam's Government, but curiously enough it was subject to the direct authority of the British Resident and not of the Prince. The financing of this force was entrusted to a firm of Calcutta Bankers named William Palmer & Co., who were permitted to charge for their advances the enormous interest of 24 per cent. The outcome of this arrangement, after a run of fifteen years' toleration, was a financial crisis, when it was decided that the Nizam's Government was indebted to the Palmers for the enormous sum of 160 lakhs (£1,600,000). It was necessary then to make a fresh start. The British Government took over the debt, the Palmers were eliminated and the Nizam gave up the tribute paid him by the Company on account of the Northern Circars. This amounted to not less than 7 lakhs annually. The first phase of the transaction ended in this manner. The Nizam was poorer by 7 lakhs a year, but he had still

to meet the cost of the contingent, which amounted to 36 lakhs per annum.

At this time the Minister of Hyderabad was a Hindu nobleman of the name of Raja Chandoo Lall, and for twenty years he met the monthly bill of three lakhs with more or less regularity, but as the Nizam's total revenue was not sufficient for the purpose, allowing for the ordinary expenses of the civil government of a great dominion, he had to have recourse to loans and other expedients. During his régime, also, the cost of the contingent was allowed to increase until the 36 lakhs swelled to 50. By the year 1843 the finances of Hyderabad were in such hopeless confusion that Raja Chandoo Lall withdrew from the scene. The monthly instalments being no longer forthcoming they figured as arrears, and gradually their total presented a formidable aspect. In 1851 it had risen to 70 lakhs.

There had been some talk on earlier occasions of the Nizam surrendering territory to defray the cost of the contingent, and in 1851 a formal proposal was made to the effect that certain districts in the Berars and also in the Raichur Doab should be assigned for the purpose of liquidating the debt and maintaining the contingent. This assignment, as proposed, was to be of the nature of a cession, and so repugnant was the proposal to the Nizam that he drew upon his private resources to liquidate the debt.

Unfortunately, all that his personal sacrifices could achieve was to reduce the debt by one-half, while all the time the cost of the contingent had to be met, and not being met continued to grow. The result was that within two years the debt had again risen to 50 lakhs, and the financial embarrassments of the Nizam became extreme.

At this moment Lord Dalhousie took up the matter with the intention of applying a drastic remedy. He sent General Sir John Low to Hyderabad, in 1853, as the bearer of a draft treaty formally ceding the Berars to the British Government. Lord Dalhousie appears to have had no doubt that the Nizam would sign this treaty as a happy release from his most urgent financial embarrassments.

But he was to learn that there are limits to helpless subservience, and the Nizam proudly declared that sooner than sign away his rights in this part of his dominions he would lose them all. There was something dignified and affecting in this attitude of a prince who had been badly served by his own Ministers. Even Lord Dalhousie seems to have been touched by this fortitude, for he modified his policy for the first and only time. General Low received fresh instructions to arrange a compromise.

The assignment of the Berar and the other districts was modified in the sense that the words " Perpetual cession " became an assignment of temporary effect. Even to this the Nizam showed the greatest reluctance to give his assent, and negotiations continued during several months. Either Lord Dalhousie or the officers on the spot became impatient, and represented that " a movement of troops " would take place unless the treaty were signed forthwith. To this ultimatum the Nizam had to give way.

The Treaty in its final form was signed in May, 1853. The assignment of the districts in the Berars and the Raichur Doab was to be made for a specific purpose, and consequently on a temporary and not a permanent basis. The purpose was defined as being of threefold effect. The objects to which it was destined were (1) the maintenance of the contingent, (2) the liquidation of the outstanding debt stated to be 48 lakhs, and (3) the cost of the administration. On the other hand, the British Government bound itself to pay to the Nizam whatever surplus there might be, and to furnish annual accounts. From this statement it is quite clear that the amount of the surplus would depend on what " the cost of the administration " might prove to be, and the Treaty threw no light on the subject. The cost was left entirely to the judgment and right feeling of the agents of the British Government, and if the establishment were over-officered or overpaid it necessarily followed that there would be no surplus at all to hand over to the legitimate sovereign. Although the Treaty contained no specific mention of the cost of the administration, or as to how it was to be measured or

controlled, Colonel Davidson, who was First Assistant during the Treaty negotiations, and who subsequently filled the post of Resident with great distinction, stated that there was a distinct understanding that the cost of the administration should not exceed "two annas in the rupee," or in plainer words, one-eighth of the revenue. Some years later, Colonel Davidson had become Resident, and he then expressed himself much more emphatically on the character of the whole transaction—

"I have always been of opinion that had the pecuniary demands of the two Governments (the British and the Nizam's) been impartially dealt with, we had no just claim against the Nizam for the debt of 48 lakhs. His Highness' Minister in a Note dated 19th August, 1851, when pressed on account of the arrears of pay of the contingent, asked for the surplus of the Abkari (excise) revenues of Secunderabad and Jalna, which at a later date were allowed to be a portion of the legitimate revenue of the Hyderabad State. We carried these revenues, amounting at present to 1 lakh annually, to our own credit from 1812 to 1853, or, say, for 41 years. They would have given the Nizam a credit of 41 lakhs, without interest, against the debt we claimed. Further, we charged His Highness from January, 1849, to May, 1853, with interest at 6 per cent on advances for the pay of the contingent, which charge for interest amounted to 10½ lakhs, although the Nizam earnestly protested against being made to pay any interest at all."

The case of the other Moslem State was one of open and unqualified annexation. In the prime of Mogul power the Nawab Nazim of Oudh was the first of the Emperor's satraps north of the Ganges. It was probably the richest of his possessions, richer even than Bengal at that period. In the early days after Plassey the Nawab endeavoured to uphold the Imperial authority against the English and met with a signal defeat at Buxar. Later on, Warren Hastings intervened to save the Nawab from the Rohillas, the tribe of Afghan origin which had withstood the Emperor Baber. From that time onwards there was a

close association between Fort William and the Palace at Lucknow. This finally bore fruit in the recognition, in 1801, of the Nawab as King of Oudh, and the conclusion of an Alliance from which the Prince of that line, in good or bad fortune, never swerved a hair's breadth. In the comity of nations, fidelity to an alliance counts as the first of virtues.

The Treaty of 1801 also contained stipulations to the effect that the King should make the prosperity of his subjects his principal object, and that he should, when necessary, follow the advice of the British Resident. By the year 1830 the financial affairs of the kingdom had got into some confusion, and the King and his Ministers failed to work harmoniously together. Lord William Bentinck was induced to intervene, and in 1831 he paid a special visit to Lucknow for the purpose of admonishing the King. A very unusual threat accompanied the lecture, for that Prince was told that if his administration did not improve his deposition from power and the annexation of his State would follow. This threat was certainly singular, for if the misgovernment of a particular prince afforded some excuse for his deposition, there does not appear to have been in the Treaty any inherent right to annex his State and destroy the dynasty. The situation at this moment was anomalous. The East India Company had pledged itself to non-intervention, and Lord William Bentinck's proposal to annex was in complete opposition to its proclaimed policy. The contrast became glaring when the Oudh Minister appealed to the British Resident to support his measures of reform, and the Resident replied that he was unable to do so, as the policy of the Company was one of rigid non-intervention in the internal affairs of the Indian States. Lord William Bentinck's threat was, therefore, futile, and it was not unnatural that the King of Oudh should have been led after that experience to conclude that the British would not interfere with his methods of government.

The next episode in the development of the question arose in the time of Lord Hardinge. The King who sat

on the musnud at that moment was a young man without any experience, and it must be admitted that his chief thought was to indulge his love of pleasure. Within the same period, also, a complete change had taken place in the Company's policy. Rigid non-intervention in the internal affairs of the ruling States had been abandoned, and the order went forth that no opportunity of adding to the Company's territory was to be neglected. It is not surprising if some of the Indian Courts failed to realize as quickly as their interests demanded the change and all it meant for themselves.

In 1845 the King dismissed his minister, who was said to be a capable man, and appointed one of his courtiers who was certainly not qualified in any respect for the office. The British Resident protested and gave the advice that the dismissed minister should be reinstated; but it passed unheeded. The King was not popular with his Hindu subjects, and the minister of his appointment was assaulted in the streets of Lucknow and narrowly escaped being murdered. He was saved by the arrival of the Resident with a body of troops, but the Resident committed himself with the conspirators to the extent of promising them their lives in return for his safety. There could be no doubt that the state of things at Lucknow was bad, and that the administration stood in need of measures of reform. Such was the position in the year 1847.

Thereupon Lord Hardinge decided to go to Lucknow in person. He was received with royal state. Fêtes were given in his honour, and then followed the business talk to which they were the prelude. The Governor-General had drafted in the form of a letter the advice and remonstrances which he wished to impress upon the King. It became known as "The Golden Letter," because the King caused it to be transcribed in golden characters for presentation to the Governor-General. He would have been better advised if he had laid this admonition near his heart and conned its terms to his own salvation. It began by explaining how Lord Wellesley's Treaty of 1801 had provided for the protection of the people, and that a

convention of the following year defined and secured their rights more explicitly. Attention was then drawn to defects in the police administration, the levy and nature of the taxes, and, finally, the dispensation of justice. It was affirmed that the maladministration was extreme, and that reforms were essential. The King was also reminded that one of the articles of the Treaty gave the Governor-General power to carry out these provisions if the Oudh Government failed to do so, more especially in regard to the ryots, by appointing his own officers to execute the necessary measures.

The Golden Letter proceeded to state the measures that would be taken failing the necessary reforms. Lord William Bentinck had threatened annexation, but Lord Hardinge was more circumspect. He had probably read the text of the Treaty more carefully. He declared that "in the event of delay in the execution of the necessary policy of reform the Government of India has determined to take over the management of Oudh under its own authority." The warning was also accompanied with a time limit. The King was to have two years' grace to accomplish the preliminary reform that was judged necessary to the accomplishment of the others. This was to ascertain the rental of every estate, and to fix a moderate assessment for each, so that the cultivators might know exactly what was their quota of taxation. The period of the test extending to two years did not expire until after Lord Hardinge had left India.

It is quite possible that the character of the threat for non-compliance or neglect in promptly complying did not appear to be so very dreadful to the King. The earlier threat had been his political and dynastic extinction. That was comprehensible, but it had not taken place. Nearly twenty years had by this intervened, and the King still sat in his own Palace, and the atmosphere of adulation which he breathed was unchanged. Another Governor-General had appeared upon the scene and said if certain things were not done he would send his own officials to do them. The King may have even thought that this would

be not such a bad arrangement, and would save him a deal of trouble. A similar remedy was working well in Mysore. Not a word was said of the deposition of a dynasty or of the annexation of one of the largest and most important States of India. The writing may have been on the wall, but perhaps the King was not so very blameworthy if he failed to see it, or, if he saw, to read it correctly. He knew, unfortunately too well for his own security, that the policy of the East India Company had gone from one extreme to the other, and that the language of its Governor-Generals was not always uniform. He may have thought, when the indulgence of his pleasures allowed him to think on any serious matter at all, that the Golden Letter in its handsome gilding was a bright ornament, and not a Belshazzar's warning.

The period of grace expired in 1849 when Lord Dalhousie was in the seat of authority, but he was then heavily engaged in the task of providing the Punjab with a new administration, and he decided to defer for the moment extreme measures with regard to Oudh. As his predecessor had done, Lord Dalhousie again remonstrated with the King, but no improvement in the position of affairs followed. The King apparently had come to the conclusion that remonstrances were only words and meant nothing to disturb his peace of mind. He had no adviser, unfortunately, by him, able and honest enough to warn him to the contrary.

In 1851, Colonel Sleeman, the Resident at Lucknow, referred in his report to the abuses that existed in the Government of Oudh, and dwelt especially on the way in which the peasants and even the landholders were overtaxed and robbed by the officials. Still Lord Dalhousie did not move. In 1854, Colonel James Outram had succeeded Colonel Sleeman, and he was directed to prepare for the information of Government a detailed report upon the exact condition of things in the kingdom of Oudh. The report was exceedingly unfavourable, representing the situation in the province as verging on anarchy, and describing the King's government as one of reckless oppression. Lord Dalhousie was moved to take steps by

this distressful narrative, which he forwarded to London accompanied by the following despatch written in June, 1855—

"For tolerating so long the total disregard of the obligations of solemn treaty and for all the ills and human suffering which have sprung therefrom the British Government is heavily responsible. It cannot, indeed, be charged with indifference to the evils whose existence it perceived, or with neglect of all exertions to palliate or remove them. For, from the date of the Treaty to the present day, the records of Government exhibit one unbroken series of acts of counsel, of complaint, and of condemnation on the part of the Government of India and its representatives at Lucknow. By official notes, in friendly letters, through the mouth of the Resident, and at formal personal interviews, the Governor-General has urged from time to time upon the notice of the Ruler of Oudh the wretched internal condition of his kingdom; and throughout all that period at frequent intervals words of indignant censure have alternated with earnest remonstrances, with warnings and with threats.

"But the Government of India has never taken the one measure which alone could be effectual by withdrawing its countenance from the Sovereign of Oudh and its troops from his dominions. It is by these aids alone that the Sovereigns of Oudh have been enabled for more than half a century to persist with impunity in their course of oppression and misrule. Their eyes have never seen the misery of their subjects; their ears have never been open to their cry. Secure of the safety of his person—secure of the stability of his throne—each successive ruler has passed his lifetime within the walls of his palace, or in the gardens round his capital, careful for nothing but the gratification of his individual passion—avarice in the one, intemperance as in another, or as in the present King effeminate sensuality indulged among singers, musicians and eunuchs, the sole companions of his confidence, and the sole agents of his power. Were it not for the support which the Government of India is known to be bound to afford the King against

all domestic as well as foreign enemies, were it not for the constant presence of British troops at Lucknow, the people of Oudh would speedily work their own deliverance, and would impose upon their rulers the effectual check of general revolt by which Eastern rulers are best controlled.

"Colonel Sleeman thus bears his testimony to this important truth, 'I am persuaded that if our troops were withdrawn from Oudh the landholders would in one month march over them all and pillage the capital of Lucknow.' I respectfully submit to the Honourable Court that the time has come when inaction on the part of the British Government in relation to the affairs of the Kingdom of Oudh can now be no longer justified and is already converting our responsibility into guilt."

In face of these facts, cited in the reports and other official records upon which Lord Dalhousie's despatch was based, it will not be disputed that reforms were needed in the Kingdom of Oudh, and the only question left for decision was by whom and how they should be executed. The one thing certain was that the King could not be trusted to carry them out, and no minister of adequate capacity and influence was known to be available. Lord Dalhousie made three proposals for meeting the situation. They were in their order (1) the compulsory abdication of the King and the annexation of his kingdom; (2) the maintenance of the King in his Royal State and dignity, but the practical administration to be vested in the East India Company *for ever*; and (3) the surrender for a limited period of Oudh to the British Government, so that its finances and judicial system might be placed on a firm and satisfactory basis. Having stated the choice of remedies that lay open for adoption, in his opinion, Lord Dalhousie went on to deprecate the adoption of the extreme course (1) of compulsory abdication, and as his reason for so determining he stated what was perfectly true, that the Oudh family had always proved itself to be a firm and loyal ally. He, therefore, did not advise that Oudh should be proclaimed off-hand to be a part of British territory, and in supporting the second proposition he declared that "it

is my earnest counsel that the King should be permitted to retain his royal title and rank, but that he should be required to vest the whole civil and military administration of his dominions in the hands of the Company and that its power should be perpetual in duration as well as ample in effect."

The third proposition does not appear to have been made in a serious spirit, for no notice was taken of it, although it would have been, perhaps, the most just of the three. The difference between the first and second propositions related to a matter of form and not of substance. Had the second been adopted the King would have been permitted to keep his Court at Lucknow instead of passing into retreat at Garden Reach.

But Lord Dalhousie's recommendation was overruled. In November, 1855, the Court, and the British Cabinet in this instance expressed its concurrence with the decision, sent its final orders for the annexation of the Kingdom of Oudh, and with them the expression of a desire that Lord Dalhousie would himself issue the necessary proclamation to give them effect before he laid down his office and returned home. The Proclamation was published on 13th February, 1856, and the change of government was effected without disorder or any manifestation of public feeling one way or the other. Still Lord Dalhousie was himself in doubt as to how it would be received, and he expressed a fear that the enemies of the British rule in India would make use of it as a handle to stir up disaffection. His doubts and apprehensions had been growing on the subject of the state of opinion in India since the first days of his arrival in the country, when the enforcement of lapses and escheats had seemed to him the easiest and most legitimate action in the world. They had become too frequent, and now at the close of his Indian career the great annexionist, who had acquired the Punjab and Pegu, would have been glad to avoid the seizure of the Kingdom of Oudh with its tradition of unbroken loyalty to the British Government.

Although addition of territory formed so large a part, and perhaps the most prominent feature, of Lord Dalhousie's

rule, it would be wrong to conclude that he was only an absorber of Indian States. He carried out many reforms, and he indicated others which were retarded by the Mutiny and only put in operation after the transfer to the Crown. It was computed that he had added not fewer than forty million new subjects to the British Empire, and as he had to devise new and different systems of administration for that number of people this task alone would have constituted sufficient labour for the whole life and undivided attention of an ordinary mortal. But with Lord Dalhousie it was but one employment among many occupations. Among his most notable administrative creations was that of the non-Regulation Province, which admitted of the Government of newly annexed regions in accordance with the local laws and customs there prevailing, as far as was compatible with British law and order, under the supreme control of the Governor-General in person.

It was not merely in political matters that he displayed his grasp of facts and his energy in manipulating them so as to serve his purpose. In the material field he displayed the same qualities. Railways and the telegraph were introduced during his régime. In a Minute of 1853 he laid down the policy and sketched the line of action with regard to the construction of railways, that have been pursued ever since. He introduced the system of guarantee which first attracted British capital to India. He devoted as much care and thought to the improvement of Indian communications by sea as he had given to those by land. He also threw open the ports of trade and lowered the tolls which fettered the external commerce of the country. He introduced an internal system of cheap postage, and he founded the Public Works Department, assigning part of the revenue each year for its operations in undertaking works of utility. As the result of these measures he almost doubled the trade of the country, and increased the revenue by one-fourth.

Although he annexed much territory he did not add to the total number of the Sepoy Army; the returns showed that he reduced it by 7,000 men. At the same time, the

English garrison had been reduced by the withdrawal of regiments on account of the Crimean War, and consequently the proportion between it and the native army rose in an adverse sense. There is no doubt that at the moment of his quitting India Lord Dalhousie viewed the military position with considerable anxiety and misgiving.

But by this time the great Governor-General had become a physical wreck as the result of his strenuous exertions during eight years for what he conceived to be the true and higher interest of India. In 1848 he had arrived in India a young man, the youngest almost on the list of Indian rulers, full of health and strength and confidence, and now in 1856 he laid down his office as a prematurely aged invalid whose life's work was ended. When he set out on his Indian career it seemed to his contemporaries that he held the reversion to the Premiership of Great Britain in his hand. When he returned to England it was to linger for a few short years as an invalid passing from one sanatorium to another. He had given his life to India, and he was fully conscious of the price he had paid for his long and exhaustive service. Writing to a friend who had served with him in India, and whom he had left behind in that country, he warned him not to follow his example. He said: "Beware, my good friend, how you follow my stupid example, and do not remain in India when your health requires you to leave it—either from a sense of supposed duty or from any other motive. I have paid heavily for doing so."

His splendid career in India, for, whether one agrees with everything he did or not, it was splendid, inspired him with some bitter regrets at its close. Would it not have been more to his advantage, he may have asked himself in those closing hours of his life, if he had never seen India, but gone on combating in the political arena, until he had made himself the master of the situation and reached the top of Parliamentary position and fame? Much of his policy in India was not of his own making but performed "by order of the Court." He had tempered some of it, he had made all of it workable and orderly, he had achieved

great triumphs which the natural course of events, as in the Punjab and Burma, placed in his way, and above all he had systematized the working of the executive power. But he knew well that many of the acts associated with his name had raised bitter feelings and would long provide the ground for angry controversies, and that the mention of his name would give rise to as much censure as applause. In such a mood he may, perhaps, have concluded that he had given too much to India and too little to himself.

CHAPTER XVIII

WARNINGS AND PORTENTS OF THE STORM

AFTER the general peace that was reached in 1818 it was only natural that thoughtful persons should begin to consider seriously what was the true position of the Company in India, what its strength, and what its perils. In the rush of conquests, under the unceasing cares and risks of war, no thought could be given to any matter that was not urgent, no heed could be paid to the future. Those wars and conquests had been carried on by Indian troops called Sepoys for the major part, with a considerable corps of Company's European regiments and a smaller body of King's regiments, lent for service in India rather than permanently assigned as a garrison. Notwithstanding slight increases to the European elements the Sepoys continued to increase more rapidly, and the ratio of European troops to Indian steadily diminished.

It was, therefore, clear long before the Mutiny that the stability of the Company's power and the tranquillity of its dominion largely depended on the sentiments and loyalty of its Sepoys. These men were taken from different races and religions. They were recruited under different conditions, those of Bengal being for Indian service exclusively, those of Madras being for general service, which signified that they could be sent beyond the seas. In the first phase of the Company's political existence the Madras army had been the most important, but after the year 1800 that of Bengal occupied the first place in the plans of the Company. The Bengal regiments were composed in the main of high-caste Hindus who were recruited chiefly in Oudh, Rajputana, and the North-west. They were good fighters under efficient officers, but they required very careful and considerate handling on account of their caste customs. On this account many of the older Anglo-Indian officers preferred the Madras troops because they were easier to manage.

At the same time it was in Madras that the first and only serious mutiny took place in the year 1806. This incident which has been discussed, and which caused the Court in London the greatest disquietude, stood out as a permanent warning. It was the greater warning against any lightly sanctioned changes in what the Sepoys were accustomed to, because it was undoubtedly produced by an alteration in the men's headgear. With this exception, for the other instances were too trivial for notice, the loyalty of the Sepoys to their salt and their sense of discipline had been beyond praise. It was quite pardonable in their officers when the great crisis arrived to believe that they would be proof to every strain. When the test was too severe for their discipline the explanation must be sought for in extraneous causes.

It was in Lord William Bentinck's time that the possible dangers to the continuance of British rule in India began to be discussed in official documents. In his masterly but little-remembered minute of 13th March, 1835, Lord William, while minimizing all internal dangers of imminent effect, dealt in a very different mood with the possibilities of the future and assigned weighty causes for the probable changes that have now in our time produced their natural and necessary results. The great Governor-General, speaking in his military as well as his administrative capacity, wrote—

"Although no internal dangers appear in any real or tangible shape, it must be allowed when one hundred millions of people are under the control of a Government which has no hold whatever on their affections, when out of this population is formed that army upon the fidelity of which we rely principally for our preservation, when our European troops, of whose support under all circumstances we are alone sure, are so exceedingly limited in number and efficiency as to be of little avail against any extensive plan of insurrection, then indeed the truth of that expression of Sir John Malcolm is not without force, that in an Empire like India we are always in danger, and it is impossible to conjecture the form in which it may approach. This state

of uncertainty is greatly aggravated by our conditions of peace, by the spread of knowledge, and by the operation of the Press—all of which are tending rapidly as well to weaken the respect entertained for the European character and the prestige of British superiority as to elevate the native character, to make these men alive to their own rights and more sensible of their power. Of the dangers of our old position, upon which men's minds continue to harp and against which they see no security but the largest possible native army, I have no apprehension.

" But there is much more reason to fear the changes incidental to our new position, of peace and more enlightened state of mind—a higher elevation of character, knowledge, improved morality, courage—all concurring causes that must produce effects to be dealt with by a very different philosophy from that which has hitherto obtained."

Lord William's words of far-seeing wisdom may well be appreciated in these more enlightened days. His most capable and discriminating colleague, Sir Charles Metcalfe, examined the question in closer detail—

" Some say that our Empire in India rests on opinion, others on main force. It in fact depends on both. We could not keep the country by opinion if we had not a considerable force, and no force that we could pay would be sufficient if it were not aided by the opinion of our invincibility. Our force does not operate so much by its actual strength as by the impression which it produces, and that impression is the opinion by which we hold India.

" Lord William Bentinck admits that we have no hold on the affections of our subjects, that our native army is taken from a disaffected population ; that our European soldiery are too few to be of much avail against any extensive plan of insurrection. This is quite enough and more than I have hitherto alluded to, for it is impossible to contemplate the possibility of disaffection in our army without seeing at once the full force of our dangers. As long as our native army is faithful and we can pay enough for it, we can keep India in order by its instrumentality, but if the instrument

should turn against us where would be the British Power? Echo answers, Where?

"It is impossible to support a sufficient army of Europeans to take the place of our native army. Lord William appears also to adopt in some measure the just remark of Sir John Malcolm that 'in an Empire like that of India we are always in danger and it is impossible to conjecture the form in which it may approach.' This sentiment expresses the reality of the case in perhaps the truest manner. In fact we are sitting on a barrel of gunpowder in India which might explode at any moment."

At the moment that Lord William Bentinck and Sir Charles Metcalfe penned these observations the Anglo-Indian army retained its reputation for invincibility. The Sepoys under English leading had never turned their backs on a foe. But seven years later the record was dimmed in Afghanistan, and at the end of another similar period the severe struggles in the Punjab suggested that the mere weight of numbers might turn the scale in any conflict. In Lord Dalhousie's time the withdrawal of two regiments of Her Majesty's Army for the Crimean expedition increased the feeling in India that England was not so strong as she was deemed to be when she had to draw upon her resources in India to wage war in Europe. The capture of Kars by the Russians was more impressive in the eyes of the Indian troops than the fall of Sebastopol, and its effect was increased when at a very short interval it became known that Russia was again threatening Herat through the intermediation of a Persian army. With these fresh object lessons to support their arguments, General John Jacob, Sir Henry Lawrence, and others renewed the warnings of Sir Charles Metcalfe and Sir John Malcolm. They could point to one paramount fact, the immense increase of the Sepoy army from 154,000 men in 1838 to 240,000 in 1845, which latter total Lord Dalhousie, despite all his efforts, had only been able to bring down to 233,000. The English garrison all the time never exceeded 45,000 strong, and in 1856 it does not appear that it exceeded 42,000, including those serving in Persia and Burma.

It was at this critical moment that another brilliant English statesman and orator was selected to fill the post that Lord Dalhousie was about to vacate. The new Governor-General was Charles Viscount Canning, son of the eminent George Canning, ranked among the foremost of England's statesmen. He was not as young as Lord Dalhousie had been at the time of his appointment, but he was in the prime of life, not having completed his forty-fifth year. Although he could not have anticipated that his sojourn in India would be passed amid such stormy and dreadful scenes as happened, yet his speech at the Court's banquet in his honour on the eve of his departure showed that he was not blind to the dangers said to be lurking behind the nominal tranquillity of India—

"I know not what course events may take. I hope and pray that we may not reach the extremity of war. I wish for a peaceful time of office, but I cannot forget that in our Indian Empire, that greatest of all blessings depends upon a greater variety of chances, and a more precarious tenure than in any other quarter of the globe, serene as it is a small cloud may arise, at first no bigger than a man's hand, but which growing bigger and bigger, may at last threaten to overwhelm us with ruin. What has happened once may happen again. The disturbing causes have diminished certainly, but are not dispelled. We have still discontented and heterogeneous peoples united under our sway; we have still neighbours before whom we cannot altogether lay aside our watchfulness; and we have a frontier configuration which renders it possible that at any moment causes of collision may arise. Besides, so intricate are our relations with some subsidiary States, that I doubt whether in an Empire so vast and so situated it is in the power of the wisest Government, the most peaceful and the most forbearing, to command peace. But if we cannot command, we can at any rate deserve it, by taking care that honour, good faith and fair dealing are on our side, and then if in spite of us it should become necessary to strike a blow we can strike with a clear conscience. With blows so dealt the struggle must be short and the issue not doubtful."

Despite the blaze of reputed triumphs in which Lord Dalhousie departed it was with much anxiety then that his successor took over his charge. The first serious question with which he was called upon to deal rose unexpectedly beyond the borders of India.

Persia had always hankered after the possession of Herat, and in 1853 it had been deemed necessary to obtain from the Shah a pledge not to interfere in the affairs of that city and province. At this period those affairs were in a very confused state. The representatives of the old Suddozai family had been deposed and got rid of. A governor named Essa Khan had established himself in their place, and not feeling strong enough to maintain his position against Dost Mahomed of Kabul, he constituted himself the vassal of the Shah. But although a vassal he desired to retain his complete independence, and when the Shah sent an army to take over the place he closed the gates and refused it admission. This happened during the Crimean War, when, trusting to Russian aid, the Shah deemed it safe to break his promise to England. In consequence of this departure from his word, the British Minister had left the Persian capital in November, 1854. It was not till the summer of 1856 that the Shah moved an army against Herat, with the view of coercing Essa Khan into complete subjection. After defending the place for four months Essa surrendered, and was soon afterwards murdered by the Persians. On 25th October, 1856, the Persians took possession of Herat, and thus a *casus belli* was provided.

Lord Canning, however reluctant to take extreme measures, was thus compelled to sanction an expedition to the Persian Gulf. At the same time he succeeded in concluding an alliance with Dost Mahomed, based on the view that Herat formed an integral part of Afghanistan, and assuring to the Amir the reversion to its possession. Having thus secured a very useful ally against the Persians, and one whose co-operation gave assured tranquillity to the North-west frontier, preparations were made to send from the Bombay army a force to occupy the island of Kharrack, in the Persian Gulf. The command of this expedition was

given to General Outram, who was at the moment on sick leave in Europe, having broken down in health under the strain of officiating in the newly-annexed province of Oudh.

War with Persia was formally declared in November, 1856, and Outram arrived in time to take over the command early in 1857. The campaign was neither very long nor very eventful. Landings were effected on the Persian coast, and it was proposed to hold some of the southern towns until the Shah should be of a reasonable frame of mind. The Persian army was defeated in the field, and as the Shah had no longer any hope of aid from Russia, peace having been concluded with the Allies, he was not long in coming to the decision to withdraw his forces from Herat, and to sue for peace with the English. One anomaly in the Persian war may be noticed. It was carried on by the military forces of India, but the negotiations were conducted by the Foreign Office in London. A new peace was signed in Paris in June, 1857, and Outram proceeded to Bagdad to arrange the details with the Persian Commissioners. The Anglo-Indian forces then returned to Bombay. In their absence the Mutiny had begun, and the storm was developing its full fury.

Far more serious than the war with Persia was the position in the newly-annexed province of Oudh. Outram had assured Lord Canning on his arrival that all was well there, but this was only on the surface. Oudh had been misgoverned, but the introduction of reforms had only aggravated the situation. For economy the State forces of the old kingdom were disbanded; 60,000 men deprived of their livelihood returned to their homes. The Taluqdars were informed that they must follow new ways and treat their ryots better. The ryots in their want of appreciation of these efforts in their behalf, rallied to the Taluqdars and eyed the foreigners askance. The reform of the King's administration was not going to prove the easy task that had been imagined. Outram left, and after an interval Sir Henry Lawrence was sent in the hope that he might conciliate the goodwill of the provincial landowners. Within

two months his military duties absorbed all his attention, and left him no time for reforms.

But a more serious situation was being revealed in the state of the native army than that presented by the unrest among the civil population of Oudh. Soon after his arrival Lord Canning had introduced an important innovation into the system of recruiting for the Bengal Army. The Sepoys of that corps had always been recruited for Indian service alone, and being mainly men of the higher castes they were averse to crossing the "black water." In 1852 Lord Dalhousie had ordered one of these regiments to proceed to Burma, but he had cancelled it on being informed that it was exempted from general service. In 1856 Lord Canning decided that the conditions of recruiting for the Bengal army should be similar to those of Bombay and Madras for general service. This change naturally gave rise to much commotion in the ranks, and it was not known how far the men already enlisted on the old system would be affected if the regiments were ordered abroad. Fortunately no occasion arose for such a test, as no Bengal regiments were sent to the Persian Gulf. The majority of the men in the Bengal army came from Oudh, and the discontent in their homes did not tend to promote their discipline in the cantonments. The Rajput recruits were similarly affected and no less concerned about the future. But no external sign was given of discontent and the discipline of the force remained intact to all appearance. From every commanding regimental officer continued to come the assurance that "All is well!"

At this critical moment it became necessary through the development of firearms to replace the old musket, known as "Brown Bess," by the Enfield rifle. In that change there did not seem the material for a mutiny, even allowing that the Sepoys hated any change at all. But the rifles required cartridges, and factories were set up for their manufacture at several places. When the cartridges were made it was intended to train the men in the manipulation of the new weapon by degrees, but it is important to remember that at the moment of the outbreak few cartridges had

been issued, and those only for training purposes. The Bengal army had been seized with an anticipatory fear verging on panic. And why?

It was said that a low-caste workman in one of the factories had an altercation with a Brahmin Sepoy, and by way of insult told him that he was about to be defiled because the new cartridges were lubricated with the fat of cows and pigs, and that in charging the rifle he would have to bite the cartridge. The Sepoy was horrified and told his comrades, and like a flash the story spread throughout the whole of the Bengal army. If the use of the fat of cows was horrible to the Hindus, that of pigs was not less so to the Moslems. The sensation produced was far greater than that arising from the proposed change from a turban to a hat fifty years before. A single regiment at Vellore had then mutinied; now a large army exceeding 120,000 men in Bengal alone was seized with the spirit of insubordination. Some officers well acquainted with the men's temper tried to reason with them, to allay their fears, and even in the last resort to promise that the implicated cartridges should never be issued. It was in vain. Rumour having begun its course, other stories were invented as to the plans of the English and circulated broadcast. It was said that they intended to bring about a general conversion to Christianity, and that to that end neither caste nor custom would be spared. When assurances were given that these assertions were baseless and even absurd, they were met with signs of incredulity and the reply, "Every one says so." The barrel of gunpowder by this only needed a very little spark to explode.

But the insubordination of the Bengal army was mainly derivative from a conviction that it constituted the real support of British authority. Its superiority in numbers was incontestable, at least five times the total of the Europeans in the Presidency. Its armament was the same, and it was composed of horse, foot, and artillery. Even its artillery was twice the strength of the British, and the Indian gunners were picked men and of excellent material. At the beginning of 1857 the European garrison was weaker

than usual; regiments were in Burma, in Persia and in Europe that should have been in the Valley of the Ganges. The Company's European army, originally limited to 12,000 men, had been raised to 15,000, the Home Government having given a grudging assent to its increase, but all told it was computed that the British garrison did not total more than 45,000, and of these at least 5,000 were absent from India The Sepoys were to be seen everywhere. There were long stretches of country without a single European garrison. The Sepoys were not merely discontented, but they were persuading themselves that they were the true masters of the country, and that the hour to overthrow the English had arrived. No doubt designing men outside the ranks of the army fed the flames of their discontent, and turned their feelings into directions to promote their own ends. But in the first phase of the movement at least the Government had to deal with a mutiny of the Sepoys, and not with a political or national rebellion.

The most important cantonment in Bengal was that at Barrackpur, where four native regiments were quartered without any leaven of Europeans. The first disturbing incidents occurred at this place, early in February, 1857. They took the form of soldiers' meetings, and culminated in several acts of incendiarism, but for the moment there was no open mutiny. Discipline was broken, but there was no available force to punish the offenders. One of the disorderly regiments was moved up the river to the cantonment at Berhampore, near Murshidabad, with the result that might have been expected. It infected the troops there with its own spirit of insubordination. For the first time a regiment, the 19th N.I., broke into open mutiny, and defied its officers. The colonel, failing to secure obedience, consented to parley with them, and obtained a brief respite by conceding their conditions. A few days later the troops at Barrackpur were informed that they themselves might purchase the ingredients for greasing their cartridges. In face of these concessions the Sepoys naturally became more confident in their position and less amenable to control. Bloodshed was avoided, but the Sepoy

mutiny had begun. The month of February, 1857, had then just closed.

The offending regiment at Berhampore was brought down to Barrackpur for disciplinary measures. The regiment was disbanded and the men dismissed to their homes. This measure was not consummated till the last day of March, and its effect was diminished by the lack of promptitude in execution, and by the omission of sterner measures. In 1827 for a minor offence the 47th N.I. had been annihilated on the same parade ground by artillery. Two days before the 19th N.I. were dealt with another regiment, the 34th, showed still more unmistakably that the bonds of discipline had been cast aside. A Sepoy named Mungul Pandy attacked an English officer, shot his horse, and struggled with him when on the ground. The troops on parade looked on, only one man, a Mahomedan, coming to his aid. The general appeared on the scene and succeeded in restoring order. The Sepoy was arrested and hanged ten days later, and, again after a further interval of almost a month, the 34th regiment was disbanded and the men dismissed. Thus the second of the four regiments at Barrackpur was wiped off the roster. For complete effect these steps were not taken with the necessary promptness. Moreover, it was quite clear that the two other regiments should have been disarmed at the same time.

In the interval there had been some suspicious movements in Calcutta itself, fomented, as was at first believed, by followers of the Oudh family, which had taken up its residence in the City of Palaces, but the careful inquiries instituted failed to incriminate the ex-King, or any of his relatives. A plot was formed to capture Fort William, the centre of British power in India, the guard for the moment consisting of a party of Sepoys, but fortunately Colonel Orfeur Cavenagh, on learning of the plot, threw himself into the fort with half a battalion of English troops and turned out the Sepoys. A stab in the back was thus averted.

At different places farther up the Gangetic valley unpleasant and disquieting incidents were taking place. Still

farther off, Umballa was a depôt for musketry training, and General Anson, the Commander-in-chief, was there in person. In face of symptoms of insubordination, he proposed to break up the camp and send the detachments back to their respective regiments. Lord Canning, a stickler for orderly proceedings, refused to sanction this step. "If we give way on this point I do not see how we can stand on any other," was his reply, and nightly acts of incendiarism by the Sepoys were their reply. At Lucknow a cavalry regiment broke loose from control, but by prompt action Sir Henry Lawrence succeeded in disarming it.

No one in authority, and Lord Canning least of all, appreciated the full significance of what was happening. General Barnard wrote from Umballa that the troops were showing no symptoms of unrest and that their behaviour was good. Sir John Lawrence sent up similar reports from Sialkot. The colonels of half the regiments were confident that their men were staunch. General Hearsey at Barrackpur was so confident that all was ended there that he refused the aid that Lord Canning proposed to send him. But of all the authorities concerned Lord Canning was the most optimistic and confident. He proposed to send back the 84th regiment of the British Army, hastily summoned by him from Burma, to its remote place of garrison! He flatly refused the proposal of the European citizens of the capital to enrol themselves as volunteers and also their request for arms. He held the view to the last that the effervescence of spirits was merely local, and that the storm would pass over. Of all the men in the front rank Henry Lawrence was the only Anglo-Indian to perceive the true aspect of the danger. He reported that the situation in Oudh was extremely bad, and he began to place the Residency at Lucknow in a posture to withstand a sudden attack.

It is said, and it is true, that it is easy to be wise after the event, but if that statement were to be accepted without demur, then the rôle of historians would cease to exist. But in the case under consideration, the veto will not prevent my asserting that if the acts of insubordination in certain

regiments of the Bengal Army manifested at the commencement of February had been dealt with promptly, rigorously, and exemplarily there would have been no Indian Mutiny and no Sepoy War. Disarmament immediate and complete provided the sure remedy. Even its casual application served its purpose locally ; it had only to be extended generally to have furnished a full remedy.

The incidents described covered a period of three months from the beginning of February till the end of April. What was happening in India during that period ? Could it be expected that when it became known that the Army of the Company was showing signs of shaking off its allegiance that the disaffected and disappointed, those who had just grievances or imagined that they had, would not seize the opportunity of turning this movement to their own ends ? It was not in human nature that they should not rejoice. In Oudh Lord Canning had followed up Lord Dalhousie's policy by an act of confiscation. Would that make the Taluqdars rally to the side of the Government that had despoiled them ? Nana Sahib had been to England to press his claims, and he had returned disappointed. He was more vindictive than ever, and he came of a clever and vindictive race. The Rani of Jhansi was brooding over what she deemed her wrongs and to feed the flame of her resentment she had concluded an alliance of the heart with Tantia Topi, one of the ablest leaders that the long contest was to see. The greatest of all the potentates of India judged by the past, the King of Delhi, representative of the Great Mogul, was brought within the range of the intriguers. He had no special grievance against the English, certainly not more than he had had against the Marathas, or as much as he had against the Afghans, but still he could not but regret his former pre-eminence when the Emperor's writ ran from the Indus to Travancore. And now news came to him from many quarters to declare that the hour for the overthrow of the English had arrived with the centenary of Plassey, and that when they had been overthrown, no one, Moslem or Hindu, would hesitate to recognize in him their long-lost Emperor. The tale was specious, the prospect

seductive, can it be wondered at if he listened to the tempters?

The three months' delay, the hesitation of men who possessed neither grip nor grit, the lack of moral fibre and reckless boldness, turned a sporadic outbreak of military discontent into a great national upheaval when the multitude had convinced themselves that all they had to do was to turn out the English to end their mundane troubles and to attain their hearts' desire. Lord Canning had many good and some great qualities, to which a tribute may be legitimately paid at a later period of the struggle, but they were not those required to meet and end a crisis. A little less dialectic power, and a great deal more foresight, swiftness in thought and decision in action, the determination to dare and to do, would have stifled the movement at the start long before the mysterious chupatties began to pass, like a fiery cross, through the villages of Northern India. Lord Canning was not the man for the occasion. Weakness is not a crime but it works more evil. The penalty paid by the people is ever the greater in proportion to the defects revealed under trial and tribulation by their rulers whoever they may be.

CHAPTER XIX

THE STORM BURSTS

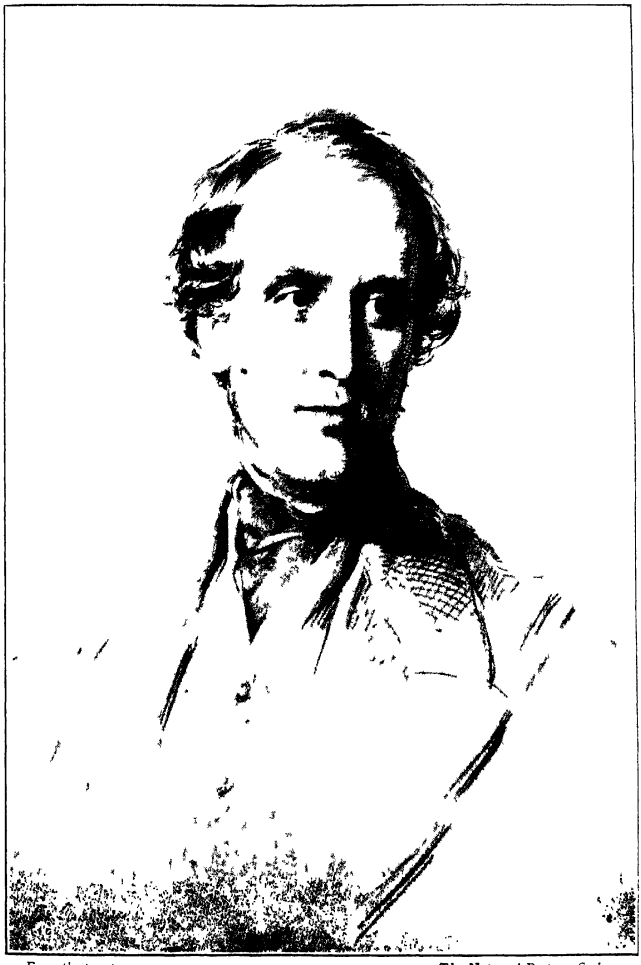
WHATEVER excuse there may have been prior to the end of April for hope that the crisis would not be intensified, was destroyed very early in the month of May. The storm had burst, and it was the more terrifying because it came from a new and unexpected quarter. Meerut was the British cantonment where a mutiny would have been deemed the most unlikely to occur, and if occurring, the most easily and promptly to be suppressed. It contained an English force of horse, foot, and artillery, and their mission was to guard and hold secure the Imperial city of Delhi. It is true that there were also three Sepoy battalions and one regiment of native cavalry.

On the last day of April there had been a first manifestation of a mutinous spirit. A troop of the cavalry refused to receive their cartridges. In older days for a less offence than that the guns would have been brought out, and they would have been blown to pieces. They were disarmed, and eighty-five of them were tried by court martial. At least the trial should have been quick in session and in judgment. The Court did not give its decision for ten days. The men were sentenced to terms of imprisonment varying from ten to five years. It was also decided that there should be a parade of the troops to witness the degradation of the culprits, culminating in their being manacled as felons, and conducted to the prison. This step, justifiable on neither military nor civil grounds, was intended to cow the Sepoys, but it had the opposite effect of infuriating them. In particular the comrades of the condemned men were enraged. They decided to rescue them from the jail, and as a forewarning of what was to follow incendiary fires occurred in the lines on the very evening of the disciplinary parade.

The next morning, while the British troops were gathering for Church parade (it was a Sunday), the native cavalry emerged from the barracks and galloped off to the prison.

The infantry regiments, after some hesitation, followed in their traces. The jail was forced, and not only the eighty-five cavalry men, but eight hundred convicts under sentence were set at liberty. Then, with passions let loose, the Sepoys turned on their officers—and all Europeans, women and children included—and murdered them wherever encountered. Notwithstanding these outrages under his eyes, the commanding officer, Brigadier Hewitt, with his very considerable corps of horse, foot, and guns, remained apathetic and looked on. Meantime, the mutineers having accomplished their main object, and dreading what they feared would be the consequences, were hastening along the road to Delhi. The English regiment of dragoons did follow them for a short distance, but having as tame a Major as was the Brigadier of the Station, they rode back again without finding the fugitives, and early next morning the mutineers reached and entered the Imperial city of Delhi.

They made their way to the Palace, they reached the Emperor's presence, and they spread the news that they were empowered to act in his name. Whether true or false it served their purpose. On all sides, Sepoys, retainers, and the rabble of a great city rallied to their side, and at that moment their sole object was the massacre of the Europeans in order to secure their plunder. Delhi was in the hands of the mutineers; but there was one building in the city, the one they most coveted, that was held by a small band of Englishmen, an officer and eight men all told. This was the magazine with its stores of powder, shot, and shell, sufficient to equip a large army in the field. The mutineers and their new found associates swarmed to the assault in their thousands, but they had to deal with a man of a different temper from Brigadier Hewitt and Major Rosser. Lieutenant George Willoughby determined that whatever the rebels did they should not secure the magazine, and the men stood by him. He laid the train to the magazine, he let the assailants swarm into the place, and then at his signal his sergeant applied the torch. The explosion was terrific; two thousand of the assailants perished with the heroic defenders.



From the painting in *The National Portrait Gallery*

THE EARL CANNING

If there had been a wise man among the leaders of the mutiny he would have found in this incident a truer augury of the issue than in the halting decisions of courts martial, or the craven spirit of the two commanding officers at Meerut. But, for the moment, the loss of Delhi was an irreparable blow. Not merely had the mutineers acquired possession of the historic capital of India, but the English had lost a fortress which might well have been held against all comers, and which formed the cardinal point in their line of communications with the North West. Lord Canning declared that Delhi must be promptly retaken, and he sent instructions accordingly to the Commander-in-Chief, Sir George Anson, then at Umballa. But to decree and to accomplish are two different things, and the general replied that he did not think he possessed the means of recapturing so strong a place. Urged by the representations of Sir John Lawrence as to the perils of delay at that moment, General Anson gave orders to march for Delhi, but a fortnight had elapsed, and three days after the troops set out General Anson died on the way. The command passed to Sir Henry Barnard. The advance to the capital continued, but the siege train was left behind.

Meanwhile, the strong force at Meerut had remained inactive. It had not stirred since the fatal Sunday on which the murder of Europeans had commenced. Nothing would induce General Hewitt to move hand or foot. He declared that he would await the coming concentration of the British forces, and from his inaction it is hardly to be wondered at if the boasts of the Sepoys from Meerut, that they had destroyed the European troops at that station were generally believed. But when the news of General Anson's march arrived there was no longer any excuse for holding back, and accordingly the bulk of the force at Meerut, under the command of Archdale Wilson, set out to join hands with the main corps on reaching Delhi.

This was on 27th May, and three days later they encountered a force from Delhi prepared to dispute the passage of the Hindun stream. The Sepoys were driven off, but they returned the next day in greater force, and with some

cannon. They were again defeated, but saved their guns, and the English troops suffered from the heat. The successes on the Hindun provided evidence of what might have been done by the Meerut brigade, if it had only pursued the mutineers on 10th May to Delhi.

On 7th June Archdale Wilson found Barnard halted 6 miles outside Delhi, in front of a strong Sepoy position at Budlee-ka-serai, with thirty guns of heavier calibre than the British field pieces. At the beginning of the action the Sepoys made a stout defence, but when the line of bayonets got within reach of their bodies they fled precipitately, leaving their thirty guns to the victors. No delay occurred in following up this success. On the same day as the battle the British troops occupied the Ridge looking down on the city. The spectacle served to reveal something of the full difficulty of the task to be achieved. The strength of Delhi was only realized when it became a question of its recapture. It was quite clear that the Governor-General's wish that a quick and decisive blow should be struck there was not within the bounds of possibility, and that the exaction of a terrible revenge for what had happened, would have to be left to the future. Difficult as the task was seen to be on the morrow of the battle of Budlee-ka-serai, no one foresaw with sufficient clearness that the siege would cover a period of almost four months.

Before the end of May English regiments had begun to arrive at Calcutta. The 2nd Madras Fusiliers, under Colonel James Neill, an able officer, had come from Madras to join the 84th; others were expected. The greatest difficulty was to move these troops up the river Ganges in good time to save the several cantonments along its banks from being overwhelmed, whilst as yet the mutiny remained in what has been called a state of suspension. Of these cantonments the most important were Benares and Cawnpore. Neill and two companies of the Fusiliers were sent to Benares, where they arrived on 4th June, and preparations were made at once to disarm the Sepoys. Neill knew what he had to do, and he was the first to show the uncompromising firmness which could alone save the situation.

He found counsels of moderation in favour, and he had to listen to proposals to propitiate the Sepoys. It was pointed out to him that there were 2,000 Sepoys in the city, and that to oppose them were only his 250 men, 30 gunners, and 3 guns. He was not to be moved by these fears. He decided to disarm the Sepoys and to do so without a moment's delay. The Sepoys were paraded, they threatened to attack, they began firing, and then Captain Olpherts brought his guns to bear on them with well directed rounds of grape shot. The story went that the guns got so hot from repeated discharges that the gunners stopped firing, whereupon the young officer threw himself astride one of the barrels exclaiming, " Will you fire now ? "

Above Benares, in the fork of the rivers Ganges and Jumna lies the important city and fort of Allahabad. The arsenal of Allahabad was the most important base on which British power reposed in the heart of northern India, along the main route of communications from Calcutta to Delhi. The garrison of Allahabad was wholly native, but it was quartered not in the city but in a cantonment, two or three miles distant from the fort. Such, however, was the faith of the English officers in their men that it was proposed to move one Sepoy regiment inside the fort. The civil authorities saw more clearly than the military, refused to trust the Sepoys, and instead collected the whole of the European community inside the fort. On 6th June the regiment that was regarded as so faithful as to be trusted with the custody of the fort mutinied and murdered sixteen of its officers. There were only fifty invalid soldiers in the fort, and these and the armed civilians succeeded in disarming the Sepoys who had formed part of the guard. The whole native city rose in emulation of the Sepoys, and every white person and even every native Christian was massacred amid circumstances of indescribable cruelty. But the fort was saved.

In a few days Neill, the pacifier of Benares, arrived to re-establish authority and to exact vengeance. The terror of his name went before him, and the offenders knew what they had to expect at his hands. His measures were as vigorous as they were prompt, and his opponents were

beaten before they were encountered. He turned the guns of the fort on the city, and threatened to destroy it. The threat cleared the place of its inhabitants. Then Neill pursued the horde of rebels to their lairs in the surrounding villages, and spared none of the Sepoys who had murdered their officers. Of the murderers of unarmed men, women, and children, few escaped to tell the tale. The first measure of the Great Retribution which was to continue for two years had been enacted. Then General Neill effected the withdrawal of the surviving women and children to Calcutta, and the fort continued to command the city and the river crossings.

It is now necessary to turn to Lucknow and Cawnpore. Sir Henry Lawrence had shown by his prompt disarming of the insubordinate cavalry, and by his measures of defence, that he fully realized the character of the crisis with which he had to deal. Even before the news of Meerut he had begun his preparations for placing the Residency in a posture of defence, and it may be said of him that he alone of all the men in India of the first rank was in no sense taken unawares. The whole of the European community of Lucknow was gradually collected within the limits of the Residency and its grounds. It stood on elevated ground above the river Goomtee, and it possessed a secure and copious supply of water. Besides the Residency, Lawrence occupied the detached position of Mutchi Bhawn, which commanded a bridge over the river. In the building he placed a detachment of a few English troops, all the Sikhs, and other Sepoys on whom he felt he could rely, and he also provided them with some cannon. The Sepoy regiments under suspicion were collected in the contonment of Murriaon, and their movements were carefully watched to prevent the possibility of their effecting a surprise. The rest of the time before the outbreak was occupied in strenuous efforts to collect supplies and to strengthen the weak points of the Residency. Lawrence felt that with Delhi lost the retention of Lucknow was more than ever indispensable.

He was still busily engaged in this task when the Sepoys at Murriaon mutinied. A regiment of Sikh cavalry did not

join the mutineers, and some sections of the infantry also refrained from doing so. These were moved down to Cawnpore. But Sir Henry Lawrence had not sat down tamely under the defiance of the Sepoys at Murriaon. He had attacked them with guns and rifles and dispersed them in all directions. It seemed then as if the worst of the peril at Lucknow had passed off. At least a respite of nearly four weeks had been obtained. It had also been ascertained by practical proof that there were loyal elements in India. Some ex-army pensioners offered their services, the Sikhs whom Henry Lawrence knew well were conspicuous for their fidelity and devotion, and the encouragement afforded by their co-operation afforded a moral force of priceless value.

From Lucknow the story passes to Cawnpore, the town on the Ganges which formed the natural base of Lucknow. Sir Hugh Wheeler was in command there, and his force consisted of 3,000 Sepoys, while all the Europeans, including invalids, totalled no more than 300. At an early stage of the movement he had received a reinforcement of 50 Europeans, but these he had passed on to Lawrence, judging that he must be in the greater need. He was not blind to his own peril, however, and as a precautionary measure he prepared a defensible position outside the town on the river bank, and then Sir Hugh did an inexplicable thing which revealed a very simple and unsuspecting mind. He appealed to Nana Sahib for his help in preserving the British hold on the city of Cawnpore!

At that moment Nana Sahib had revealed nothing as to his intentions, but it was notorious that he cherished many grievances, and that he had been to England to bring about if he could a reversal of the decision in India. Still social civilities had passed between him and the English officers at Cawnpore. He had been their guest at the Mess, and they had been entertained at Bithoor. These trivial acts were allowed too much weight, and insensibly, perhaps, they biased the judgment. At all events, Sir Hugh Wheeler, a chivalrous and unsuspecting old gentleman, requested the Nana to be good enough to guard the magazine and Treasury within the town of Cawnpore. The Nana complied willingly

enough, and on the same day, 22nd May, the Europeans withdrew into the prepared position in a state of confusion, verging on panic. For twelve days the situation remained calm, and nothing happened, but on 4th June the Sepoys of the garrison mutinied, seized and plundered the magazine and Treasury, and announced their intention of marching for Delhi. Had this plan been carried out the name of Cawnpore might never have become infamous.

But Nana Sahib intervened to induce them to serve his own designs, and he persuaded them that far more plunder and profit was to be acquired in Cawnpore and its neighbourhood than at far-off Delhi. To that end the preliminary was to capture the position to which the European community at Cawnpore had retired. This position was no more than a hastily improvised and weak entrenchment, On 6th June, two days after the first outbreak, the mutineers began the attack with a heavy bombardment. For nineteen days without cessation that fire was kept up, and the heroic garrison did not yield. But provisions were giving out, and although heavy losses had been inflicted on the assailants the defenders themselves were reduced to the last gasp by starvation, and no sign of aid from any quarter could be discerned. At this critical moment Nana Sahib sent in an emissary offering a safe conduct for the garrison to withdraw to Allahabad, and to provide the boats required for the purpose. Notwithstanding his treachery, which had become patent to all the world, Sir Hugh accepted the offer. He may have felt that there was no alternative, but his reasons for accepting the proposal can never be known. He may even have expected treachery, but not so black as what befell this most unfortunate party.

The men and the women and children bearing visible marks of suffering and starvation reached the boats at the Ghat, entered them confidingly in the expectation that they would bear them to safety, and no sooner had they taken their places than a brisk and sustained fire was directed upon them from the river banks. Defence was impossible—it was a mere butchery of those who were helpless. After the firing had gone on for some time Nana Sahib ordered

that no more women or children were to be shot, and they to the number of 120 were carried to a building—the Beebeeghur—within the town. All the men were killed except four, two officers and two privates, who by their escape were able to relate what had happened at Cawnpore down to 27th June. Of the worse atrocity that followed they and no one could speak for no witness survived.

On 15th July when the avenging troops of Havelock had got so close to Cawnpore that one more victorious rush would carry them into it, Nana Sahib ordered the butchery of the women and children, whose numbers had been swelled to two hundred by captures at Futtehghur and elsewhere, and when his own Sepoys refused to execute the order he called in the butchers of the town to perpetrate the foul deed. There had before this been many murders and much treachery, but the Cawnpore tragedy was the first horror, and the infamy of the Nana far surpassed that of any other leader during the struggle. Even at this lapse of time it is difficult to write calmly of the butchery of the helpless women and children at Cawnpore, and the Memorial Well will stand for ever as a reminder of the foul deed, and as a warning against over-confidence. No age and no people are entirely free of the stigma of having produced human monsters of cruelty, but in the black list none will be given a higher place than Nana Sahib of Bithoor.

The loss of Cawnpore entailed the isolation of Lucknow, and warned Sir Henry Lawrence that the period of the enemy's inaction had expired. He had good reason for congratulating himself that he had been left undisturbed for so long. The respite had given him more time to complete his preparations. It also reduced the period of waiting for the arrival of the relieving force, which sooner or later was certain to arrive. On 29th June the approach of the mutineers was signalled, and Lawrence called in the small body of troops he had left at Murriaon after dispersing the Sepoys at that cantonment. He then decided to move out with a portion of his force to meet the advancing enemy. He took this step with the view of feeling their strength and testing the steadiness and fidelity of his own native soldiers.

At the same time the movement was somewhat risky, and as it turned out almost produced a disaster.

The battle of Chinhat was fought on 30th June, and although the troops were somewhat disheartened by the miscarriage of their supplies of food, it looked at first as if they were about to gain a decided success. But a weak point existed in their position, and the Sepoy leaders were quick enough to see it. A thick wood could not be occupied on account of the small number of the force, and the enemies hastened to seize it, and having seized it made a vigorous attack on the flank of the British. There was no means of saving the column except by a prompt withdrawal into the Residency. During the retreat some of the natives deserted to the rebels, who following up their success gained an entrance into the city where they were at once joined by the inhabitants.

After this incident Sir Henry withdrew the garrison of the Mutchi Bhawn, which was blown up, and concentrated his system of defence within the Residency alone. His garrison numbered 1,000 Englishmen and 700 natives, chiefly Sikhs. Of non-combatants there were 40 old or wounded men, 240 women, and 320 children among the Europeans, as well as 700 native Christians. The supplies were ample, and lasted till the close of the siege.

Three days after Chinhat a shell burst in Sir Henry's bedroom, mortally wounding him. With his dying breath he exhorted his successor, General Inglis, to stand firm to the end, and as he expired he uttered the modest and memorable words, " I have tried to do my duty."

The siege of the Lucknow Residency which began on 1st July, continued without intermission till 25th September, or for nearly three months. The attack was carried on with heavy guns and mines, but the defence stood firm, and only one breach was effected, and when the besiegers attempted to storm at that point they were repulsed with heavy loss. Only one battery also was silenced, that commanded by the building known as Johannis' House in the city. When this was destroyed by a successful countermine the silent battery was restored, and resumed firing.

Notwithstanding their most desperate efforts the mutineers, whose numbers increased daily from the men of the disbanded Oudh army, did not obtain a single success; but when the long-looked for succour at last arrived, the garrison was in almost a desperate position, for the siege had been prolonged beyond all the estimates of its possible duration.

The command of the relieving force was entrusted to General Henry Havelock. He had under his orders the remains of the two battalions first sent up the river in May by Lord Canning, and two others intercepted at Singapore while on their way to China. Two others were expected from the Persian expedition, which had by this concluded. Having got together as strong a brigade as was possible at Allahabad, Havelock began his advance above that place towards Cawnpore on 30th June. He had only covered a short distance when the news of what had happened at Cawnpore was brought him, and he halted to mature his plans, the necessity for extreme haste no longer existing. He resumed his march on 7th July. At that moment his force was composed of 1,400 Europeans and 560 native troops, and he had a small body of horse, made up of 20 English volunteers and 95 natives. The bulk of the native infantry were Brasyer's Sikhs, who had done well in the defence of Allahabad. The exact strength of the enemy was unknown, but it undoubtedly amounted to many thousands, and the season was the hottest of the year, and consequently the most trying for Europeans.

About half-way on the Grand Trunk Road to Cawnpore the mutineers attempted to stop the advance at a place called Futtehpore. The following action was fought on 12th July, and resulted in their complete defeat. Three days later, having been strongly reinforced, they made a stand at Aong, and on being driven out of that position, they made a further stand on the same day at Pandoo Nuddee with the same result. These two last battles were fought on 15th July, but the mutineers had still considerable powers of resistance. The contingent of native cavalry had proved unreliable, and had been disarmed and dismissed; and after the three opening battles Havelock had

only 1,100 English, and 300 Sikh effectives left. With these he fought and won, on 16th July, the final battle which gave him possession of Cawnpore, but only to learn of the butchery that had been consummated on the previous day. The completeness of the success was also dimmed by the Nana's escape.

Too late for Cawnpore, Sir Henry Havelock felt bound to push on for Lucknow, where no one knew what had been happening. A small reinforcement reached him from Bengal, and leaving 300 men with Neill to hold an entrenchment erected to cover the best crossing of the Ganges—here one and a half miles broad—he landed on the northern bank with a column all told of no more than 1,500 men. His first advance began on 29th July, and the very next day he had two severe fights with the mutineers at Oonao and Busherut Gungee. These successes were neutralized by an outbreak of cholera among his men, and by bad news from Neill. The Sepoy regiments at Dinapore, which most culpably had not been disarmed, had mutinied, threatening the line of communication with Calcutta, and causing serious delay in the arrival of the promised reinforcements. Under these circumstances Havelock had no choice but to return to the Ganges, and on 12th August he felt compelled to re-cross the river and take up a defensive position at Cawnpore. There he remained until 20th September, waiting for more troops and fresh supplies to resume his advance. The most striking incident of that period was his defeat of the Nana, and the destruction of his palace at Bithoor, but again the Nana escaped.

At this moment Sir James Outram, having returned from Persia, was appointed to the supreme command, civil and military, in Oudh, but with a fine spirit he declined to deprive Havelock of the honour of relieving Lucknow, leaving him in command until that task had been accomplished.

Havelock's second advance began on 20th September, the force with him amounting to 2,400 English and 800 Sikh soldiers. After three days' march and one severe action, the force reached the Alum Bagh on 24th September, and here the troops received the cheering news that Delhi had been taken.

The next day the relieving force won its way through to the Residency, entering the place by the Bailly Guard Gate, where the gallant Neill was killed at the head of his men. The relief of the Residency was only complete in one sense. The garrison had been reinforced, but Outram who now took over the command, decided that all that could be done at that moment was to continue to hold the Residency, and a somewhat more extended position along the Goomtee. The later events at Lucknow will be considered in their place, but it is now necessary to describe what had been happening during these last three months at Delhi.

When the British force under General Barnard reached the Ridge above Delhi, some of the more hot-headed talked of an immediate assault, but wiser counsels prevailed, and it was decided to entrench a position and await reinforcements and the siege train. Reinforcements continued to come in from the Punjab, and before the end of June the force on the Ridge had been raised to 6,500 men; but the number of fresh adherents for the mutineers and of other defenders of the city, raised the strength of the enemy still higher even in proportion.

A brief reference must be made to the position in the Punjab. Every one felt that the immediate issue depended on what happened in that great Province so lately annexed and inhabited by brave races and fierce warriors. A story was current that when one of the loyal chiefs in Bengal was told of successes elsewhere he asked, "What news from the Punjab?" and when questioned as to his anxiety about that quarter he replied, rolling up his scarf to suit the words, "The Punjab lost the mutiny will roll up in a flame."

Sir John Lawrence, the reputed strong man of Anglo-India, was Chief Commissioner of the Punjab. He was more than that, he was a despot in authority who would listen to no one. But the qualities of men are tested in critical moments, and by this test the strength of Sir John Lawrence was made to appear no better worth than the weakness of a child. He proposed to meet the peril by an act of surrender of unsurpassable folly. He suggested to the Governor-General on 12th June, that the Afghan Amir, Dost Mahomed,

should be invited to aid the British, and that Peshawar and the rest of the region on the right bank of the Indus should be entrusted to his defence, with the accompanying promise that eventually the Indus would be considered the boundary between Afghanistan and India. It seems almost incredible that any man who knew the Punjab should have proposed to do a thing which would have alienated the loyalty of the Sikhs for ever, and created a new Afghan peril, the development of which no man could measure or foresee. But strange as was this aberration of judgment, it was accompanied by a suppression of adverse opinion which deserved a harsher term. Every officer in the Punjab and on the borders, from Herbert Edwardes downwards, protested against the step, and exposed its folly from one point of view or another. But in his message to the Governor-General, Sir John Lawrence omitted all reference to this fact. The prospect was dark, but there was no need to make it darker by suppressing other intelligence. Lord Canning has the credit of vetoing the proposal on his own inspiration, and with regard to the suggestion of the Indus he observed caustically that he had never heard of a river proving a satisfactory frontier.

The situation within the Punjab had steadily improved. Those regiments which were in the slightest degree open to suspicion were disarmed. The loyalty of the Sikhs in the territorial corps as in the regular regiments was established. The great ruling chiefs of the Phulkian families, Patiala, Kapurthala, Nabha, Jind, and Faridkote, had from the very morrow of the outbreak thrown in their lot with the English, and helped in every way to support the maintenance of the established authority. Gulab Sing of Cashmere was foremost with the foremost, and prepared his contingent to come down into the plains. The Mahomedan tribes of Mooltan, on the investigation of the Nawab of Bahawalpur, recruited for active service, and even clansmen from the Khyber came in to join the new corps. Thwarted in his pet project, John Lawrence resorted to masterly inactivity, and proposed to do nothing to strengthen the force before Delhi.

But there was a finer spirit, and a stronger will among his subordinates than his own. There was John Nicholson. He pressed the counsel on the Commissioner that the moment called for a display of self-confidence, and above all of boldness.

"Be bold, be bold, and evermore be bold!"[1] He pressed it every day and every hour of the day, and at last the Chief Commissioner sanctioned his departure with a movable column of rather less than 2,000 men, which brought up the force on the Ridge to a total of 8,000.

In the interval several changes had occurred in the command of that force. General Barnard died of cholera, his successor, General Reed, was invalided shortly afterwards, and Archdale Wilson took up the command. Encouraged by the long delay in making any attack on the city, the mutineers and their allies, who by this numbered together 30,000 men, assumed the offensive, and made several attempts to carry the Ridge, but all of them were repulsed with loss to the assailants. The siege train was at last approaching, and realizing that an attempt would be made to intercept it, Nicholson moved out with a lightly equipped column to protect it on its way. His anticipations were verified, and he came into contact with the rebels at Nujufgurh, where he inflicted upon them a severe defeat, taking nineteen of their field guns. This was on 25th August, but the batteries were not in a position to begin bombarding the city walls and gates before 11th and 12th September. By this time the strength of the attacking force had been raised to 14,000 men, but of these one-fourth were in hospital.

After two days' firing practicable breaches were declared at several points, and preparations were at once completed for the storming of the city. The assault was entrusted to four columns, with a fifth column in reserve. Three breaches at the Cashmere and Water Bastions, and the Cashmere Gate, which was blown in by the engineers at the moment of the assault, were assigned to the first three columns, while the fourth, under the command of Colonel Charles Reid, who had held Hindoo Rao's House, the most

[1] Spenser's *Faerie Queene*.

exposed point on the Ridge, with the Sirmoor Goorkha battalion, was to attempt to carry the Lahore Gate. The first three columns were completely successful, the fourth failed through its commander receiving a severe wound from which he lost an eye at the crucial moment of the attack. The fifth or reserve column came to the aid of the first at the moment that its gallant leader, John Nicholson, received what proved to be a fatal wound. The success had been dearly paid for, as the English loss amounted to sixty-six officers and eleven hundred and four men killed and wounded.

At this moment hesitation was exhibited, and counsels of timid caution were again to be heard, but thanks to the energetic protests of the dying Nicholson, supported by Neville Chamberlain and Baird Smith, the positions gained were held, and an advance into the city decided upon. This commenced on 19th September, and was completed two days later, when the whole of the city and the person of the old Emperor were in the hands of the victors.

The Emperor was sent down to Calcutta, and eventually he was interned in Burma, where he passed the closing years of his long life. His two sons were captured by some of the cavalry, outside the city, while attempting to escape and summarily shot by Captain Hodson. The majority of the Sepoys who escaped from the carnage made their way to Lucknow, which had become their last rallying point.

While these events had been in progress in northern India there had been some important occurrences in central India, where a separate nucleus of insurrection had been formed. The Maratha States of Gwalior and Indore were compelled under various Treaties to pay for contingents for the maintenance of order in that quarter. Although they were officered by Englishmen they were less under their control than the regular Sepoy regiments, and the traditions of Maratha prowess and power were not dead in their midst. The rulers of both these principalities at this time were young men without much experience. There is no reason to suspect either of treachery, but certainly they were unable to control the troops nominally under their command. At Gwalior worse scenes occurred than at Indore. The

contingent at Morar murdered their officers and many helpless women and children, but although the Maharaja openly threw in his lot with the English, he was unable to stem the tide of disaffection, and compelled to seek shelter in his own fortress. In the end the greater part of the Gwalior contingent marched off to join Nana Sahib at Bithoor, but the Maharaja's feudatory troops did not mutiny till a later period.

At Indore it was the Maharaja's own troops who got out of hand, and attacked the Residency, but the Resident and his staff succeeded in reaching Bhopal territory without any loss. At the adjoining cantonment of Mhow the Sepoys mutinied, and several officers were shot on the parade ground. The mutineers and the insubordinate troops of the Maharaja marched for Delhi, where they participated in the events described. Some of the minor Maratha Chiefs were implicated in the insurrection, but the Mahomedan Chiefs of Central India, Bhopal, Tonk, and Jaora, stood firm on the British side, and gave material aid of various kinds. The Gaekwar also was conspicuously loyal, and so were all the Chiefs of Guzerat.

The recovery of Delhi and the relief of the Residency at Lucknow marked the turning point in the great struggle. The storm had burst on an unsuspecting and unprepared administration, but it had now spent the worst of its force. The contest was far from over, but the final issue could no longer be in doubt. The remainder of the expeditionary force to China had been diverted to Calcutta, the troops in Persia had returned to Bombay, and strong reinforcements were on the way from England. New leaders were coming out to take the place of the old, and plans were being pressed on on every side to bring the matter to a speedy and completely satisfactory termination.

CHAPTER XX

THE TIDE TURNS

THE capture of Delhi enabled the Government to turn its main attention to Lucknow. Notwithstanding Havelock's relief of the Residency, the position there remained of extreme gravity, and every day saw an increase in the number of the insurgent forces until at the last they numbered not fewer than 120,000 men, and these were more or less trained soldiers either in the British army or in those of the native States. In many of the details of military craft they were as skilful as any to be found elsewhere. Outram had, as explained, extended the defences of the Residency to include a portion of the river bank, and he had also reoccupied the Alum Bagh on the other side of the river, which Sir Henry Lawrence had abandoned before the opening of the siege. The Alum Bagh was of importance not only for commanding the bridge over the Goomtee, but also for keeping open communications with Cawnpore. Although in such overwhelming numbers, the mutineers remained quiet and desisted from attacking. It is true that firing took place daily, but the results were of no importance. The garrison had sufficient stores of provisions, but none the less they were closely beleaguered, and all their communications with the outer world were cut off. And in this manner the month of October passed away, and the lull continued till half the month of November had expired.

Sir Colin Campbell, who had done so well in the Sikh war at Chillianwalla and Goojerat, and who had afterwards commanded the Highland Brigade in the Crimea with much distinction, had by this arrived in India to take up the post of Commander-in-Chief, and the supreme direction of military operations. He was a first-rate fighting leader, but not an able general, and he was also impatient of advice and preferred to follow his own way. Sometimes extremely rash, he was more usually over-cautious, allowing opportunities to pass by him unutilized, and while he was never

over-elated by success he was sometimes unduly discouraged by a check to his plans. Having made the necessary arrangements to hold Cawnpore in security, as he imagined, with a garrison of 1,000 men, he began his march at the head of a force of 5,000 men. He would have been more deliberate but for a message from Outram that the Residency could not hold out beyond 18th November. The increased garrison had placed an unexpected strain on the supplies.

He decided on his own line of advance, rejecting the advice of his chief engineer officer, Major Goodwyn, to follow that taken by General Havelock. The result was that he had to traverse very difficult country, affording the enemy many favourable localities for making a stand, and they were quick to seize them. Consequently Sir Colin had to fight several stiff actions in which he suffered considerable losses, and his movements were further hindered by the charge of his wounded. However, he reached the Alum Bagh on 12th November, and there he was confronted with the problem of how best to reach the Residency and then to withdraw the garrison. At this early stage of the campaign it had become clear to him that with his small force it would be impossible on this occasion to do more than secure a complete evacuation of the position.

It was necessary, in the first place, to establish communications with the Residency because Sir Colin had no precise knowledge as to the positions of the garrison and of the enemy. The necessity of providing this information had occurred to Outram, but it was deemed impossible for any one to make his way through the intervening lines of the Sepoys, and death seemed the certain portion of anyone attempting it. However, a non-combatant, Dr. Kavanagh, undertook the task, and after many hair-breadth escapes he succeeded in reaching the Alum Bagh. Contact being thus established, and the line of action decided upon with regard to the most effective co-operation, Sir Colin began his attack on that portion of the city which flanked the Residency. The date was that named by Outram as the limit of the garrison's power of resistance, viz. 18th November.

There was much stiff fighting, but the mutineers were driven through the streets for some distance back from the Residency, and the evacuation of the position that had served as a bulwark for six months with all its occupants, combatants and non-combatants, was successfully accomplished. On the first day of the relief occurred the historic meeting between Colin Campbell, James Outram, and Henry Havelock within the walls of the Residency.

The new arrangements were based on the retention of the Alum Bagh alone, of which Outram was left in charge with a force of 4,000 men. Alarming news was then coming up from Cawnpore, and Sir Colin had to start on his return march on 27th November. Before describing the events that had been passing, and were still to pass, at Cawnpore one concluding incident in the story of the defence of Lucknow must be described. The heroic Havelock, worn out by the long strain and hardships he had undergone since he took up the command at Allahabad, succumbed to a sudden attack of illness on 28th November, a few days after the concentration at the Alum Bagh. He had accomplished his part in the suppression of the Mutiny with admirable thoroughness and skill. He had not been a favourite of fortune in his military career, and he had not been pushed to the front by some powerful patron or influence. His chance came to him late in his professional life, but he was equal to the occasion, and his will always be the most commanding figure among the leaders of the English during the Mutiny. The opinion has been often expressed that if he had been given the supreme direction of the war he would have brought it to a quicker and more brilliant conclusion than the slow and hesitating Sir Colin. There were great possibilities about James Neill and John Nicholson, both cut off in their prime, but in the aged Havelock, the war produced, if exception be taken in favour of Sir Hugh Rose, its best tactician and strategist.

Colin Campbell got back to Cawnpore just in the nick of time. Windham, who had been left with a thousand men to hold the place and to keep secure the bridge of boats that had been thrown across the Ganges, had been induced

to leave his position and to march to encounter a force advancing from Gwalior, over which Tantia Topi had assumed the command. This force was far more formidable than Windham had imagined ; it numbered 25,000 trained men and was led by the ablest of the rebel leaders. Windham was repulsed in a two days' action, 27th-28th November, and retired behind his entrenchments, while the rebels again occupied the city of Cawnpore. This was the news that led Colin Campbell to hurry back to the Ganges.

He arrived in time to secure the bridge of boats, but before he could deal with the enemy he had to arrange for the conveyance of the civilian survivors from the Residency, and the sick and wounded of his own force to Allahabad. This took several days, but early in December he was ready to deal with Tantia Topi's force. The second battle of Cawnpore, fought on 6th December, resulted in a decisive victory and the dispersal of the Gwalior troops. The Nana Sahib, who was present on the occasion, succeeded in again escaping. The result of this battle was that Cawnpore ceased to be a weak spot in the position for the remainder of the war.

All thoughts were now turned to the recovery of Lucknow, and with the arrival of fresh troops from England Sir Colin found himself at the beginning of February, 1858, in command of an army of 20,000 men with 120 guns. At this moment a great ally appeared on the side of the English. The Goorkha regiments in the British service had made a great name for themselves by their valour and constancy. They were the dominant race in the Himalayan kingdom of Nepal, and at this juncture its virtual ruler, Jung Bahadur, was bringing down an army of 10,000 of his own troops to take his share in the capture of Lucknow, and the restoration of order throughout Oudh. The whole army swelled by this corps, a naval brigade under Sir William Peel, and a division under Brigadier Franks, now totalled 30,000 men with 164 guns. The attack was timed to commence on 5th March.

The main idea of the attack was to drive the defenders through the city, leaving them one free exit alone, that to

the west, when the very considerable body of cavalry forming part of the force held in reserve for the purpose was to swoop down upon and pursue them. The plan seemed well conceived, but like many other combinations in war it miscarried at the last moment. Outram led the attack into the city. The defenders occupied a series of walled palaces and public buildings, which they had converted into detached forts. The fighting continued during four days and no mercy was shown on either side. On one of these days Outram succeeded in advancing farther into the city than was deemed probable, and he urged Sir Colin to defer the main attack no longer, as so favourable a moment was not likely to recur. But Sir Colin's caution would not permit him to move, and it was not till 9th March that he delivered his main attack south of the river. The most terrific fighting of the whole struggle thereupon ensued. The Sepoys stood their ground to the last, knowing that if they could not hold Lucknow they would have no chance in the open. In the palace of the Begum Kothi 2,000 Sepoys were bayoneted by the 93rd Highlanders and the Punjabis. Step by step, yard by yard, the assailants forced their way onwards, and another five days of the struggle were recorded.

On 14th March Outram requested permission from his Chief to force the iron bridge, which would have given him command of the western side of the city and thus completely hemmed in the defenders, who would then have had no choice between surrender and extermination. But Sir Colin, with his usual caution and slowness, sent back word that "he was not to make the attack if it would cause his losing a single man," which was equivalent to a negative. The consequence of this order was that Outram with no very formidable obstacle left in his path, and virtually master of the situation, was restricted to the passive rôle of a looker-on, while Sir Colin continued his frontal attack upon the remaining positions in the City, suffering much unnecessary loss. The street fighting ended on 15th March, and it was now the turn of the cavalry to play their designed part. At first the cavalry were sent

along certain roads in the belief that the fleeing Sepoys must take them as their line of flight. They did not, they carefully avoided them. A large number of the Sepoys crossed the Goomtee and passed through a gap in the encircling line that had either been overlooked or left unguarded. Finally, on 18th March, the cavalry, under Brigadier Campbell, completely failed to find the bulk of the fugitives, who had slipped away through the West Gate as was expected. The consequence was that the capture of Lucknow did not carry with it the expected destruction of its garrison. As a force, as a single unit, the Lucknow defenders were broken up, but the many thousands who escaped were able to carry on in detached bodies irregular and sanguinary warfare for another year.

Recriminations for this failure were many and bitter. Sir Colin Campbell threw all the blame on the cavalry and their brigadier, but discriminating historians have had no difficulty in deciding that Sir Colin was primarily responsible for the failure of his own plans by refusing his assent to Outram's proposal to storm the iron bridge and thus turn the flank and rear of the Sepoys' defences.

We may now turn to another scene of the drama. The Governor of Bombay, Lord Elphinstone, was an exceedingly able man, one of those born to show their best qualities in critical times. He was calm and confident in the worst moments, and knew how to inspire others to follow his example. It is true that the Bombay troops remained staunch and that the feudatory chiefs of that Presidency gave no trouble. The Raja of Sholapore was the one exception, and he was easily suppressed. A plot for an insurrection was formed by some sections of the Bombay community. He watched and waited till it was on the point of being hatched and then he cast the official net over the offenders. He also knew how to discriminate. He rejected the tales that Holkar was in sympathy with the mutineers, and knew how to avail himself of that Chief's loyal co-operation, which he pronounced invaluable. It was a pity for the termination of the struggle that Lord Elphinstone and Lord Canning could not have changed

places. Lord Elphinstone's rôle was confined to sending troops where they were most needed, and in providing the men for an expedition across India that was to help largely in giving a decisive turn to the long protracted struggle.

Among officers of experience in England who volunteered for India in the summer of 1857 was Sir Hugh Rose. He had a brilliant record in the Crimea and the Near East, but no experience in India, or of Indian troops, yet it was mainly with Indian troops that his brilliant campaign in Central India was conducted. In September, 1857, he was appointed to the command of the Poona Division of the army which Lord Elphinstone was consolidating out of the best materials available in Bombay. This division was eventually merged in the Central India Field Force, with which a second division commanded by General Whitlock was to co-operate. General Whitlock's force belonged to the Madras army, and it was unavoidably slow in reaching its appointed station. At this time the whole of Central India was a focus of hostility, with the exception of the Mahomedan principalities that have been named, and Sindhia had been obliged to shut himself up in his rock-palace at Gwalior while his army remained quiet for a certain period in the cantonment of Morar.

The plan of campaign which Sir Hugh was directed to carry out was to march across Central India from Mhow to Calpee—a distance of 1,000 miles—and to join forces there with the corps operating from Allahabad and Cawnpore. Sir Hugh Rose reached Mhow early in January, 1858, and before the end of the month he defeated the Raja of Banpur, the principal rebel in these parts, at Barodia, and captured his strong fort of Rathgarh, the first of a succession of strong forts and natural fortresses which marked the long line of march in front of the expedition. At this stage Sir Hugh Rose was joined by a Bhopal contingent of 800 men. Unlike the armies in the north, the Indian element preponderated in that of Sir Hugh, who had only one Englishman for three Indians, and thus the loyalty of a large portion of the Indian community was affirmed. His troops were also composed of men from the Bombay army, which the

authorities in Bengal affected to place on an inferior level to those of the North.

The capture of Rathgarh was followed by the reduction of many others of the same class, and also by the relief of one weak British garrison, which had been holding out for eight months on its own limited resources.

If the Raja of Banpur had been confident of holding Rathgarh, he was still more so of making a successful stand in the Maltun pass, which he had strongly fortified. But he did not know the man he was dealing with. Instead of running his head against the Maltun position, Sir Hugh evaded it by capturing the neighbouring pass of Mundenpore. It also was held by a strong force, but by skilful manoeuvring the position was carried with little loss. That of Maltun was hastily abandoned, when its defenders discovered that their flank was turned and their line of retreat commanded. At this stage several regiments of the Hyderabad Contingent arrived to reinforce the column, and they rendered excellent service during the rest of the campaign.

The most difficult part of the operations now commenced. The strongly-fortified town of Jhansi was held by 11,000 men under the Rani of that place. Sir Hugh appeared before it on 20th March, and set up his batteries for a regular siege. The bombardment had gone on for a week when the approach of a large relieving army under the ubiquitous Tantia Topi was reported. Although it was said to number at least 20,000 men, Sir Hugh moved out with 1,500 men to meet it, and gained a brilliant victory on the banks of the Betwa. Then retracing his steps, he ordered the capture of Jhansi by storm, the bombardment having effected several practicable breaches. Jhansi taken, with heavy loss to the defenders and comparatively little to the assailants, the onward march across Bundelkhand was resumed, and Tantia Topi was found at Kunch prepared again to hazard the chance of a battle. He met with no better fortune, his army being driven out of a strong position, and the Hyderabad cavalry distinguished itself in the pursuit. The Rani and Tantia joined hands for what seemed a final stand at Calpee, but they again suffered

a signal defeat. Calpee occupied, the original plan of campaign was fulfilled. By this time Sir Hugh Rose's health had broken down, and he resigned his command to which Sir Colin Campbell appointed Sir Robert Napier as his successor.

At this moment the opinion was generally held that the Rani and Tantia Topi were reduced to a state of helplessness, and that no more would be heard of them except as fugitives. But the Rani conceived a fresh and daring scheme. Deprived of her own territory and the strong bases she had possessed in Jhansi and Calpee, she resolved to acquire another in the strong rock fortress of Gwalior, where the Maharaja Sindhia was still in residence, although kept in what was tantamount to honourable confinement by that portion of his forces which remained in the Morar cantonment. On the approach of the Rani, who was accompanied by Tantia Topi, Sindhia ordered his troops to oppose them, but they refused, and without firing a shot joined hands with the new-comers. While Sindhia and his minister, Dinkar Rao, fled to Agra for British protection, the Rani declared Nana Sahib as the Peshwa from the rock on which Gwalior stands, and summoned all the Marathas to join his cause. So far as the Indian Mutiny ever justified the designation of an Indian rebellion, it was in the support accorded to it by the Marathas worked upon by the traditional claims of the Peshwa personified in Nana Sahib, and by the undoubted courage and energy of the Rani of Jhansi and her henchman, Tantia Topi. The Marathas had once flattered themselves that they were to be the masters of India, and by participating in the Mutiny they imagined that their old ambition might be revived.

Sir Hugh Rose had resigned, but this recrudescence of his lately-vanquished foes was too much for his observance of strict official procedure. Despite his bad health and physical feebleness, he resumed the command, collected all his detachments and marched for Morar. On 16th June he captured the Morar cantonment, and on the following day defeated the Rani, who was killed fighting at the head of her troops. Hers was one of the few heroic figures revealed on the rebel side, and it was a pity that she had not

found a better cause. Four days later the Gwalior fortress was stormed, but its capture was mainly due to the discovery of an unknown gate giving access to the interior of the fort. Tantia Topi again escaped from the fray, and prolonged the contest until the end of the year, but he met with no successes. For the first three months of the year 1859 he was a fugitive without a following, and in April he was betrayed by one of his hosts, who sent him as a prisoner to Captain (afterwards Sir Richard) Meade. He was tried by court martial and sentenced to be hanged, being granted at his own request a respite of a few days to write out his reminiscences of the war. He was the only rebel leader who revealed any comprehension of the larger measures of war. His execution took place on the very day appointed for a public thanksgiving for the suppression of the Mutiny.

Of the other prominent persons in the revolt there remained only the most execrated and notorious of them all to be accounted for, Nana Sahib. It was believed that he was among the fugitives from Lucknow, and that as the pacifying columns under Hope Grant and Franks moved northwards he was with those who fled fastest towards the least accessible division of Nepal, and when the last of the pursued had been driven into the Terai at the end of the year 1858 it was reported that the Nana had died there. The report was regarded as true in official circles, but rumours were circulated from time to time in after years that the Nana had been seen at different places. These stories were run to ground for the most part and either disproved or discredited.

In 1874, however, a wandering fakir of strange appearance and no ascertainable record was arrested in Central India within the territory of Maharaja Sindhia. He was definitely charged with being the Nana, and placed under arrest. A court of inquiry was appointed, and some witnesses who had known the Nana were invited to see him, but they failed to identify the prisoner with him. Others came to the conclusion that allowing for the lapse of time and the sort of life he must have led during that long

period he might be the person incriminated. The only thing clear and certain was that the individual was half-demented, and after being kept under arrest for some time he was released and passed into oblivion. The incident served to strengthen the earlier conviction that the Nana Sahib had not died in the Terai, that it was even dubious whether he ever fled in that direction, and that the probability was that he had found Brahminical shelter in some isolated spot as the representative of the Peishwas.

A few words may now be said about one part of the North-west frontier, which lay outside the range of authority of the Punjab administration. The province of Scinde forms the southern prolongation of the Punjab to the mouths of the Indus and the great port of Karachi. This division of the Frontier districts was under the charge of a commissioner, who during the Mutiny was Mr. (afterwards Sir) Bartle Frere. In command of the forces, which were all locally raised, was General John Jacob, and under these superior officers was a band of very capable military and civil officers, who formed what was called the Scinde School in contradistinction to that of the Punjab. There was no fear of any local disturbance or rising once General Jacob, by visiting Khelat, had signed an agreement with its Khan, to ensure his co-operation in raising Baluchi regiments, and it became Sir Bartle Frere's chief object to detach thoroughly trustworthy troops northwards to help the Punjab authorities in holding the trans-Indus districts in security. Sir John Lawrence, in speaking of the aid he had received from this quarter, declared that " Mr. Frere could not have helped me more if he had been a commissioner in the Punjab itself."

Of General Jacob's military talent the highest opinions were held, but for some reason he was kept within his own special province, and given no wider opportunity of displaying the skill with which he was generally credited. His premature death in December, 1858, of fever, served to reveal the devotion of the Baluchis, whom he had gradually weaned from their lawless life on an unsettled border, to become models of discipline and faithful loyalty. Few

Anglo-Indian officers were ever more deeply mourned for by their men.

One scene more must be referred to. Every one considered on the first outbreak of the Mutiny that the attitude of the Nizam would decide the course of events in the Presidency of Madras, where the cavalry of the army were almost entirely Mahomedans. In 1854 the office of Minister had been taken over from his uncle by the Nawab Salar Jung. He was a man of great sagacity and thoroughly devoted to the interests of his Prince, which was more than could be said of some of his predecessors. The Nizam of the day was Afzul ud Dowla, and among his courtiers were some who held opposite opinions to those of the Minister. But fortunately Afzul ud Dowla listened to the wise counsels of his Minister, and all went well. The peace of the Deccan was assured, any hostile elements there may have been in Madras received no outside encouragement, and the regiments of the Hyderabad Contingent, alone among all the contingents of India, were employed with the Anglo-Indian troops and rendered excellent service during the campaign in Central India. The value of the Nizam's co-operation was recognized after the conclusion of peace by the restoration of the Raichur Doab, and other concessions.

To sum up with a few general conclusions on the subject of the Mutiny, its causes and its suppression, it may be declared with regard to the former that the British authorities were very largely to blame for their own troubles, for the chief cause at least of their aggravation and extension lay in the over-confidence and persistent short-sightedness of the English officials, both civil and military. They carried the natural and often essential belief in their paramountcy as the supreme power to that inordinate degree of self-satisfaction when the simplest and most obvious precautions are neglected and the rules of common sense are defied. By the clearest laws of human nature the natives of India could not be deemed likely to be wholly content with their subordinate position under a foreign sway, and yet the Sepoys who were taken from those peoples were

assumed to be animated by a loyalty and devotion to their military chiefs as great as if they were recruited in England.

At the very moment when these views were most uppermost, the discipline of the Sepoys was relaxed by their having wrested concessions from the Government in respect to several matters of minor importance it is true, but still closely affecting their own status and the restraint of discipline. They had also begun to appreciate their superior numbers in all its significance, and as it was admitted by several eminent British authorities they had little difficulty in convincing themselves that their support was indispensable to the existence of what could not but be in their eyes a foreign government. At the same time, they had become dissatisfied with their position—the men with their pay, the officers with their prospects. The period of peace following the last Punjab war looked like continuing indefinitely because there seemed no enemies left to be encountered, and peace signified the loss of batta, the extra pay which had been so long enjoyed as to make it seem part of the regular daily allowance. Peace carried with it the further peril which always attends inaction in non-national or mercenary armies, and the peril increases with its size and numbers. Another cause of discontent with the Bengal army in particular was the introduction of general service, which altered the terms of their enlistment without regard to their principles and prejudices, or without leaving them a say in the matter. These were the real irritants or causes of excitement in the minds of the Sepoys, and to them must be attributed the Mutiny in Bengal.

The greased cartridges, which had not been distributed at the time of the first ebullitions, and which the Sepoys had no objection to use themselves after their insubordination became general, were an extraneous matter that served the turn of intriguers by giving them a lever with which they might work on the credulity and passions of the native soldiery. Every political agitation fixes on some badge or token as a signal for action. To some degree and in particular places the "greased cartridges" may have served to excite the Sepoys to a pitch of frenzy; but the allegation

that the English intended to convert the Indians to Christianity by force was employed just as freely, and may have answered the purpose of the originators of trouble more effectually. These incitements might have produced local scenes and risings, but the general mutiny of an army can only be explained by the deeper causes mentioned which had been in operation long before the introduction of the Enfield rifle had been thought of.

The causes of the suppression of the Mutiny are as simple as they are clear. The chief of them might be summed up in a single sentence—the superior fighting power and endurance of the British soldier. The struggle continued during the greater part of two years, and for that protracted period the vigour, energy and morale of the soldier were subjected to the rudest possible strain by the climate and disease, while the opposition of a well-drilled and well-armed adversary, often at least ten times superior in numbers, had to be overcome. If ever the phrase is justifiable that long trial of strength might be described as "a soldier's battle."

There were very few brilliant strokes of generalship to supplement the efforts of the men and the regimental officers who led them into action, and they were those delivered by Havelock and Hugh Rose. As leaders who inspired their men with confidence and who, once launched in pursuit of their foe never gave him breathing space, Franks, Napier (afterwards of Magdala) and Hope Grant confirmed their previous reputations. James Neill and John Nicholson, slain at Lucknow and Delhi respectively, attained the position of popular heroes, and Henry Lawrence indicated by his example the way in which the rising he had foretold should be put down. The band of men who, under the leadership of John Lawrence, kept the Punjab in tranquillity and turned it from a grave menace into a tower of strength, may claim a large share in the credit of the suppression of the great revolt. For similar reasons Lord Elphinstone, Bartle Frere, and General John Jacob are entitled to not less praise for their good work throughout the Bombay Presidency.

But while the claims of the English to praise for their courage and constancy in what regarded from any point of view was a great national calamity, the loyal allies within India herself must not be overlooked. No one will deny the claims of the Sikhs to the first place. Those latest adversaries of the British Raj having buried their enmity, proved themselves "faithful among the faithless." The Maharaja of Cashmere sent his troops to Delhi; Patiala and the other Cis-Sutlej States were prompt at the start, and long enduring to the end. Sikh regiments were regarded like English at Lucknow and elsewhere. The alliance of Jung Bahadur of Nepal was most valuable. It was ensured, as was said, by the impressions made on him by the visit he paid to London during the Great Exhibition of 1851. The Gurkha regiments proved as solid as the rocks of their native land in daring and devotion. Last but not least, there was the conspicuous example of loyalty and confidence set by the Nizam, and his great Minister, Salar Jung, to all the Faithful.

CHAPTER XXI

THE TRANSFER TO THE CROWN

THE Indian Mutiny had one inevitable consequence. It entailed the transfer of the responsibility of governing India from the East India Company to the Crown, thus ending the dual system which had been introduced by Pitt in 1784, and placing the British Parliament in sole and supreme authority. In July, 1857, Lord Palmerston brought the subject to the Queen's notice, representing the inconvenience of the dual form of government, and in the following months the question was examined by a Committee of the Cabinet. From their Report a Bill was drafted which was presented to Parliament in February, 1858, and it was made clear that the general sense of the two Houses was in favour of the transfer. But the Company was prepared to make a fight for the maintenance of its position, more especially as only a few years had expired of what was considered the renewal of its old Charter. Some fully qualified persons supported their contention, on the ground that it would be somewhat risky in the midst of a great crisis such as prevailed, to subject administrative questions in India to Party discussions in the House of Commons. Even Lord Canning looked upon the proposed change at that particular moment with a dubious eye. The formal protest of the Company against its supersession was supported in the House of Lords by Earl Grey, and in the Commons by Mr. Thomas Baring. It claimed much merit for the company's rule, and also declared that the acquisition of India at all was entirely due to the Company's efforts. John Stuart Mill was engaged to draw up the most powerful plea he could frame on its behalf.

Sir George Cornewall Lewis was entrusted with the task of disposing of the fallacies on which these claims were based. A very slight historical retrospect, he said, sufficed to expose the futility of these assumptions. As for the pretensions to administrative excellence, he declared that

there had never been a worse government than that of the East India Company from 1758 to 1784. Its good character had been earned since Parliamentary control had compelled it to be careful. Pitt's Board of Control had secured the much-needed subordination. Dundas had completed it in 1793. The petition fallaciously assumed, he declared, that the government of India, since the battle of Plassey, had remained unchanged, but in truth there had been one continuous change, a continuous absorption by the State of powers which could not be safely wielded by a Corporation. On the last occasion of the renewal of its Charter a third of the Directors had been made nominees of the Crown. The Mutiny, though not attributable to the existing system, showed how clumsily it worked, and what delays it involved. The existing arrangements merely threw obscurity on the seat of power. Parliament, by which all improvements had been effected, was becoming daily more conscious of its responsibilities in the matter, and it was expedient that with the responsibility should go the outward semblance of authority. These were the arguments, ably set forth by Sir George Cornewall Lewis, that influenced the House of Commons, and Lord Palmerston summed up the situation by declaring: "I am not afraid to trust Parliament with an insight into Indian affairs, Parliament will do fully as well as the Directors."

A few weeks after the introduction of the Indian Bill Lord Palmerston was defeated on the "Conspiracy to Murder" Bill, arising out of the Orsini affair, and resigned office. Lord Derby formed a new Conservative Government, and as several of its members, notably Lord Ellenborough, had been very critical of Lord Canning's procedure considerable uncertainty prevailed as to the course of events. But with regard to the Indian Bill submitted by Lord Palmerston it was recognized that as the House had committed itself to the principle of the transfer the question could not be shelved, and a new Bill, with a few modifications of the first, was presented to Parliament. One of the changes, due to Lord Ellenborough's fantastic views, was to assign the election of one-half of the eighteen members of the proposed

Secretary of State's Council to five of the great trading centres in England. Queen Victoria expressed surprise at such a strange procedure, and recorded her disapproval of it. When it was brought before the House of Commons Mr. Bright and other members of the Liberal Party subjected it to severe criticism. Lord Derby then came round to the Queen's view, and Lord Ellenborough resigned, being succeeded by Sir Charles Wood. Finally, the Bill was passed into law on 2nd August, 1858.

The changes effected by the measure were principally those of form. The President of the Board of Control became a Secretary of State, with undivided authority and responsibility, and the Court of the East India Company, with its President and Directors, disappeared from history. To assist the Secretary of State with advice and information a Council of India, composed of eighteen members, was to be appointed, their work to be entirely of a non-public and confidential character, and entailing no responsibility. The Secretary of State was left full power to adopt or reject the recommendations of his Council. In the first phase of its existence, at least, the Council was believed never to have gone beyond its province as a source of information.

In October, 1858, the text of the new law, and of the Royal Proclamation which was to accompany the publication reached India. By the same mail Lord Canning received the letter informing him that Queen Victoria had appointed him her first Viceroy of India. The Queen had taken a leading part in the drafting of the Royal Proclamation; the first text submitted for her consideration did not seem appropriate for the occasion. She requested Lord Derby when framing a new one for her approval " to bear in mind that it is a female Sovereign who speaks to more than a hundred millions of Eastern people on assuming the direct government over them, and after a bloody war giving them pledges which her future reign is to redeem, and explaining the principles of her government. Such a document should breathe feelings of generosity, benevolence, and religious toleration, and point out the privileges which the Indians will receive in being placed on an equality with the other

subjects of the British Crown, and the prosperity following in the train of civilization."

The Proclamation finally drawn up and published with fitting ceremonials in India on 1st November, 1858, was in strict accordance with these instructions. Intended primarily as a message of peace in the present and a guarantee of justice to all the peoples of India in the future it announced that Her Majesty had taken upon herself the government of the territories in India, which she had entrusted to the East India Company, and called upon all her subjects in India to bear true allegiance. Lord Canning was to be her first Viceroy and Governor-General, and it confirmed all officials of the East India Company in their appointments. It also guaranteed the scrupulous maintenance of all treaties and engagements made with the Native Princes, promising that the rights, dignity, and honours of Native Princes would be respected by the Queen, and guarded from infringement as jealously as her own.

Then followed a noble paragraph, written it must be borne in mind, while the clash of arms still resounded, of which the exact text is given, because it stands for ever as the first charter of the rights of the peoples of India within the British Empire—

"We hold ourselves bound to the natives of our Indian territories by the same obligations of duty which bind us to all our other subjects, and those obligations by the blessing of Almighty God we shall faithfully and conscientiously fulfil. Firmly relying ourselves on the truth of Christianity, and acknowledging with gratitude the solace of religion, we disclaim alike the right and the desire to impose our convictions on any of our subjects. We declare it to be our Royal will and pleasure that none be in any wise favoured, none molested or disquieted, by reason of their religious faith or observances; but that all shall alike enjoy the equal and impartial protection of the law; and we do strictly charge and enjoin all those who may be in authority under us that they abstain from all interference with the religious beliefs or worship of any of our subjects on pain of our highest displeasure. And it is further our will that,

so far as may be, our subjects of whatever race or creed be freely and impartially admitted to offices in our service, the duties of which they may be qualified, by their education, ability, and integrity, duly to discharge."

With regard to those who had taken part in the Mutiny, the Queen promised pardon to all who had been misled by false reports and designing men, and who now desired to change their attitude, and promise future obedience. Lord Canning had taken the first step towards condonation of the past, and assurance for the future in his Proclamation to Oudh. The Queen confirmed it, and carried the measure of reconciliation further by promising her royal clemency to all offenders, except those convicted of an active share in the murder of English men, women, and children. To other less active participators in the Mutiny, those who had concealed mutineers, etc., the punishment imposed was to be always short of a capital sentence, and a large mitigation was to be accorded to those who could show that they had been the tools of more extreme and designing men. Finally, the Proclamation announced " unconditional pardon, amnesty, and oblivion, of all offences " to those in arms who returned at once to their homes, and resumed their peaceful pursuits. The time limit for these concessions was fixed at two months, that is to say, before New Year's Day, 1859.

The policy enunciated in the Royal Proclamation was in full accord with that which Lord Canning had advocated and followed himself. In his reply to the Queen's letter of appointment as her first Viceroy of India, he had written " with his humble obedience " that " it is Lord Canning's earnest hope and prayer that as long as this high function shall be in his trust it may be administered in a spirit not unworthy of your Majesty, and that when he shall deliver it again into your Majesty's hands, it may be found to be without spot or stain from any act or word of his."

Immediately after the final fall of Lucknow, Lord Canning had issued a Proclamation to the people of Oudh embodying the terms upon which he invited the population of the insurgent province to come in and participate in its pacification. Moderate and considerate in its terms on the question

of punishment by death, it imposed the confiscation of all proprietary rights in the land, but at the suggestion of Outram, who was the titular Commissioner, the qualifying words were added that this penalty was to be enforced with indulgence, and that it would be entirely remitted on prompt submission or for other valid reasons. This order of what appeared to be wholesale confiscation was severely criticized by Lord Ellenborough, then President of the Board of Control, but as he criticized without having seen the qualifications by which the order was accompanied his censure lost half its force. The momentary dissent to Lord Canning's proposals was effaced when it was realized that no penalty could be found for the general insurrection of the Oudh Taluqdars between drum-head court martial and confiscation, that Lord Canning chose the milder penalty, and that even that could be averted by prompt submission.

When the censure reached him, and it was widely circulated before it could reach him, Lord Canning resisted the natural impulse to resign. He did so on public grounds, as set forth in his dignified rejoinder—

"No taunts or sarcasms, come from what quarter they may, will turn me from the path which I believe to be that of my public duty. I believe that a change in the head of the Government of India at this time, if it took place under circumstances which indicated a repudiation on the part of the Government in England of the policy which has hitherto been pursued towards the rebels of Oudh, would seriously retard the pacification of the country. I believe that that policy has been from the beginning merciful without weakness, and indulgent without compromising the dignity of the Government. I believe that wherever the authority of the Government has been re-established it has become manifest to the people in Oudh as elsewhere that the indulgence to those who make submission, and who are free from atrocious crime, will be large. I believe that the issue of the Proclamation which has been so severely condemned was thoroughly consistent with that policy, and that it is so viewed by those to whom it is addressed. I believe that policy, if steadily pursued, offers the best and

earliest prospect of restoring peace to Oudh on a stable footing.

"Firm in these convictions I will not, in a time of unexampled difficulty, danger, and toil, lay down, of my own act, the high trust which I have the honour to hold, but I will with the permission of your Honourable Committee, state the grounds upon which these convictions rest, and describe the course of policy which I have pursued in dealing with the rebellion in Oudh. If when I have done so it shall be deemed that that policy has been erroneous, or that, not being erroneous, it has been feebly and ineffectually carried out, or that for any reason the confidence of those who are responsible for the administration of Indian affairs in England should be withheld from me, I make it my respectful but earnest request that I may be relieved of the office of Governor-General of India with the least possible delay."

It might be said at the most that the issue of Lord Canning's Proclamation was slightly premature, for the escape of nearly 100,000 armed men from Lucknow, however broken in spirit, to find shelter in the northern districts of the vast province, could not but be attended with a species of terrorism over the local landowners as long as they remained in their neighbourhood. But as those bands and groups were pressed forward, reduced in numbers by an incessant guerilla warfare, and gradually disposed of in one way or another, the Taluqdars came in to make their submission in ever increasing numbers, and to sue for the indulgences that were promised in the Proclamation.

Within eighteen months of the Proclamation, Lord Canning held a Durbar at Lucknow (October, 1859) for the Oudh Taluqdars, at which he was able to express his conviction that the tranquillity of the province had been completely re-established, and that in no part of India was opposition to the Government less likely to occur. These happy results he attributed chiefly to the introduction of a simple system of administration, a light assessment of the land revenue, and the measures whereby the Government had been able to confer on the Taluqdars a permanent and hereditary title in the estates which had been restored to

them. With few exceptions the Taluqdars attended the summons to Lucknow. Further proof of the success of Lord Canning's policy was afforded when a deputation, composed of nineteen of the largest landowners, waited on him at Calcutta in April, 1861, to convey their appreciation of the lenient terms conceded them at the close of the Mutiny, as well as for the restoration of the privileges which had been curtailed at the time of the annexation by his predecessor.

In his reply, Lord Canning felt able to assert that: "No part of Hindostan is more flourishing or more full of promise for the future than Oudh. The ancient system of land tenure has been restored, but it has been placed on a new and clear foundation. The preservation of the great families of the soil has been encouraged and facilitated. The rights of the humble occupants have been protected. Garrisons have been reduced, police diminished. The country is so tranquil that an English child might travel from one end of it to the other in safety; so thriving that its people have been the most prompt and liberal of all the natives of India in responding to the cry of their famishing brethren of the North West."

A totally unexpected incident created considerable anxiety, and much surprise at the end of the year 1859. By one of the clauses of the Royal Proclamation it was notified that the men of the Company's European army would be taken over by the Crown, and allowed to merge themselves in the Regular army with a bounty. They numbered at the moment something about 12,000 men, and the authorities never doubted that the offer would be accepted by the great majority. To the great surprise of every one concerned, the opposite took place. The troops clamoured for what they called their rights, represented that a breach of their terms of engagement was being committed, and violated all the rules of discipline by public meetings and noisy demands. For a moment things wore an ugly aspect, and a serious "White Mutiny," as it was termed, was threatened. One soldier was hanged for insubordination, but threats failed to restore order. At several stations an angry collision was

narrowly averted, and at last the Government, as the only way of restoring peace, granted the men their discharge and their passage to England. Their expectation of receiving the bounty, however, was not gratified, but the State lost the services of 10,000 well trained and experienced soldiers, who could not be easily replaced.

Among the causes of the unrest in India which produced the Great Mutiny had been the enforcement of the right of lapse through the curtailment of the privilege or custom of adoption failing direct male heirs. This had, beyond all doubt, produced a feeling of great dissatisfaction in the breast of every ruling Chief of Hindu race, great and small. The course taken, which was a change of earlier practice, had been the policy of the East India Company, rather than of Lord Dalhousie, who was in this matter merely their executant, and now that the Company was gone it behoved the Crown to declare that that course was gone too, if it was to attain its end of restoring confidence among the Indian Princes. They had to be reassured not merely as to their own tenure of their States, but also as to their due transmission in accordance with the customs and practices of their religion.

Lord Canning selected the occasion of a Durbar at Cawnpore to announce that the British Government would henceforth recognize properly authenticated adoptions on the failure of natural heirs as applying to sovereign rights, as well as to personal property. A month later the same assurance was given at Agra in the presence of many of the greater princes, including Sindhia; thus making it clear that the Crown had no desire to continue the annexing policy of the Company at the expense of those who were entitled to share in the government of their portions of Indian territory. No concession could have excited greater satisfaction, or given rise to louder or more sincere expressions of joy. A great cloud was lifted from the horizon of the Feudatory Chiefs, who breathed freely again in the conviction that what they held they would continue to hold as long as the British Raj might last.

To complete the effect of this pronouncement, Lord

Canning had the personal satisfaction of extending the range of the concession. At a Durbar held for the Cis-Sutlej Sikh Chiefs at Umballa in January, 1860, Lord Canning announced that, as a reward for their consistent loyalty and conspicuous services, the Queen conferred on them the right of adopting male heirs in default of legitimate successors, a privilege which they had not possessed under any of their former rulers. The last of the post-Mutiny Durbars was held at Jubbalpore in Central India, when Holkar and other Maratha princes were received and thanked for their loyal services in contradistinction with the proceedings of some of their contingents, as well as of their own armed forces. The reversal of one of the salient features in what was generally described as Lord Dalhousie's policy was then completed.

Perhaps Lord Canning's greatest difficulty was in restoring something like normal relations between the two communities of Calcutta. In this task he received invaluable assistance from Sir Bartle Frere, who was well known in Western India for his conciliatory efforts to bridge the chasm that separated Europeans and Indians even before the Mutiny. Sir Bartle joined the Viceroy's new Council shortly after the Proclamation, and proved himself a sympathetic coadjutor in Lord Canning's efforts to appease the ill will that prevailed. Time was needed to remove the bitter feelings among the Europeans, as well as the sense among the Indians that they lay under a personal ban of suspicion, if not of hatred. Lord Canning endeavoured to mete out justice with an even hand on both sides. In a new regulation it was enacted that Europeans, as well as Indians, should have a licence to bear arms, thus placing them on an equality.

The financial situation in which the Government found itself at the end of the Mutiny was exceedingly embarrassed, and no one on the spot was able to propound a remedy. Forty millions sterling had been added to the debt, and the cost of the army was increased by ten millions annually. The garrison of India had to be reconstituted. In the Company's time the Sepoy army had been six times as large as the European, and it included an equally strong force

of artillery. The margin of safety in the future required a very different arrangement. It was decided that the proportion should be one-third European and two-thirds Indian, and that the artillery should be exclusively European. At the same time the system of recruitment was radically changed. The old high caste Sepoy was no longer welcomed, the regiment ceased to be the resort of families passing down from one generation to another, and finally battalions were subdivided into companies of different races and religions. Men of special races considered apt to arms were favoured. Sikhs, Pathans, Dogras, Goorkhas, and hillmen generally were attracted to the colours, and it was not for another thirty years that Marathas were regarded as safe material. In some aspects the new Indian army was superior to the old, but in one particular the need of economy led to a perilous change. The battalions of the Company had a corps of twenty-four British officers attached to each of them, but in the new force the number was reduced to seven or eight. In the later wars in Afghanistan and on the North-west frontier, it sometimes happened that the whole body of British officers were killed or disabled at the beginning of an action. This measure, adopted in consequence of financial stringency in the first place, was not intended to be permanent, but no means have been found since of procuring the necessary funds out of the annual Budget for reverting to the old numbers.

The most serious problem was that arising from the financial situation. The paramount need was to discover fresh sources of revenue, and to reorganize those which were in existence. Lord Canning could get little help from any of his colleagues. Their first proposals to introduce a system of licensing trades and professions excited alarm and created distrust. Lord Canning wrote home describing the dilemma in which he was placed, and requesting the services of one of the most experienced financiers of the day. Mr. James Wilson, who had filled responsible posts at the Boards of Control and also of Trade, was sent out to India in that character.

Mr. Wilson was the first to hold the position of Financial

Member of Council, and he left an example that has provided his successors with an animating example. The work he accomplished in less than two years before he was struck down by the climate and overwork was colossal. He reoganized the whole of the customs services, introduced on workable lines an income tax and a licence duty, and created a State paper currency. By these efforts a good beginning was made in the direction of providing a revenue, but little could be accomplished in the way of reducing expenditure, owing mainly to the cost of the new army, and the need of replenishing the arsenals. In 1861 Mr. Wilson's health broke down, and he was compelled to return to England. His successor, Mr. Samuel Laing, was able, in some measure, to reduce the burden of the military expenditure, and thus to bring an equilibrium in the budget at least within sight.

The greatness of Lord Canning's character, and the true nobility of his mind, were revealed in the stress and storm of the Mutiny. Alone among his contemporaries he preserved a calm discriminating power of judging events, and a rigid adherence to the principles of justice. In the first phase he would not tolerate irregular or illegal procedure, and in the second he displayed a desire for clemency and conciliation, when all around him the air resounded with nothing but ruthless and unsparing calls for vengeance. He was attacked on all sides for his moderation, his removal was demanded by secret intrigue and innuendo, as well as by public addresses and appeals, and whatever he did was pronounced wrong in itself, or worse in the doing. The storm of detraction and vilification raged round him during the whole of the crisis, but he remained unmoved, and pursued his way unheeding. It was only when the term of his office was nearing its close that opinion veered round in his favour, and that his critics began to realize that he had been wiser than they were. Mr. Wilson, the Finance Minister, summed up in admirable words the work he had done, and the example he had set for others to follow during the long period of a struggle without precedent in the world's history—

"The future historian of India, when recording the

occurrences of the last three years, if he be a man of fine discrimination, will dwell with pride upon the fact that at that moment India was governed by a nobleman who never in the midst of the greatest peril allowed his judgment to be swayed by passion, or his fine sense of honour and justice to be tarnished by even a passing feeling of revenge. For perhaps the first time in any Asiatic war, Lord Canning adopted throughout the whole of the campaign the most scrupulous principle of integrity. Whatever service was performed, whatever provisions were supplied, were strictly paid for, and when, under the vigorous administration of the Punjab contributions were exacted, the obligations have all been acknowledged and faithfully repaid. However much such a mode of conducting a campaign may add to its present expense, the statesman who pursues it is far more than repaid in the permanent stability which he thus gives to an Empire. I cannot but believe that we are already reaping the benefits of it in the great repose which has spread itself over India, and which I am convinced will enable us to deal the more effectually with our present financial difficulties."

In November, 1861, Lord Canning had the inexpressible grief to lose his wife by a swift and sudden attack of fever. This noble and gracious lady had shared the anxieties of her husband, and lightened his labours by her devotion and encouragement. She displayed during the worst moments of the crisis a rare and inspiring courage, and set an example of moral fortitude to all, and many needed it. Her death was regarded as a public loss, and may have contributed to the heart-searching which had overtaken her husband's former critics. To Lord Canning himself the loss was irreparable ; on her tomb in the park of Barrackpur, his written epitaph is graven : " Honours and praises written on a tomb are at best a vain glory."

By this time Lord Canning's own health was completely undermined by hard work and ceaseless anxiety. His strength was turned to feebleness, and, although unknown, he carried within himself the seeds of a mortal malady. It was only on the eve of his departure that opinion in the

English circles completely changed and veered round in his favour. Events were then seen at last in their just perspective, criticism gave place to praise, and perhaps the praise of chastened and corrected defamers is more precious than that of the most constant friends. The Indian community was even louder in expressing its regret at the departure of one who they felt had not been a bitter foe or a harsh conqueror. Addresses of farewell came from many quarters, far and near. One expressed the prayer—"Safe may your return be to your native land, the good wishes of all here attend you! In that land of the West if justice and humanity be ever honoured, you cannot but hold a distinguished place!"

And so, amid the good wishes and respectful admiration of all the community, European and Indian, Lord Canning, "pale, wan, toil-worn, and grief-stricken," passed off the stage of Indian affairs. Within three months of his departure he passed off that of the world's. The Mutiny was a fiery ordeal for all who went through it. It was a human cataclysm in which the worst passions were aroused. If good has come out of evil then a large measure of the credit must be attributed to the wisdom, self-restraint, and regard for justice displayed by Lord Canning at every turn of the long drawn-out struggle.

CHAPTER XXII

A TRANSITIONAL PERIOD

LORD CANNING was succeeded as Viceroy and Governor-General by his friend the Earl of Elgin. They had been schoolfellows at Eton and fellow students at Oxford. It was a little curious that the three successive Governor-Generals, Dalhousie, Canning, and Elgin should have been contemporaries at Christ Church, but while the two latter came through Eton, Harrow claimed Dalhousie for its own. Lord Elgin had served with distinction in several British possessions overseas before he set foot in India. He had been Governor of Jamaica during four years, and he was considered one of the ablest of the administrators it had ever known. In 1846 he was on that account given the higher post of Governor-General of Canada, and there also he distinguished himself in no ordinary degree. He took up his duties in this responsible office at a particularly unsettled period. There was great commotion on account of indemnity claims arising out of the rebellion, and the scenes which greeted Lord Elgin on his entry in Montreal, which had just been proclaimed the capital, were stormy and unpleasant. His carriage was stoned, and the Governor-General's passage through the streets was hurried, if not precipitate. The riots culminated in the burning down of Parliament House and the transfer of the capital from Montreal to Toronto. Notwithstanding this unpromising commencement, Lord Elgin held his post for eight years, and he left amid loud expressions of public affection and regret. His was a triumph of character as well as ability.

Shortly after his return to England in 1856 the necessity arose of sending an ambassador to China with the object of concluding a treaty of peace. Serious disturbances had been in progress there for many years, and a state of war existed in the Canton region and along the coast. A decision had been formed to transfer the scene of operations to the

North, and thus exert pressure on the Central Government. As it was not doubted that success would attend this move, an Ambassador was to accompany the military and naval commanders, and in April, 1857, Lord Elgin was appointed to undertake the mission. When he reached Singapore on 3rd June, 1857, he found Lord Canning's letter apprising him of the outbreak of the Indian Mutiny and begging him to send all the troops forming part of the China reinforcements to Calcutta, in order to avert the overthrow of British authority in the valley of the Ganges, where " for a length of 750 miles there were barely 1,000 European soldiers." Lord Elgin's response to this appeal was prompt and complete. The troops with him were sent off at once, and orders were left for those that followed to be diverted to Calcutta. This opportune assistance exercised, as has been seen, a salutary change on the situation in Bengal, and it must be borne in mind that only the accidental occurrence of a Chinese expedition at the moment rendered such prompt aid a possibility.

But Lord Elgin proceeded on his journey to Hongkong. On finding that no progress could be made with the negotiations until a sufficient force had been got together to enforce them, he sailed on H.M.S. *Shannon* for Calcutta, where he arrived early in August. After some weeks there he sailed again for Hongkong, leaving the *Shannon* to help in the defence of Calcutta. It was from its crew that the commanding officer, Captain Sir William Peel, formed the Naval Brigade of 450 men and 10 8-inch guns which did such excellent service at Cawnpore and Lucknow. Lord Elgin returned to China, where he concluded the Treaty of Tientsin in June, 1858. Owing to the refusal of the Chinese Government to ratify this treaty, it was found necessary again to resort to force, and in 1860 Lord Elgin proceeded to China for a second time to sign a final convention in Peking itself, confirming the original Treaty of Tientsin. With this record behind him it is not surprising that when a successor had to be found to Lord Canning the official world concluded that there was no better man available for the post than Lord Elgin.

Lord Elgin accepted the appointment, but at the same time he had some misgivings about the state of his own health. He was less robust than he appeared to be, and although he had lived in the tropics he was rather apprehensive of the heat of India and more especially of Calcutta. At a farewell meeting at Dunfermline he spoke forebodingly of his chances of return, seeing that he had only just completed his half-century, as may be judged from the following passage—

" The vast amount of labour devolving upon the Governor-General of India, the insalubrity of the climate, and the advance of years, all tend to render the prospect of our meeting again remote and uncertain."

These words proved prophetic, for Lord Elgin's rule in India did not extend beyond twenty months. The shortness of the term also prevented its possessing any features of marked interest or importance. Tranquillity prevailed, and there were no burning questions to be solved. Moreover, unlike his predecessors, Lord Elgin had to deal with a Secretary of State fully conscious of his powers, and rather prone to consider that he, and not the Viceroy, was the real ruler of India. Lord Elgin was very patient under this control, but he hoped that in a little time it would be relaxed, or that he might find some means of reasserting the independence of the Governor-General to a legitimate extent. Speaking to a colleague at this period, he is reported as saying, " The first virtue which you and I have to practise here at present is self-denial. We must walk for a time at least in paths traced out for us by others."

Brief as was his stay, he formed one conclusion very promptly and very positively. He did not approve of the attitude of the European community in Calcutta towards the Indians, and he promised to apply himself to the task of improving their relations by extending the social openings to the latter. It is regrettable that fate did not give his beneficent inclinations an opportunity of realization.

Although tranquillity prevailed throughout the Peninsula and peace was in the air, Lord Elgin could not escape the proverbial " little war." In the Umbeyla pass, through

the district of Buner, local trouble had been passed on as a legacy from the Sikh period. About the year 1824 a comrade-in-arms of the famous Ameer Khan of Tonk, named Syed Ahmed Shah, had founded a Hindostani colony in this region. Living by plunder, they had experienced the heavy hand of Runjit Sing, but they continued to preserve to the end of his reign their cohesion, if not their independence. After the British appeared on the scene they became more aggressive and secured the protection of a spiritual chief known as the Akhond of Swat. Their raids into British territory increased in number and in daring, and after they seized Sittana, a stronghold in the Black Mountain, it was decided that their proceedings could no longer be tolerated, and that the menace to the frontier from their activity must be removed.

Sir Neville Chamberlain was sent, therefore, with a force of 9,000 men to bring them to reason. The campaign was completely successful, but the exceptional natural difficulties of the region rendered it more than usually costly. Sittana was occupied, their head station at Malka was destroyed, and the community broken up and dispersed. The Umbeyla pass was permanently held, thus adding to the peace and security of a border region which had been so long disturbed by raids and outrages of a grave complexion.

In the summer of 1863 Lord Elgin, having suffered greatly from the heat in Calcutta, removed to Simla, where he seemed to recover, but when the approach of winter rendered it necessary to return to the plains he decided to make a tour through some of the border districts of the Punjab. Locomotion was not then so easy in those parts as it has become in recent years, and in the upper valleys of the Chenab, and other tributaries of the Indus, the crossing of the rivers was attended with no little difficulty. At the passage of the Chandra there was only a damaged twig bridge available for the crossing, and in effecting it Lord Elgin experienced a great strain, revealing at the same time the weakness of his heart. Before the short distance to the military cantonment at Dhurmsala could be

accomplished it was clear that he was a dying man. His death took place at that station on 20th November, 1863.

The suddenness of Lord Elgin's death placed the Home Government in a quandary as to who should be his successor. No suitable politician of high degree seemed to be available, and Lord Palmerston, fertile in resource, made a new departure by selecting Sir John Lawrence. It would be hard to conceive two men more unlike and less in sympathy than Palmerston and Lawrence, but the wily Premier was thinking of scoring with the public. On the eve of the selection no one would have ventured to suggest Sir John Lawrence; on the morrow of it every one hailed it as the most judicious and natural. And so at last "the saviour of the Punjab" came into his own.

Ill-health had compelled Sir John to hand over the Chief Commissionership of the Punjab to Sir Robert Montgomery before the end of the Mutiny and to return to England after an absence of seventeen years. But as his health was restored he pined for India, and this was so well known that he was offered in 1861 the Governorship of Bombay. This offer he declined, but, although his ambition was great, he had no sound reason for thinking that he would ever be thought of for the higher post of Governor-General. The unexpected happened for him with the death of Lord Elgin. Providence afforded him with the rare opportunity of being chosen as the first member of his Service since Warren Hastings to fill the most exalted position in India. Now it must be remembered that contrary to the general practice it would seem more natural and more advantageous to India that Viceroys should be selected from the ranks of those who have lived in and know the country, than from a class of politician, whatever their ranks in their own country, who have had no such experience and to whom India is as sealed a book as the moon. But however foolish and unreasonable this rule may have been, the expansion of it into a new principle that Governors and Lieut.-Governors of Presidencies and Provinces are to be ruled out as ineligible for the Viceroyalty, seems to be a colossal assertion of official pigheadedness. Had that rule been applied

in his time Lord William Bentinck would never have had the opportunity of redeeming the record of so many conquerors with his era of peace, and his pledge of better things.

Beyond his thorough acquaintance with Indian questions, and his complete mastery of the land problems, Sir John Lawrence had many qualities always useful and at that moment especially valuable in an Indian ruler. He knew the value of money and was economical. He disliked parade, he liked the people, and what better proof could he have given of this than that he walked among them? The Europeans did not approve of these tendencies, and called him niggardly and mean; but economy and improved organization to that end was one of the essentials of the hour. The budget was in chronic deficit, and arrears of business urgently needed attention. Yet he was pressed on all sides for money. Bombay wanted money, so did the Commander-in-Chief, so did the public works. He said somewhat pathetically, "Every one appears to be anxious to get something out of me, and on paper there seems no way of making both ends meet."

Under Lord Elgin, and more especially during the interregnum following his death, official business had fallen into arrears, and as many of these matters could only be settled on the Viceroy's responsibility, there was an immense accumulation of work awaiting Sir John Lawrence on his arrival. This he cleared off rapidly and effectively, but he was so conscious of the physical suffering and strain arising from incessant toil in Calcutta during the hot season that he decided on the removal of the Public Departments to Simla every summer. Before his time the Governor-Generals and their secretaries had gone in the hot weather to the hills, but it was Sir John Lawrence who introduced the annual exodus of the Departments, and it proved so advantageous to the public work as well as to the staff that it has been followed ever since. But it was long before the Secretary of State could be brought to give his sanction to this step as a permanent measure.

In the year following his arrival the great province of Orissa was visited by a famine which attained terrible

dimensions, and carried with it a most grievous loss of life. It came unexpectedly, and found the authorities unprepared. Means of communication were scarce or unequal to the severe strain imposed upon them. A large quantity of rice was at last collected, but its distribution was slow and irregular. In the end it was computed that not fewer than a million persons died of starvation or sickness. A second famine in 1868 desolated a great part of Bundelkhand, but although less disastrous than the occurrence in Orissa it served also to show that the existing machinery of the administration was not well provided or adequate for the task of dealing effectually with such visitations. As a precaution against the repetition of this calamity Sir John Lawrence commenced the introduction of a regular system of irrigation canals, and extended the existing railways by branch lines. With the same idea in his mind of expanding Indian activities, and of developing Indian resources he created the Forestry Department, which has done such magnificent work in the last sixty years.

Like his predecessor, Sir John Lawrence had his own "little war." The trouble on this occasion was not in the North-west of India but in the North-east. The Himalayan State of Bhutan possessed a certain number of duars, or districts, in the northern valleys of Bengal and Assam, and there was a long list of insults and injuries on the official record awaiting settlement. To arrive at a better state of things, Lord Elgin had sent Mr. Ashley Eden on a mission to Bhutan, but he caught its ruler in a quarrelsome mood. The Chief insulted the envoy, and placed him in confinement until he extracted from him a treaty ceding in perpetuity the duars of East Bengal and Assam. On Mr. Eden describing what had happened, the Treaty was repudiated as obtained by force and fraud, and the Viceroy issued a Proclamation formally annexing the western duars to India. The Bhuteas replied with a vigorous attack on the border town of Dewangiri, which they took and plundered. It was thus made necessary to despatch an expedition under General Tombs, who was completely successful in bringing the hillmen to reason. A peace was finally concluded

in November, 1865, by which the eighteen duars were finally surrendered to the British, who arranged to pay a small annual fee for good conduct on the borders. Since that incident the relations with Bhutan have been uninterruptedly cordial.

During the years of Sir John Lawrence's viceroyalty events in Afghanistan attracted considerable attention, and as they were the precursor of the stormy incidents in which India participated later on, they call for description. In 1863 the old Amir, Dost Mahomed, died, leaving the succession to his son, Shere Ali. Akbar Khan had predeceased his father, but Shere Ali had two elder brothers, Afzul and Azim. Shere Ali wrote to Lord Elgin, advising him of his father's death and his own succession, but an unfortunate delay of six months ensued before a reply was sent to his letter by the Indian Government. For this lapse Sir John Lawrence must be acquitted, for he had not reached India at the moment. When he did arrive Afghanistan had become the prey of a dynastic struggle, and the rival competitors were making separate bids for British support.

When Sir John Lawrence appeared upon the scene Shere Ali had the best of the contest. At least Afzul was his prisoner, but Shere Ali felt so little secure that he sent his most trusted general, Mahomed Rafik Khan, to India to obtain support in arms and money in return for which he would sign a treaty of friendship. That was the auspicious moment for improving our relations with Afghanistan and for giving them a regular form. Sir John Lawrence did not rise to the occasion. He refused to do anything. He may have said, "Let things run their course." At all events his attitude was one of indifference. This was not merely a great blow for Shere Ali, but it was an encouragement to all his rivals, so that it was not surprising that the fortune of war turned against the legitimate Amir, who soon found himself a fugitive in Herat. At this juncture Sir John Lawrence discarded his policy of inaction. He had turned a deaf ear to Shere Ali, but no sooner was he defeated than he hastened to recognize the released prisoner Afzul as "Amir of Kabul and Kandahar." When Afzul

died in October, 1867, Sir John Lawrence was again very prompt to recognize his brother Azim as "Amir of Kabul and Kandahar," at the same time officiously addressing Shere Ali as "Amir of Herat." It does not seem to have occurred to Sir John Lawrence, or to the Foreign Secretariat, that the prince who had been recognized as Amir of Afghanistan in Sir William Denison's official letter of December, 1863, would naturally resent the attenuation of his style four years later. Besides, in support of caution and circumspection, there were the well-known uncertainties of a dynastic war; and so things happened in Afghanistan.

Immediately after Sir John Lawrence had recognized, on paper, a condition of things that was tantamount to the disruption of Afghanistan, Shere Ali's star was again in the ascendant. His son, Yakoob Khan, recovered for him not only Kandahar but Kabul, thus reuniting Afghanistan again. Azim fled to Seistan, where he died in the desert, and Abdurrahman, Afzul's son, fled to Bokhara. Sir John Lawrence's nominees thus disappeared from the scene, and Shere Ali resumed the control of the whole State left him by his father, but he owed nothing to the English. In October, 1868, as one of the closing acts of his régime, Sir John Lawrence had written Shere Ali a letter of congratulation on his triumph, which was attributed very truthfully to "his own courage, ability and firmness." Shere Ali remarked in his reply that "the sincere desire" of the British Government for his success was "in a greater degree than before." Although victorious Shere Ali's financial needs were so great and pressing that he could not conceal from himself the fact that he had need of the support of the British Government, and that in no other quarter could he obtain what he needed. He was encouraged to believe that he might obtain it, for before Sir John Lawrence departed he sent the Amir a present of six lakhs. In official circles in India it became known that the Amir Shere Ali was quite ready to visit the Viceroy, whoever he might be, for the purpose of concluding a formal treaty.

As Sir John Lawrence initiated a policy towards Afghanistan which was termed one of "masterly inactivity," and

which was extolled by his admirers as the acme of wisdom, it may be as well to mention the leading passages in his own connection with the subject. In 1854, under instructions from Lord Dalhousie, who had written that "it is wise for us to make some exertion and even some sacrifice to obtain a general treaty with the Amir," Lawrence had met the Amir's then heir at Peshawar, when a treaty was signed in general terms to the effect that the Afghans should be "the friends of our friends, and the enemies of our enemies." Two years later when Persia was attacking Herat, Dost Mahomed came in person to Lahore and signed a treaty of alliance securing to the Amir a subsidy and a supply of arms for the period of the war. Lawrence had previously recommended our ignoring Afghanistan, and especially of our never sending officers into the country again, but when this treaty of alliance was concluded he insisted on their being sent to superintend the proper distribution of the help afforded. The distinguished brothers Henry and Peter Lumsden were consequently sent by Lawrence, and owing to the Mutiny they were not able to return from Kandahar, where they remained in honourable confinement until tranquillity was restored in India. His proposal with regard to the abandonment of Peshawar and a retirement behind the Indus has been referred to during the Mutiny. But he had previously written "Peshawar and Kohat provide a good base of operations in the event of a general invasion from the west," and again, "We require both banks of the Indus to keep the Punjab quiet and hold our own against external aggression." It is, therefore, clear that the views of Sir John Lawrence were neither very clear, nor at all consistent on the subject of trans-frontier policy. He regarded the Afghan problem as a nuisance, and he never endeavoured to discover a solution of a trouble that has been a thorn in the side of India for centuries. His policy was that of the ostrich burying its head in the sand, so that it may not see the impending blow. That is not the way to avert peril from a nation, or to prolong the existence of empires.

There was one department of government in which Sir

John Lawrence stood absolutely supreme, and that was in respect of land tenure and revenue. On that subject no one could approach him, and in its legal aspect he was supported and strengthened by Sir Henry Maine, the Law member of his Council. The question had reached an acute stage, calling for alleviation, if not cure, in Bengal and Oudh. In Bengal the Permanent Settlement granted by Lord Cornwallis provided a bar to any sweeping measure of legislation as affecting either the rent of the Zemindars or their status. But outside that limit there was scope for legitimate and salutary interference to protect the ryots.

The Zemindars, and not only they, but the increasing body of European planters, claimed the right to increase the rents of their ryots, and also to enforce it by legal process. When a test case was brought before the High Court the Judge gave them reason. Sir John Lawrence was up in arms against what seemed to him a flagrant injustice and a denial of the inherent rights of the people, and he proposed to introduce special legislative measures to redress the hardship. But the necessity for this step was removed by the result of the appeal to the conclave of Judges, who reversed the decision of the lower Court. A second attempt to control the action of ryots in respect of cessation of work or other deviations from contract, by making such acts amenable to the criminal instead of the Civil Courts was defeated by Sir John Lawrence's vigorous intervention and opposition. So far as Bengal was concerned, the contemplated encroachment on the ryots' few rights in a fixed rent and a free contract was brought to nothing.

In Oudh the position was more complicated. Lord Canning's arrangement had given, after a brief space, full satisfaction to the Taluqdars, and they in their turn were enjoined by a clause in their sunnuds to take care of the interests and prosperity of their ryots. But in Oudh there were other landholders than the great Nawabs, and there were ryots who had owned their lands for centuries by prescriptive right. There had also been village communities. Lord Canning had not gone into the details of the subject very closely, and indeed his main care after passing

an edict of virtual confiscation became to evolve a new and stable order of things out of the dissolution of the old. The Taluqdars, having resumed their rights, did not trouble themselves much about fulfilling their new obligations to the ryots, while amongst the latter were many who claimed full rights of property in their small tracts of land. Even that part of the community which lived on, and out of the land, could not be divided into main sections as Taluqdars and ryots, for between the two were other groups of no inconsiderable weight and importance. The day was bound to come when these dormant rights would be resuscitated, and it arrived all the sooner because the Taluqdars, seizing what they deemed their chance, strove their hardest to extinguish them. Sir John Lawrence took up the question in 1864, but he was opposed on his own council because any interference with the Taluqdars was pronounced an infringement of their rights, and in London because his proposals were not understood. It was not till the year 1867 that by the skilful mediation of Sir John Strachey a compromise was arrived at which restricted the encroachments of the Taluqdars, and restored a whole class of landholders to their old rights and positions. This compromise affirmed that (1) Government would create no new rights (a point in favour of the Taluqdars), (2) the privileges of all cultivators who had been originally proprietors should be confirmed and legally secured (tantamount to fixity of tenure), and (3) cultivators on the raising of their rent were to receive compensation for what were called "unexhausted improvements." To the last stipulation was attached the important order that "no rents were to be raised at all except by the sanction of the Courts of Law."

In 1868 an expedition had to be sent to Abyssinia where British subjects were held captive by the Negus Theodore. This dispute was not one by the greatest stretch of words that could be termed an Indian interest. As a matter of convenience, the Home Government decided that the expedition should be sent from India instead of from England. Sir John Lawrence came into the matter only

to the extent of suggesting that Sir Robert Napier was the best officer in India to have the command, and events fully justified the appointment. There never was a more perfectly-equipped expedition or a more complete success. But the cost, speaking in due proportion, was immense. Who was to pay? At the moment of the question reaching a practical form, Sir John Lawrence was on the eve of retiring from his post, but he certainly had, at the time that the expedition was being fitted out, no thought of the cost being debited to India. The employment of Indian troops in Abyssinia was placing an undue strain on their loyalty and discipline, but to burden the Indian taxpayers with the cost of the expedition was an injustice. Indian interests are obviously involved in the affairs of some countries and points of intercommunication within the Empire, but outside India. Abyssinia by no stretch of imagination could be brought within that range.

Whatever criticism may be levelled at Lord Lawrence—he was raised to the peerage at the termination of his Governor-Generalship—for his external policy and his views about the defence of India; there can be no doubt that he understood better than any of his contemporaries the internal position of the country in which he had passed the greater part of his life, and that he was in sincere sympathy with the vast silent mass of its population. In the days immediately prior to his final departure he gave expression to many wise reflections couched in terms of warning. The following among others is well worth treasuring in the heart—

"Our difficulties and dangers are at home, in the country itself; not, I mean, at present, but in the future, in the bad feeling between the two races, English and native; in the difficulty in reconciling their interests. Those things are never out of my mind night or day, but how to reconcile people to what is wise and politic and good for both, there is the rub. The great difficulties here are those between the English and the natives. It is these which will in the long run damage if not ruin our power."

Almost his closing words in India (11th January, 1869)

were an exhortation to all the English " to be just and kind to the natives of India." It seems probable that as Lord Lawrence's reputation declines among his own countrymen it will rise the higher as a just and benevolent ruler and true friend among all the peoples of India.

CHAPTER XXIII

AN IRISH VICEROY

ENGLISHMEN and Scotsmen between them having monopolized the governing posts in India, it was a stroke of genius on the part of Mr. Disraeli to give her the lighter touch and the more delicate handling of an Irish Viceroy. In November, 1868, the Prime Minister selected as Lord Lawrence's successor the Earl of Mayo. Never was a high public appointment subjected to more virulent and vulgar attack. Lord Mayo was declared to be quite unqualified for the office, and Mr. Disraeli was denounced for appointing an Irish " squireen " to the most exalted post under the Crown. Mr. Disraeli knew his man, and he met the storm of detraction by declaring in his official announcement that—

" On the Earl of Mayo, for his sagacity, for his judgment, fine temper and knowledge of men, Her Majesty has been pleased to confer the office of Viceroy of India. And as Viceroy of India I believe he will earn a reputation that his country will honour ; and that he has before him a career which will equal that of the most eminent Governor-General who has preceded him."

Events proved that Mr. Disraeli was right, and Lord Mayo's triumph was the more remarkable because, as matters turned out, he, the nominee of a Conservative Premier, and himself a member of that Party, was destined to serve his term under a Liberal Government.

As a matter of fact, Lord Mayo did not deserve in any way the attacks made upon him. He had had long experience of Parliament, first in the House of Commons and then in the House of Lords. On three occasions he had held the difficult and delicate post of Chief Secretary for Ireland. He had gained a high reputation among his colleagues for close attention to the duties he undertook, and for great capacity in mastering details. He was also a strenuous worker, and thanks to his good health and robust constitution, he was able to get through an immense amount of work

which would have over-mastered feebler men. He had proved himself able to deal with a crisis by the manner in which he put down the Fenian insurrection in 1867, firmly, reasonably, and temperately without recourse to martial law. For the task awaiting him in India his credentials were just as good as those of any of his predecessors had been.

As Lord Mayo is less remembered for his work as a financial reformer than for what he accomplished in other directions, that part of his administration may be dealt with in the first place. Lord Lawrence was very economical in small matters, but he could not make the budget balance, and the deficit at the end of his term increased to not less than three millions a year. The debt had risen after the Mutiny to a total of 102 millions sterling, excluding loans of over 90 millions for railways and canals. Excluding the latter, against which there were returns as a set-off outside the regular revenue, the 102 millions represented, in the main, the deficits that had been accumulating for over half a century, plus the cost of suppressing the Mutiny. The direct taxes produced 33½ millions, and the indirect sources of revenue, of which opium was the chief, 12½ millions more. The Budget could be framed on an assumed total revenue of 46 millions. Notwithstanding this, the anticipations of the Budget were never realized. The Financial Ministers predicted a surplus, but in the result a deficit became chronic. A further permanent feature about the revenue was the absence of elasticity in tax production. New taxes were hard to discover, the old gave no increase. Yet the people of India seemed lightly taxed on an average of less than 2 rupees per head at the exchange value of those days. One thing alone was clear. Immediate results, in a realized budget and a working surplus, could only be obtained by reductions on the side of expenditure. The receipts being stationary, retrenchment became essential in the outlay.

At the moment of Lord Mayo's arrival in India, Sir Richard Temple was Finance Minister, and he prepared a budget for the year 1869–70, assuming that there would be a small surplus of £50,000. But at this moment the expectations of 1868–9 were being converted into the unpleasant

reality of a deficit three times as large as had been assumed in 1868. In face of this disagreeable fact Lord Mayo became very anxious as to what the outcome of the first budget under his régime would be. Applying the actualities of the previous year to the new it was clear that the estimated surplus of £50,000 must turn out to be a deficit of at least £1,650,000. Great confusion in the system of keeping the general accounts, and the loose manner in which the estimates were prepared in different departments rendered the task of discovering the exact state of affairs, and the proper remedies, exceedingly difficult. It goes without saying that those who had accustomed themselves to these loose and irregular methods regarded the reforms and revision on which the new Viceroy was bent with little favour, and no small amount of personal apprehension.

On making his first discovery Lord Mayo wrote to Sir Stafford Northcote: "I am beginning to find that our finances are not in as comfortable a state as they ought to be. The enormous distances, the number of treasuries, and the complexity of accounts as between each, render accurate forecasts and rapid information almost insurmountably difficult. The waste of public money is great, and I have been obliged to take strong measures, and to say some very hard things about it." Some months later he wrote to the Duke of Argyll who had succeeded Sir Stafford as Secretary of State, "I should be sorry to say how much I feel the hard lot that is now cast upon us to recover the finances from a state of deficit. But unless we have a war, which God forbid, we will do it."

His first measures were to cut down the grants that had been sanctioned. That for Public Works was clipped by £800,000, and reductions in the sums assigned to other spending departments effected a further saving of £350,000. On the other side of the account, he determined to increase some of the taxes. They presented a very limited range, and there was no visible alternative to increasing the income tax from 1 to 2½ per cent, and the salt duty in Madras and Bombay. From these two sources he counted on an increased revenue of half a million sterling, which, with the

reductions in expenditure, would exactly balance the deficit of £1,650,000, computed in the revised Budget. He explained the reasons for these measures in a despatch, in September, 1869, to the Secretary of State, from which the following paragraph must be taken for the sake of clearness.

"While the accumulated deficits of the three years ending with 1868–9 have amounted to 5¾ millions, the cash balances in our Indian treasuries have fallen from £13,770,000 at the close of 1865–6 to £10,360,000 at the close of 1868–9, and notwithstanding our recent loan of £2,400,000 are at this moment lower than they have been at this season for many years. During the same period our debt has been increased by 6½ millions, of which not more than 3 millions have been spent on reproductive works. Your Grace has reminded us that successive Secretaries of State have enjoined us so to frame our estimates as to show a probable surplus of from half a million to a million sterling. We entirely agree with Your Grace in acknowledging the soundness of this policy. We have no doubt that, extraordinary charges for Extraordinary Works being provided for by loan, our expenditure in time of peace ought to be so adjusted to our income as to leave an annual surplus of not less than one million. The necessary conclusion to which we are thus led is that nothing short of a permanent improvement in the balance now subsisting between our annual income and expenditure of at least three millions sterling will suffice to place our finances in a really satisfactory condition. How by reducing our expenditure and increasing our income we can best obtain such a result is the problem that we have now to solve. We are satisfied that there is only one course which we can properly follow. We must no longer continue to make good the deficit of each succeeding year by adding to the public debt. And we must determine, whatever be the difficulty of the task, that there shall henceforth be no room for doubt that in time of peace our income will always be in excess of our ordinary expenditure."

The result of these measures for 1869–70, Lord Mayo's first official year, was that the revenue more than balanced the expenditure, showing a surplus of about £120,000. As

this was the first surplus realized since 1854, it was a magnificent achievement for a Viceroy in his first year of office. Lord Mayo did not rest content on his laurels. He determined to introduce reforms of system that would facilitate the task of his successors. These related to the Financial Department of the Supreme Government, the Local Governments, and a readjustment between the revenue and the expenditure. He had discovered that the examination and collation of the local returns in the Financial Department was carried out with little intelligence, and often entirely neglected. Even when executed it was generally accomplished too late to be of any use to the framer of the Budget. Lord Mayo made a sweeping order that all statistics were to be classified with despatch and available for use by the Finance Minister in good time. Lord Mayo was the first Governor-General to require the proper elucidation of the local returns, which only became valuable by co-ordination, and to insist on the classification of records as the easily available source of information on which the Government could alone base its measures, if they were to be justified by results. Before his time all was hopeless confusion, he changed a state of chaos to one of order.

With regard to the Local Governments he introduced a new system. These possessed no independent financial powers before his time. They had presented a list of what they deemed their requirements, and the Supreme Government granted them what it could, or what it deemed a fair proportion of the total revenues of India. This was in every way a bad system. The demands of the Local Governments were inflated to include not merely what they needed, but what they would have liked to secure. There was no inducement to economize. Lord Mayo, by a Resolution of 14th December, 1870, approved finally by the Secretary, introduced a new system of Provincial and Imperial Finance. By this a fixed yearly consolidated grant was made to the Local Governments for their provincial needs, and out of this they had to defray all the cost of the administration within their limits with the exception of the army. The disbursement of this grant, which is generally fixed for a

term of years, appertains absolutely to the Local Government, thus relieving the Supreme Government of much work for which the local authorities were better qualified. At the same time the fixed character and limited amounts of these grants imposed upon the provincial authorities the necessity of economy, as well as closer attention to statistical details under the impetus of the example set by the Governor-General in Council.

With regard to the third point, the readjustment between revenue and expenditure, it was to the reduction of the latter, rather than the increase of the former, that he looked mainly for improvement. Among his economies may be specified those effected in military expenditure. By the simple plan of reducing the number of regiments, but at the same time raising the battalions to fuller strength, he saved half a million on the cost of the European army without reducing the total strength of the garrison. He also saved a further quarter of a million by minor economies in the expenditure on the Bombay and Madras armies.

The results have been stated for the first year of his office. They were still more striking in the second and third years. In the second year he had a surplus of 1½ millions, and in the third it exceeded three millions. This result was all the more remarkable because the revenue he garnered was considerably less than that raised in Lord Lawrence's time. But for Lord Mayo's timely economies the financial position of India would have been deplorable at the close of his rule in 1872.

Sir John Strachey, three years after his death, paid the following tribute to the permanent value of his work—"Lord Mayo's close personal attention to financial questions never flagged. He had by decisive measures established steady surplus for chronic deficit; he had increased the working power of the Local Governments, while checking the growth of their demands upon the Imperial treasury. He had established a policy of systematic watchfulness and severe economy. The time was now coming when the results of all his exertions and sacrifices were to be gathered; when the Viceroy would be able to gratify his nature by granting

relief from the burdens which he had reluctantly imposed. Lord Mayo was occupied with such questions on the very journey which ended so fatally. He had reason to hope that effective remission of taxation would soon be practicable, but he was still uncertain what shape it ought to take. It should never be forgotten that the welcome measures of relief which the Government subsequently found itself in a position to effect were possible only in consequence of Lord Mayo's vigorous policy of retrenchment and economy.

"He found serious deficit, and he left substantial surplus. He found estimates habitually untrustworthy; he left them thoroughly worthy of confidence. He found accounts in arrears, and statistics incomplete; he left them punctual and full. He found the relation between the Local Governments and the Supreme Government in an unsatisfactory condition, and the powers of the Local Governments for good hampered by obsolete financial bonds. He left the Local Governments working with cordiality, harmony, and freedom under the direction of the Governor-General in Council. He found the Financial Department conducted with general laxity; he left it in vigorous efficiency. And if the sound principles be adhered to, which Lord Mayo held of such importance, and which in his hands proved so thoroughly effective, India ought not again to sink into the state from which he delivered her."

This was the great achievement of Lord Mayo's Viceroyalty, and furnishes his true title to fame. In the reform of the Finances he had done what none of his predecessors had even attempted to do.

The question of the relations of the Indian Government with Afghanistan was a matter of foremost importance when Lord Mayo arrived in India. The temporizing policy of Lord Lawrence during the civil war between the sons of Dost Mahomed has been described, and at the moment of his departure the victorious Amir, Shere Ali, had expressed a desire to visit the Viceroy. In July, 1868, Sir Henry Rawlinson, the greatest authority of his time on all Central Asian questions, had written a minute in his capacity of

Member of the Indian Council which forms a landmark in the evolution of British policy. He said in it—

"The fortunes of Shere Ali are again in the ascendant. He should be secured in our interests without delay. Provided he is unentangled with Russia, the restoration of his father's subsidy, and the moral support of the British Indian Government would probably be sufficient to place him above all opposition, and to secure his fidelity, and it may indeed be necessary to furnish him with arms and officers, or even to place an auxiliary contingent at his disposal."

This minute was sent to Lord Lawrence for consideration, and, of course, the views it contained were in his eyes anathema. They were those of the rival Scinde school, of General John Jacob and Sir Bartle Frere. It was not likely that the occupants of the Punjab Olympus would regard them with favour. Lord Lawrence before giving up office committed himself to the following rejoinder—

"We think that endeavours might be made to come to a clear understanding with the Court of St. Petersburg as to its projects and designs in Central Asia, and that it might be given to understand in firm but courteous language that it cannot be permitted to interfere in the affairs of Afghanistan or in those of any State which lies contiguous to our frontier. We think also that our relations to the Court of Teheran should be placed entirely under the Secretary of State for India, and that we should be empowered to give to any *de facto* ruler of Kabul some arms and ammunition, and substantial pecuniary assistance, as well as moral support, as occasion may offer, but without any formal or defensive alliance."

The Secretary of State's comment on these extraordinary proposals was, "I cannot bring my mind to the proposal that we should subsidize first one and then the other according as accident brings up Shere Ali or Abdul Rahman to the head of affairs."

Shere Ali was impatient to see the Viceroy, and he had definite proposals to present to him. Lord Mayo acquiesced in the visit taking place as soon as possible, and Shere Ali set his face towards India early in February, 1869. Shere

Ali had a policy, but the British Government had none. Even Lord Mayo had come to no positive resolution as to what should be done beyond affording the Amir some slight assistance in maintaining the position he had recovered. At the same time he was prepared to give the Amir the most hospitable welcome, and to draw him to the British side by the ties of sympathy.

It has been stated that the Amir came with a fixed programme, and if it were realized he was prepared to go to the farthest point of compliance in conceding the full equivalent of the closest alliance. There were five requests in his programme. He wanted (1) a treaty; (2) a fixed annual subsidy; (3) assistance in arms or in men to be given not when the British Government might deem fit, but when he might ask for it; (4) an engagement binding the British Government to support the Afghan Government in any emergency, and not only that Government generally, but as vested in himself, and his direct descendants, and no others; and (5) the recognition of his younger son Abdulla Jan as his heir in preference to his elder brother Yakoob Khan, who had overthrown his rivals.

On not one of these points had Lord Mayo any authority to give him satisfaction, on not one of them would the British Government have committed itself to approbation. The most that either the Viceroy or the Secretary of State could sanction would be a present in money and in arms. Lord Mayo described exactly what had been promised as the result of negotiations that covered several weeks.

"We have distinctly intimated to the Amir that under no circumstances shall a British soldier cross his frontier to assist him in coercing his rebellious subjects; that no fixed subsidy or money allowance will be given for any named period, that no promise of assistance in other ways will be made, and that no treaty will be entered into obliging us under any circumstances to recognize him and his descendants as rulers of Afghanistan. But that by the most open and absolute present recognition, and by every public evidence of friendly disposition, of respect for his character and interest in his fortunes, we are prepared to give him all

the moral support in our power; and that in addition we are willing to assist him with money, arms, and ammunition, native artificers, and in other ways whenever we deem it desirable so to do."

These pleasant words and vague promises fell very far short of what the Amir wished to obtain, but nevertheless he was so charmed with Lord Mayo's genial manner and by the imposing nature of the Durbar at Umballa, and the attendant festivities that he returned from his Indian visit with a strong desire to keep on good terms with the English. The best evidence on this point is to be found in his son Yakoob Khan's statement to Lord Roberts in 1879: "In 1869 my father was fully prepared to throw in his lot with you. He did not receive from Lord Mayo as large a supply of arms and ammunition as he had hoped, but nevertheless he returned to Kabul fairly satisfied, and so he remained until the visit of Nur Mahomed Shah to India in 1873. This visit brought matters to a head. The diaries received from that envoy during his stay in India, and the report which he brought back on his return, convinced my father that he could no longer hope to obtain from the British Government all the aid that he wanted, and from that time he began to turn his attention to the thoughts of a Russian alliance."

The results nine years after the Umballa Conference will come up for consideration later on. So far as Lord Mayo's own scheme of external policy went he summed it up as follows, in the belief that the first step had been taken at Umballa for attaching Afghanistan to the British side—

"Surround India with strong, friendly, and independent States, who will have more interest in keeping well with us than with any other Power, and we are safe. Our influence has been considerably strengthened both in our own territories and also in the States of Central Asia by the Umballa meeting; and if we can only persuade people that our policy is really one of non-intervention and peace, that England is at this moment the only non-aggressive Power in Asia, we should stand on a pinnacle of power that we have never enjoyed before."

Following up his idea of a barrier of friendly States, Lord Mayo intervened in Khelat or Beloochistan to promote its internal tranquillity, and to secure for it well defined frontiers with its neighbours in Persia and Afghanistan. He thus began a policy which has brought that barrier State at least within the sphere of Indian interests. He also sent Mr. Douglas Forsyth on his first mission to Kashgar, where Yakoob Beg had created an ephemeral power at the expense of the Chinese.

We come now to consider Lord Mayo's relations with the Ruling Princes of India great and small, and the vast congeries of Feudatory States subject to British authority. It was computed at that time that their area covered 600,000 square miles, with a population of fifty millions. This area remains unchanged, but the population now exceeds sixty millions. Under the Company the view had prevailed that the more powerful of these States were innately hostile to the British Raj, and that it was desirable to neglect no occasion of extinguishing their rights and absorbing their possessions in the Company's territory. The Queen's Proclamation reversed those views. Annexations on any pretext were to cease. The reigning houses were assured of unbroken possession in their families, and for those of the Hindu faith " adoption " in its widest sense was recognized and ratified. This new principle of policy brought comfort to the occupant of every " gadi " or " musnud." But, of course, there was another side to the picture. These feudatory States ceased to be " foreign " in any sense of the term, as it had been used. They had become integral parts of the British Empire, and it was obviously on that ground alone that Queen Victoria's pledge and responsibility could be held binding. If any of them were to be so foolish as to seek to revert to the old position of Treaty bound powers it could only be by the cancelling of that promise. Queen Victoria spoke as a supreme Sovereign.

Lord Mayo's first utterance on the subject was his address to the Rajput Chiefs at Ajmir. They represented the old aristocracy of India, the men who by descent and ancient tradition possessed an indefeasible right in their portion of

the soil of India. This address provides the true key to his policy—

"I, as the representative of the Queen, have come here to tell you, as you have often been told before, that the desire of Her Majesty's Government is to secure to you and to your successors the full enjoyment of your ancient rights, and the exercise of all lawful customs, and to assist you in upholding the dignity and maintaining the authority which you and your fathers have for centuries exercised in this land. But in order to enable us to carry fully into effect this our fixed resolve, we must receive from you hearty and cordial assistance. If we respect your rights and privileges you should also respect the rights and regard the privileges of those who are placed beneath your care. If we support you in your power, we expect in turn good government. We demand that everywhere throughout the length and breadth of Rajputana, justice and order shall prevail; that every man's property shall be secure; that the traveller shall come and go in safety; that the cultivator shall enjoy the fruits of his labour, and the trader the produce of his commerce, that you shall make roads and undertake the construction of those works of irrigation which will improve the condition of the people, and swell the revenues of your States; that you shall encourage education, and provide the relief of the sick.

"Be assured that we ask you to do all this for no other but your own benefit. If we wished you to remain weak we should say—be poor and ignorant and disorderly. It is because we wish you to be strong that we desire to see you rich, instructed, and well governed. It is for such objects that the servants of the Queen rule in India, and Providence will ever sustain the rulers who govern for the people's good. I am here only for a time. The able and earnest officers who surround me will at no distant period return to their English homes; but the Power which we represent will endure for ages. Hourly is this great Empire brought nearer and nearer to the throne of the Queen. The steam vessel and the railroad enable England, year by year, to enfold India in a closer embrace. But the coils she seeks to entwine

around her are no iron fetters, but the golden chains of affection and of peace. The days of conquest are past; the age of improvement has begun.

"Chiefs and Princes! Advance in the right way, and secure to your children's children and to future generations of your subjects, the favouring protection of a power who only seeks your good."

The question of harmonious relations with the Feudatory States bristled with difficulties. The full recognition of adoption, the guarantee that no ruling family should be deprived of its hereditary possessions, whatever might happen to the individual Chief, were two basic concessions on which confidence and concord might be established. But there was a thorny problem left over in deciding the degree and measure of interference, and interference originated from two distinct sources. There was the interference of the Resident or Agent, frequent in occurrence, often produced by mere trifles, and consequently irritating. There was the interference of the Supreme Government, slow to be employed, ignoring trifles, and only to be brought into action in grave circumstances, and therefore almost without exception justifiable and beneficial. When Lord Mayo addressed the Princes he thought only of the latter cases.

It was said of him that he either drafted himself, or approved of some other's drafting, four guiding rules on which interference might be justifiable, and even described as unavoidable. They were—

1. The undoubted responsibility of the British Government as the supreme Power for any serious misrule in Indian self-ruling States, and the consequent determination to interfere therein wherever it became necessary to stop misgovernment. This act of interference was never to carry with it the annexation of the State, but the removal of the offending prince either temporarily or permanently, transferring the administration to British officers and to native coadjutors, or a Regent, in the joint interests of the State and family.

2. Non-interference, and the lightest possible form of control, in the case of Chiefs who governed well, the Indian

Feudatories to be given reason to feel that it depended on their own acts and conduct to decide the degree of practical independence, which they would enjoy, and that that degree would be strictly regulated by the character of their administration and their treatment of their subjects.

3. No amount of misrule to serve as a reason for annexation.

4. The education of the native Chiefs while young, under the direction of British officers, who should give their principal attention to inculcating a sense of their duty to both their own subjects, and also to the Supreme Power as embodying the dignity and destiny of India.

These rules were no new departure in themselves. The three first defined and gave a workable form to the promises contained in Queen Victoria's Proclamation; but the fourth gave an amplification to them, and propounded a means of realizing the full promise of the new policy. English education among the Indian Princes was a new project. A few Indian Princes had of their own accord expressed a desire to learn English, and English tutors had been engaged for the purpose. A few others had learnt some amount of English from native teachers who had themselves been brought up in an English school. But these were rare exceptions. The great majority were acquainted only with their own vernacular, and those who could add to it Persian or Arabic were classed as well-instructed. But English was never thought of. Treaties, official documents, and the Governor-General's khureetas were expressed in Persian, and very often the Prince to whom they were addressed could not understand them till translated by one of his writers into Hindi or Marathi. It was a bold but necessary innovation to propose that the interpretation, if not the original, should be in English, but the proposal might never have borne any fruit if Lord Mayo had not devised the means of giving the Princes and the princely classes of India a sound English education.

For education schools are essential, for the higher education public schools are necessary. Lord Mayo himself founded one of the most important public schools for princely

or aristocratic classes that exists in India. It owed its inception to the necessity imposed on Lord Mayo to intervene in the Rajput State of Alwar that was being misgoverned. In Kathiawar with its close on 200 princely houses it was not difficult to found and keep an institution framed on the lines of Eton and Harrow. This had been accomplished a few years before in the Raj-Kumar College at Rajkote. The Mayo College at Ajmir preserves the fame and the name of Lord Mayo as the responsible originator of the higher education among the ruling classes of India, and other Public Schools on the same lines have been founded since his time.

Among minor measures of administration originated if not completed by Lord Mayo, may be mentioned the Statistical Survey of India, and a Department of Agriculture and Commerce. As the agricultural development of India is one of the great questions of the day, Lord Mayo's wise words of warning might well be remembered—

"In connection with agriculture we must be careful of two things. First, we must not ostentatiously tell native husbandmen to do things which they have been doing for centuries. Second, we must not tell them to do things which they cannot do, and have no means of doing. In either case they will laugh at us, and they will learn to disregard really useful advice when it is given."

It was to self-government in the sense of local government, above all in the development of municipal institutions, that Lord Mayo looked for the healthy social improvement of the Indian communities. He does not appear to have given himself the trouble to speculate about their political evolution, but then he was not a politician, but a practical man of affairs. In that capacity his crowning work was to hold the first census of British India.

Lord Mayo had accomplished so much in three years, he had proposed or begun so many other reforms, his health and vitality seemed so sound and vigorous, that any prophet would have been excused for declaring that he would accomplish still greater things, that he would put the seal to his fame, before he turned his face homewards. But a cruel

fate ordained differently. Lord Mayo was specially interested in the treatment of prisoners, and he could not but be struck with the high rate of mortality in Indian jails at that period. If the rate was high in the jails in the towns and Mofussil it was infinitely worse in the convict settlement in the Andamans, where it totalled 10 per cent. This result was the more disturbing because the convict population was increasing rapidly every year. A brief examination of the facts revealed that the cause of the trouble was lack of discipline and want of supervision, which allowed the detained to have easy access to practically unlimited supplies of alcohol. The accommodation for the sick was also limited, and no kind of sanatorium existed. At the same time the cost of maintenance was very heavy, and the Settlement was a drain on the exchequer. Lord Mayo considered that it should be made self-supporting, and drafted a new system to that end. He appointed an officer of rank to superintend the introduction of the new methods. Not satisfied with drawing up the new regulations, Lord Mayo decided to take the first opportunity of paying a visit to the islands to see how his plan worked, and such an opportunity occurred when he visited Burma in January, 1872. In an unhappy hour he decided to call at the Andamans on his return journey.

On 8th February, 1872, Lord Mayo arrived off Hopetown, the principal port of the group of islands. Lady Mayo accompanied him on the tour, but fortunately did not land. The Viceroy was accompanied by his staff, which included his devoted and accomplished Private Secretary, Colonel (afterwards Sir) Owen Tudor Burne. Every precaution was taken by the Superintendent for his safety, and although it was clear that the passage through 8,000 criminals, many of them of the most hardened and desperate character, must be attended with some risk, no one thought in view of the precautions taken that there was any serious danger. The inspection of the islets where the worst criminals were confined passed off without any disquieting incident, and on the return to Hopetown it was supposed that the Viceroy would at once go on board the man-of-war in which he was

performing his tour. But unfortunately, as it turned out, there was still an hour of daylight left, and Lord Mayo proposed that they should "do Mount Harriet." He had fixed in his mind's eye on this eminence of 1,100 ft. as the best point for a sanatorium for fever patients.

This final excursion was doubly unfortunate, because all the party had had a hard day, and many of the staff were well-nigh exhausted. At the summit they were completely done up. It was said that the Viceroy sat down, and looking over the islands and the sea indulged in the following soliloquy—

"Plenty of room here to settle two millions of men. How beautiful! It is the loveliest scene I think I ever saw." And then darkness covered the landscape, and the descent had to be made by the light of torches. The party reached the jetty where the launch was in waiting, and it is no reflection on any one at a moment when all danger seemed past if those responsible for Lord Mayo's safety were a little off their guard. At least the close order in which the staff and the local officials and guards had followed and even surrounded the Viceroy, was broken by an accidental movement on the part of the Superintendent.

On reaching the jetty as described the Superintendent, who had been on one side of the Viceroy with Colonel Burne on the other, asked permission to turn aside to give some orders for the morrow. Almost instantaneously after this step, which left one side of the Viceroy exposed, a man leaped out from behind a heap of stones, where he had been in hiding, and buried his knife in the Viceroy's back. The wound was terrible, and Lord Mayo had only strength to utter a few words before he expired. The murderer, a Pathan of gigantic stature, had been classed as harmless and well behaved, but at his trial it was revealed that he had long been brooding on revenge, and that he was obsessed with the idea that he must kill some important Englishman. The ways of Providence are inscrutable. That the victim of this half-mad devil in human shape should have been the very man who had come to these islands to ameliorate the lot of society's worst outcasts, strikes the mind with

overwhelming effect as demonstrating the futility and vanity of human plans and effort.

It may fairly be said, as was said at the time of the tragedy, that if his career had not been thus cut short, Lord Mayo would have taken his place in history as the greatest and most beneficent of English Viceroys in India. But he had done enough to ensure his memory being preserved and held in honour long after others will have passed into oblivion. His Viceroyalty forms a landmark in India's story. He accomplished much, he set the initiative for several of the most important movements of the period that followed his death, and he will always be remembered as one of the most fascinating and attractive figures that have flitted across the stage of Indian affairs.

CHAPTER XXIV

THE PRINCE OF WALES'S VISIT

THE unexpected termination of Lord Mayo's rule gave the Liberal Government then in office the opportunity of appointing his successor. They found him in Thomas George Baring, Lord Northbrook, who had once served as private secretary to Sir Charles Wood at the Board of Control. He was known as a moderate politician with safe views, and he belonged to a family of great power in the realm of finance, which had given more than one Chairman to the East India Company. If the appointment did not cause great enthusiasm, at least it raised no adverse criticism, and was accepted as one of the best, under the circumstances, that could have been made. Moreover Lord Northbrook was exceedingly wealthy, perhaps the richest peer who ever filled the highest post in India. It was said by a humorist of the day that he did not draw his salary till the end of his term, and that the transfer of so large a sum to England was the first cause of the fall in the rupee!

Pending his arrival the Governor of Madras, Lord Napier and Ettrick, had been acting as Governor-General. Lord Mayo had removed the stain of a permanent deficit from the Budget, but he had done so by the imposition of some fresh taxation, which always results in unpopularity. At the moment of his murder he was planning reductions in that direction, but as far as was known he had come to no positive decision as to how they were to be effected. As fresh taxation is always unpopular he left the golden opportunity of placating public opinion in that sense to his successor, and Lord Northbrook, being steeped to his finger-tips in the science of figures, was prompt to seize it.

Of all the new taxes, that on income was the most unpopular and opposed. Lord Mayo had not introduced it, he found it in existence. To help in meeting a serious predicament he had increased its amount. There was reason to believe that he contemplated its return to the

earlier rate as soon as the revenue could be pronounced stable as well as satisfactory. Lord Northbrook went one better. Almost his first act was to abolish the income tax altogether, and he could not have chosen a surer means of securing popularity for his administration at the start. His other financial measures were either trivial or of temporary utility, but in the result he did not compromise the satisfactory financial position he took over from his predecessor, and the Indian Budget continued throughout his term to show a surplus each year, and the returns justified the estimates.

This result was the more gratifying and creditable because one of the worst famines that ever visited an Indian province fell upon Bengal in his time. It was boldly grappled with by the Viceroy, as well as by Sir George Campbell, the Lieut.-Governor, and their measures of relief were carried out on a vast scale which established a record. As the reward of their joint efforts the mortality was far lower than had occurred in cases of less severity and more limited extent; but naturally enough the attendant cost was proportionally higher. The Bengal famine cost the Government over six millions sterling, not taking into account the inevitable loss of revenue. Notwithstanding this dead weight, Lord Northbrook succeeded in maintaining an equilibrium between revenue and expenditure. His financial training and experience thus proved of great service in a moment of economic tribulation for the people of the largest and most important province in India.

Very shortly after Lord Northbrook's arrival in India he had to turn his attention to questions outside the country. The final award was given in regard to the disputed boundaries between Afghanistan and Persia in Seistan, based upon the report of the British Commissioner, Sir Frederic Goldsmid. It was said to give satisfaction to neither, which may be regarded as proof of its impartiality, but no protest against its terms was made by either the Amir or the Shah. It furnished, however, one of the reasons for the despatch of an Afghan envoy to India.

In 1873 a Russian expedition reached and conquered

the Khanate of Khiva, and at the same time secured by treaty complete control of the lower course of the Oxus. This made a great sensation in Afghanistan and particularly at Herat. The Russian Government had given assurances to the British Government that it had no further designs in that quarter and more particularly with regard to Merv, but such assurances were evidently no more than a temporary emollient. The sequence of events so far as Lord Northbrook was concerned was as follows. On 28th March, 1873, Lord Northbrook in Council expressed to the Duke of Argyll, then Secretary of State, their satisfaction at Count Schouvaloff's assurances, that the Russian Government had no intention of retaining possession of Khiva, or of crushing it under an indemnity which would take more than twenty years to pay off. Both these pledges were violated. Khiva was disarmed and completely subjected, although not occupied, and the indemnity was so crushing that it could never be paid off.

On 24th July, after the fall of Khiva was known, Lord Northbrook telegraphed again to the Duke of Argyll that "the Amir was alarmed at Russia's progress, dissatisfied with our general assurance, and anxious to know definitely how far he may rely on our help if invaded." This alarm was increased by reports that Russia was about to begin operations from the Caspian against the Turcomans. The shadow of Russia was falling ominously at that moment over Afghanistan on two sides. Having stated the condition of the Amir's mind, which had been revealed to him by Shere Ali's special envoy, Nur Mahomed Shah, who came on a visit to Simla, Lord Northbrook went on to propose the following policy to the Secretary of State, for official adoption—

"I propose assuring him that if he unreservedly accepts and acts on our advice in all his external relations, we will help him with money, arms, and troops if necessary to repel unprovoked invasion." That was Lord Northbrook's original proposal. It would have given the assurance asked for by the Afghan ruler. What was the Secretary of State's decision? "The Cabinet think you should inform the

Amir that we do not at all share his alarm, and consider there is no cause for it."

In consequence of these views, which were official orders, Lord Northbrook had to trim his sails and alter his course. He caused the Amir's envoy to be informed that "a good understanding exists between the Governments of England and Russia, and also that Afghanistan is in no danger of invasion from the north, because Russia has declared that State to be outside the sphere of her operations." The envoy then asked some pertinent questions about the rumoured operations against the Turcomans, only to receive the reply that "they are robbers and kidnappers, and the cause of a large portion of the mischief in Central Asia, and that the Amir would be well advised in having nothing to do with them." But the amazed envoy interpolated, "But they are our neighbours and hold Merv!" After that there was no further reason for the Afghan envoy to prolong his stay at Simla. On his return to Kabul he reported that there was no hope of obtaining the desired help from the British Government, and thereupon, as Yakoob Khan revealed to General Roberts in 1879, Shere Ali began to turn his thoughts to an accommodation with Russia.

Lord Northbrook was an exceedingly loyal colleague, and during the heated debates on the Afghan War of 1878–9 he affirmed that he entirely agreed with the Duke of Argyll's policy in 1873, although he had himself proposed the very opposite, as his telegram of 24th July clearly showed. Lord Northbrook was loyal to his friends but less so to himself. His words remain on record to show what Shere Ali asked for, and what the Viceroy was willing to do until the British Cabinet peremptorily vetoed it.

In 1874 Mr. Gladstone's Government was defeated at a General Election. Mr. Disraeli returned to power, and the Marquis of Salisbury followed the Duke of Argyll at the India Office. Friction soon arose between Lord Salisbury and the Viceroy. Lord Salisbury wished to assert the power of the Secretary of State in London at the expense of the Viceroy's authority in India. Lord Salisbury was

always somewhat blunt of speech and his suggestions read like commands. He was very keen on propitiating opinion in Lancashire by the reduction or even the abolition of the Indian import duty on cotton manufactures. This was a question that affected India directly, and that ought obviously to be decided in India and by her Government. This view was upheld by Lord Northbrook, but on his side Lord Salisbury made a firm stand on the plea that British interests had a right to be considered as well as Indian, and that the metropolis was entitled to some benefit from the connection with India. The matter was a little complicated by the consideration that Lord Salisbury's proposal was in accordance with the Free Trade principles and tradition of which Lord Northbrook was a staunch upholder. Yet he asserted the right of the Indian Government to tax these articles of English manufacture as it considered necessary without the interference of the Secretary of State.

The dispute went on for more than a year in the official correspondence, and it closed with a clash of authority which but for an outside circumstance of non-political significance would have led to Lord Northbrook's resignation at an early date. On 15th July, 1875, Lord Salisbury wrote a strongly-worded despatch to the Viceroy, requesting him in the next Budget to repeal the import duties on cotton manufactures. In August the Viceroy, without referring the matter to the Secretary of State, retained the duties in his Budget for the coming year. This indifference to the Secretary of State's instructions, or request, was made the more flagrant by the fact that some time before an order had been issued from the India Office requiring the Viceroy to submit any new proposals to the Secretary of State for consideration and sanction before carrying them into effect. In the case at issue there was ample time to have done this, but the Viceroy, although he was well aware of Lord Salisbury's views, had chosen to ignore them, and to act as if nothing had been said. It was quite clear that Lord Salisbury could no longer work with Lord Northbrook, or Lord Northbrook with Lord Salisbury. In one respect at all events the position of the Secretary of State

is clearly superior to that of the Viceroy. He does not resign when the two authorities clash. The penalty falls on the Viceroy. In this case there was an interval of five months between cause and effect, for the following reason. The Heir to the Throne was about to visit India, and a change in the person of the Viceroy might have caused some embarrassment and confusion.

In 1872 the Duke of Edinburgh had paid a visit to India during the life of Lord Mayo. This was the first visit that any member of the Royal Family had paid to India, and it passed off so well in every respect that it was held to provide an encouraging example for others to follow. Queen Victoria was always very solicitous and even nervous as to the effect of tropical climates on the health of any of her sons, and it was only after much anxious examination of all the considerations for or against the proposal that she gave her assent to the visit of the Heir to the Throne, the Prince of Wales, to India. The determining argument in its favour was undoubtedly the Duke of Edinburgh's favourable report.

In the summer of 1875 it became generally known that the Prince of Wales intended to pay a visit to India during the next cold-weather season.

Lord Salisbury addressed the Viceroy in the following despatch—

"*August* 19, 1875.

"My Lord,

"I have to convey to you formally the information which your Excellency has already received by telegraph that it is the intention of H.R.H. the Prince of Wales to visit the dominions of Her Majesty in the East. I am assured of the pleasure with which your Excellency will welcome His Royal Highness.

"Your Excellency will receive in due course intimation of the dates fixed for His Royal Highness' departure from England and arrival in India, and of the members of the suite by which he will be attended. Your Excellency, as Viceroy, will represent Her Majesty in receiving His Royal Highness with all the honours befitting his exalted rank,

and Her Majesty's Government feel assured of the earnest and loyal desire of your Excellency and of all officers under your control to omit no circumstance which can contribute to His Royal Highness' comfort in visiting, as far as time allows, all that is most interesting in those provinces of the British Empire in the East which are under your control. The sojourn which His Royal Highness proposes to make will only be sufficient to bring before him a small portion of the vast multitudes of various races who live directly under English rule. But he will doubtless have presented to him many of the most eminent officers, civil and military, European and native, who, under your Excellency, bear rule among them, and he will see some of the most important divisions of that great army to which the defence of the Empire is confided, and in which His Royal Highness now holds the highest rank. His Royal Highness will have the opportunity, which he will highly value, of personally conveying to the chiefs and princes who rule in India under the paramount protection of the Queen of England, the assurance of those gracious sentiments which have ever been entertained towards them by his Royal House. Her Majesty has been graciously pleased to mark her sense of the importance and dignity of the occasion by empowering His Royal Highness to hold a special investiture of the Order of the Star of India, of which your Excellency is Grand Master. At this and all other ceremonials Her Majesty's Government feel assured that the supreme authority with which your Excellency is invested as Her Majesty's representative will enable you to show how highly you estimate the proof of Her Majesty's goodwill, and her confidence in the loyalty of her Indian subjects which are afforded by her sanctioning the visit of the Prince to India.

"SALISBURY."

A detailed official plan was then drawn up for a tour of four months through the principal provinces of India, including visits to several of the most important Courts and some of the most famous shooting preserves in the Peninsula. The Prince selected his companions and staff with

great circumspection. There were a few members of the aristocracy whom he regarded as his friends, the most trusted officials of his household, Sir Bartle Frere as Anglo-Indian emeritus, an eminent physician with long Indian experience in Sir Joseph Fayrer to look after the health of the party, and a not less eminent journalist in Dr. W. Howard Russell to chronicle its movements and adventures. The journey was performed in H.M.S. *Serapis*, and the tour was framed on the circumnavigation of the Peninsula from Bombay to Calcutta with a passing stop in Ceylon.

On 11th October, 1875, the Prince of Wales, accompanied by the Princess as far as Calais, left London *en route* for Brindisi, where the *Serapis* was waiting for him with the members of the party already on board. The Prince stayed one night only in Paris, reaching the Italian port on 16th October, and the *Serapis* sailed immediately. The time-table, which had been drawn up on the most exact lines, did not allow of the smallest departure from the programme. For what had to be accomplished it was even felt that the freedom of movement would be somewhat cramped, and that many places in India which were worth seeing would have to be passed by.

On 23rd October Port Said was reached, after a brief detour to Athens to enable the Prince to see his brother-in-law, King George, and while the ship passed leisurely through the Canal to Suez the Prince went to Cairo to pay a visit of ceremony to the Khedive. At Port Said the Prince had been greeted by the three sons of that potentate, who had sent them to do especial honour to the Heir of the British Throne. Ismail Pasha was a genial being with whom the Prince felt himself in natural sympathy, and the pleasant hospitality of Cairo was a fitting prelude to the ceremonials and pageantry of the East that were to express the goodwill and devotion of the Princes and Peoples of India.

After a brief stay at Aden, where the excitement of the native Arabs, including women and children, was said to be indescribable, the final stage across the Indian Ocean was accomplished in fine weather, and Bombay was reached

on 8th May. The Prince was received by Sir Philip Wodehouse, the Governor of Bombay, Lord Napier of Magdala, Commander-in-Chief in India, and nearly eighty of the most important Princes of Western India, including Maharajas Holkar and Sindhia. The young Gaekwar, who had only just been placed on the gadi, was a prominent figure in the group, and the Prince was observed to engage him in conversation. Another distinguished Indian was Sir Salar Jung, then acting as co-Regent for the young Nizam, who headed the deputation from Hyderabad. The stay in Bombay covered several days, and included a visit to the far-famed caves of Elephanta, with their wonderful rock statuary. From Bombay the Prince went to Baroda, where he was the Gaekwar's guest for several days. Here he had his first introduction to Indian sport in hunting with the trained cheetahs. At Baroda, also, the Prince made the acquaintance of Sir T. Madava Rao, who was administering the State in this prince's minority. In him the Prince recognized one of the most cultured minds and highest intelligences of all the prominent representatives of India with whom he came in contact during his tour.

Returning to the *Serapis*, Colombo was the next port of call. Here the Prince had his second experience of Indian sport. A great elephant battue had been arranged in the Prince's honour, but, as sometimes happens in these affairs, the proceedings were not in accordance with the programme. The elephants broke in the wrong direction, and threatened to charge the point at which the Prince was stationed. One elephant in particular seemed to single him out for attack. The Prince fired and wounded the animal. It drew back into the undergrowth, it reappeared, and with a second shot the Prince laid the gigantic pachyderm low. The experience was exciting and not free from alarm for the others who were present It left something to be remembered about the visit to Ceylon.

From Colombo the next stage brought the *Serapis* on 14th December to Madras, where the Duke of Buckingham and Chandos was the governor of the day. The reception here vied in public enthusiasm with that displayed at

Bombay. The Chiefs of Southern India and the ancient aristocracy of the Provinces, many representing dynasties anterior to the Mogul conquest, gathered in their hundreds for the great official reception at Government House. Among spectacles arranged for the Prince's delectation the one that made the most lasting impression on the mind was the illumination of the incoming successive lines of surf before breaking on the shore.

Two months now had passed since the departure from England, and the Prince had lived for five weeks under the Indian sun. All had gone well. The health of the whole party was excellent, and the Prince showed no signs of weariness or relaxed interest in the new surroundings. A more fatiguing period awaited him after his arrival in the capital which he reached on 23rd December. Here he was received at the landing-stage by the Viceroy in person, accompanied by the highest officials, including the Commander-in-Chief, the Judges, etc., and an address of welcome was presented by the Chairman of the Municipality. Among the great Chiefs were to be noted the Maharajas of Cashmere and Jeypore, as well as Sindhia and Holkar, who had both been present at Bombay. A brilliant procession was then formed and the party proceeded in the regular official order to Government House. Here 10,000 school children sang the National Anthem. The Begum of Bhopal viewed the procession from Government House, and was duly presented to the Prince by the Viceroy. Visits of ceremony occupied a couple of days, and among those received were special ambassadors from Nepal and Burmah. The Prince officially opened the New Zoological Gardens, and attended a public ball at the town hall to mark the close of the old year. New Year's Day, 1876, was assigned to the unveiling of Lord Mayo's statue and to a Grand Investiture of the Order of the Star of India. Among the recipients of the Grand Cross were the Maharajas of Jhodpore and Jeend and the Nawab of Rampore. This concluded the Prince's stay in the City of Palaces.

The next places visited in their order were Benares, Cawnpore and Lucknow, taken on the way to Delhi, where

the Prince was much struck by the imposing architecture of the walls, gates and palaces, memorials of an imperial greatness that had passed away. At that moment Delhi was beginning to recover something of its departed prosperity, but as it was not a centre of commerce nor the abode of merchants the visitor who had just come from such bustling centres of activity as Bombay, Madras and Calcutta, would be struck by its quiet and peacefulness.

On 12th January the Prince reached Delhi, and made his formal entry into one of the ancient capitals of India. The scene was worthy of the imperial occasion. The most striking incident occurred when the Prince came in sight of the grand flight of steps leading to the main gateway. The immense multitude which had been sitting low rose as by one accord. The effect was described as wonderful, like the bursting of innumerable flowers, for there were many thousands of native gentlemen and ladies as well as European ladies waving kerchiefs and parasols, and the many-coloured dresses and turbans were all revealed at once.

From Delhi the Prince proceeded to Lahore, stopping at Umballa to turn aside to pay a brief visit to Patiala, whose ever-loyal Maharaja entertained him at supper. This incident affords proof of the cramped opportunities afforded the Prince by the necessarily limited space of time at his disposal. The visit to the Punjab concluded with a stay of four days at Jammu as the guest of the Maharaja of Cashmere. On the return journey the Prince opened the great railway bridge at Agra, and paid brief visits to the capitals of Maharajas Sindhia and Jeypore. At this point the ceremonial side of the visit may be regarded as concluded, but there remained one more incident of a different character to show the Prince another side of the many-hued life of India.

As the guest of the great Jung Bahadur of Nepal the Prince was to enjoy a carnival of sport in the Terai, which is the most densely-covered jungle in the Peninsula, and the most productive of the largest specimens of big game. Moreover it is strictly preserved, and the most favoured only gain permission to shoot as the greatest privilege.

Whereas up to this point the Prince had passed most of his nights in palaces he, for this fortnight, passed his days on the back of an elephant, and his nights under canvas in a hunting camp. This experience over, the Prince started on his journey to Bombay, breaking his route at Indore to enjoy the hospitality of Maharaja Holkar.

He reached Bombay on 14th March, and two days later the *Serapis* began her homeward journey.

Before she sailed the Prince addressed the following letter, describing in a few lines his enjoyment of the period during which he had been India's guest—

" H.M.S. *Serapis*,
" BOMBAY.
" *March* 13, 1876.

" MY DEAR LORD NORTHBROOK,

" I cannot leave India without expressing to you, as the Queen's representative in this vast Empire, the sincere pleasure and the deep interest with which I have visited this great and wonderful country. As you are aware, it has been my hope and intention for some years past to see India with a view to becoming more intimately acquainted with the Queen's subjects in this distant part of her Empire, and to examine for myself those objects of interest which have always had so great an attraction for travellers. I may candidly say that my expectations have been more than realized by what I have witnessed, so that I return to my native country most deeply impressed with all I have seen and heard. The information I have gained will, I am confident, be of the greatest value to me, and will form a useful foundation for much that I hope hereafter to acquire. The reception I have met with from the princes and chiefs and from the native population at large is most gratifying to me, as the evidence of loyalty thus manifested shows an attachment to the Queen and to the Throne which I trust will be made every year more and more lasting. It is my earnest hope that the many millions of the Queen's Indian subjects may daily become more convinced of the advantages of British rule, and that they may realize more fully

that the Sovereign and the Government of England have the interests and well-being of India very sincerely at heart.

"I have had frequent opportunities of seeing native troops of all branches of the service, and I cannot withhold my opinion that they constitute an army of which we may feel justly proud. The 'march past' at Delhi of so many distinguished officers and such highly disciplined troops was a most impressive sight and one which I shall not easily forget. I wish also to state my high appreciation of the Civil Service, and I feel assured that the manner in which their arduous duties are performed tends greatly to the prosperity and the contentment of all classes of the community. I cannot conclude without thanking you and all those in authority for the facilities which have enabled me to traverse so rapidly so large an extent of country, and rest assured I shall ever retain a grateful memory of the hospitality tendered by yourself and by others who have so kindly received me.

"Believe me, my dear Lord Northbrook,

"Yours very sincerely,

"ALBERT EDWARD."

Lord Northbrook had sent in his formal resignation on 4th January, but he did not leave India till the middle of April, by which time his successor, Lord Lytton, had arrived to take over the control of affairs.

CHAPTER XXV

EMPRESS OF INDIA

ALTHOUGH Lord Northbrook's resignation was not made public till January, 1876, his intention to resign, as soon as circumstances connected with the Prince's visit rendered it convenient and proper, had been notified to the Prime Minister some months earlier. This gave the Government the opportunity of deciding who should be his successor without the Press having the chance of suggesting names and discussing the pretensions of possible candidates, as had happened after Lord Mayo's murder. The Prime Minister was able to consider and decide the matter in private, and to defer revealing his intentions until the appointment of a new Viceroy had been made. The Prime Minister was again Mr. Disraeli, who had sprung such a surprise on the public and the gossips when he selected Lord Mayo, and who was now about to spring a still greater surprise in the best informed circles. Whoever had been suggested there it would certainly not have been Lord Lytton.

Lord Lytton was at the moment Her Majesty's Minister at Lisbon, where he received the Prime Minister's letter offering him the Viceroyalty—

"LONDON,
"*23rd November*, 1875.

"My dear Lytton,

"Lord Northbrook has resigned the Viceroyalty of India for purely domestic reasons, and will return to England in the Spring.

"If you will be willing I will submit your name to the Queen as his successor. The critical state of affairs in Central Asia demands a statesman, and I believe if you will accept this high post you will have an opportunity not only of serving your country, but of obtaining an enduring fame.

"Yours sincerely,
"B. DISRAELI."



By courtesy of *"English Life"*

THE EARL OF LYTTON

To this Lord Lytton sent the following reply—

"My dear Mr. Disraeli,

"No man was ever so greatly or surprisingly honoured as I am by your splendid offer, nor could any man possibly feel prouder than I do of an honour so unprecedented, or more deeply anxious to deserve it.

"But I should ill requite your generous confidence were I to accept the magnificent and supremely important post for which you are willing to recommend me to the Queen without first submitting to your most serious consideration circumstances which cannot be already known to you, and in which you will probably recognize a paramount disqualification."

He then referred to a condition of his health, which rendered him at times incapable of prolonged mental labour coupled with anxiety. Resuming, he wrote—

"I assure you most earnestly that if with the certainty of leaving my life behind me in India I had a reasonable chance of also leaving there a reputation comparable to Lord Mayo's, I would still, without a moment's hesitation, embrace the high destiny you place within my grasp. But the gratitude, industry, and *will* which must help me to compensate all my other deficiencies afford no guarantee against this physical difficulty. I am persuaded that you will not misunderstand the hesitation and anxiety it causes me.

"If there be reasons unknown to me which upon purely public grounds (the only ones I would ask you to consider) still dispose you to incur such a risk, an intimation from you to that effect will relieve me from all hesitation. In that case, and in that case only, I shall regard your letter, not as an offer which I can decline, compatibly with my intense appreciation of the undeserved honour it involves, but as a high and glorious command which it would be a dereliction of duty to disobey."

The answer to this letter was cabled on 20th December, and it was sent from Hatfield to show that Lord Salisbury was in agreement with the Prime Minister. The telegram was as follows—

"We have carefully considered your letter, and have not changed our opinions. We regard the matter as settled."

Lord Lytton's reputation at that moment was one of the Poet in the first place and of the Diplomatist in the second, both careers requiring exercises of the brain which call for imagination, the rarest of divine gifts. A diplomatist without imagination is a dull personage, a poet without it would have no existence. But if there is a high office in worldly affairs calling for this ethereal quality in man that office is the Viceroyship of India. For that reason Mr. Disraeli's selection of Lord Lytton to be the successor of the sober, staid, slow-thinking, and slower-speaking Lord Northbrook was a most excellent selection. The Eastern Magician seemed to know intuitively that his nominee would have to deal with many scenes and spectacles outside the humdrum existence of ordinary humanity, and that there was no man in England to play the part, but the latest and the last of the Troubadours of Romance.

Although his appointment had been gazetted on 7th January, 1876, Lord Lytton did not leave England for his post until 1st March, and in those seven weeks the world of the British Empire had been made cognizant of a great event, a remarkable step forward in the relations of England and India, perhaps the greatest, always bargaining for that rarest power of imagination, in the common history of the two countries. Mr. Disraeli, not content with giving two magnificent Viceroys to India, had formed the conclusion, which duller minds had not conceived, that the moment had arrived to invest his Royal Mistress with a new style, and to add to her many titles, if a herald had been engaged to proclaim them, another not less proud, not less significant than those she already bore.

The Queen's speech on 8th February, at the opening of Parliament, attended by Her Majesty in person, for the Session of 1876, contained the following passage—

"I am deeply thankful for the uninterrupted health which my dear son, the Prince of Wales, has enjoyed during his journey through India. The hearty affection with which

he has been received by my Indian subjects of all classes and races assures me that they are happy under my rule, and loyal to my Throne. At the time that the direct government of my Indian Empire was transferred to the Crown, no formal addition was made to the style and titles of the Sovereign. I have deemed the present a fitting opportunity for supplying this omission, and a Bill upon the subject will be presented to you."

In due course a Royal Titles Bill was brought in to allow of the addition of the title of Empress of India to the style and titles of Queen Victoria, or of Emperor when her successors should chance to be males. For that title the obvious rendering in the classic tongues of the East was Kaisar i Hind, on the precedent of the Roman Emperors having always been designated Kaisar i Room. It cannot be said that any of the speakers during the debates on the passage of the Bill rose to the height of the subject. Rarely could it have happened for men of such considerable Parliamentary reputations to have put their names to such carping littlenesses. Some even pretended to see in the proposal a slight of England herself, and went so far as to suggest that it was a violation of the Constitution, inasmuch as it seemed to imply a revival of despotic power. No one was competent to deal with the fact that Maharani or Begum, the only Indian equivalents for Queen, was an inadequate and misleading description, as applied to the sole and supreme Ruler of India.

Notwithstanding this petty and unworthy opposition, the Titles Bill was carried into law before Lord Lytton left for India. Lord Lytton and his family—his elder son, the present Earl of Lytton, was destined to be born in India in the summer of 1876—accompanied by Colonel Burne as Private Secretary, to fill the same post he had held with Lord Mayo, left England on 1st March, reaching Egypt three weeks later. On 24th March, on arriving at Suez to resume his journey to India, after spending two days in Cairo, he found the *Serapis* in the harbour with the Prince of Wales on board on his voyage home.

In the course of his interview with his Royal Highness he

had the advantage of hearing from his own lips the impressions made upon him by his Indian tour, while Sir Bartle Frere was able to supplement the information he had already garnered at the India Office on the position of affairs in Afghanistan and Central Asia. Lord Lytton described the *Serapis* as "a floating Western Palace with the products of the East."

The immediate task that awaited the new Viceroy, apart from the Afghan negotiations which claim and will receive specific description in the next chapter, on his arrival in India, was to organize the appropriate ceremony for the proclamation of the Queen as Empress of India. As it was an event unique of its kind in history, so was it clear that it required a unique and splendid setting. There was some discussion in the first place as to where it should be celebrated. Calcutta, or to be more precise, Fort William, was the chief seat of the Government, but Calcutta was only a commercial city, with no historical claims on the minds of any of the races of India. It had come into existence with the English merchants, and while it might be held to typify the power of the Company, it had no corresponding claim to pose as the centre of the power of the Crown. There was also a material objection to its selection. It lay in an extreme quarter of India to which it would be highly inconvenient and irksome for the majority of the ruling Princes of India to betake themselves. Many of them, if it had been chosen, would have found excuses in some form or other for being absent.

A brief consideration of the matter sufficed to show that there was only one place in India with paramount claims over every other for the effective and duly impressive celebration of the Proclamation of Queen Victoria as Empress of India, and this was Delhi, the seat of Mogul power, and that of many of the older dynasties going back to the time of Alexander. Outside Delhi, too, there were plains and open spaces like the Ridge, well suited for the vast camp that it would be necessary to create for the accommodation of the immense number of guests of all ranks, and also of their followers and retainers, whose presence was necessary

to give dignity and even sublimity to the proceedings. The magnificent walls, gates, and towers of the ancient city provided an appropriate background to the brilliant pageantry below, extending in its variegated hues and ever changing phantasmagoria to the extreme limits of the horizon. Delhi then was pronounced the inevitable choice for the Imperial Durbar; and then and there was settled for all successive State ceremonials and high spectacles the pre-eminence of Delhi, which eventually resulted in its being proclaimed once more the Imperial Capital of India. Regarded in their proper light the Prince of Wales's visit, the adoption of the Imperial title, and the restoration of Delhi to its old position as the Imperial Capital of India, mark three successive stages in the firm attachment of India to the Crown.

Lord Lytton threw himself into the congenial task of arranging the multifarious details of the programme, so that the Proclamation of the new Empress of India might be rendered as effective as possible. It was said that altogether 68,000 invitations were issued. The delicate question of precedence had to be decided among Princes of the second and third rank, as well as of the first, with regard to whom gradation was easier. Seventy-nine Chiefs of the first rank not merely accepted the invitation to be present, but were present in person. They included the Nizam, the Gaekwar, the Maharajas of Cashmere, Gwalior, and Indore, all the Rajput and Sikh Princes, the Mahomedan and Maratha Chiefs of Central India. Among them were experienced rulers of long standing, like Sindhia and Holkar, young men like the Nizam, and a boy in the person of the newly chosen Gaekwar, who must be one of the few survivors of the scene. There were present also the three most notable statesmen of India during the nineteenth century, Salar Jung, Madava Rao, and Dinkar Rao. We have not seen their equals in our time. From farther afield came Jung Bahadur of Nepal, and many representatives of European States and Royal families, impelled by curiosity and not a little envy to witness a spectacle the like of which no other country could furnish. It would be difficult to give the totals of the suites and retainers of the Chiefs, each assigned his own special camp

distinguished by their flags and armorial ensigns. This supplied Lord Lytton with a pretty notion. He ordered small flags in blue silk, one side showing the Royal coat of arms worked in silver, and the other those of the particular Chief to whom the flag was presented. Finally 1,200 members of the Civil Service, 300 selected representatives of the aristocracy of the Three Presidencies, and a military force of 14,000 men to typify the Anglo-Indian armies, completed the component parts of the vast gathering.

For the first time on record not a few, but practically all of the Princes of India took up their allotted places in an Empire of which they formed so distinguished a part, while the impression produced on the foreigners present was all the greater because they had presumed disunion and secret hostility existed where they found only concord and union. The Great Durbar for the Proclamation was held in an immense circular arena, protected by canvas and silk. The benches on which the participants sat were covered with silks and satins. The colours were brilliant, and almost dazzling in their variety. The Herald chosen for the occasion to proclaim the style and titles of the Queen-Empress was the tallest officer of the British army. The challenge to all the world to deny her claim and rights rang out from silver trumpets. Then came the Viceroy's speech, explaining all the import of the change in clear and beautiful words, revealing in their form and phrasing some happy turn of Oriental fancy. While the Viceroy was speaking the whole audience remained seated, but as he concluded and resumed his seat all present rose by one spontaneous movement and cheered and cheered again.

Then occurred one final and unrehearsed incident. The Chiefs and the nobles, and all those present resumed their seats, but one Chief remained standing. It was Maharaja Sindhia. In loud tones he exclaimed—

" Shah-in-Shah Padshah (Monarch of Monarchs), may God bless you ! The Princes of India bless you, and pray that your sovereignty and power may remain steadfast for ever ! "

The great Durbar could not have had a finer ending.

On this speech Lord Lytton wrote a special commentary for the enlightenment of the Queen-Empress.

His words have a very special significance which is recognized throughout India, though it is not apparent in the translation of them, and cannot be adequately rendered in English. "The word used by Sindhia to express your Majesty's position in reference to himself and brother princes is a word which the Princes of India have hitherto been careful to avoid using, for it signifies in the original the power of issuing absolute orders which must be obeyed. Coming, therefore, from the lips of Sindhia on such an occasion as the spokesman of all the native Princes then and there assembled, it permanently and publicly fixes your Majesty's suzerain, and more than suzerain, power in India beyond all possibility of future question."

Lord Lytton wished to complete the effect of the Durbar by originating a Council of Princes and a Court of Heraldry, but his wishes were not afforded the opportunity of realization. That India was to be given a larger place in the affairs of the Empire was shown a few months later when the Prime Minister, now created Lord Beaconsfield, summoned the Indian troops to Malta as a warning to Russia in the Near East.

It must not be supposed that the first two years of Lord Lytton's rule—that is to say, the period prior to the outbreak of the Afghan War—were occupied with nothing but festivity and ceremonial. There were many serious and weighty questions to attend to. In the first place, the execution of the Secretary of State's orders with regard to the repeal of the import duty on cotton manufactures required skilful manipulation, and much criticism was silenced by its presentation as the very embodiment of free trade. But this was not the only achievement to be recorded in fiscal measures. Lord Lytton abolished all inland customs which imposed vexatious restrictions on the expansion of the home trade. Many hundreds of customs barriers were removed with no inconsiderable saving in expenses, as well as benefit to commerce.

Lord Lytton was afterwards charged with want of

sympathy with the natives of India, but his acts ought to have shielded him from such an attack. He had been in the country only a short time when an inadequate sentence passed on a European for striking a servant a blow which occasioned death roused his sense of moral indignation, and he endeavoured to have the judgment revised. Indeed, his endeavours were so strenuous that he incurred the censure of the European community. A still more striking proof of his true sentiments was afforded when he decided that one-sixth of the appointments in the Civil Service annually should be reserved for Indian candidates. This was the first step in practice towards giving reality to the pledge that none by reason of their race or religion were to be held excluded from State employment. Lord Lytton also revised and continued Lord Mayo's policy, which Lord Northbrook had modified, of increased liberty and financial control for the local Governments. By this policy of decentralization the strain on the Supreme Government was sensibly diminished.

In the summer of 1877 a terrible visitation befell Southern India. Madras experienced a protracted period of drought, severe beyond the memory of man, and intense human suffering followed over a wide area. Lord Lytton, alarmed at the reports that reached him, sent Sir Richard Temple to investigate the situation. The information he obtained was so bad that the Viceroy, despite its being the hottest season of the year, decided to proceed to the scene in person. As it was clear that the Madras Government did not possess either the resources or the means of grappling with the situation unaided, Lord Lytton took with him the best men he could obtain, whose experience would enable him to adopt the most scientific measures for overcoming the crisis. Among them may be named General Kennedy, Secretary of the Public Works Department at Bombay, and the great authority on irrigation, Sir R. Scott Moncrieff. Lord Lytton's presence inspired all with the zeal to work their hardest, but the Madras famine proved a sad experience for all concerned.

After stimulating all those engaged in their task of relief,

Lord Lytton turned his attention to the preventive side of a recurrent problem. It was clear at the outset that the financial resources of the local Governments were inadequate to deal effectively with an outbreak of famine on a large scale. It was also clear that Madras was then ill-equipped in matters of irrigation and means of communication to meet such a visitation by prompt measures in its early stages. Lord Lytton appointed a Commission to draw up a code of rules to be applied immediately on the notification of an approaching period of dearth in any part of the peninsula. The measures proposed were very extensive and far reaching, and although Lord Lytton adopted them and supported them with all his power at home, the Secretary of State deemed them excessive, and overruled many of them. The projected cost and their efficacy also was materially reduced. In one respect an important change was admitted. The burden of dealing with famines in any Province was to be borne by the Supreme and not the local Government. A famine reserve by setting aside each year a sum of one and a half millions sterling out of the revenue was the great departure in system due to Lord Lytton's initiative.

Sir John Strachey described this scheme as follows— " that, in addition to the necessary margin of revenue over expenditure, a surplus of £1,500,000 must every year be provided on account of famine relief alone, and that this sum, when the country was free from famine, must be regularly devoted to the discharge of debt or the prevention of debt which would have been otherwise incurred for the construction of railways or canals."

This system, sometimes modified or suspended, has in essentials been maintained ever since, and it has worked successfully; but no one seems to remember that it originated with Lord Lytton. Such is the uncertainty of fame! The Madras famine was followed immediately by a further famine in Mysore, then under British administration, which, although less disastrous than that in Madras in respect of mortality, brought out not less clearly the absence of all preventive or even precautionary measures. Here Sir

Charles Elliott rendered great service in introducing the Lyttonian measures, and Sir R. Scott Moncrieff began those works of irrigation, and of utilizing hydraulic resources that have so largely contributed to the prosperity of the modern state of Mysore.

There remains one more subject to complete this brief sketch of what may be called the domestic affairs of Lord Lytton's administration. A Government, whatever its character, colour, or composition, must always be the most convenient mark at which discontented men may direct their shafts of reasonable criticism or inordinate abuse, and it is, unfortunately, the general lot of humanity to have to endure conditions of life and fortune that are conducive to discontent. A government has need of a tough skin and a large amount of indifference to remain heedless when its motives are impugned and its measures attacked and censured; but, as a general rule, it may be declared that the stronger a government feels within itself the more indifferent does it become to the assaults of its detractors. If it remains fully conscious of its rightfulness, it feels that it can ignore them; if it has doubts about itself, it will destroy their authors.

But a different situation arises when a government, no matter what strength it may be conscious that it possesses, perceives that the attacks on itself as a public body are being diverted to illegal and nefarious ends by diminishing the security of the general community, and by placing the individuals who are entrusted with the mission of executing its orders in personal danger. Then it feels the compulsion to act, and it will always be immaterial whether the Government put in that position is indigenous or exotic. The officials, the staff, the executive, are essential to the existence of any Government; their services, their loyalty, their endurance, cannot be ensured without the protection of the Government they serve. These reciprocal obligations lie at the root of all forms of established Government.

When the freedom of the Press was established by Lord William Bentinck and Sir Charles Metcalfe, a vernacular press was practically speaking non-existent. The press

that Macaulay had in his mind was European, and more particularly English. But after a time journals in one or other of the prevalent languages of the country began to make an appearance, and continued to multiply. This was particularly the case at Calcutta and throughout Bengal. There seems no reason to doubt the accuracy of the statement that for a long time no European officials paid much, if any, attention to the character of the news or the tone of the articles in the vernacular press. Shortly before the arrival of Lord Lytton some officials in the Mofussil had called the attention of their superiors to the fact that some of the local scribes had incited their readers to assassinate them. Then for the first time was attention given to the subject, and under the sense of what amounted to a new revelation an official was told off to examine the vernacular journals, and to make a summary of their most characteristic contents. The result was an accumulation of disturbing matter, which ranged from systematic slander and vulgar abuse to exhortations to mutiny and incitements to murder. The result was very disturbing, and the grave question had to be asked and answered, what was the wisest thing to be done? Some said continued indifference, others prompt and vigorous repression. Lord Northbrook had himself admitted the gravity of the provocation, but he shelved the question of deciding the action to be taken for the arrival of his successor.

Lord Lytton's regulations for the control of the Vernacular Press were adopted in March, 1878. They included the creation of a Press Commissioner, and authorized the prosecution of any offending editor, and the suppression of the paper itself if the offence were repeated after warning. But formidable as the Press regulations appeared on paper, they gave rise to little litigation, and it was said that only one serious case of prosecution arose under the new law. The effect of such a law having been passed was in itself deterrent, and for the closing months of Lord Lytton's rule the vernacular press dropped some of its bitterness, and incitement to overt acts of violence disappeared. Unfortunately these purely Indian matters had been made the

subject of Party politics in London, and instead of supplementing and improving the regulations, the next Administration made it its declared policy to abolish them, with the result that when a more serious situation arose twelve years later in Bombay than Bengal had witnessed, they had to be revived and applied in a more sweeping form.

Taken all in all, Lord Lytton's Viceroyalty will bear close scrutiny, and the examination leaves the impression that he has as yet received but scanty justice.

CHAPTER XXVI

THE LAST AFGHAN WAR

THE outstanding feature in Lord Lytton's Viceroyalty was beyond question the breach in the relations with Afghanistan followed by war. The course of these relations from the time of Lord Lawrence when the Amir, Shere Ali, began his reign has been traced in their different stages. They assumed a hopeful aspect in Lord Mayo's time, and it seemed then as if a durable accord might be reached. They resumed a doubtful character in the time of Lord Northbrook, when the disappointing result for the Amir of the Seistan Boundary Commission and the complete failure of Nur Mahomed Shah's visit to Simla finally alienated Shere Ali, and led him to take steps to establish relations with the Russians. Apprehension of Russia's approach on the side of Persia rather than Central Asia had led to the first war in 1839. The same motive with far greater reason provoked the second in 1878. Russia was no longer at a distance. Her conquests had brought her to the Oxus, and her emissaries had passed freely and frequently to Kabul. Russia had given the British Government many assurances that she had no designs in Afghanistan, and that she recognized that State as lying entirely beyond her sphere, and within that of Great Britain. But whoever relies on a Russian promise, whether Czarist or Soviet, "writes on water or builds on sand." In 1877 and again in 1878 Russian officers were received with welcome in Kabul, and on the latter occasion a treaty was signed, although the form was observed for the sake of screening the Russian Government that it was done by the Russian Governor-General at Tashkent.

The full extent of the mischief wrought at Kabul was not known at the moment, but when it was announced in the summer of 1878 that an expedition had been ordered to advance from the Caspian into the Turcoman country

towards Merv, it was admitted that the time had come to place our relations with the Amir on a definite basis. In January, 1877, a preliminary conference had taken place at Peshawar between Sir Lewis Pelly and the Amir's representative, Nur Mahomed Shah, when a specific request was made for permission to depute English agents to Kabul and Herat. Its results were nil, and the envoy's death terminated the affair. No further steps were taken during the following eighteen months because war with Russia herself was quite a probable contingency until the Berlin Conference in the summer of 1878 established peace in Europe. This accomplished, the Viceroy was instructed to take the necessary steps to determine the future relations of the British Government with the Amir of Afghanistan. The necessity of doing this had been brought home to the Government of India by the knowledge that during the summer of 1878 a Russian general had visited Kabul, where he had been received with exceptional honours. The time had come to decide whose influence was to be predominant in Afghanistan, that of Russia or that of England?

Lord Lytton decided as the most appropriate step to send a British mission to Kabul, and he nominated as his envoy General Sir Neville Chamberlain, the most brilliant officer left of the old school in active service. Sir Neville was also known as a man of moderate views, free from prejudice, and with an unequalled knowledge of the North-west Frontier. He was provided with a suitable escort, and a communication was sent to the Amir informing him of the intended mission. To this no reply was sent, but not on that account could the mission be postponed as the time had come to test the real intentions of Shere Ali. At the end of November, 1878, Sir Neville Chamberlain set out on his journey, and entered the Khyber Pass. When he reached the Afghan fort of Ali Musjid he was refused permission to proceed, and informed that he would be fired on. As the relations between the two States were those of nominal friendship, and as the Amir had recently welcomed a Russian envoy, this rude repulse of a British officer representing the Indian Government could not be regarded as

anything else than a public affront that no self-respecting rulers should condone. The refusal to receive Sir Neville Chamberlain was followed by a declaration of war, and the invasion of Afghanistan began.

The Government of India was not wholly unprepared for this adverse result. Regiments had been warned for active service, and a plan of operations had been carefully drawn up for the attack on Afghanistan to be commenced simultaneously at three separate points. The largest force under Sir Samuel Browne was to operate in the Khyber, a second corps commanded by Sir Frederick Roberts was to advance on the Kuram Pass from Kohat, and a third under Sir Donald Stewart was to attack Kandahar from the side of the Bolan and Quetta. The operations of all the columns were attended with complete success. The Afghans were defeated at Ali Musjid and driven out of the Khyber by Sir Samuel Browne, who then advanced as far as Jellalabad. Sir Frederick Roberts after one severe action at the Peiwar Kotal reached the Shutargardan Pass, and threatened Kabul with a flank movement in support of a direct attack from Jellalabad. Sir Donald Stewart experienced no difficulty in taking Kandahar. No campaign could have been brought to a more rapid or completely successful conclusion than the advance into Afghanistan in the winter of 1878–9. The Afghan powers of resistance seemed to crumble away at the first contact, and the hollowness of Russia's promises of aid must have been made clear even to the blindest at Kabul.

Shere Ali did not wait for further developments. When the English reached Jellalabad he incontinently fled from his capital to seek safety beyond the Hindu Kush. Before he left Kabul he released his son, Yakoob Khan, whom he had long kept in prison, and consigned to him the task of making the best terms he could with the English. As for himself he retained the hope that Russia would yet come to his aid, and he sent several of his officers to Samarcand to inform General Kaufmann, the Russian Governor-General, that the time had arrived for him to fulfil his promises to the ruler and people of Afghanistan. It was said, and there was no reason to doubt the statement, that

Yakoob Khan himself wrote a letter to support his father's appeal with his personal assurance that he would be faithful to the Russian alliance. Meanwhile he had to deal with the more urgent matter of staying the further advance of the victorious English.

The sudden death of Shere Ali at Balkh in February, 1879, released the Russian authorities in Central Asia from the embarrassment in which their secret and treacherous proceedings with him had placed them, and Yakoob Khan, discovering that no help was likely to come from that quarter, decided to make peace with the English as the only means of averting the occupation of Kabul and the probable overthrow of his own authority. Negotiations were accordingly opened, and as he complied with all the demands made upon him they did not prove protracted, and a treaty of peace was signed at Gandamak in May, 1879. Yakoob Khan complied very readily, but time alone could prove whether he possessed either the power or the will to carry out his promises and the terms of the Treaty. The chief advantage claimed by the framers of the Treaty was that it gave India for the first time " a scientific frontier " on the North-west.

Among the other terms the most important was the residence of a British envoy in Kabul. No one seems to have entertained any doubt that the execution of this arrangement was perfectly feasible and well within Yakoob's power, and as he himself never expressed any reluctance to the step it is scarcely matter for surprise that the British negotiators did not suggest any doubt or difficulty on the subject. Yet this was the point about which all his predecessors had expressed an adverse view in the past. They alleged that the presence of a resident British envoy at their capital would be dangerous, not merely for him, but for themselves. It might have been wiser to let the question of a resident envoy stand over and to have made the alternative proposal of British agents at Kandahar, Herat, and Balkh figure as the crucial point in the Treaty, but it will be said no doubt that it is easy to be wise after the event.

Sir Louis Cavagnari, who had negotiated the Treaty of

Gandamak, was appointed by Lord Lytton to be the first duly-accredited British Resident at Kabul. Accompanied by a small staff of officers and an escort of Indian troops, he took up his residence at the Afghan capital in June, 1879. The Amir gave him a hospitable reception and for some weeks everything passed off satisfactorily. But it soon became clear that Yakoob was not likely to prove the strong ruler that he was expected to be. He had been too long in prison, his spirit was daunted, and he had no hold on any class of the people. He had not even fought with the foreigners, but made peace with them by a Treaty which did not seem to hold out even the promise of any recompense for the Afghans themselves. That was the flaw in the Treaty of Gandamak. The bribe offered to the Afghan ruler for the reception of agents had always been the payment of a subsidy more or less fixed.

If ever an Amir stood in need of a subsidy it was Yakoob Khan. The treasury was empty, and he was surrounded by troops clamouring for their pay. Shere Ali had summoned troops to his aid from the remote districts, and two regiments at least had arrived from Herat. They had been summoned to fight the English; they found them installed in the capital, and the titular ruler had no money to pay them their dues and to send them back to their homes in a contented mood. The Afghan troops were consequently discontented and ready for any mischief that promised money or plunder, and Yakoob Khan had no means of mollifying their angry passions. The truth as to the insurrection that followed can never be known, but the version most credited by the Amir Abdurrahman was that the mother of Abdullah Jan, Shere Ali's favourite son, who had died just before the war began, had given the Commander-in-Chief Daoud Shah 3,000 sovereigns to incite the troops to mutiny, to attack the British Residency, and to kill the envoy Cavagnari, in order that Yakoob Khan might be discredited and thus lose his kingdom. Some credit was given to this version by the allegation that long before hostilities had commenced the lady implicated had written to the Government of India, offering to poison her husband,

Shere Ali, if it would guarantee the succession to her son, Abdullah Jan. The desire of revenge is as strong in the breast of an Afghan as of a woman, but the alleged plot to discredit Yakoob Khan seems a little too involved, seeing that there were easier ways at the disposal of the irate and disappointed lady to attain that object.

On the whole, therefore, the story that the Herat regiments mutinied for their pay and then attacked the British Residency in pursuit of plunder seems the more reasonable if less romantic explanation of the tragic occurrence. At all events none of the versions current at Kabul implicated the Amir. He was the victim of the plot as well as the members of the British mission. On 3rd September, 1879, the British Residency was attacked and stormed. Not one of its members, British or Indian, survived to tell the tale of the massacre. Another tragedy was thus added to the long list of murders and assassinations that composed the stormy history of the Bala Hissar.

Under this provocation the Government of India had no alternative than to send a fresh expedition to exact punishment for this cruel outrage. The evacuation of Kandahar had been only partially carried out; it was countermanded and Sir Donald Stewart was ordered to concentrate his force again in that city. At the same time Sir Frederick Roberts, who had come out of the first campaign with an enhanced reputation, was entrusted with the command of the army that was to advance on Kabul. He decided to avoid the Khyber Pass and to march on the Afghan capital by the Kuram valley and Shutargardan Pass, which he had reached on the previous occasion. No resistance was attempted by the Afghans or the local tribes on the Indian side of the pass, and the expedition reached the low-lying district at the northern point of which stands the town of Kabul. The Afghan forces collected from all sides to oppose the British, and when it is remembered that General Roberts had less than 3,000 men under his command, it will not be denied that his was a bold undertaking. The Afghans assembled at the village of Charasiah to the number of 10,000 men, and it was computed that among them were

not fewer than thirteen regular regiments of Shere Ali's old army.

The evening before the battle Yakoob Khan escaped from his own people and came into the British camp protesting that he was innocent of all participation in the massacre of the British mission. His coming in when he could have escaped to the northwards was certainly in appearance the act of an innocent man. He then and there abdicated in favour of his son, and was sent to India to be interned pending the consideration of his case. Meantime the Afghans had been routed at Charasiah (6th October) by General Roberts, who considered it one of the happiest of his many victories, and three days later he entered Kabul in triumph. Search was made for the assailants of the Residency. Some were found and promptly hanged, and part of the Royal Citadel or Bala Hissar was blown up to leave a permanent mark of British vengeance.

The military objects of the expedition having been attained, there remained the more difficult task of reaching some solution of the political problem. As Lord Lytton wrote, " The garment we had woven having been rent asunder, we must weave another as well as we can." The situation was complicated by the fact that there was no representative of the reigning family with whom negotiations might be resumed. At that moment, too, it seemed as if no central authority existed in Afghanistan. Innocent or guilty, it did not seem possible to replace Yakoob Khan on the throne, and he was no longer desirous of recovering such perilous honours as belong to any ruler of Afghanistan. His son, Moosa Jan, was only a child, and he was in the hands of the extreme anti-foreign faction. It was pronounced imprudent to withdraw the victorious army until some individual or authority should come forward or be discovered to conclude a binding arrangement for the future. Moreover, a precipitate withdrawal would only serve to encourage Russia to resume her machinations at Kabul.

There appeared no reason to feel any serious apprehension as to the consequences of keeping the army in Afghanistan during the winter of 1879–80. The force was well equipped

in every way, and its communications with India were secure, and messages could be exchanged with the greatest rapidity with the Government in India. Moreover, the opposition of the Afghans in the open had either proved very feeble, or was considered to be overcome, and the absence of a suitable claimant to the throne was assumed to signify that there was no leader left at all likely to succeed in combining any large body from the tribes to attack us. This reasoning seemed the sounder because the only two members of the ruling family with any claims to authority were far removed from the immediate scene of action. Ayoob, the uterine brother of Yakoob Khan, was at Herat ; Abdurrahman was interned in Russian Turkestan. On all these grounds it was decided to continue the occupation of the country for another year and to employ the interval in deciding what seemed the best policy to follow for the restoration of things to a permanent footing. Many different plans were considered during that period, but whether it was good or bad, Lord Lytton was the only man who propounded a positive scheme of settlement for the future of Afghanistan.

The military side of the question again became of the greater importance, but fortunately the British force was commanded by an exceedingly able and far-seeing general in Sir Frederick Roberts. His force was not large, and measuring all the possibilities of the situation with calm and critical eyes, he began to take steps at the earliest moment to provide for all contingencies. The concentration of his force in a strong and well-prepared position was the first essential. He constructed a fortified cantonment possessing a good water supply at Sherpur, and of sufficient dimensions to provide for his whole force without unduly extending its area beyond the capacity of his troops to hold it against all comers. In this position he felt perfectly secure against any attack, and able to wait calmly until the Afghans' fury should be exhausted and the return of spring enable him to resume the offensive.

While these timely preparations were in progress, Afghan hostility suddenly developed an unexpected volume and intensity. Leaders of a popular anti-foreign movement

had come forward in the persons of Mahomed Jan, a soldier of fortune, and the Chief Mollah of Kabul, and the tribesmen came in from all quarters, attracted by the prospect of repeating the deeds of the winter of 1841–2, but they were to find that they had to deal with a very different soldier from Elphinstone. At the same time, the danger was far too serious to be treated with levity, and the Afghans might even claim that they had obtained some success in the Chardeh Valley, where General Massey's cavalry had been driven back by Mahomed Jan, with the loss of two guns.

Thereupon General Roberts withdrew all his troops into Sherpur and stood on his guard. This step was taken on 14th December, 1879.

Mahomed Jan having collected the tribes, knew that he must employ them promptly to the end for which they had gathered, or they would speedily disperse. With his overwhelming superiority in numbers, it was not difficult for him to surround Sherpur on all sides, and during ten days he delivered daily assaults of more or less severity. On the tenth day he made his final attempt to carry the place by storm, but he was beaten at all points with a loss which was computed at not less than two thousand men. This disaster ended the attempts to capture Sherpur, but winter held the land in its grip, and General Roberts, not enticed to foolish adventures by his sense of security, waited on patiently for the milder weather and for the arrival of reinforcements.

To give him the latter it was decided that Sir Donald Stewart, in command at Kandahar, should march northwards with the greater part of his force as soon as the season allowed, and no doubt this decision was arrived at from a recollection of General Nott's feat in 1842. It was also the most economical way of reinforcing the corps at Kabul. Incidentally, too, it would bring British troops into an untouched part of Afghanistan and deprive the hostile forces still known to exist of their last rallying point in the fortress of Ghuzni. General Stewart began his march before the beginning of April, and his column numbered

6,000 combatants, more than double the force with which General Roberts had won the battle of Charasiah. He encountered no opposition until he had got within thirty miles of Ghuzni. Here at a village called Ahmed Khel on 19th April the Afghans made a sudden attack on the British force while in column of march. It was delivered by a body of Ghazis several thousand strong. The impetus of their attack threw that part of the column which was attacked into some confusion, but order was quickly restored, and the Ghazis beaten off leaving 1,000 killed on the ground. No further opposition was met with, and on 27th April Sir Donald Stewart reached Kabul, taking over the chief command as General Roberts' senior.

Before proceeding farther with the main chronicle it is necessary to make a divergence to describe how a new character suddenly appeared upon the scene and speedily assumed a leading part. In 1868 on the triumph of Shere Ali, Abdurrahman, Afzul's son, fled for shelter to Bokhara. In 1877 when the Russians began their intrigues with Shere Ali, they deemed it politic to remove his potential rival to a greater distance from the frontier, so they interned him at Tashkent. Shere Ali having died and Yakoob Khan having become involved with the British, they came to the conclusion that Abdurrahman might play their game, and so they gave him some money and let him depart to try his fortunes once more. He crossed the Oxus and made good his hold on Badakshan, whence he succeeded in establishing his influence if not his authority over Balkh and Kunduz. Early in the year 1880 it was known that he was supreme north of the Hindu Kush, and Lord Lytton was quite willing to treat with and recognize Abdurrahman as Amir of Kabul. To that end he deputed Sir Lepel Griffin to Kabul in March, 1880, with full and clear instructions to negotiate with Abdurrahman for the purpose of his assuming the direction of affairs at Kabul and concluding a treaty which had some chance of proving a binding and durable engagement.

We must now consider the closing incidents of Lord Lytton's viceroyalty. Lord Lytton had decided upon a

policy with regard to Afghanistan which would have marked a new departure. He had decided that it would be best to break it up into several parts and to have arrangements with the chief or ruler of each separate part. In the execution of that policy he had recognized a scion of the Barukzai House, Shere Ali Khan, as Wali of Kandahar, and he had expressed his readiness to treat with Ayoob Khan on a similar understanding with regard to Herat. When Abdurrahman came along he seemed to fit in with Lord Lytton's plans as a possible Amir of Kabul, and Sir Lepel Griffin was positively enjoined to open negotiations with him to that end. This was not difficult, for Abdurrahman, encouraged by the signs of the time, came down from the mountains and took up his quarters in the city of Kabul, but he soon let it be seen that no partial Amirship would content his ambition. He would be Amir of Afghanistan or none at all.

At this moment there occurred far from the scenes we have been describing a political cataclysm which completely altered the situation. A General Election had been held in England, with the result that the Conservatives were beaten and the Liberals returned to power with a great majority. Lord Beaconsfield and Lord Salisbury went out of office and Mr. Gladstone returned to power. Lord Lytton, whose policy had been bitterly attacked during the Election campaign by men who had no policy at all, had placed his resignation in Lord Beaconsfield's hands so that it might accompany his own, if the necessity should arise through defeat at the polls. Among the misrepresentations of fact on which the Election of 1880 turned was the allegation that Lord Lytton was anxious to annex Afghan territory, whereas he was not only most desirous to quit that country but had actually made arrangements to that end in more than one direction.

The negotiations with Abdurrahman were continued during this critical and uncertain period by Sir Lepel Griffin, whose instructions tied him down to treat with that chief as Amir of Kabul alone. But Sir Lepel Griffin was a strong man and had views of his own. He was on the

spot, and he had discovered in Abdurrahman another mind of mastery and spirit. He enlarged his instructions, and he informed Abdurrahman that he would be recognized as Amir not only of Kabul but of Herat also. He would have added Kandahar as well, but he felt his hands tied in that quarter by the somewhat nebulous arrangement with the Wali. If Lord Lytton had remained in power this would have meant Griffin's official ruin, but he had made a shrewd calculation that the Liberal leaders would be very grateful to anyone who could present them with a ready-made Amir for their gracious acceptance.

At this very moment a dramatic incident occurred which favoured the full realization of Griffin's plan for a fresh settlement in Afghanistan based on the old principle of a "united and friendly" State in opposition to Lord Lytton's new formula of separate chiefships, realizing the theory of imperial rule by dividing one's opponents. Reference has been made to the separate administration of Herat by Yakoob's full brother Ayoob. During all these years of civil strife and foreign invasion he had made no stir. He had written no letters, he had given no promises. He was the dark horse in the political arena. He seemed indifferent to everything that was happening. But he was not so indifferent as to fail to perceive that the departure of Sir Donald Stewart for Kabul left but a small garrison in Kandahar, and that if he was ever to come forward to play for his own hand the favourable moment for doing so had thus arrived.

It is not necessary for a born leader of armies to have been trained in the Potsdam school or at the Staff College to understand the main principles of successful war. If it were, Nadir Shah and Ahmed Shah would never have come into the first rank of conquerors. One of those principles is to bring an overwhelming force to bear on a vital point, and then it does not greatly matter whether the men who follow their leader are Germans or Afghans. Early in July, 1880, reports came into Kandahar that forces were being collected beyond the Helmund. The Wali held the best crossing of the river at Girishk with some of his levies,

and General Primrose in command at Kandahar thought it well to move out a brigade to give confidence to the local ruler and to obtain information about the alleged approaching enemy.

There is no doubt that the prevalent opinion was that the movement was of no great importance. This view was very quickly refuted by events. The detached brigade mustered about 2,300 men, including six companies of an English regiment and a battery of horse artillery. It was commanded by General Burrows. On his approaching Girishk the Wali's levies at that place mutinied, and went off to join Ayoob Khan, who was crossing the river higher up; but the English commander arrived in time to prevent their carrying off the guns that had been placed at the Wali's service. Having ascertained that the reported hostile forces were not a myth, and his mission was accomplished when he ascertained that fact, General Burrows began to retreat towards Kandahar. When he had covered thirty-five miles he halted and remained in an exposed position, while the enemy was endeavouring to encircle his force and cut off his communication with his base. The route lay through the village of Maiwand, and when General Burrows learnt that Ayoob Khan might seize it before he could he resumed his retreat.

By this time it was known that Ayoob Khan's force numbered 12,000 men with thirty-six guns. The worst had happened, for when the British force got to Maiwand not only were the Afghans in possession, but Ayoob had had time to occupy a strong position, protected by a nullah in front of it, commanding the main road. It was said that a thick mist concealed the Afghan position, and that General Burrows would not believe that they were in any great numbers. These were bad mistakes to commit on the point of entering upon an unequal battle. The British commander was completely outmanoeuvred as well as outnumbered.

The disastrous battle of Maiwand was fought during the morning of 27th July, 1880, and the British troops stood so firm and fired so well that for a time it seemed as if their

valour might decide the day. But, unfortunately, all the troops did not behave so well. Many of the Sepoys, dismayed by a charge of Ghazis, broke and fled away, the two regiments of native cavalry, whether they were badly led or for some other reason, refused to charge to aid the British infantry, and galloped off the field, and the battery of guns after some share in the struggle also withdrew to seek safety by what seemed a precipitate flight. The British infantry fought on to the last man and their last cartridge. The total loss was 1,200 killed and wounded, and Ayoob captured two guns and the camp equipage. Over 300 camp followers were butchered at the close of the action.

Such was the disastrous battle of Maiwand, the one serious catastrophe that dimmed the glory of the second British occupation of Afghanistan. It produced an immense sensation in England as well as in India, and although not so serious as the first reports made out by speaking of the destruction of a whole brigade, it revived and strengthened the old prejudice which represented Afghanistan as a place of misfortune and bad luck. The consequences of this reverse were not very serious, and they were also quickly repaired. The tribes round Kandahar rebelled, and did to a limited degree invest the city, which, however, was never in any great danger. A considerable relieving force was drawn from the Bombay Army and sent through the Bolan, but long before it could reach its destination another British force had struck the decisive blow and retrieved Maiwand.

When the news was flashed to Kabul on 29th July, General Roberts, having the divine gift of genius, at once offered to lead an army from that place across Afghanistan to deal with Ayoob Khan at Kandahar. Some hesitation was shown both in India and in London to adopt this proposal, but once it was officially sanctioned no time was lost in putting it into execution. One week after the acceptance of his offer, General Roberts began his memorable march at the head of nearly 10,000 men. The date was 8th August, 1880.

The distance to be traversed was nearly 300 miles. The route lay for the most part through a barren region, and the season was the hottest of the year. The whole population was hostile, but the force looked too formidable to be molested. The march was completed in twenty-one days, and rendered more remarkable by the fact that the column never carried with it more than five days' supplies. The troops reached their destination in sound condition and good heart, animated by their dauntless leader, of whom it might be said, in the words of Shakespeare, " whose spirit lent a fire even to the dullest peasant in his camp."

Ayoob saw the storm approaching, but he was a brave man and did not flinch from the encounter. He took up a position on the hills above the old city of Kandahar with his centre resting on the village of Masra, and he fortified it as well as he could. It is impossible to state the exact number of men under his orders, but as he had been joined by many of the tribes after Maiwand it is probable that they totalled 20,000 men altogether. On 1st September General Roberts delivered his attack, and after a stubborn resistance the Afghans were driven out of their positions, leaving 1,000 of their number dead on the ground. They also lost most of, if not all, their cannon, and Ayoob fled with the remnants of his army to Herat, which he had quitted in expectation of a triumph only six weeks before. The remaining passages of the Kandahar episode belong to Lord Ripon's viceroyalty.

The concluding arrangements with Abdurrahman must be described. On 22nd July he was proclaimed as Amir at Kabul, and he was assured that the British Government recognized him as the ruler of the whole of Afghanistan, with the exception of Kandahar. A week later the news of Maiwand arrived, and it became necessary to hasten a final settlement.

While the British authorities saw that the attitude Abdurrahman intended to take up must give a decisive turn to the situation, Abdurrahman realized for himself that the interposition of the British army between him and the victorious Ayoob was a providential accident in his own

favour. He was prompt in declaring that he would make himself as useful as possible in the circumstances and promised that he would use all his influence to secure supplies for General Roberts's column on the march. In this respect he proved as good as his word, but his influence at that time was not very extensive. A three days' conference ensued between him and Sir Lepel Griffin at Zimma, and as the result a written communication was handed to the Amir setting forth the engagements that he might consider we had contracted towards him. The old promise of support against unprovoked aggression was renewed, and the fatal clause in the Treaty of Gandamak stipulating for a resident British Agent at Kabul was dropped. No subsidy could be granted at that moment, but as a parting gift he was presented with the handsome sum of nineteen lakhs, a considerable number of guns, and the vast quantity of stores forming the reserve in the Sherpur cantonment. Two days after General Roberts set out on his long march to the south, Sir Donald Stewart began the withdrawal of the rest of the army of occupation to India by way of Jellalabad and the Khyber.

The second Afghan war, like the first, left no definite result behind it. As a military exploit it was a very creditable performance, and even the disaster at Maiwand, due mainly to the incompetence of the general in command, was but a slight blemish in the record. But it had cost a very large sum of money, no inconsiderable loss of life, and it had accomplished nothing whatever towards improving relations with the Afghans who were given no reason to regard the English in any other light than that of invaders and enemies. In 1839 the object was to restore his dominions to a dispossessed and exiled prince. It failed in the main because the Afghans were too tenacious of their independence. In 1878 the motive of intervention was to counteract Russian intrigues at Kabul and to convince the Afghan ruler that British power was a reality and that of Russia but a fantasy of the Steppes. But how a permanent settlement was to be effected between the two neighbours was left to chance. The real difficulty of the

political problem was only revealed after the military success was assured. A permanent arrangement seemed to fade away into the shadows the more closely it was approached, and the return of Abdurrahman, who had lived on and with the Russians for ten years, was hailed as a providential set-off against his predecessor's offence in entertaining Russian officers at Kabul and yielding to their cajoleries. A cynic would conclude that the process was costly and the change small.

But Lord Lytton had a policy and in this respect he stood alone. It was to break up Afghanistan into three or more separate chiefships, to treat those chiefs as the ministers of British power, to occupy Kandahar in force, and eventually to do the same at Herat. It was a policy that had some risks, but that might have very well produced great results. It was a policy that would have appealed to the Marquis of Wellesley or the Marquis of Hastings. It was a call to posterity to take up the great game in Central Asia, and eventually to roll back the Russian hordes to their Cimmerian gloom. But for its success it needed the guidance of a dictator, and not the control of a Parliament where the fluctuating verdicts of the hustings left no opening for continuity of policy, or time for the decision of great matters by knowledge, iron determination, and clear prescience.

The hope may be expressed, and this mainly in the interests of India, that if ever a third invasion of Afghanistan should have to be considered it will not be undertaken without a full and inflexible decision being formed beforehand as to what the policy to be realized is to be, and without the firm intention to carry out that policy to its appropriate end, whatever the cost and effort it may entail. If no definite policy can be formulated then more wisdom would be exhibited in drawing back from the adventure than in blindly undertaking it only to return once more with empty hands from the scene of contest.

CHAPTER XXVII

LORD RIPON'S VICEROYALTY

THE result of the General Election of March, 1880, due mainly to the eloquence and vehemence of Mr. Gladstone, turned in a large measure on the unpopularity of the Afghan War, the necessity of which was not very apparent to the British public. Lord Lytton was attacked and blamed not merely for what was described as a costly failure in external affairs, but also for having gagged the Indian Press by his Regulations. The attack made on him during the Midlothian campaign was unqualified and unsparing, and the Liberal leaders pledged themselves that their first measures after their return to office would be to reverse his policy and to undo everything that he had done.

But they had first to find a new Viceroy, and they were led to seek a safe man, one well experienced as to the precise value of pre-election promises, and one also who in practice would succeed in toning them down before he committed himself to their definite fulfilment. Mr. Gladstone found the suitable politician in Lord Ripon, who had been, in 1866, Sir Charles Wood's successor at the India Office as Secretary of State.

In one matter only did Lord Ripon act promptly on his arrival in India with regard to the policy of simply reversing his predecessor's measures. He hastily repealed Lord Lytton's Vernacular Press Act, which had already proved its usefulness as a preventive piece of legislation, and the vernacular papers in Bengal in the first place, and later on in Bombay, resumed their political and semi-seditious campaign with increased vigour and intensity. It will be shown in the proper place how Lord Morley, at an interval of thirty-two years, was compelled to reimpose many of its stipulations and penalties. A far wiser course would have been to revise some of the minor conditions and to have brought the English Press within its scope.

But in the minds of the Electorate at home, the Press regulations were a very small affair as compared with the policy to be pursued and the settlement to be made in Afghanistan. Afghan policy, not less than Balkan atrocities, had decided the Election. Was Lord Ripon going to drop the Lytton policy and scuttle out of Afghanistan? That would have been a clear repudiation of his predecessor's acts, but could it be done? In a very brief space of time, Lord Ripon was forced by facts to decide that it was not possible. He was confronted with the same difficulties as Lord Lytton had been, and his method of dealing with them can be shown as differing but very slightly, if at all, from what Lord Lytton had commenced to do and intended to continue. Even in one minor but interesting detail, their views approximated. Lord Lytton had declared in positive terms that on no consideration whatever would he concur in the restoration of Yakoob Khan. Some of the members of Lord Ripon's staff were inclined to support that step, and this more especially after the secret investigation by Sir Neville Chamberlain of the facts relating to the Kabul massacre had resulted in Yakoob's exculpation; but Lord Ripon arrived at the same conclusion as Lord Lytton in finally deleting that prince's name from the list of possible candidates, and this was done long before the battle of Maiwand.

At the moment of Lord Ripon's arrival in India, the negotiations with Abdurrahman were hanging fire. Then followed Maiwand, and his hurried recognition as Amir of Kabul and Herat; while General Roberts proceeded to deal with Ayoob Khan. Those passages have been described. Although Kabul had been evacuated and the northern army withdrawn through the Khyber, a very large army—the largest ever concentrated at one spot in Afghanistan—remained at Kandahar. Yet Lord Lytton's convention with the Wali had come to an end by his resignation, and there was no reason to defer the completion of the evacuation of Afghanistan by handing over Kandahar to Abdurrahman. Withdrawal was easy and quite practicable. Why was it not carried out in the south with the

same precipitancy as had happened in the North ? Because Lord Ripon had been compelled by the facts and knowledge he acquired on taking up his post to recognize that there were many reasons for not evacuating Kandahar at the time, and some even in favour of not abandoning it at all.

An arrangement of an informal character, although committed to writing, had been made with Abdurrahman, but its value depended on his capacity to maintain his position at Kabul and also on his good faith. Nothing certain was known on either point. His power might crumble away, or his relations with the Russians, whose bread he had eaten for ten years or more, might assume a sinister aspect. Ayoob Khan, although defeated by the British, was still at Herat, and it was not doubtful that so enterprising a leader would not tamely submit to his cousin's supremacy once the field was left clear for him. The Shere Ali party had triumphed in 1868; there could be no certainty that it would not triumph again once the only serious obstacle in Ayoob's path, the British force at Kandahar, was removed. Lord Ripon, therefore, sanctioned the retention of the army at Kandahar until the spring of 1881.

During the winter of 1880–1881 the Kandahar question was warmly discussed in official quarters in England, and the weight of expert evidence and authority was overwhelmingly in favour of its retention, and the proposal had influential supporters even in the Cabinet. The final decision to evacuate was carried not by Mr. Gladstone's eloquence but on financial grounds, the cost of retention having been made to appear excessive by the unnecessarily large garrison left there. That was the deciding reason that led Lord Hartington, who was Secretary for India at the time, to support his Chief.

Immediately after the commencement of the 1881 Session, the Government then announced its intention to withdraw its forces from Kandahar and thus complete the evacuation of Afghanistan. Protests of all kinds poured in, but the Government possessed a large majority, and opposition was futile under the Parliamentary system. Before the end of April, 1881, Kandahar was again in the

possession of the Afghans, and Abdurrahman moved a large part of his armed forces to that quarter. At least he had no doubt that Ayoob would fight him for its possession, and he was not kept very long waiting for the contingency. No one could measure very accurately or very confidently the chances of the two rival chieftains. Abdurrahman had been helped with arms, artillery, and ammunition by the English. He had also received that very useful war-chest of 19 lakhs. Without those aids, the incidents that followed the British evacuation of Kandahar showed that he would very speedily have been driven back to his Russian place of exile or, if he preferred it, into India.

Ayoob Khan was still a popular hero. He had been beaten by General Roberts, but he had previously beaten a British force. At all events, as the British were gone, he had nothing to fear from them. The mollahs preached his fame throughout Afghanistan as a Ghazi. The whole of the Shere Ali party was on his side, for, in addition to his own claims, he held Yakoob's son and heir, Musa Jan, at Herat. He still commanded a considerable force, weak mainly in artillery, and there could be no doubt that he possessed some military talent. His chances of success were not so slight as many deemed them to be. At all events, he was not so disheartened as to fear to put the matter of superiority to the hazard of the die.

In July, 1881, one year after his previous advance, Ayoob was again on the banks of the Helmund, and resorting to the same tactics as before, he crossed the stream at Karez and routed the forces sent to oppose his advance. This battle fought on 20th July formed an encouraging commencement for his adventure. A few days later he took possession of the city of Kandahar, a considerable part of the garrison coming over to his side. A lull of six weeks ensued, and during that interval no one knew exactly what was happening in Afghanistan. The cloud was lifted before the end of September. Abdurrahman had the power of the purse, and he collected fighting men wherever he could find them. He had the advantage also of numbers and of artillery when he marched in person to the south to

decide, once for all, whether he or Ayoob should be supreme. He found Ayoob ready to oppose him in a prepared position on the site of the old city of Kandahar. The battle fought on 22nd September is said to have lasted seven hours, and Abdurrahman with becoming modesty attributed his victory to the return to his side of the four regiments which had gone over to Ayoob in the first instance. At the same time, he could not refrain from expressing his disappointment at Ayoob's escape from the field by accusing him of cowardice.

Abdurrahman is entitled also to the credit of having made a move of sound strategy. At the same time that he marched south to meet Ayoob, he ordered his Governor in the Turkestan Province, Abdul Kudus Khan, to attack Herat and thus to obtain possession of Ayoob's stronghold. This attack from an entirely unexpected quarter was completely successful, and early in August, Herat had passed into the hands of Abdurrahman's lieutenant. When Ayoob fled from the field of Kandahar, he found no other place of refuge save in Persia, where he became, in the political sense, of no account. After some years he quitted this irksome abode to throw himself on the mercy of the Indian Government, and to disappear from history as a British pensioner in the Punjab.

In the autumn of 1881, therefore, Abdurrahman was firmly placed on the musnud of Afghanistan, and once more that State was in the position of a single and united kingdom. The framers of the arrangement of August, 1880, were consequently able to boast of the success and excellence of their policy which fortune had so greatly helped and favoured.

Abdurrahman, relieved of all pressing anxiety with regard to his position in Afghanistan, began to consider the question of his relations with the Government of India. He was very willing, he declared, to be a true and useful ally, but he expected to be rewarded; and he did not conceal his conviction that if the British would not come to terms with him, he felt confident that the Russians would, and there never was any doubt that Abdurrahman was a shrewd

diplomatist and man of business. The formula of the Liberal Party on the subject of British policy in Afghanistan had always been "no treaty, no *fixed subsidy*, no European troops, officers or residents, no dynastic pledges." This policy of absolute negation would have been intelligible with the people of another planet. It was as impossible as it was ridiculous with India's nearest and most formidable neighbour. Still it was the policy that Lord Ripon was expected to carry out at the time of his appointment. He certainly strove for a period to conform with its stipulations, but events proved too strong for him.

The representations of the Amir as to his true position were very precise. He had succeeded so far in crushing his opponents, but his treasury was empty and he had no absolutely certain source of revenue. It was quite clear that if he could not pay his troops regularly, they would soon become mutinous and desert him. The preservation of his authority depended on money, and without money, and that soon, he represented that he could not long hold his ground. So far for the Amir's point of view. The Government of Lord Ripon had then to ask itself the question, would not Abdurrahman's downfall be a catastrophe for themselves? There was another, would not his appeal to Russia for help to meet his difficulties be a still greater? and it was impossible to answer either of these questions except in the affirmative. Therefore Lord Ripon wrote to the Home Government recommending that the Amir should be helped with a "fixed subsidy," and Mr. Gladstone yielded to the force of the argument. The surrender of principle was the more complete, because the subsidy was to be granted to the Afghan ruler not to place his country in a state of defence against invasion, but to enable him to assert and maintain his authority over his own subjects. The principle of "no dynastic pledges," as well as that of "no fixed subsidy," was thus completely abandoned. But it was contended that at least one of the principles retained its virtue, "no treaty." The Amir was to get his "fixed *subsidy*" *without any equivalent obligation on his part* whatever!

In the meantime the Russian menace had drawn nearer and grown more definite. General Skobeleff had crushed the Turcomans at Geok Tepe, and that victory had been followed up by the virtual acquisition of Merv, which Russian officials had declared over and over again they had no intention of ever approaching. It had always been held that the only effective reply to a Russian occupation of Merv would be a British advance to Herat. Failing that, two measures seemed called for. One was a closer agreement with the Amir based on the fixed subsidy already conceded, and a clear demarcation of the Afghan frontier followed by a notification to Russia that its infraction would be regarded as a *casus belli*. With regard to the former, it was arranged that the Amir should pay a visit to India to discuss the situation with the Viceroy; but the latter proposal was dropped in favour of direct negotiations with Russia, which resulted in the tracing of the Afghan frontier being entrusted to a joint Anglo-Russian Commission. The development of both these transactions took place in the time of Lord Ripon's successor. His own personal contribution to the treatment of the Afghan problem was the grant of the fixed subsidy to the Amir, which provided the basis of British policy in Afghanistan for a long period.

A very interesting event occurred in March, 1881. The important State of Mysore, which had been under British administration for half a century, was restored to its Maharaja, who represented the ancient Wodeyar dynasty. The history of Mysore in the last forty-five years has fully justified the rendition to its original owners.

In Lord Northbrook's time a political movement had made a commencement at Calcutta. It was distinguished in general terms as that of Young Bengal. While Lord Lytton was in power some of its leaders had come to England, where they were under less restraint than in India, and they had taken part in the Election of 1880. "The voice of India," Mr. John Bright declared, "was making itself heard in England." When Lord Ripon went out as Viceroy it was understood that he was to do something overt to show that it had been heard.

No one had any clear plan for showing how this was to be accomplished, nor has anyone ever attempted to explain how an injury to the European community, a breach of its separate existence, an intrusion on its distinct privileges, could prove of any use or benefit to the Indian community. Yet it was only in this way that Lord Ripon could evolve any project that might tend to gratify the sentiments of Young Bengal. Among the few privileges possessed by the European resident was that of trial by his own countrymen both as judges and as juries. Lord Ripon conceived that to curtail or abolish this privilege would be speaking straight to the heart of the Bengalis; and the Law Member of his Council, Mr. Courtenay Ilbert, agreed with and strengthened this view. Unfortunately neither Lord Ripon nor Mr. Ilbert had the slightest knowledge of Indian life and conditions, and they seemed to imagine that they were still enjoying the serene atmosphere of the House of Lords. In February, 1882, Lord Ripon made one of those generous and sweeping declarations of principle which are harmless until an attempt is made to turn them into definite action. He said: "I should be very glad if it were possible to place the law in regard to every person not only on the same footing, but to embody it in the very same language, whether it related to Europeans or natives." His words show that at that moment Lord Ripon did not think it was possible. It was a pity he did not adhere to that view, but he subsequently changed it, because, as he explained, no one made any attempt to repudiate his leading axiom.

After pondering over the question for almost a whole year, he allowed the Law Member to prepare a Bill "to remove from the Code at once and completely every judicial disqualification which is based merely on race distinctions." Within the Council the Bill encountered, strangely enough, little or no serious opposition; and misled by this attitude into the belief that the measure would give rise to nothing more than mild criticism outside it, Lord Ripon went even farther in his support of the Bill than its nominal author, by declaring his conviction that "opposition to the Bill was really opposition to the declared policy of Parliament

about the admission of natives to the Covenanted Civil Service." Lord Ripon complained after the storm broke that no one in his Council or out of it had expressed the least apprehension as to how the European community would regard the proposal to lower their status, and the only explanation ever offered of this curious silence was that the Councillors were so engrossed in the consideration of other questions that they did not give full or proper attention to this matter.

In London, also, when the project was submitted to the Secretary of State's Council, it does not appear that, with one exception, any warning voice was raised to deter the Viceroy from committing a grievous mistake. The exception was Sir Henry Maine, who drew up the objections to the Bill as drafted in a masterly minute. He not only pointed out the pitfalls into which its authors were blindly marching, but he made suggestions as to how the Bill might be modified and rendered if not completely acceptable, at least innocuous, and free from offence. By some extraordinary and inexcusable office blunder, this important minute was not sent to India. Lord Ripon had some reason for declaring, when the time arrived to make his excuses, that no one had warned him of the storm his measure would raise, for if they had he would never have taken up the matter.

The Criminal Jurisdiction Bill proposed to deprive the British community of what had been regarded as its indefeasible right to special jurisdiction and to trial by judges, or, where necessary, by juries composed exclusively of men of their own race. This right, which had existed from the earliest days of the Company, had never been challenged by any of the Mogul Emperors. The Bill completely abolished this system by subjecting Europeans under the Indian Code to trial by mixed juries and native magistrates. It must be remembered that this affected the *status* of the Indians not at all, and consequently the Bill roused little enthusiasm in native circles.

But the effect was very different on the European community, and the non-official sections of the British residents

were even more indignant and enraged than the official. The storm of opposition and denunciation raised by this unhappy measure has never been surpassed. Lord Ripon was attacked and openly insulted on all sides, his levées were boycotted, petitions with thousands of signatures were sent to England, and a Defence Committee was formed in London. The agitation soon took the form of a threat to suspend the work of the administration and to bring the Government of the country to a standstill. Even the mildest of its critics described the Bill as "possibly innocuous, but perfectly unnecessary." Its gravest fault was that it was a "disturbing Bill," and any measure that tends to disturb unnecessarily the delicate position in India is not merely a fault, but a crime. If the agitation had been confined to India, Mr. Gladstone might have ignored it; but it had become so serious and widespread in England, that the existence of the Government itself was imperilled. Then Lord Ripon was given permission to get out of his trouble in the best way he could.

Lord Ripon thereupon suspended at once the progress of the Bill, and in due course a new one was drafted from which the objectionable features were removed. In January, 1884, the altered text was submitted to the Legislative Council. It limited the jurisdiction over Europeans to certain qualified native officials, while the right of Europeans accused of any criminal offence to be tried by a jury composed of at least one-half of Europeans afforded the necessary protection against vindictiveness or prejudice. The judges, if Indian, in such cases were to be selected only from the higher grades of District Magistrates and Sessions Judges. The Criminal Jurisdiction Act thus became a harmless and useless addition to the Indian Statute Book. It was relieved of the details and sweeping character that made the original Ilbert Bill a peril, but none the less the attendant agitation had widened, unfortunately, the gulf between the European and Indian communities in Bengal.

But for this unfortunate affair, Lord Ripon's viceroyalty would have been pronounced more successful than was admitted at its close. He was a man of great knowledge,

broad views, and extremely open to reason. He showed the latter quality in his treatment of the Afghan question. Sent to India to reverse Lord Lytton's policy, he practically continued it. He saw quite clearly that Afghanistan could not be left to its own fate to become the prey of Russia. He abandoned the traditional Liberal policy of "masterly inactivity" in favour of one of very positive activity. Even in regard to the Ilbert Bill, he was misled by those who ought to have advised him, but once he realized his mistake he was prompt in taking the necessary steps to withdraw from the false position in which he had become entangled. But it would not be true to say that the Ilbert Bill controversy did not have a depressing effect on his spirits. He had been misjudged, and he had misjudged others. He was glad to leave India before the completion of his term, and to re-enter the political arena at home with which he was so thoroughly familiar. Perhaps the best tribute to his Indian administration was paid by his successor, Lord Dufferin, in the following extract from a letter to Lord Halifax (Sir Charles Wood of an earlier day)—

"I lost no time in making every one aware that there was to be no dissolution of continuity between Lord Ripon's policy and my own. Nothing would have been more fatal than if a suspicion had gone abroad amongst the natives that I was disposed to abandon in any particular the friendly attitude he had so courageously maintained towards them. I sincerely trust that when he reaches England he will obtain the credit he deserves. No Viceroy has laboured so conscientiously or so uninterruptedly for the good of the millions entrusted to his care; and I have been immensely struck by the ability, the moderation, and the good sense of his semi-official correspondence with Lord Kimberley. I have already announced my intention of fostering to the utmost of my power the beneficent projects he instituted for the good of the people; and I shall be quite content if I can leave the country under the same honourable conditions which attended his departure."

CHAPTER XXVIII

LORD DUFFERIN'S FIRST PERIOD

LORD DUFFERIN'S name had more than once been connected with India before he received the definite offer to succeed Lord Ripon. He had served his novitiate at the India Office as Under Secretary of State in the time of Sir Charles Wood, and he had been offered and declined the Governorship of Bombay. But his later career had been devoted to diplomacy, and it looked as if he were fated to remain in it to the end. At the same time his experiences in Egypt and at Constantinople had given him an insight into Eastern problems, and with the Russian negotiations approaching a climax the Government felt that a diplomatist at that juncture would be specially suited to control Indian affairs. In August, 1884, Mr. Gladstone offered him the succession to Lord Ripon, and it was accepted. On account of the urgency of the Bengal Tenancy Bill and the imminence of the Amir's projected visit, his departure was hurried, and he landed in Bombay early in December, 1884.

It is with the latter question that it will be appropriate to deal in the first place, more especially because some of the incidents threatened a stormy opening for Lord Dufferin's term in India. On 14th June, 1880, Lord Ripon had authorized the British Agent in Afghanistan to tell Abdurrahman as the basis of further negotiation that "he could have no relations with any Foreign Government save the British, while if any foreign Power interfered with him, and such interference should lead to unprovoked aggression on the Kabul ruler, he would receive aid in such manner and at such a time as might be necessary to repel it, provided he followed British advice." This promise of a vague and informal character had stood in the place of a treaty, and in 1883 Lord Ripon had added thereto the grant of a fixed annual subsidy of twelve lakhs on the general understanding that the Amir would follow our advice, and hold no relations with any other foreign Power. In the meantime the Russian

advance to the Afghan frontier had become a reality, and direct negotiations had begun between England and Russia to ward off the menace. That menace became worse towards the end of the year 1884, by the Russians appearing on the Murghab and pushing up the Heri Rud to the oasis of Penjdeh.

The Russian Government had given a very half-hearted assent to the proposal for a joint frontier commission, and after assenting they sought to minimize its importance by nominating as their Commissioner an officer of inferior rank and dubious antecedents, while the British Government had selected a very distinguished representative in the person of General Sir Peter Lumsden. When the British ambassador objected to the Russian representative a new Commissioner was selected in a Russian General named Komaroff. For clearness' sake it may be observed that the Government of India, although the party most interested, had nothing to do with the work of the Commission. The Commissioners were under the direct orders of the British and Russian Governments, and the matter rested entirely between London and St. Petersburg.

Lord Dufferin, however, was left as the leading figure in the negotiations with Abdurrahman. The Viceroy sent a pressing invitation to the Amir to visit India, it was accepted with equal fervour, Rawul Pindi was selected as the place of meeting, and on 31st March, 1885, Abdurrahman crossed the Indian frontier on his journey. On that very day the Russians had attacked and overwhelmed the Afghan outpost at Pul-i-Khisti near Penjdeh, but, of course, the news did not arrive for some days afterwards. At this moment the British Government was deeply involved in the Soudan problem by the fall of Khartoum, and the Russian Government was quick to turn its embarrassment in that quarter to account. In consequence of the military demonstrations of General Komaroff, who acted more as if he were a conqueror than a Commissioner, General Lumsden had felt compelled to withdraw his camp from Penjdeh, where the Russians and Afghans were face to face. By this time Komaroff had concentrated an overwhelming force close



THE MARQUIS OF DUFFERIN AND AVA 378

to the scene, and with or without warning, which even if given there was no reason for the Afghan commander to obey, he attacked and crushed the Afghan post at Pul-i-Khisti, killing 200 Afghans out of a total of 400. This inexcusable attack in disregard of all the laws of international relations, was an open affront to the British Government, and brought the two countries to the brink of war. Even Mr. Gladstone was moved to anger, and gave the House of Commons a fine oration about "the book which was open and could not be closed." He was, however, greater with words than in deeds, and the Russian authorities soon ascertained that he did not mean to resort to arms.

The turn the question would take really depended on the Amir, and to the surprise of many persons he took the matter very calmly, or at least affected to do so. In the Autobiography he published some years later, he wrote on this episode: "But I was not a man to get excited, and, therefore, took the matter calmly as a lesson for the future." This vague statement does not help to a final judgment, but if we turn to the reports of his discussions with Lord Dufferin immediately after the receipt of the news we discover that he had other fears than those arising from the immediate situation.

Having explained to the Amir that the reports of British officers showed that Herat could not be held against artillery, Lord Dufferin proposed sending officers from India to put it in a proper state of defence. Abdurrahman at once raised objections. He declared that he would not be answerable in such an eventuality for the action of his people, and that the presence of a British army would be construed by the Afghans as an intention to subdue them. It was made quite clear that the Amir had formed the opinion that the active intervention of the British even in his behalf would signify the diminution, if not the disappearance, of his own authority. But he did not perceive that this declaration reduced the obligation of the British Government to help him, and that it chimed in with its own desire to avoid war with Russia. If the Amir did not object to lose a frontier district here and there it was clear that the sooner the Commission was

able to arrive at some sort of a conclusion the better would it be for all the parties concerned. That was not finally accomplished until July, 1887, when Sir West Ridgeway, who had succeeded Sir Peter Lumsden, signed a Protocol in St. Petersburg delimiting the whole frontier from the Heri Rud to the Oxus.

Notwithstanding the dubious circumstances under which it was held, the Amir's visit to Rawul Pindi was a great success. There is no doubt that he was greatly pleased and flattered at his reception. The best account of the transaction was contained in the letter written by Lord Dufferin to a friend, from which the following extracts are taken—

"There can be no doubt that the Amir was very well satisfied as far as his *amour propre* and personal sentiments were concerned. His great fear was lest having been a nominee of our own he should be treated more like a feudatory than an independent ruler. When, therefore, he found that he was surrounded by all the attributes of royalty, welcomed by one of the Queen's sons, and received as an ally his gratification was undisguised. The bayonets at the end of the sentries' muskets at his gate disturbed him a little, until he learnt that my sentries' muskets were furnished forth in the same formidable manner; and there were other little circumstances which excited his suspicions at the commencement of his stay. But as day succeeded day, and he found his treatment if possible bettered and bettered, he altogether thawed, and became at last quite effusive. In his private conversations with me he was very satisfactory as far as words went, and after all at an interview of this kind words are the only coin current. The principal object I was anxious to attain was the freeing of the hand of Her Majesty's Government in relation to the delimitation of the Afghan frontier. When this subject was originally mooted instead of asking him to point out what he claimed to be his frontier, we made the mistake of indicating it ourselves.

"It would take too long to tell you how the final result was reached, but after a second interview I had the satisfaction of telegraphing to Lord Kimberley that as far as the Amir was concerned, he might run the line almost as far

south as the Russians themselves desired. In this way the English Government recovered its complete liberty of action, but you will understand that my proceedings in the matter do not imply any acquiescence on the part of the Indian executive in a modification of the frontier. That can only be decided in accordance with the strategical requirements of the locality. My own military advisers do not consider that it very much matters within certain limits, where the line goes, or that the Russian boundary being drawn a day or two's march nearer or farther from Herat materially affects the question of the safety of that place. It has been long since determined by H.M.'s Government at home, and by my military advisers here, that it would be undesirable for us to send an army to Herat unless hereafter compelled to do so by the force of circumstances. I consequently made it a point to show no anxiety whatever to send troops into the Amir's country. In fact, I told him that even if he should require them it must depend upon circumstances whether we would determine to help him in that particular manner. On the other hand, he himself intimated very frankly that the memory of our last war with Afghanistan was still fresh in the minds of his people, and that an advance on our part in force would still be looked upon by them as an endeavour to conquer their country, until he should have had an opportunity of acquainting them with the result of his interview with me, and had imbued them with a more friendly feeling towards us. I told him that we would freely give him guns for Herat on his consenting to allow our engineers to determine their calibre, numbers, and positions. He was very reasonable in his demands for money, and said that he did not want any increase to his subsidy. To what degree the Amir may be able or willing to make good his engagements is a totally different matter. I do not think he will ever prove actually false, for all his interests manifestly compel him to throw in his lot with us, but unfortunately with an Oriental two and two make five as often as four. His health, moreover, is bad, and his temper imperious and fretful. Finally, I warned the Amir that if he did not succeed in keeping Herat out of the hands

of Russia, we, in self-defence, in all probability, would be compelled to move to Kandahar, to which he assented."

This most interesting and important document also contained a graphic account of the great Durbar with which the meeting at Rawul Pindi concluded. Lord Dufferin wrote to the same correspondent—

"The Durbar was a magnificent sight, and we were again favoured by the weather; but when the Amir asked leave to say something 'that could be heard at a distance' I was a little nervous lest he should give vent to some untoward utterance. Still it was better to risk such a contingency than to show any hesitation in the matter, so I at once told him that every one would be happy to hear any remarks he might be pleased to make. On this he delivered the speech which you will have read in the newspapers. It greatly surprised the natives, who were all unfavourable to him, as they were not prepared for his giving such absolute pledges for his good faith in the presence of the Mussulman world of the East, in whose sight he would be disgraced did he ever hereafter break them; but so far from the Amir himself showing any regret at what perhaps he did in a moment of enthusiasm, he has frequently reiterated the assurances he then made in as strong if not stronger terms, and in as public a manner."

That the Amir's words were due to no fleeting or transitory impression was shown when he agreed to the British Commissioner, Sir West Ridgeway, returning in October, 1886, from the Oxus to India viâ Kabul. He was received by the Amir with every mark of honour and friendship, and the most careful measures were taken to ensure a safe and respectful passage for the Commissioner and his escort throughout their long journey across Afghanistan. In a public speech on the occasion of their arrival in the Punjab, Lord Dufferin took advantage of the opportunity to declare, "That an English mission so constituted should be received as honoured guests of the Amir, and with the most hearty and friendly welcome at the hands of his subjects along their entire route, is in itself a remarkable and significant circumstance which cannot fail to have a

most beneficial effect upon the future relations between the government of India and Afghanistan."

There is on record Abdurrahman's own description of the impression left upon him by the conferences at Rawul Pindi. This is given in his remarkable autobiography which, if the history is a little coloured, is still intensely interesting. He wrote—

"It was a great delight to me to meet Lady Dufferin, who was the cleverest woman I have ever seen, and the Duke and Duchess of Connaught, to whom I found that the hearts of all their Indian subjects were devoted. Lord Dufferin left India in 1888 to the great sorrow and regret of all the subjects and friends of the Indian Empire. The people had never seen such a wise statesman as their Viceroy, and Lady Dufferin's residence in India was of hardly less importance than that of her husband."

After the flight of Ayoob, the Amir's position looked, and was generally judged, to be perfectly secure, but he was destined to receive an unexpected shock, and for a moment his throne seemed in peril. His cousin, Ishak, the son of Azim, had shared his exile in Russian territory, and his fortunes after his return to Afghanistan to make his bid for power. When Abdurrahman came to Kabul in the summer of 1880 he left Ishak to govern the northern province in his behalf. He was still there in 1888, but he had come under his cousin's suspicion for reasons that were not clearly known. The Amir bided his time to prepare before striking, but in the summer of 1888 he sent a positive order to Ishak to come to Kabul without delay. As the Amir's methods of dealing with those who incurred his displeasure were notoriously summary, Ishak refused, and not only that but he raised the standard of revolt, claiming the Amirship for himself in right of his father, who had been one of the candidates in the old struggle recognized by Lord Lawrence. At one moment it looked as if Ishak might prove successful, but in the end he was completely defeated, and compelled once more to flee for safety into Russian territory. During the worst of the crisis Abdurrahman wrote to Lord Dufferin begging him to move some troops up to the frontier so that

they might come quickly to his aid if Ishak proved able to advance across the Hindu Kush. The need did not arise, but the incident suggested grave doubts as to the stability of the Amir's power.

There is no doubt that the Penjdeh incident stirred up the sentiments of the warrior races of India. It brought the long strained and uncertain relations of England and Russia to the verge of a clash, and for the first time thoughtful persons in India began to ask themselves seriously the question whether British rule or the Russian yoke would be preferable. Once the question was fairly put there was no doubt about the reply, and the weight of argument was supported by the sentiment of patriotism. Whatever else it might be termed, the advance of Russia could not but be a form of invasion, and India had had too much experience of what these scourges from the North West signified in massacre and rapine to regard a fresh visitation, however speciously designated, with anything but feelings of horror and dread. A movement of loyalty to the British Raj, a realization of the fact that in a great emergency theirs would be a common peril and the same lot, spread throughout India. It found expression in the autumn of 1887 in the Nizam's remarkable offer to contribute sixty lakhs towards the defence of the frontier. The indirect consequence of that offer, which, however, was not accepted, was the creation of the Imperial Service Corps, representing selected regiments from the armies of all the Native States available for immediate service, and more especially on the frontier.

Reference has been made to the fact that when Lord Dufferin reached India the most urgent matter awaiting decision was the Bengal Tenancy Bill. As the land question, and especially that part of it attaching to the relations between landlord and tenant, was one to which he had given his closest attention in Ireland from the time of his youth, it was not surprising that Lord Dufferin quickly mastered the intricacies of the measure in question. The land question in India had always been a struggle between conflicting interests, and there had grown up under the different successive rules a curious and disconcerting mixture of systems.

The English found in the different provinces and divisions of India a miscellaneous assortment of proprietary and cultivating tenures. Out of this general confusion it was necessary to establish some kind of permanent force in the relations between landlord and tenant. The problem complicated in every other respect was free from one disturbing element. The English intruders had made no attempt to settle in the occupied country as landholders. The question remained, therefore, a purely internal matter, affecting the indigenous inhabitants alone.

Lord Dufferin, thanks to his exceptional experience, was able then to decide authoritatively between landlord and tenant upon the different matters which still awaited final adjustment. The decision of the Legislative Council was on some of these points in favour of the landlord, but the tenant's status, his hold on the land he occupied, and his safeguards against arbitrary dispossession were all very materially strengthened by the new Act. Its principle may be said to be based upon a system of fixity of tenure at judicial rates, and its three main objects were, first, to give the settled ryot the same security in his holding as he enjoyed under the old law of custom; secondly, to secure to the landlord a fair share of the increased value of the produce of the soil; and thirdly, to lay down rules by which all disputed questions between landlord and tenant could be reduced to simple issues, and decided upon equitable considerations. The principles of the Act were further safeguarded by a section which restricted the power of entering into contracts to defeat its fundamental provisions. Lord Dufferin, when proposing the passage of the Bill into law, disallowed the main contention of the landlord party, that an interference between Bengal Zemindars and their tenants amounted to an infringement of the Permanent Settlement made by Lord Cornwallis in 1798. As a matter of fact, the Act supplemented it, and fulfilled reforms that Lord Cornwallis had himself contemplated introducing, but had been compelled for want of time and opportunity to leave untouched.

The second land question with which Lord Dufferin had

to deal arose in Oudh. Here the object was to protect tenants against capricious eviction. Lord Ripon had gone so far as to submit a Bill on the subject to the Secretary of State, but it was not regarded with favour, or perhaps it would be more correct to say that any further interference in that province beyond that carried out by Lord Lawrence seemed to him to be hazardous. The Oudh Taluqdars appealed to the declaration made in that Viceroy's time to the effect that their tenants had been declared to possess no prescriptive right of occupancy. But the precise meaning of no prescriptive or other right of tenancy was left vague and undecided. Did it mean that a tenant should be exposed, and for ever, to unlimited rack-renting or arbitrary ejectment ?

It was, of course, generally agreed that rents must vary with the changing circumstances of a country, and no one attempted to maintain that an ordinary tenant had any of the rights of a proprietor. But the Taluqdars claimed that they possessed absolute power to eject the tenant or increase his rent while, by the existing law, the tenure of a cultivating tenancy was limited to twelve months. This limitation was certainly very unfavourable to the whole class of cultivators. Lord Dufferin succeeded in winning over to his views the assent of the Secretary of State, which had been denied to his predecessor. His Bill was moderate in its terms, but it effected two great reforms. It prescribed a statutory period of tenancy, and it forbade the indiscriminate enhancement of rents. It enabled tenants at will to make improvement on their holdings with the knowledge that on ejectment they would be entitled to compensation for any subsisting improvements going back for a period of thirty years. Every tenant, after his rent had been fixed in accordance with the Act, was to hold his land for a minimum period of seven years. The inherent justice of this arrangement was proved by the Taluqdars accepting it without fur her demur.

The third of Lord Dufferin's Land Tenancy Bills related to the Punjab. At the time of the annexation of that Province the landlords were willing enough that their

tenants should share with them the direct obligation of revenue payment to the Government. The value of the land was uncertain and fluctuating, while the Government demands were precise and inexorable. But with growing prosperity and the increased value of land these views changed, and the landlords claimed their extreme rights. The Punjab, it may be observed, is a region of small land-owners and peasant proprietors, and it is with these that the tenants, a very numerous class, have to deal; consequently both owners and tenants are directly interested, and often more or less actually engaged in the work of cultivation. In the Punjab then the problem was to distribute and define as between these two very similar classes the right of occupation and the profits of agriculture according to well-known usage and sentiment, especially in regard to prescriptive possession by length of tenure, and to the reclamation of waste lands.

Lord Dufferin's Bill provided for the adjustment of rents in proportion to the changes in the demands of the land revenue. It extended the period which should elapse between any enhancement of rent, and it introduced a more liberal scale of assessment for the compensation to be paid to tenants for their improvements, and in certain cases for disturbance. The Bill gave rise to much discussion, which was not surprising, considering its technical character, but it passed into law in 1887, and was then accepted without any friction or manifestation of discontent in the great Province to which it related.

At this time Lord Roberts was Commander-in-Chief in India, and one of his chief objects was to accustom the Anglo-Indian army to operate in much larger bodies than it had been accustomed to do. During the Penjdeh crisis he had made arrangements for the immediate advance, if necessary, of 25,000 men to Kandahar, and he had begun the preparations for the despatch of a second army of equal strength to follow in its support. But the need for turning these measures to practical account was averted. In December, 1885, Lord Roberts had arranged for military manoeuvres in the Punjab on a large scale, and the Viceroy

undertook to be present at the review outside Delhi, with which they were to conclude. Lord Randolph Churchill was Secretary of State at this time, and to give further distinction to the event he invited many foreign officers to visit India as State guests to get a close view of the Indian army. Among these were several Russian officers, who were certainly very surprised to see the very large body of Indian troops under the British flag, whereas they had ventured to raise no solid body of natives in Asia, and even when they were recruited they were merged in Russian regiments, and employed away from their homes.

Lord Dufferin sent home a despatch giving a very graphic description of the scene, from which the following extracts are taken—

"It was indeed a striking display—no less so because the discharge of cannon which saluted the Viceroy's arrival on the field was reverberated from the sky by a peal of thunder, and the troops marched past under a storm of rain. Though the glitter of the spectacle was dimmed, the sight was splendid. One forgot the storm and everything else in one's interest in looking at the men. Indeed, from a business point of view, I am not sure but what it was better as it was, as it enabled our soldiers to show what pluck and discipline could effect in spite of adverse circumstances. Though they were almost up to their knees in mud each battalion marched past like a straight and solid wall. The ground was especially trying to our poor little short-legged Goorkhas, but they ground their teeth and set their faces, and passed the saluting flag in as level a line as any other regiment.

"Roberts was delighted, and it did my heart good to see 40,000 men advance in line with him at their head. He considers that the lessons we have learned are well worth the money which has been spent, and I really believe it is the case. Indeed, I imagine it would be well if the same sort of thing, though on a lesser scale, could be gone through every year. Both men and officers must learn a great deal, and it shows up at once our capable and our incapable commanders.

"The foreign officers were somewhat surprised at the fine physique and efficiency of our native soldiers, but they all remarked on the paucity of British officers with the Indian regiments, which I could not but acknowledge was, as it still is, a weak point in our military organization."

CHAPTER XXIX

THE THIRD BURMESE WAR

THE principal occurrence and the main substantive achievement of Lord Dufferin's viceroyalty was the third Burmese War, followed by the conquest and annexation of Upper Burma. In order to make clear the causes of this step, a brief retrospect is necessary. King Mindon Min, who signed the peace of 1853, continued to reign until the year 1878. He was a man of great intelligence and moderate views, and he fully deserved the description given of him as the best ruler Burma had known for very many years. In 1857, Mindon Min moved into his new capital at Mandalay, and soon afterwards a commercial treaty was concluded with him; but owing to the intervention of the Mutiny, the matter was allowed to remain dormant. A more active phase was reached when Colonel Fytche, Commissioner of Lower Burma, visited the King at Mandalay, at which place Colonel Sladen had been living as Resident since 1863. A fresh Treaty for trade was signed on the basis of a five per cent customs duty for imports and for exports. But what were called the Royal monopolies, viz., timber, precious stones, and earth oils, were to be entirely excluded from the operation of the Treaty, and of these, timber was by far the most important of the Burmese products.

Notwithstanding this limitation, the prospect of developing commercial relations with Burma had never seemed brighter. British subjects had obtained the right to trade anywhere; a mixed Court was established for the trial of disputes between the two nationals; and, finally, a Burmese resident was appointed to Rangoon. The King began laying down telegraph lines in his kingdom, and in 1871 he deputed a special embassy to London. This was a great success, and when it returned bearing letters from the Queen, the Prime Minister, and the Viceroy, the King, to show his pleasure, sent a squadron of fifty royal boats to

escort the returning embassy up the river. Among other measures to show his desire to keep on friendly terms with the English, he caused his principal sons to be taught their language. The death of the King blighted this fair prospect and introduced very different characters to the scene.

Among these were two ambitious women, the Alemandaw Queen and her daughter, the Princess Supayalat. The former, taking advantage of the King's weakness in the final stage of his illness, induced Mindon Min to sign an order for the arrest and confinement of practically speaking all the Princes of the Blood. Seven days after the King's death, his son Thibaw was proclaimed king, and his marriage with the beautiful Princess Supayalat followed. Whatever risk of opposition to his succession there may have been was removed by the summary proceedings of these ladies, who decided to leave nothing to chance. Thibaw had intended only to keep the Princes in confinement, but this was not a course that commended itself to either of the two queens, in whose hands the easy-going King was but as wax. They declared that the only sure way of preventing them causing any trouble in the future was to kill them, and, moreover, that such a course was the established custom of the country to remove all possible claimants to the throne by summary process. To their persistence, Thibaw yielded, and the seventy or eighty prisoners, including several queens and princesses, were barbarously murdered in their prisons. This event occurred in February, 1879.

Neither the perpetrators of the massacre, nor the King who sanctioned it, were prepared for the outburst of horror and indignation with which the news of the crime was received. The Resident, Mr. Shaw, who had succeeded Colonel Sladen, addressed the King in terms of strong remonstrance to which the accidental presence of a strong squadron at the mouth of the Irrawaddy gave additional effect. But the British Government was at this time engaged in two wars, one in Afghanistan, and the other in South Africa, and could not take up a third on purely humanitarian grounds. Thibaw was sufficiently impressed by the general outcry in Burma, as well as by the British

protest, to issue a public statement giving the reasons for what he had done in lofty terms. He declared that " the clearing and keeping by matter (an unintelligible phrase which the interpreter explained as signifying the imprisonment and massacre) was undertaken in consideration of the past and the future according to custom in the interests of Church and State." This statement was held to mean that he was a little frightened at what he had done, and this view was strengthened by his deputing an ambassador to India with a letter announcing his accession and bearing presents to the Viceroy. The embassy was rejected and turned back with the observation that it could not be received by the Government of India in a friendly and honourable way on account of the bad treatment and discourtesy shown to its representative, Mr. Shaw, who died at this time of heart disease, aggravated, if not caused, by the worries and annoyances of his post. Before the end of the year 1879, the Residency at Mandalay was formally closed, and diplomatic relations between the two countries finally terminated.

Although Thibaw was led, insensibly perhaps, by Queen Supayalat and her mother, to take up a hostile attitude towards the British Government and to appeal to the Chauvinist passions of the various races that composed the Burmese nation, he did not succeed in making his own authority either secure or popular. The massacre with which he began his reign was too much for the public conscience, and aroused a fear that no one would be safe from the resentment of the two vindictive women in the Palace. Far from being regarded as a strong monarch whose slightest behests should be obeyed, Thibaw was treated, in consequence of his subservience to his consort, as a weak puppet who might be safely defied.

A condition of internal strife bordering on civil war ensued. Bands of dacoits roved the country, plundering where they listed and often accomplishing their purpose by the murder of their victims. The Shan States, which formed in a military sense the most important part of the kingdom, shook off the authority of Mandalay, and might

have subverted the reigning dynasty if they had not preferred to quarrel and fight among themselves. The frontier town and trade emporium of Bhamo was captured by Chinese rebels, and thus one of the most important avenues of foreign trade was cut off. The Kachins, on the right bank of the great river, imitated the Shans on the left, and carried their raids down to the outlying districts of Mandalay. The districts in Lower Burma, near the British frontier, were infested with dacoits, and British traders complained either of direct loss and injuries or of conditions precluding the pursuit of any trade. Finally, the Burmese officials in Upper Burma harassed and sometimes ill-treated any Europeans who were sufficiently venturesome as to place themselves within their reach. Remonstrance to the King was generally useless; when redress was promised, it was never forthcoming. It was clear that this condition of things with an important neighbour of India's, such as Burma undoubtedly was, could not continue indefinitely, and that a crisis must sooner or later arise.

It was precipitated all the sooner because of the discovery that the matter might not be confined to Burma and the British Empire alone, as the King, seeking a way out of his difficulties, was beginning to intrigue with other Powers, and to obtain possible allies and supporters in Europe. He had given a friendly reception to envoys from France and Italy, and had sent two return missions to Europe. They were instructed to avoid England and to devote their main efforts to the purchase of arms, and to the establishment of a constant source of supply in weapons of war. It was not possible for the Government of India to close their eyes to these efforts and tendencies in a quarter where foreign intrusion would be especially troublesome and even perilous. As long as Burma remained a properly constituted independent kingdom, it was clear that no veto could be imposed on its having relations with other Powers. The crisis long threatened was now becoming recognized as inevitable, and, moreover, there was no time to be lost.

At this period the French had begun an active course of

expansion throughout Indo-China, and they included within the range of their proceedings not only China and Siam, but Burma. Their agent at Mandalay made himself very agreeable to Thibaw, who began to think that he could play off one European Power against another. The result was that two commercial agreements of a definite purpose were concluded with the French representative. The first related to the construction of a railway from Mandalay to the British frontier at Toongoo, and the French Government was to make a loan of half the cost to a Franco-Burman Company formed for the purpose. As security for the interest on the loan, the Royal monopolies of earth-oil duties and the customs on river trade were to be hypothecated. The second agreement was even more startling. The creation of a Royal Bank was to be promoted by a second combination between the French Government and a special Burmese Company, also under French control, to be formed for the purpose. The promoters of the undertaking promised themselves large profits, as the general business was intended to be the grant of loans at 18 per cent, while the King was to have the privilege of accommodation at 12 per cent. The Bank was to have power to issue notes, to acquire the management of the Ruby mines, and to hold the monopoly of *let pet*, or pickled tea. The members of the syndicate, which included some Burmese, promised themselves larger dividends out of this arrangement.

These French concessions, which were of the nature of monopolies, promised to have exactly the opposite effect on the British and Indian traders established at Rangoon, and elsewhere along the Burmese frontier. The Indian Government could not remain deaf to the protests of its nationals, and drew up a firm remonstrance to measures, which made no pretence of concealing their hostile purpose, and which in their effect could not but prove fatal to British-Indian trade. This remonstrance was not despatched, because just at the moment of its presentation the Burmese authorities committed an open act of unqualified hostility, thus depriving themselves of any claim they may have possessed

to consideration as an independent State, holding such relations as it pleased with any foreign Power.

In the summer of 1885 the Burmese Government imposed a fine of £230,000 on the Bombay-Burma Trading Corporation for alleged infringement of the Royal Monopolies; and when the Indian Government proposed that the cause of complaint as well as the infliction of the penalty should be submitted to arbitration, the Burmese Government haughtily rejected the suggestion and seized the Corporation's property. If the Burmese Government acted on any outsiders' suggestion in this defiance, it was very badly advised, for it thus afforded the British Government with a just and sufficient reason for closing the discussion by an appeal to arms.

On 22nd October, 1885, an ultimatum was sent to Mandalay calling upon King Thibaw to receive an envoy from the Government of India with proper terms of honour and respect, to defer all action against the Trading Corporation and its property until the arrival of the envoy, and thereafter to receive at his Court a British diplomatic agent, and to give proper security for his safety and becoming treatment. It was further stated in the ultimatum that the Burmese Government must for the future pledge itself to regulate the external relations of the country in accordance with the advice of the Government of India. Failing immediate compliance with the three first conditions, the British Government would proceed to action. The suspense as to what Thibaw would do was not prolonged. On the 7th November he issued a Proclamation to his subjects, calling upon them to drive the English into the sea, and two days later his contemptuous rejection of the terms of the ultimatum reached Rangoon.

Thibaw was unprepared for what followed. He was thinking of the circumstances of the earlier wars. He overlooked the fact that the British frontier was so much nearer his capital; he did not appreciate the significance of the introduction of steam. While the Indian Government threatened, it had also prepared to act. An expeditionary force of 10,000 men was in readiness to march, a

strong flotilla of light cruisers and gunboats only awaited the signal to dash forward and free the river passage, for the command of the river route was essential for speedy and complete success.

Five days after the receipt of Thibaw's reply, the British forces crossed the frontier. The advance ships at once engaged the nearest batteries, and captured under their guns a large King's steamer and many barges with which the Burmese had intended to block the river.

The first success was, therefore, of the greatest importance, for it signified that the best defence of the Burmese had been pierced. Two days later (16th November) the formidable Sinbaungwé batteries on both banks of the river were carried by the land forces, who met with little or no resistance, the garrison fleeing at their approach. The progress up the river continued unchecked. The fort of Kamyo, on one bank, was captured without a shot; but the position at Minhla, on the opposite bank, was defended by its garrison, and only taken after a stiff fight, the only one during the campaign. Whether from the unexpected resistance or through the inequalities of the ground, a Madras infantry regiment on this occasion got into confusion and, before it could be rallied, the majority of its European officers were either killed or wounded. On the 23rd and 25th of the month, further positions were carried, and the armed flotilla with the transports behind it drew close to the old capital of Ava. Here envoys arrived from the King with an offer to negotiate, but the advance was not stayed until the ships lay off Mandalay with their broadsides ready to bombard the capital.

On 27th November, Thibaw ordered his troops to lay down their arms, and the next day Thibaw, with the queens, who had been the principal cause of all his troubles, were prisoners in the British camp. Very wisely they were removed at once to Rangoon, there to await the final decision of the Government of India as to their destination, for it was quite clear there could be no restoration.

When Mandalay was occupied, evidence was found in abundance that the Indian Government had not taken

action a moment too soon. Italian engineers had constructed three strong forts for the defence of the capital, and they were held by many thousands of armed men. Besides, the arsenals were full of cannon, rifles, and muskets —all serviceable if old—and of the 1,860 pieces of artillery seized, many were new and of formidable calibre. Unfortunately, of the thousands of armed men in the Mandalay forts, while some laid down their arms in obedience to Thibaw's order, a far greater number seized the opportunity to escape, carrying their weapons with them, and consequently the country was overrun for a long period by armed men, who had no other means of livelihood than by plunder. In three weeks, General Sir H. Prendergast had brought this remarkable campaign to a triumphant conclusion by the occupation of the capital and the removal of the offending king. With this result, all the plots of outsiders, all the dreams of avaricious syndicates, collapsed like a house of cards.

The later operations were full of interest. Shortly after General Prendergast began his advance up the river, a second column marched north from Toungoo, east of the Irrawaddy, to execute a flanking movement towards Mingyan. A certain amount of irregular resistance was encountered on the way, but the objects of the expedition were all attained ; and as all his communications were thus secured, General Prendergast resumed his advance above Mandalay. On 28th December, Bhamo, the last river port in use at that period, was occupied, and thus the whole navigable course of the Irrawaddy had passed under British control. On New Year's Day, 1886, appeared the official Proclamation annexing the kingdom of Upper Burma to the British Empire.

Although seven weeks sufficed to reduce Thibaw's government to a state of helplessness, it required seven years before it could be said that the whole country was amenable to British authority. The jungle warfare with the scattered bands of armed Burmese soldiers and dacoits went on for many years, and entailed far heavier loss on our troops than the war itself had done. The breaking up of the

larger bands was effected by the establishment of numerous protective posts scattered over the whole country, with small lightly equipped columns passing constantly between them, and undertaking operations against roaming bands as necessity demanded. But complete success was only attained by the employment of Indian cavalry and by the raising of local bodies of mounted rifles. The Shan States were occupied in 1887 and the Chin Hills in 1889, while the Kachins continued to be a source of trouble down to 1893.

After internal tranquility was established, it became necessary to define the frontiers with the then neighbour States of Siam, France, and China. The boundary was fixed with Siam in 1893, with France in 1895, and with China in 1900. The northern half of the frontier with the last-named country has not been marked out with precision. It has been defined as following the watershed between the Salwen and the N'Maikha.

When Burma was annexed, it was decided that it should be treated as a non-regulation province, which allowed of greater latitude in the system of administration introduced into the recently subjected territory. Beyond putting an end to acts of cruelty and extortion, little or no change was attempted in the first place. The existing taxation was left untouched, and no new taxes were imposed. The Royal Monopolies were abolished, and trade in the products of the soil was pronounced free of all trammels. This toleration of what had existed under the Burmese kings, stripped, of course, of their features of cruelty and tyranny, went on until the year 1897, when Burma was transformed from a Chief Commissionership into a Lieut.-Governorship. In the interval, the judicial code of India had been introduced step by step, so that when the change took place in name, it was in effect hardly perceptible.

The system of administration is simple and based on practical principles rather than fine theories. The Lieutenant-Governor is assisted by a Legislative Council, for which Burmans and Shans are eligible. The Council prepares and passes Bills regarding local and provincial matters. These are submitted for the sanction of the Governor-General

of India. A High Court with a Chief Justice and three Judges was set up in 1900. There is a Judicial Commissioner for Upper Burma, and civil judges at Mandalay and Moulmein. The executive includes four Commissioners of revenue and circuit, and nineteen deputy Commissioners for Lower Burma; and four Commissioners and seventeen deputy Commissioners for Upper Burma. There are Superintendents for the Shan States and the Hill districts. The principal towns (forty-one in number) have their own municipalities, with their benches of honorary magistrates. In the country districts the administration is based on the village, each having its own headman, with very considerable powers responsible to the Government for the collection of the revenue and the maintenance of order.

The land settlement has been completed throughout the whole of Burma. In Lower Burma the term is for fifteen years, and in Upper Burma for ten. Formerly the greater part of the land was State or Royal. There were also feudal, hereditary, and service tenures. Now all land in Upper Burma is classed as either State or private. The right of acquiring land by squatting has been abolished. All waste land belongs to the State. Service lands were subjected to close scrutiny of the claims advanced to their ownership, and on the result of the inquiry classed as either State or private. In the important Shan districts, the chiefs retain their authority, and serve as intermediaries between the Government and their clans. The garrison of the province, as far as regular troops are concerned, has been reduced to the smallest dimensions, but in its place has been created a military police of 16,000 men. This corps is very efficient and equal to any corresponding corps of regular infantry. There is a civil police force of equal numerical strength.

Since the British occupation, the trade of Burma has made an immense expansion; and no better proof of this could be given than by the fact that Rangoon now ranks as the third port in India, its returns of trade being exceeded only by Calcutta and Bombay. The principal exports are rice and teak, and the former holds the first place. Nine

million acres are actually under cultivation, and it is estimated that double that quantity of suitable and prepared land remains available when new cultivators come forward in sufficient numbers. The largest quantity exported in a single year exceeded 2,000,000 tons of an approximate value of 10 millions sterling. On several occasions of dearth in India, it was the surplus rice of Burma that saved the situation.

Teak comes next to rice as the leading export of Burma. Originally it was exported from Moulmein, because the supply came down the Salwen; but as reafforestation was not practised, the forests were gradually exhausted in that region, and the Moulmein export trade came to a natural end. This experience served as a warning when Upper Burma passed into British hands. Teak continued to be a leading export from Rangoon, but the forests were strictly conserved, and the output has been fully sustained without any injury to the source of supply. Burma has a very considerable export trade with Western China, and among the chief items are many articles of British and Indian manufacture. No limit can be placed on the development of this trade once the existing communications have been improved by the addition of useful lines of railway, which have been long called for.

In adding Burma to the British Empire, Lord Dufferin accomplished one of the most remarkable and profitable achievements in Anglo-Indian history. It presents a very striking contrast with the many costly and unprofitable expeditions into Afghanistan. There finality has not been reached, but in the Irrawaddy Valley there is nothing left to accomplish. The Burmese are easily satisfied and make good subjects. They enjoy life, which is a natural remedy against discontent. They are not very rich, because they spend all they get and never think of saving, but they have enough for all their requirements, which include a good deal of amusement. If the men are lazy, the women are thrifty and hard-working, and thus the framework of society is kept well together. Prosperous as Burma is at the present time, its prosperity will increase enormously if circumstances should favour its becoming the chief avenue of trade with Western China.

CHAPTER XXX

LORD DUFFERIN—A RETROSPECT

LORD DUFFERIN was the first Viceroy to introduce as a regular custom official visits to the Feudatory States as the guest of their rulers. Before his time the general practice had been for the Viceroys during their tours to hold Durbars sometimes in an important city, sometimes in their camps when they happened to reach a convenient central position in any of the great divisions of India. It must be admitted that the change was mainly due to the increased facility of locomotion by the construction of railways, but at the same time it should not be overlooked that the visit of the Prince of Wales to several of the principal chiefs had provided a pointed precedent.

It was at the close of his first year in India that Lord Dufferin, on his way back to Calcutta from Simla, paid his first round of visits, which were described by Lady Dufferin in her charming book, entitled *Our Viceregal Life in India*. Beginning at the little hill-State of Nahun—now known under the name of Sirmur—which is almost at the door of Simla, it extended throughout Rajputana, where the capitals of all the leading principalities were honoured with a visit, however brief, by the Viceroy and the Vicereine. The mention of Nahun serves to remind the reader of the pages of the distinguished authoress that it provided a foretaste of the exquisite nature of Indian hospitality. Here, there being no suitable houses, a camp was prepared and equipped by the Chief at each of the successive halting places. A beautiful little white city of canvas laid out in streets with illuminated lamp-posts stood ready to welcome the travellers at each stage, and Lady Dufferin was much struck by the thoughtfulness that had placed beautiful fireplaces for her special comfort in the principal rooms. Finally, she declared that " no Government residence could have been more comfortable " than these improvised abodes for their entertainment.

The tour through beautiful Rajputana with its Chiefs of ancient lineage, its imposing cities, half-fortress, half-residence, and its magnificent palaces, was of a most interesting and fascinating character. It was like returning to the world in the Middle Ages which everywhere else had passed away, and it appealed to the aesthetic and romantic side of Lord Dufferin's character. The tour concluded at Agra, and the Viceroy, writing to a friend, gave a brief description of his impressions, including those at a first sight of the Taj—

"Were I to go over all that I have done during the last two or three weeks it would be but a repetition of what I have already told you, for all our receptions at the Rajput Courts have been of the same character, though differing from one another in details. The most Eastern-looking and splendid of all was at Jeypore. There is a beautiful palace and courtyard upon whose marble floors, lighted by torches, several hundred young Nautch girls danced before us.

"Here of course we have been busy with the usual sights. In the Taj I was not in the least disappointed, though from an architectural point of view it is the outcome of a period of art on the verge of degradation. It is in the state of a ripe pear which you must get up in the middle of the night to eat before it has turned rotten at the core by the morning. As it is it has just escaped, and is certainly lovely both in its general effect and in its details."

In 1886 Lord and Lady Dufferin visited Hyderabad and Mysore, and the conclusion he formed from these tours was to the following effect—

"It has now been my good fortune to have passed through most of the native States of India and to have come into personal and, I may say, intimate contact with their Chiefs, and I have no hesitation in saying that though there may be differences between them, though some States may be more advanced than others, some rulers less sensitive than others to the weighty responsibilities imposed on them by Providence, on the whole my experiences have been eminently satisfactory and reassuring, and the Queen-Empress,

and the Government of Great Britain, have the greatest reason to congratulate themselves on the general enlightenment, the desire to do their duty, and the conscientious application to affairs which is so generally prevalent amongst them."

In Lord Dufferin's time, but not on his initiative, the British Government began to display interest in the affairs of Tibet, with which some persons believed that a profitable trade might be carried on from India, although there was no evidence to support the view. The Peking Government had been induced to fulfil a condition in the Chefoo Convention of 1876 by granting a passport to Mr. Colman Macaulay to proceed to Lhasa, and that gentleman elated by his success had returned to India to make preparations for his journey. Unfortunately for the issue those preparations were on an extremely lavish scale, and rumour brought exaggerated versions of what was stirring to Tibet. The Lamas, thoroughly alarmed, sent special messengers to Peking, claiming Chinese protection. This, under the circumstances, seeing that Mr. Macaulay had been given a very sweeping passport to which all Chinese officials were ordered to bend low, placed the Chinese Foreign Office in a great difficulty. Their dilemma was the greater when they learnt beyond doubt that the Tibetans would oppose the entry of the mission by force of arms.

Lord Dufferin was not interested in Tibet, and had looked on the project all along with a doubtful eye, more especially as he had been engaged in some very troublesome matters with China arising out of the occupation of Burma. China was claiming in that quarter not merely her old right to a tribute mission but also a port on the Irrawaddy, and some frontier districts. Lord Dufferin's skill as a diplomatist was called into play, and turning the anxiety in Peking to save their face with the Lamas to account, he offered to drop the Macaulay mission in return for the Chinese abandonment of their pretensions in Burma. An arrangement was concluded in that sense.

But the Tibetans were not so easily mollified. They had, if not an ally, at least a devoted follower in the Raja

of Sikhim, whose territory was within the British frontier, and who received a subsidy on the condition of good behaviour. With or without his connivance the Tibetans had seized his post at Lingta, which they had strongly fortified at the news of the coming mission, and when called upon to give it up they had refused with much bravado. Lord Dufferin treated them with great patience, but as they refused to receive letters calling upon them to yield, a force had in the end to be sent to expel them. This was accomplished without any difficulty in September, 1888, and the whole of Sikhim was cleared of their presence.

Almost concurrently with the Sikhim imbroglio a more serious frontier conflict occurred on the Punjab borders in the region known as the Black Mountain, near the scene of Sir Neville Chamberlain's expedition against the Sittana fanatics in 1863. The clan involved was known as among the most turbulent of the frontier, and small parties were warned not to pass too close to their country. In June, 1888, two officers of the Guides passed incautiously, as they had only a small escort, by their settlements and were fired upon and killed. It was necessary to sanction an expedition, and caution dictated that it should be strong. The necessary preparations caused delay, and it was not till the month of October that a force of 8,000 men crossed the frontier and meted out stern justice to the offenders.

Among other remarkable incidents of this viceroyalty, the restoration of his historic capital, the great fortress city of Gwalior, which seems to dominate Central India, to the Maharaja Sindhia, was an important as well as a graceful act. The Maharaja at that moment was a little boy, but he lived to become known as the staunchest and most devoted friend of the British Government. His sudden and premature death in 1925 was a great loss to his own State as well as to the British Empire.

The Jubilee of Queen Victoria's accession to the throne arrived in 1887, and it was celebrated throughout India with official and unofficial demonstrations of loyal respect and gratification. Lord Dufferin took the prominent part in those which centred in the proceedings held on the Maidan

of Calcutta. The different public bodies of all kinds presented loyal addresses of congratulation on the auspicious event to Her Majesty's representative, and 30,000 school children, native and European, were entertained as the guests of the Viceroy and Vicereine. Among the many brilliant and thoughtful speeches Lord Dufferin made in India must be reckoned those he delivered on this occasion to the assembled deputations. After pointing out how much had been undertaken and accomplished for the welfare of the country and the people, he dwelt on the fact that much more remained to be done, but for its successful achievement the co-operation of the leaders of native society everywhere, and of the representatives of education and enlightenment was necessary. That co-operation alone will promote the highest interests of the peoples of India. The remainder of this speech deserves to be preserved for its permanent and practical wisdom—

"We are surrounded here on this auspicious occasion by native gentlemen of great attainments and intelligence, from whose hearty, loyal, and honest co-operation we may hope to derive the greatest benefit. In fact to an administration so peculiarly situated as ours, their advice, assistance and solidarity are essential to the successful exercise of its functions. Nor do I regard with any other feelings than those of approval and goodwill their natural ambition to be more extensively associated with their English rulers in the administration of their own domestic affairs, and glad and happy should I be if during my sojourn amongst them circumstances permitted me to extend, and to place upon a wider and more logical footing, the political status which was so wisely given a generation ago by that great statesman, Lord Halifax, to such Indian gentlemen as by their influence, their acquirements, and the confidence they inspired in their fellow countrymen, were marked out as useful adjuncts to our Legislative Councils.

"Believe me, I speak from personal knowledge when I say that amongst the many preoccupations and anxieties of the Queen-Empress, there is no section of her subjects whose interests she watches with more loving or affectionate

solicitude than your own. Moreover in doing this she most truly represents, as it is fit and right their Sovereign should, the feelings and instincts of the English people. Through the mysterious decrees of Providence, the British nation and its rulers have been called upon to undertake the supreme government of this mighty Empire; to vindicate its honour, to defend its territories, and to maintain its authority inviolate; to rule justly and impartially a congeries of communities, many of them widely differing from each other in race, language, religion, social customs, and material interests; to preserve intact and unimpaired the dignity, rights and privileges of a large number of feudatory Princes; to provide for the welfare of a population nearly as numerous as that of Europe and presenting every type of civilization known to history from the very highest to the very lowest; to safeguard and develop the enormous moral and material British interests which have become inextricably implicated with those of the natives of the soil; to conduct its administration in a way to win the love, confidence and sympathy of races as keenly sensitive to injustice and wrong as they are ready to recognize kindness and righteous dealing."

This speech breathed nothing but sympathy with the reasonable and attainable aspirations of the people of India, but at the same time being based on material considerations, it was not likely that it would give satisfaction to extreme idealists. Young men in a hurry were beginning to make their appearance in the public life of India. An advanced Reform Party had been embodied as an association, and in the winter of 1886–7 it organized what was called a National Congress in Calcutta. The speeches delivered by the members were free from any disloyal sentiments or unfriendliness to British rule, but some of the resolutions proposed and carried were deemed rather extravagant not only by the Europeans but also by the staid elders of the native community. At the moment of their expression they did not appear to have a practical value.

But Lord Dufferin watched the movement with interest

and discrimination. He did not agree with much that came out of the speakers' mouths, and yet he realized that sooner or later the British Government would have to deal with the awakened sentiment of the educated classes who were the creation of British policy, precept and example. He was not in favour of ignoring the movement with all its latent possibilities of unrest, much less of trying to repress what might be regarded up to a certain point as a safety valve. But undoubtedly he would have favoured any available means of guiding it into safe and navigable channels. His considered opinions on this important issue have not lost their practical value to-day, when all the issues involved have increased in importance, and the strain on the intelligence as well as the loyalty of the leaders of all political movements in India has been intensified by party passion, and it must be added, self-interest.

If it be remembered that the following warning as to what might be coming was written in 1886, it will not be said that Lord Dufferin was lacking in prescience—

"I think it is desirable that the Government should make up its mind as soon as possible in regard to the policy it is determined to pursue, for evidently India is not a country in which the machinery of European democratic agitation can be applied with impunity. My own inclination would be to examine carefully and seriously the demands which are the outcome of these various movements; to give quickly and with a good grace whatever it may be possible or desirable to accord; to announce that these concessions must be accepted as a final settlement of the Indian system for the next ten or fifteen years; and to forbid mass meetings and incendiary speechifying. Putting aside the demands of the extremists, the objects even of the more advanced party are neither very dangerous nor very extravagant.

"But it must always be remembered that though common sense and a certain knowledge of affairs and of the world may limit the programme of the leaders to what they think *they have a chance of getting, the ideal in the minds of the* major part of their followers is an India in which the British

Army shall ward off invasion from without, and preserve them from the tyranny and usurpation of the native Princes within, while they themselves shall have free scope to administer their domestic affairs untrammelled by the interference of white men except perhaps in the person of a Viceroy and a limited number of high officials.

"Undoubtedly the most vital and important of the notions started by the reformers is the change they propose in the Legislative Councils. I confess that soon after my arrival in the country it occurred to me that improvement might be possible in this direction, and personally I should feel it both a relief and an assistance if in the settlement of many Indian administrative questions affecting the interests of millions of Her Majesty's subjects, I could rely to a larger extent than at present upon the experience and counsels of Indian coadjutors. Amongst the natives I have met there are a considerable number who are both able and sensible, and upon whose loyal co-operation one could undoubtedly rely. The fact of their supporting the Government would popularize many of its acts which now have the appearance of being driven through the legislature by force; and if they in their turn had a native party behind them, the Government of India would cease to stand up, as it does now, an isolated rock in the middle of a tempestuous sea, around whose base the breakers dash themselves simultaneously from all the four quarters of the heavens."

At the close of his administration he supplemented this advice with some words of warning to the effect that the greater part of Indian opinion was silent and lay beyond the reach of the spokesmen of what was then termed the Congress movement—

"Having regard to the relation in numbers, in condition, in status, and in qualifications for government of what may be called the Europeanized or educated section of the Indian people as compared with the masses that constitute the bulk of the nation, I am convinced that we should be falling into a great error if miscalculating the force and value of the Congress movement and the influence of its supporters and advocates, whether in the press or elsewhere,

we were to relax in the slightest degree our grasp of the supreme administration of the country. On the other hand, as long as we hold firmly to this principle and remain fully alive to our own Imperial responsibilities, I believe that both with safety and advantage we can give full play to the legitimate and praiseworthy ambition of the loyal, patriotic, and educated classes in India, who are desirous of taking a larger share than hitherto in the transactions of the public business of their respective provinces."

The one seriously disturbing incident in Lord Dufferin's administration was the remarkable fall in the exchange, which caused what was destined to prove a permanent depreciation in the value of the rupee. This was felt the more deeply because it raised the total under the head of "Home Charges," which were made up of the purchase of stores, the provision of interest on loans, and the payment of pensions. The Home Charges thus became a very visible and easy mark of attack for the unfriendly critic. Lord Dufferin summed up the result quite concisely when he declared that the fall had made the revenue of India three millions less than it otherwise would have been.

It has been declared that the great and most durable achievement of Lord Dufferin's rule in India was the conquest and annexation of Upper Burma, but Lady Dufferin accomplished another that provided no unworthy pendant to add to the lustre of their sojourn in India. Before their departure from England Queen Victoria had spoken earnestly to Lady Dufferin on the question of endeavouring to relieve the suffering in sickness and child-bearing of Indian women. On her arrival in India, Lady Dufferin began at once to inquire what had hitherto been done, and to consider ways and means for doing much more. She found that although efforts had been made in a few places to provide hospitals and medical attendance for women, yet that, taking India as a whole, there was a lamentable deficiency in them, that the native practice was bad, and that there was a great need of effective organization. The plan that she adopted was to propose an association whose single object should be to train up and otherwise provide female

doctors, nurses, and midwives. A prospectus was accordingly published and circulated throughout India, with appeals for support and general co-operation, and in August, 1885, an association was inaugurated at Simla—under the name of "The National Association for Supplying Female Medical Aid to the Women of India."

Lady Dufferin was made President, the Viceroy Patron, and the Queen-Empress telegraphed her willingness to be the Royal Patron. To the present day the Association is known as "The Countess of Dufferin's Fund," thus preserving the rank held by her Ladyship at the time of its foundation.

The first general meeting was held at Calcutta in January, 1886, and was largely attended by both the Europeans and the Indian community. Lord Dufferin, who presided, said that he regarded the meeting as one of the most important ever held in India, as upon its successful issue a vast amount of human happiness was dependent. The object of the Association in its ultimate development was to supply the women of the land from one end of it to the other with proper medical advice and attendance under conditions consonant with their own most cherished ideas, feelings, and wishes. Our ambition, he declared, is eventually to furnish every district, no matter how remote, if not with a supply of highly-trained doctors, at all events with nurses, midwives and female medical assistants, who shall have such an acquaintance with their business as to be a great improvement on those who are now employed.

The association promptly took root and rapidly spread throughout the whole of India with branches in the chief cities, while in the Feudatory States it was heartily welcomed and liberally supported by their Ruling Chiefs. It has now become a self-supporting and genuinely national undertaking, and will permanently hand down to posterity Lady Dufferin's name as a friend and benefactress among the women of India.

On the eve of her departure from India in October, 1888, Lady Dufferin received a deputation of purda-nashin ladies of Bengal, Bihar, and Orissa at Government House. Only

a few were expected but seven hundred came, and there were not a sufficient number of chairs for all. As men were excluded Lady Dufferin's daughters did their best to accommodate them, but many had to stand during the proceedings. In replying to the address from the deputation, read by Lady Bayley, Lady Dufferin said—

"I am quite sure that no one in the fulfilment of a plain duty has ever received so great a reward as I have in the sympathy and appreciation of those for whom I have tried to do something, and in the rapid progress and success of the work I undertook. That work is founded on love and common sense, to build on such sure foundations it cannot fail. If it has been my happy privilege to draw attention to the remedial sufferings and to the wants of the women of India it is the quick response to that appeal emanating from the hearts and minds of their countrymen which has made the amelioration of their lot a reality and not a dream. I shall have no greater pleasure in returning to England than that of conveying to Her Majesty the Queen-Empress your expressions of loyalty and gratitude, and in assuring Her Majesty of the stability and the vitality of the work in which she has taken so great and active an interest. Again I thank you with all my heart for your kindness to myself, and I pray that every year that passes may add to the happiness, may diminish the suffering, and may improve the condition of the women of India."

Early in 1888 it became known that Lord Dufferin did not wish to prolong his tenure of the post of Viceroy beyond the period of four years, which would be reached in the month of November. Of course there were many rumours as to the cause of this decision, but the truth was stated in his letter to the Queen written with all his courtly grace. It is worth quoting as a record—

"It is with infinite reluctance that Lord Dufferin lays down his great office, but he is the oldest Viceroy that has ever administered the Government of India, and he was beginning to be afraid that another year might find him less capable of hard work and less energetic than it is desirable your Majesty's Representative in this country

should be. Even Lord Lawrence was only fifty-eight when he returned to England, whereas Lord Dufferin will be sixty-three before he is again admitted to kiss the hand of the Queen-Empress."

The unusual features of the resignation were that the intention to resign was announced nine months before the date fixed for its fulfilment, and also that the name of his successor, the Marquis of Lansdowne, was notified at the same time. The reason for this was the fluctuating state of home politics with which Lord Dufferin had no concern. It was one of those matters that Lord Salisbury, the Premier of the day, always decided for himself, but at the same time he informed Lord Dufferin that he was to be appointed Ambassador to the Italian Court, thus resuming his career in diplomacy.

A few weeks before he left India Lord Dufferin was informed that the Queen had been pleased to confer upon him a Marquisate, and after some hesitation he chose the title of Marquis of Dufferin and Ava. The ancient capital of Burma suggested a happier termination for the title than the modern afforded, and thus his name was to be perpetually associated with the greatest of his achievements.

In a summary of the work performed during his tenure of office, he stated that he "had never any ambition to distinguish his reign by a sensational policy, believing as I did that in the present condition of affairs it is best for the country that the administration should be driven at a low and steady pressure"—wise words applicable at all times to the best policy for the true interests of India. Although Lord Dufferin's administration was free from the least taint of sensationalism no one can ever dispute that it was sound, sober and statesmanlike. Over and beyond the rough work of administration which goes on, day in and day out, without a break, Lord Dufferin knew how to add a personal grace and dignity to the smallest functions of his office. It may be doubted if a wiser or a more discriminating Governor-General ever held authority in India, but certainly no other ever impressed so much dignity on

what he undertook, or affixed the mark of his characteristic grace so clearly to everything he wrote or said. Dr. Johnson's famous epitaph on Oliver Goldsmith might well have been composed for Lord Dufferin himself—

" He touched nothing without embellishing it."

CHAPTER XXXI

LORD LANSDOWNE'S VICEROYALTY

IN selecting Lord Lansdowne for the Viceroyship the British Government continued to furnish proof that it wished to give of the best in England to discharge its duties towards India. No British statesman of recent years has upheld the fame and traditions of the famous family which he represents better than the Marquis of Lansdowne; none has rendered more useful and honourable service to the Empire. Canada seems to provide a most excellent training ground for Indian Viceroys, for Lord Lansdowne was the third within a generation to make Quebec the stepping-stone to Calcutta. Lord Dufferin, in one of his farewell speeches, passed the following eulogium on his successor—

"In another week I shall have discharged my trust, and transferred my great office to the hands of one of England's most capable statesmen, a nobleman in the prime of life, and already distinguished for his sound judgment, his moderation, his wisdom, and the industry with which he applies himself to public affairs. That he will by the intelligence, the impartiality and the sympathetic character of his rule, gain and maintain the goodwill and the confidence both of Her Majesty's native and English subjects in India I have not the slightest doubt, and this conviction, to a great degree, consoles me for my regret in quitting your service."

Before his arrival in India, Lord Lansdowne had expressed the hope that his stay in India would be marked by unbroken peace. The sequel was to show that he longed for the impossible. India was fringed by warlike tribes and hostile races, who live by force and plunder, and to whom peace and quiet seem almost a dishonour. Still, for a brief space of time tranquillity prevailed, and enabled the new Viceroy to turn his thoughts to measures for the amelioration of the lot of the masses. Landing at Bombay

on 3rd December, 1888, Lord Lansdowne reached Calcutta a week later where, in response to an Address from the Municipal Corporation, he made his first speech in public. "I hope," he said, "that during my term of office peace and safety may prevail throughout the land, and that we who are concerned in its Government may find it within our power to address ourselves unimpeded by external or internal complications to the task of wise and prudent legislation for the domestic advantage of the people, and to the introduction of such improvements in the machinery by which your public affairs are administered, as may from time to time be required by the altering circumstances of the country and its people."

Lord Lansdowne turned his first attention to the study of the agricultural resources of India with a view more especially to ascertain whether they were adequate to meet the needs of a vast and rapidly increasing population. The statistical data collected with much trouble and pains justified the gratifying conclusion that the soil of India was producing sufficient supplies to meet the wants of the people, even allowing for its rapid increase. That was a general conclusion, but it did not exclude the possibility of large districts, and even areas having a deficiency or of their running short of supplies periodically. The Imperial Department of Revenue and Agriculture had been created in the time of Lord Ripon as one of the precautionary measures suggested by Lord Lytton at the time of the Madras famine. Provincial Departments were formed, and local branches organized in every part of India for collecting statistics as to the land produce, the character of its cultivation, and the normal condition of each agricultural district. This system was built up on the old native practice of preserving maps and land records in every village. To carry out this arrangement in a proper and effective manner village accountants had to undergo a course of training, and they are now to be found in large numbers, as scarcely a village is without one. Lord Lansdowne was not content with introducing this system into British India. He induced Maharaja Sindhia to adopt it in Gwalior, and since

that day several of the other great ruling Chiefs of India have followed his example.

As the improvement and increase of the agricultural production of India is one of the great questions of the moment, it is not improper to recall the fact that Lord Lansdowne established the Agricultural Chemists' Department, for the express purpose of instituting experiments on a scientific basis. Veterinary and bacteriological sections were added to cope with the diseases and epidemics prevalent among cattle. Rinderpest alone had carried off several millions every year. Lord Lansdowne also gave his attention to the development of the mineral resources of India, and to that end stimulated the efforts of the Geological Department. In his time oil was discovered in Burma and in the valley of the Lower Indus, iron in different parts of India, and coal in the Central Provinces.

With regard to the assessment and returns of the land tax he could only begin a great measure of reform which has been in progress ever since, but he is entitled to the credit of having been the first to realize the mistake that had been committed in departing from the age-long established principles of native administration by substituting an absolutely rigid system of collecting the revenue for one that was eminently elastic. At the same time, increased liberty was conferred on the occupiers and holders of agricultural lands to dispose of their lands by transfer and sale. Reports from different Government centres in India showed that defects in the land revenue system might be a primary cause of agricultural impoverishment. In the Deccan the growing poverty and indebtedness of the agricultural population had led to the transfer of land to the money lending profession. In 1879 an Act had been passed to protect the agriculturist under any circumstances from the loss of his land. Notwithstanding this measure infractions had become frequent, and Lord Lansdowne instituted an inquiry which led to a further expansion of the protection afforded by the Act. The full execution of the proposals emanating from Lord Lansdowne's Deccan Commission only became possible in the time of his successor.

Lord Lansdowne devoted much attention to the extension of irrigation works, and of new lines of railway. The area of actual irrigation was increased from 7,806,200 to 9,684,140 acres, an increase of nearly 25 per cent. The development of railway communications was not less remarkable. In his five years' rule 3,905 miles of new lines were opened to traffic, and an almost equal number sanctioned for construction. The most important line was the East Coast railway, establishing direct communication between Calcutta and Madras, and opening up vast tracts of country previously cut off from all outside communications. The Godra-Rutlam to Delhi, the Lucknow-Bareilly to Benares, the Bareilly-Rampur, and the Bengal-Assam were the most important within the confines of India proper, while outside these limits the Mushkaf-Bolan in Baluchistan, and the Mu Valley line in Upper Burma, claim mention as essential sections of Imperial communication.

Intimately connected with all these matters of social security and progress was the question of sanitation, but as Lord Lansdowne stated in one of his public speeches, " Sanitary problems in India are to be approached with the utmost tact, patience, and forbearance. The path of the sanitary reformer brings him face to face sometimes with natural indifference, begotten of ignorance, sometimes with what appears at first sight to be prejudices and superstitions, but which on closer examination prove to have their foundations deep in the customs and traditional habits of some portion or other of the human race. In regard to the distribution of the work to be done I will venture to say that our great object should be to stimulate local efforts, and to render , if possible, the people themselves alive to the advantages of sanitary reform." Lord Lansdowne's practical contribution towards the solution of this vast and perennial problem was the inauguration of a system of water works in the great cities, such as Agra, Allahabad, Benares, and Cawnpore.

Lord Lansdowne took great interest in education. During his rule primary schools increased by over 8,000, and the number of scholars by 323,000. Female education may be said to date from his time. With regard to technical or

applied education Lord Lansdowne had very clear views, which he expressed in his first address as Chancellor to the University of Calcutta.

"There seems to be growing up in several parts of the Empire a widespread feeling that the existing system, whilst conferring great benefits is too exclusively literary, and that we should endeavour to supply our students with a training which would serve their purpose in the event of their ultimately electing to adopt a profession in which literary attainments were not indispensable. I am informed that this feeling has found expression in a growing sympathy for the establishment of technical schools as a supplementary branch of education. Even in the bosom of the University this feeling, I am told, already exists, but it is checked by a not unnatural apprehension that any change even of a supplementary kind in the existing curriculum, would endanger the interests of that purely literary culture which will, I hope, never cease to be associated in our minds with university education. To find some means of obtaining the desired advantage without encountering the evil results which are feared, ought not to be a problem of insuperable difficulty, and I would commend it to the careful consideration of the University authorities."

In connection with education it is worthy of mention that Lord Lansdowne founded the Imperial Library in Calcutta, and also the Imperial Record Office.

Lord Lansdowne increased the functions of the Legislative Councils. By a new Act of 1892, the rights to discuss questions of finance, and also to interpellate the Government were fully conceded. "I feel no doubt," said Lord Lansdowne, "that both the public and the Government of India will gain, the one by the keener knowledge and insight into public affairs which it will obtain, the other by the increased opportunity which will be given to it of explaining its position and defending its policy." The composition and strength of the Legislative Councils were also improved, the one by the adoption of the electoral system, the other by the increase in the number of additional members. In almost his last speech before leaving India, Lord Lansdowne

dwelt on the importance of strengthening the Legislative Councils in every possible way—

"I am convinced that it would be impossible to overrate the importance of infusing new life into these Councils, both by enlarging their functions and by so modifying their constitution as to include within them a certain number of members owing their appointment to the recommendation of other bodies rather than to nomination by the Government. I earnestly trust that the Imperial Council, strengthened as it has lately been by the extension of its functions, and by the addition to its ranks of a larger number of representative members, some of whom will owe their presence to the recommendation of their fellow citizens, will enjoy an ever-increasing share of public confidence, that it will conduct its deliberations with wisdom, dignity, and moderation, and that it will prove to be a new source of stability and usefulness to the institutions of this country."

Before Lord Dufferin left India, a commencement had been made on paper in placing the organization of the army on an entirely new basis, but the scheme had not been put in working order. The old system of separate Presidential armies with their Commanders-in-Chief and district staffs, dating from the early years of the Company, had become quite out of date, and the times demanded a single and central control for all the forces in India. Lord Roberts had prepared the scheme under one Viceroy, and he was there to bring it into execution under his successor. By the new arrangement the separate Presidential commands were abolished, and there was thenceforth to be only one Commander-in-Chief for the whole of India. Under his direct and supreme authority there were to be four large commands under as many Lieutenant-Generals. These were designated Bengal, Bombay, Madras, and the Punjab. Baluchistan and Sind were to be divisions forming part of the Bombay command, while Burma continued to be attached to Madras. The old separate Staff corps were at the same time merged into one, entitled "The Indian Staff Corps."

At this period, too, great attention was paid to the improvement of the rank and file of the native army as a combatant

force. It was admitted that the Madras and Bombay armies, recruited in the main from peaceable classes, were no longer up to the necessary standard, and it was desirable to form new regiments recruited from the warlike races of the North. Thus while Madras has the nominal charge of garrisoning Burma its new battalions sent there are exclusively composed of Gurkhas, Sikhs, and Punjabis. Lord Lansdowne is entitled to the credit of having placed the organization of the Imperial Service Corps on a working footing. Lord Dufferin had asked " those Chiefs who have specially good fighting material in their armies to raise a portion of those armies to such a pitch of general efficiency as will make them fit to go into action side by side with Imperial troops." The invitation met with a general and enthusiastic response. Offers poured in from all sides, but when Lord Lansdowne took over the practical working of the scheme he found it necessary to discriminate. Many of these offers, made in the enthusiasm of the moment, were clearly either beyond the resources of the Chief himself or held forth no likelihood of advantage in the military sense.

For this reason Lord Lansdowne laid down the following rules for guidance as to whether an offer should be accepted or declined, and it was also hoped that their public definition would lead to the elimination of useless or unacceptable offers. They read—

" The Government of India will on no account accept assistance of this kind from the Feudatory States, except in cases where there is the clearest possible evidence to show, first, that the Ruler of the State in question is honestly and sincerely desirous of placing his troops at our disposal, and esteems it an honour to have those troops brought into line with those of the Imperial Government ; secondly, that such service will not impose too heavy a burden on the State, and that there is to be found among its people a genuine loyal desire to accept such service ; and thirdly, that there exists in the troops themselves that military spirit so conspicuous in some of the races of India which has given to our native armies some of the finest fighting material in the world. The essence of the whole scheme is that there should

be no compulsion in the matter, that only those States should be singled out which are not only willing but anxious to bear their part with us in defending the Empire in the hour of need."

The organization of Imperial Service Troops was begun in the Sikh States of the Punjab and Cashmere. The results proving satisfactory, it was next extended to Gwalior and the Rajput States. In the third group were Hyderabad, and the States of Central India. Bikaner contributed an admirable camel corps, and Jeypore and Gwalior special transport bodies in addition to combatants. Occasions arose even in Lord Lansdowne's time to test the quality of some of these special levies, notably Cashmere, on active service during the Gilgit and Hunza expeditions, and the result exceeded expectations. The experiment having been proved successful, Imperial Service corps were given a definite place in the new plans of general mobilization that formed part of Lord Roberts's reorganization of the Indian army in the event of war. Finally, the volunteer corps were reorganized, and a course of training introduced which provided a body of 30,000 men for home service. The result of all these measures has been that a condition of readiness for action has superseded the old haphazard arrangements which left everything to chance, and which were always marked by confusion.

The finances of India, owing to the depreciation of the rupee, had attracted attention in Lord Dufferin's time when, owing to that cause alone, the Budgets showed a recurrent deficit. The commercial classes clamoured for a remedy, and on Lord Lansdowne's arrival the position had become acute. Various remedies were proposed, including the adoption of a gold standard, but it proved difficult to reach an accord between the Government of India and the Secretary of State. At last the Viceroy's request to close the Indian mints to free coinage of silver was sanctioned, and the value of the rupee was fixed at 1s. 4d., or one-fifteenth of the sovereign, where it still remains. The original desire of the Indian community was that the value should be fixed at 1s. 6d., and as in normal circumstances the average value of the

rupee in the open market reaches that amount a case seems to be raised for revising the ratio of more than thirty years ago.

Lord Lansdowne cultivated close relations with all the Feudatory Chiefs. During a visit to the Nizam's dominions he made a speech to the following effect: "I have always recognized the advantages of the arrangement under which a considerable portion of the Indian Empire continues to be governed by its hereditary rulers, and to be subject to forms of administration differing to a considerable extent from our own, but inspired by our proximity and stimulated by our example. No one would be more averse than I should be to any change in our relations with the Native States inconsistent with the measure of local autonomy which they now enjoy. It is because I entertain these feelings so strongly that I am desirous to see the government of these States carried out upon sound principles, and in such a manner as to place it beyond the power of anyone to say that the Government of India in arresting, as it has striven to arrest, the process by which the greater part of the territories of India were passing under the direct rule of the Crown, showed itself unmindful of the welfare of the millions of people who still remain outside the limits of British India."

If Lord Lansdowne ever indulged the hope that he would be free of the frontier and trans-frontier cares that had beset his predecessors he had soon to abandon it, but before taking up that theme reference may be made to his visit to Khelat, where he was able to pay a deserved tribute to the prescience of Lord Lytton, who by his Treaty of 1876 had paved the way to the cleverest strategical moves ever accomplished in Middle Asia. The central scene of this visit was the Great Durbar at Quettah in 1889, attended by the Khan of Khelat, the Jam of Las Bela, and all the Sirdars of Baluchistan, and the great incident was Lord Lansdowne's address to the Chiefs assembled—

"The Treaty made in 1876 by Lord Lytton, then Viceroy, with the Khan of Khelat, was the starting-point of the new era throughout the whole of this wide-stretching region.

The changes that followed in its train must be of a nature, I think, to be entirely satisfactory to all concerned, and not least to your Highness. The Bolan Pass has become a safe and peaceable highway, and your Highness' wise action in subsequently consenting to the commutation of the transit dues formerly levied upon all commodities conveyed through the Pass has given a further stimulus to commerce. The heavy cost of this arrangement was cheerfully borne by the British Government in the general interest. I believe I am within the mark when I say that there is not a Chief or a trader in this part of the country whose wealth has not greatly increased in consequence of those salutary changes, while the mass of the people released from the dangers and anxieties of internal disputes, have experienced a general and marked advance in well-being and prosperity. Other roads besides that through the Bolan Pass have been opened up, and your country has been thrown into direct connection with the commercial enterprise of the Indian Empire.

"Hardly ten years have elapsed since the districts of Pishin, Sibi, and Thal Chotiali first came into British possession during the war with Afghanistan. Since then these districts have been formally declared to form part of British India; while more lately the Kakar country and Khetran Valley have come under our administration. During these years you have had ample opportunity of judging what British rule means. You will, I hope, have learnt that this is founded on justice, that the British Government neither exacts heavy taxes nor interferes with your private affairs, that it has no wish to meddle with your religion, and that it desires to respect your ancient customs, so far as it is possible to respect them without injustice to individuals. The British Government desires to see its subjects prosperous, contented, and happy.

"Your local levies have been employed in maintaining order, and your jirgas for the performance of the ordinary duties of civil administration. In return for these benefits the Government expects from you loyal and faithful service. Such service has, I am glad to know, been rendered by many of you in the past, and I feel convinced that you will not fail

to render it again should the opportunity be given to you. Of one thing you may be sure—that the British Government is strong and powerful, and that it does not forget those who have deserved well at its hands."

This review of frontier matters may be concluded with the statement that preparations were commenced and far advanced in Lord Lansdowne's time for the scientific defence of the North-west Frontier against invasion on the largest scale imaginable. They are based on a triple line of defence, and long before the third could be reached it would be possible to bring a million trained men from Great Britain and the Empire generally to withstand the invader. The nearer the shadow of Sovietic Russ a and her dupes falls on the North-west Frontier, the clearer is India's need for that combined Imperial defence which can alone exorcise the menace.

The small hill-State of Manipur below Assam was the first scene of trouble in Lord Lansdowne's time. A palace plot, the deposition of one bad Rajah, and the elevation of a worse, led to active intervention. An attempt to settle the matter without resort to force failed, some English officers, including the Chief Commissioner, were murdered, and troops had to be sent to restore order. The murderers were captured and executed, and a Regency set up to manage affairs for a child Rajah.

A more stirring incident occurred at Gilgit on the extreme western border of Cashmere. The hold of the Cashmere ruler on this important point was not very secure, nor was his rule very efficient, which suited the marauders in the vicinity. To secure a better state of things a British agent was sent there. East of Gilgit lies the fort of Chalt, and about thirty miles to the north of Chalt are the twin States of Hunza and Nagar, the point where three Empires meet. Of all the marauders of this region the clans of Hunza-Nagar were the most formidable and successful, and their stronghold was a veritable slave mart. After several warnings, which were either unheeded or rejected in terms of scornful defiance, due it was said to the encouragement afforded by a Russian officer, it was decided to bring these old offenders to

reason. With a joint Indian and Cashmere force Colonel Durand captured both towns, and placed on the musnud a nominee who swore to show fealty to the Government of India. The very analagous events in Chitral belong to Lord Elgin's period. For the same reason the story of the Durand mission to Kabul falls within its scope, but the preliminaries were arranged by Lord Lansdowne.

Notwithstanding the fixed subsidy and the delimitation of his frontier on the side of Russia, the relations with the Amir Abdurrahman had not been entirely satisfactory. His way of looking at things was so different from the views of our officials that a certain coolness became perceptible in our relations with him. He thought he would enhance his own dignity by ignoring the Viceroy and dealing direct with the Government in London. He succeeded in sending a personal letter to Lord Salisbury through a surreptitious channel, but this irregular mode of proceeding could not be tolerated, and he was informed firmly but civilly that he must address the Viceroy alone.

During the two first years of Lord Lansdowne's administration the Amir was absent from Kabul being detained in Turkestan, placing its administration on a firm basis after the Ishak rebellion. When it was known that he had returned an intimation was sent to him that there were several matters outstanding that required arrangement between the two Governments. The Viceroy then expressed the opinion that the best way to arrive at a speedy agreement about them was for the Amir to receive the visit of a distinguished officer, and he concluded with the proposal that that officer should be Lord Roberts. This proposal upset the Amir very much, and he declared he was too ill to think about it. After a little further consideration he took exception to the name of Lord Roberts because he said that he had many enemies in Afghanistan, and that he could not guarantee his personal safety. He also objected to the proposed size of his escort. It was believed at the time that the Amir had formed the conclusion that while Lord Roberts would give much he would not do so without obtaining an adequate equivalent, and that he would have to accept

binding conditions which were not at all to his taste. Whatever the cause, the proposed mission was abandoned, and for a time a fresh rupture with Afghanistan appeared not improbable. The greatest precautions were observed along the frontier, as no one could tell what so headstrong an individual might do in one of his outbursts, and more than two years elapsed before it could be said that Anglo-Afghan relations had reassumed their friendly character.

Lord Lansdowne in his farewell speech at Calcutta towards the end of the year 1893, described the situation that had existed during this trying period in the following words—

"Until this winter all the conditions were calculated to lead to misconceptions and strained relations. You had, on the one side, the British Government actuated by a strong desire to secure peace upon its marches, and to keep open the great avenues by which they are traversed. You had, on the other side, an Eastern Ruler, jealous of external influence, conscious of his own strength, the inheritor of a throne to which there has always clung the dim but glorious traditions of a suzerainty, including the whole of the Mahomedan tribes of the Punjab frontier. To give such a ruler a kingdom without properly defined boundaries was to court difficulties and misunderstandings, and we have had a plentiful crop of them. Could we be surprised if under such circumstances the tribes not knowing whether to look to the Amir, or to us, sometimes turned to Kabul and sometimes to the Punjab Government or to the Baluchistan Agency? Was it strange that in the presence of such a state of things the trade routes were harried, and raids, followed by bootless reprisals, perpetrated upon British territory, or that every troublesome outlaw and intriguing pretender to the Chiefship of a border State should, whenever it suited him to set us at defiance, represent himself as enjoying the special protection of the Ruler of Islam, or was it unnatural that the Amir should regard with a suspicious eye the extension of our railways, and the piercing of the great mountain barriers which screened his possessions from our own?"

That was the situation when Sir Mortimer Durand,

Foreign Secretary to the Government of India, was sent to Kabul in the autumn of 1893, some weeks before Lord Lansdowne left India on the conclusion of his full term in the hope that he might succeed in effecting the removal of all causes of misunderstanding.

It is perhaps difficult to appraise the exact value of the work accomplished by any Viceroy of India in the past generation. Not only is the period too near our own time, but as many of the incidents of one Viceroyalty overlap those of both his predecessor and his successor, it is difficult to disengage the precise share that attaches to each individual ruler.

But the impression cannot be rejected that Lord Lansdowne's good work in India has not received the full recognition to which he was entitled. And yet his five years' term of service as the Sovereign's Viceroy furnishes a very full and varied story. He gave great attention to the moral as well as to the material interests of the Indian peoples. He fostered trade, he developed the resources of the country, he restored elasticity and equilibrium to the Budget, and he succeeded in stemming the fall of the exchange, which threatened confusion and disaster by giving stability to the rupee, which has been more than sustained for thirty-five years. These were practical results. If he sanctioned no conquests—both Manipur and Hunza were legitimate spoils of war—he concerned himself with the largest and most comprehensive plans of defence for those conquests which make up the history of British India against the day when some daring and rash invader may seek to emulate those conquerors of the past who found India unprepared and defenceless. Of all the ills that could befall India in the future none would surpass the calamity of an invasion led by alien hordes, whose sole idea is to spread terror before them, and to leave ruin and desolation in their track. That is a prospect which every true lover of India's peace and prosperity should keep ever in his view.

CHAPTER XXXII

LORD ELGIN'S VICEROYALTY

A CURIOUS and unprecedented incident followed the notification of Lord Lansdowne's intention not to prolong his stay in India beyond four years. The Liberals were in office and Mr. Gladstone was Premier for the last time. A suitable nominee for the Viceroyship was not discoverable at the moment in the ranks of the Party, and Mr. Gladstone decided on making a new departure. Lord Lawrence had been the one exception to the rule of filling the highest post in India from outside the members of the Indian Services, but his appointment could be held justified by the exceptional events in which he had taken so prominent a part. There was no civilian in 1893 with anything like his claims and credentials, but one of his most trusted and devoted lieutenants survived in the person of Sir Henry Norman. The political and social world was taken by surprise when it was announced that Mr. Gladstone had selected this Anglo-Indian veteran, pledged to the lips in favour of the archaic policy of "masterly inactivity," to succeed the Marquis of Lansdowne as Her Majesty's representative in her Indian Empire.

Since his retirement from India, Sir Henry Norman had been a member of the Secretary of State's Council, and in that capacity he had no doubt been very useful to the Liberals while out of office during the agitation that accompanied the Afghan War in 1878–9. But for that co-operation the Governorship of Jamaica had seemed a sufficient reward. No one, friend or foe, could see any justification for bestowing upon him the most splendid post in the Empire, and the embarrassed congratulations of his friends were almost as disconcerting as the open criticism and protest of those who only saw in the measure an unreasonable and unjustifiable appointment. After holding for sixteen days the title of Viceroy and Governor-General, Sir Henry

Norman came to the conclusion that his best course would be to resign the appointment which his political leader in an unreflecting mood had conferred upon him.

The withdrawal of Sir Henry Norman, however, did not completely relieve the situation. There was no slight difficulty in finding a suitable candidate among the Peers who still followed Mr. Gladstone's lead. Certainly not one possessed the necessary experience in administrative affairs to bring up his name voluntarily and naturally before the bar of British opinion as one well qualified for the task. It was inevitable, under these circumstances, that an experiment would have to be made, and at last the official choice fell upon the Earl of Elgin. This nobleman was the son of the Earl who had died as Viceroy in 1864, after a very brief sojourn in India, and perhaps the strongest reason given for the new appointment was that it was a sort of compensation for the untoward fate which had cut short what promised to be a brilliant Indian career for his father. The new Viceroy was favourably known for his assiduity and common sense, and his friends declared that he would not disappoint those who selected him. It was also imagined that the situation in India was calm and assured, and that he might count on a period of tranquillity and freedom from pressing anxiety during his term of office. These anticipations were falsified. From almost the beginning to the end of his stay in India he was beset by serious troubles and weighty anxieties. Famine and plague, incessant wars on the frontier, internal dissensions of the most disturbing character, occupied his constant attention by day, and must often have disturbed his rest by night. Through it all, Lord Elgin proved himself a strong man of steady purpose and equitable judgment.

The arrangements for a mission to Kabul had been made by Lord Lansdowne before his departure. They were in some respects very different from those originally proposed. A civilian and a diplomatist was delegated for the task in place of a soldier. Sir Mortimer Durand, the Indian Foreign Secretary, was entrusted with the mission in place of Lord Roberts, who by this time had left India. Instead

of a large escort, he took none, the Amir engaging himself for his personal safety. In several respects the changes seemed improvements on the original programme.

On 20th September, 1894, Sir Mortimer Durand and his personal staff entered Afghan territory, where he was received by the Amir's Chief Commander, Ghulam Haidar Khan, on behalf of his Sovereign. On 2nd October, the Mission made its State entry into Kabul; on 5th October, Sir Mortimer was welcomed by the Amir personally at a Durbar of State. Subsequently the envoy had many private interviews with the Afghan ruler, when many points were discussed and ventilated which facilitated the despatch of business. The question of the boundaries between India and Afghanistan was the paramount matter involving, among other things, the definition of spheres of influence.

The question regarding the North-east frontier, that is to say, the Cashmere frontier, and the upper regions of the Hindu Kush, having been fully discussed, was settled in an agreeable and advantageous manner to both sides. Recent movements of the Russians in the Pamir region had much to do with the Amir's reasonableness in this direction. An Afghan post at Somatash had been attacked by a Colonel Yanoff and its small garrison of a dozen men killed (July, 1892), and this incident contributed greatly to the Amir's change of front on the question of the mission. If Russia intended to force a serious quarrel upon him, then he would clearly have need of England. The surrender to England of Chitral and Gilgit was to his own advantage as bringing her upon the scene, for these were the outlets for any descent on India from the Pamir.

This matter settled, the more important questions relating to the Punjab borders were taken up. The British envoy, in his personal interviews with the Amir, enlarged upon the identity of the British and Afghan interests in this quarter, and it was stated that Abdurrahman, won over by the tact, patience, and sincerity of his guest, agreed to a settlement which was equally advantageous to both sides. By this new arrangement, the Amir engaged not to interfere for the future in any way with the Bajauris,

Afridis, and Waziris; and also that the frontier should be clearly demarcated by a joint Anglo-Afghan Commission wherever possible. On the other hand, it was agreed that the Amir should retain Asmar and the valley above it as far as Chandak, which was in the hands of the Afghans. He was also to hold the district called Bermal, in the north-west of Waziristan, the Amir binding himself to make no attempt to exercise his influence directly or indirectly in any of the resigned territories. It must be remembered that these surrenders were not of Afghan territory, but of claims in the intervening "No Man's Land," or "Land of Trouble" (Yaghistan), which never had any real substance.

By way of favour, the British Government granted permission to the Amir to purchase and import cannon, rifles, and munitions of war, at the same time raising his subsidy from twelve to eighteen lakhs per annum. Among other concessions to which Abdurrahman attached importance must be mentioned the fact that the Indian Government promised to stand aside while he effected the subjugation of the curious Kafir community of the Hindu Kush, who had maintained their independence during many centuries. The task was very congenial to the Amir, and thanks to the cannons and rifles with which he was provided, he met with rapid and complete success. Those Kafirs who survived the invasion were deported to the district of Lughman, east of Kabul; but no information has ever been issued as to how they have fared since.

After the negotiations were concluded and the Treaty signed, the Amir received Sir Mortimer Durand and the officers on his staff at a Durbar in the Hall of Audience in the grounds of the Arq or Citadel. The hall was crowded with the dignitaries and Chiefs; and after the members of the Mission had been presented separately to the Amir, His Highness made a speech in which he declared his entire satisfaction with the terms agreed upon, and his firm conviction that the interests of Great Britain and Afghanistan were identical. These remarks were received with loud applause and expressions of approval; and thereupon an address, bearing the seals of the leading men in the country,

was presented to the Amir. As it was an eulogium of his work, he decided to read it aloud himself, and he laid stress on this as an expression of national gratitude for what he had accomplished for Afghanistan during his long reign. He also emphasized those passages which revealed the general confidence in him as their ruler and protector. In return, they assured him of the unswerving obedience which they declared they would always render him, and finally they promised to abide by the terms of the new settlement with the English.

On 14th November, Sir Mortimer Durand was received by the Amir at a private farewell interview, at which his sons and a few of the higher officials were present. Matters relating chiefly to trade were discussed, Abdurrahman remarking that his country was not yet ripe for a commercial treaty, but he spoke warmly in favour of the establishment of a regular "Amad Raft" (coming and going) between Afghanistan and India which would tend to confound any common enemy. The following day the Amir took an opportunity of seeing Sir Mortimer once more to bid him good-bye on his return journey, which began under a royal salute of twenty-one guns.

Lord Lansdowne summed up the results of this mission in the following words: "I believe that my successor will find in H.H. the Amir, who has during the recent negotiations evinced the strongest desire to arrive at an honourable settlement and to remove all causes of ill will between his Government and ours, a firm ally and a friendly neighbour, well content to abide honourably by the contract to which he has lately become a party."

Before passing on to other frontier matters, it must be mentioned that the delimitation of the Afghan frontier in the Pamir region had to be effected not only with Russia, but with China. In 1895 an Anglo-Russian Commission, with Commissioners from China as well as Afghanistan attached, took up the work; and as no one wished to be obstructive, it made rapid progress and was free from any unpleasant incident. The delimitation of the Pamir frontier to the east of Victoria Lake was thus successfully arranged

in September by the joint Anglo-Russian Commission, and the boundary line was defined up to the high spurs of the Mustagh range on the Chinese border. The northern frontier of Afghanistan was thereby determined from Zulfikar on the Heri Rud to the Pamir. A dispute arose over a few miles of unimportant territory, but when the matter was referred to London the British Government almost immediately coincided with the Russian view, and the Commissioners were enabled to finish their work speedily and to the satisfaction of all parties. At a farewell banquet the Russian Commissioner, General Schweikovski, and the British Commissioner, General Gerard, made appropriate speeches and parted on the most friendly terms.

It is now necessary to describe a long succession of border troubles, expeditions, and wars which in cost and gravity surpassed all precedent. It will be most convenient to begin what may appear an involved narrative with the occurrences at Chitral. On 1st January, 1895, the Mehtar Nizam ul Mulk was murdered by the order of his brother, Amir ul Mulk, who seized the musnud. He was not left in its possession very long. Hereupon another aspirant appeared in the person of Umra Khan of Jandol, the near kinsman of a previous Mehtar; and to make his case stronger, Amir ul Mulk stood aside in favour of his nephew, the young Sher Afzul. Warnings were issued from India that fighting must not be indulged in and that the Resident would arrange matters. But Sher Afzul had brought with him a large number of the Bajour clan, and he at once took possession of the town of Chitral.

On 31st March he laid siege to the Residency, which was held by the Resident, Mr. Robertson, with a garrison of 500 men. Messengers were sent off to summon aid, and Colonel Kelly set out at once with a force mainly composed of Cashmere troops to the rescue. Crossing the Shandur Pass (12,000 ft.) in deep snow, he had first to disperse the tribes laying siege to the fort at Mastuj. This accomplished, he reached and relieved Chitral on 20th April, but it is right to mention that before he arrived, the Khan of Dir had brought succour a few days earlier to the Residency.

Meanwhile a strong expedition had been fitted out under the command of Sir Robert Low. Having stormed the Malakand Pass, this corps had no difficulty in dispersing the Bajourees under Umra Khan, who fled into Afghanistan, where he was imprisoned by order of the Amir. Peace and order were then restored in Chitral, the two intriguers, Amir ul Mulk and Shere Afzul, being deported to India. On 14th May, part of General Low's force reached Chitral, and eventually it was decided to annex that district, leaving a child ruler in titular possession.

The Chitral affair was an ordinary episode in the affairs of those petty States where the feuds and rivalries of their ruling families had produced many dramatic incidents and a long series of troubles; but the attempt to settle the affairs of the numerous clans who had been recognized by the Durand Convention as having passed into the British sphere of influence, proved a long and thorny business. These were first-class fighting men, and of late years they had acquired large quantities of rifles and cartridges. The whole of their country was difficult; much of it was inaccessible. They knew every yard of it; the greater part had never been even approached by any Anglo-Indian troops. The Durand frontier signified a new and heavy responsibility.

The first troubles broke out in Waziristan, where the Wazirs, without any warning, began hostilities by attacking the British camp at Wano on 3rd November, 1894. A disaster was narrowly averted, but the assailants were finally repulsed, leaving 350 of their number dead on the ground. Sir William Lockhart was sent with a considerable force to pacify this region and, after defeating those who followed the banner of the Mullah Powindah in many encounters during the month of December, 1894, he dictated terms of settlement which were eventually accepted by a tribal jirgah before the end of January, 1895. About this time the Amir had encroached beyond the Durand line and allowed some of his irregular forces at least to occupy Mittai, where they remained for over twelve months. This naturally appeared an equivocal step; but as in the same period he received an invitation from Queen Victoria to

come to England, which he circulated through his country, and as he sent his second son Nasrulla to England, it was not regarded seriously by the ruling power. The withdrawal of this force in 1897 with a frank avowal that Mittai was outside the Afghan sphere confirmed this view. Nasrulla's visit to England was not a success. He was a difficult subject to deal with, and although every attention and honour were shown him, he returned to his country with unfriendly feelings towards his hosts, and these were aggravated by the failure of the secret mission which his father had given him to obtain the right of holding direct diplomatic relations with the British Government.

The year 1897 was marked by troubles and conflicts on a more formidable scale than had yet been known. They began in June in the Tochi Valley, where a surprise attack was made on the Political Agent and his escort, and in the following month the whole of the Swatis, who had hitherto been friendly, were up in arms under a leader who became known as the Mad Mullah. An expedition of 8,000 men, under Sir Bindon Blood, was sent into the Swat valley, and having relieved the fort of Chakdara, he defeated the Mullah's forces and dispersed them. This trouble was scarcely appeased, when a fresh and far more serious rising began in the Khyber region, where the Afridis and the Orakzais, the two most numerous and formidable tribes of the whole frontier, defied the British power and closed the Khyber Pass. The conflagration of tribal enmity thus rolled along the whole length of the frontier, and fanned by religious zeal, as well as the plundering instinct, attained formidable dimensions.

No risks could be taken in such an emergency, seeing that the two tribes involved could place between them nearly 100,000 men in the fighting front. An army of 60,000 men was collected at various points under the supreme command of the Commander-in-Chief, Sir William Lockhart, and for the first time the Feudatory Princes were invited to send some of their Imperial Service contingents to the front. This invitation was responded to with the greatest enthusiasm by all. The fiercest fighting at the opening of the

campaign occurred on the Samana Ridge during September, but the struggle became intensified as the troops forced their way into Tirah and reached the heart of the Afridi country. It was here that the dramatic incident of the capture of the Dargai height by the Gordon Highlanders took place on 18th October. After this event the Orakzais gave in their submission, but the Afridis continued to fight on till the end of December, when they, too, admitted that they had had enough and accepted the terms offered.

Among the conditions imposed was their exclusion from the Khyber Pass, which passed under British control for the first time. A strong fort was constructed at Lundi Kotal. A chain of fortified block houses with, eventually, a railway through the Pass, dreaded from of old, consolidated the position. The struggle with the Afridis and the Orakzais entailed a loss of 433 killed, including 36 British officers and 1,320 wounded, of whom 80 were officers. It revealed, also, some serious defects of organization; and while the valour of the soldier, British and Indian, was beyond all praise, the same tribute could not be paid to the quality of the leading, or the merit of the general plan adopted.

The greater part of Lord Elgin's term of office was thus taken up with frontier operations, costly in blood and money, and not as conclusive in their results as they should have been, thus forming no happy beginning for the direct assumption of the control of the tribes of the "No Man's Land" between the Punjab and Afghanistan. On this occasion the tribes got no outside assistance, as the Amir would, and indeed could, not listen to their petitions, but it may not be always so. As far as can be judged, there is nothing to show any tendency to adopt a settled and peaceful life by these tribes in whose blood still ferments the instinct of strife and rapine.

These border affairs were far from being the worst of Lord Elgin's troubles. In May, 1896, a state of famine prevailed in the North-west Provinces, Rajputana, and Central India. By October it extended to Oudh and the Punjab. Before the year closed, half a million people were

employed on relief works. Although a heavy death rate was averted, the supplies were barely sufficient, and a severe strain was placed on the Government resources. But when the dearth was even more severe in 1897 than in the previous year, and famine prevailed more or less in every part of India, then the prospect indeed seemed black, and even the bravest began to despair.

The gravity of the position was revealed by the fact that in June of the latter year, over four millions of people were employed on relief works. At this time an Indian Famine Relief Fund was opened in England, and over half a million pounds sterling were raised before it closed. Not till 1898 did the situation improve in such a measure as to relieve the anxiety of all concerned.

Considering the very carefully compiled arrangements to deal with famine on its first outbreak, originated by Lord Lytton after the Madras Famine, these afflictions and the extent to which they ran were disappointing and discouraging. A careful examination of the whole question was made, with the result that a flaw was detected. Before railways were made and the external trade of the country had increased, the surplus food of good harvests fetched very low prices, and used to be kept by the producers or local dealers in store against a year of scarcity, or, perhaps, until the stores rotted. But under the new conditions the surplus is exported and fetches the current prices in the world markets. But when scarcity arises, the local stocks of reserve food are not there. The well-filled granaries always held in reserve for a famine by the ruling Princes, under the pressure of public opinion, are no longer to be found. It is, therefore, clear that to have a perfect famine policy, the Government of India must include reserves of food stored in suitable public or State granaries. This can be carried out by Government purchases of bumper harvests, thus reducing the export of what is called the surplus produce of India, but which is only a surplus in a restricted sense, as it takes no account of lean years. The idea that with money plentiful supplies of food can always be obtained by importation is not sound in all cases. The importation

may be effected with time and trouble, but it may come too late. Money in the pocket is not food in the mouth.

Bad as was the visitation of famine to which the people of India had been accustomed in some form or other for centuries, a still more terrible visitant arrived in India in the time of Lord Elgin. At the end of 1896, rumours spread that cases of bubonic plague, the terrible plague of Egypt, had occurred in Bombay. An attempt was made at first to represent the disease as something else, but when it spread with appalling rapidity, such efforts to conceal the worst were unavailing. By December the smitten population was in a state of panic, and it was declared that half the inhabitants of the great city had abandoned their homes and fled into the country. Whether they carried the contagion with them or not, the plague broke out in Poona and Karachi, and in both places the total of deaths was almost on a par with that in Bombay.

A Plague Commission was appointed to devise the best means of dealing with the crisis, but as there was no known certain and swift remedy for a plague epidemic, it was not surprising that little could be accomplished all at once. The attack on unsanitary areas, the house-to-house inspection, the isolation of suspected cases, could not be put in practice without touching the susceptibilities of large bodies of the public, and in the result the work of the Commission was regarded in many quarters with absolute hostility. It really seemed to some observers as if the people preferred the preservation of their social customs and the exclusiveness of their mode of life to the preservation of the health of their families and their own existence. Even the presence of the Angel of Death walking through the land could not remove their prejudices or stimulate their energies. Thus the evil had to be left to its own cure by self-exhaustion. The Government could not set fire to the infected parts of Bombay, although many turning to history recalled the fact that the plague of London had only been stayed by the Great Fire. But after the epidemic had died down, an extensive and elaborate scheme for rebuilding a great

part of Bombay was taken in hand, and large tracts of insalubrious and malarial soil were reclaimed. The possibilities of plague recurrence in other parts of India less well prepared than the new city of Bombay to resist cannot be ignored, more especially in these times of social disturbance and political confusion in China, whence the plague was first introduced into India.

War, famine, plague! These did not end the troubles that befell Lord Elgin. To them had to be added political unrest and seditious agitations within the limits of the State. These were not uniform in character and did not spring from a single cause. The agitation against the operations of the Plague Commission had been largely fomented by the Brahmins on the plea that caste observances had been violated, and the extreme vernacular papers had not been sparing in their denunciations on that account. To say the least, this attitude made it very difficult to apply a remedy for the malady that was converting some of the busiest quarters of Bombay into a silent desert. But when this opposition passed from criticism to overt acts, no Government could remain indifferent. Still less could it do so when those acts led to the brutal murder of two Commissioners, Mr. J. Rand and Lieut. Ayerst, who were carrying out their remedial duties for the benefit of the stricken people of the Bombay Presidency in Poona.

The time had come for the adoption of extreme measures. The murder of the English officers was traced to a conspiracy in Poona, where a young Brahmin named Damodar was arrested. He admitted that he and two of his brothers had alone committed the deed. The latter had made good their escape for a time, but the former, after a long trial, was sentenced to death and eventually hanged. At the same time, it was made clear that these young men had been worked upon by the exhortations in the vernacular Press not to refrain from overt acts in defence of what was called the rights of their religion. The Poona *Kesari*, edited by Gangadhar Tilak, was the most virulent in giving pernicious advice. It was decided to arrest him for inciting the people to sedition and rebellion. After a trial in July,

1897, Mr. Tilak was sentenced to eighteen months' imprisonment and his paper was suppressed. The publishers and editors of other papers of the same character were also brought to trial and sentenced to shorter terms. Eventually, Mr. Tilak was released when he had served half his sentence. Although the later episodes of the Poona agitation belong to the time of Lord Curzon, it will be sufficient to state that it culminated in the assassination of two brothers named Dravid to whose evidence Damodar's arrest had been due. For this fresh crime, which made a great sensation, Damodar's two brothers and an accomplice named Ranade were tried, found guilty, and sentenced to death.

During all these trying and anxious times, Lord Elgin had not failed to gain the goodwill of the ruling Princes, and the respect of the serious and intelligent classes of the Indian community. Wherever he went he left a good impression, and his speeches appealed to the heart, as well as the minds of his audiences. He was so evidently animated by honest purpose and a desire to do the best thing possible under difficulties, that criticism was disarmed and cavilling silenced. He was quiet, matter of fact, and sensible. He indulged in no flights of fancy. He attended to the business of the day, and he concentrated the attention of his hearers on the facts which controlled events, and not on the theories of reformers or disturbers of the existing social and political situation. His Scottish wit was often brought into play to relieve a tense moment when passion seemed calculated to obscure reason. His appointment was, in the first place, termed the hazardous experiment of an unknown and untried man, but before he had been long in the seat of authority it was seen that he was equal to his charge, and by the time it was due to close he had confirmed this impression, leaving behind him the reputation among all classes of one of the most considerate, just, and well-inspired rulers that British India had ever known.



H M KING EDWARD VII AND H M QUEEN ALEXANDRA

CHAPTER XXXIII

LORD CURZON'S PRO-CONSULSHIP

FROM Lord William Bentinck's time, with the exception of Lord Lawrence, no Governor-General or Viceroy had possessed any special knowledge of India or acquaintance even with Asiatic races and problems. In that sense every one of these appointments might have been termed an experiment. In the personal sense, also, not one of them had been looking forward to India as a field of employment and distinction until the eve of their nomination. Lord Elgin's successor was the exception in both respects. No one had made a closer study of India and Asiatic subjects generally than Lord Curzon. No one had travelled more extensively within the limits of the Asiatic Continent, no one had explored more of its hidden places, and certainly no one had ever worked harder to familiarize himself with the peoples of India, their condition, character, and customs. Lord Curzon differed, too, from his predecessors in the personal sense. He had laid himself out during the whole of his public life to become Viceroy of India. That was to be the crowning feat of all his efforts, and in 1898 he attained his heart's desire.

In August, 1898, Mr. George Nathaniel Curzon, then acting as Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, was notified by Lord Salisbury that he had submitted his name to the Queen-Empress as Lord Elgin's successor in the high office of Her Majesty's Viceroy in India. The selection was approved by the Queen, who thereupon raised him to the peerage of Ireland as Baron Curzon of Kedleston. The significance of an Irish creation in those days was that it did not disqualify the holder from obtaining a seat in the House of Commons, the most notable instance of the kind having been that of the famous statesman, Viscount Palmerston.

Lord Curzon sailed on 16th December, 1898, accompanied by his wife, a lady of American extraction, reaching Bombay

on 30th December, proceeding thence to Calcutta, where he took over charge from Lord Elgin on 6th January, 1899. In his first speech on arrival at Bombay he declared that he had come " to hold the scales even "—words that General Gordon had employed when he first went to the Soudan—but Lord Curzon's task in that respect was by far the more complex for, as he said, " a Viceroy of India is confronted with a mosaic of nationalities and interests—with his own countrymen, few in number, and scattered far and wide under a trying climate in a foreign land, and with the manifold races and beliefs, so composite and yet so divergent of the indigenous population in its swarming and ever multiplying millions. To hold the scales even under such conditions is a task that calls indeed for supple fingers and nerves of steel."

Immediately after his installation, Lord Curzon was called upon to deal with many serious matters. The famines of 1897–8 had left a serious legacy behind them in Government deficits and public losses, and there were reports which proved only too well founded that dearth and its attendant desolation were to fall again upon many divisions of the peninsula. The famine of 1899–1900 was even worse in the Native States than in British India. In the former thirty millions of people were brought to the verge of starvation, in the latter twenty-five millions were sufferers. In British India alone five millions were employed on relief works at the worst moment ; in Feudatory India one million. The only mitigating feature in the visitation was that the death rate rose very little above the normal. The material losses were incalculable. It was not merely a crop famine, but a fodder famine, and no exact total could be affixed to the millions of cattle destroyed. Thus what might be called the working capital of the agricultural classes was entirely swept away.

On the other hand, the system of relief introduced was promptly organized and brought into operation at an early stage—so early, indeed, that many critics pronounced it premature, if not unnecessary. The scale of relief was generous, and many declared it to be over-generous, Many

improvements in the distribution of supplies were introduced. Instead of operating, as previously, in large centres such as famine camps, villages had their separate kitchens and means of distribution. The aboriginal tribes, who had been neglected on previous occasions, were provided for, and a far larger number of medical men, their assistants, and volunteers from all classes of the services, were induced to take upon themselves the control of famine relief. In the Feudatory States the organization for dealing with an outbreak of famine was at this period very defective, and in most cases non-existent. This was especially the case in Guzerat, where a famine had never been known. The suffering was consequently greater in these portions of India than in British India, where anti-famine precautions had become part of the regular administrative cares of the Government for twenty years and more. But once the Chiefs and their Governments became fully alive to the gravity of the situation, and to the duty that devolved on them, they made the most strenuous efforts to make up for the lost ground, and showed a most gratifying awakening to the call of philanthropic exertion and beneficence.

Lord Curzon was sensitive on the charges brought against his famine measures, but as they were made recklessly and without knowledge of the facts, he could afford to treat them with indifference. Curiously enough they found expression in England more than in India, where what he had done was too well known and appreciated to allow of detraction. But certain extreme politicians at home had imagined that they could make some capital by platform attacks on the Viceroy, well knowing that there could be no one on the spot to supply the facts and refute their calumnies. The best reply to these charges was that Lord Curzon had sanctioned an expenditure of not less than thirteen millions sterling on famine relief, and that the mortality attributable to starvation had been low.

The hope that the ravages of famine would not in 1899–1900 be aggravated, as had happened two years before by the horrors of the plague, had soon to be abandoned. Its grip on Bombay and other districts within the infected

area was not relaxed. In November, 1899, Lord Curzon visited Poona to thank the band of voluntary plague workers numbering five or six hundred persons for " their unwavering courage," in a fight that he then believed was " now well-won," but the congratulations were premature, for in 1902 plague was again rampant, and 560,000 human beings perished under the sickle of the Reaper. In 1903 the figures rose to 842,000, and in 1904 to 1,000,000. These appalling figures stagger the imagination, and far exceed the worst records of famine.

Human ingenuity and science seemed at a loss how to deal with the scourge. Inoculation with Haffine's Plague fluid was recommended, and to set a good example Lord Curzon and the members of his family and staff underwent the injection, but in the infected areas there seemed to be seeds and sources of the malady that defied its efficacy. A change of plague policy was then introduced. The original restrictions were pronounced too severe and modified. An unfortunate accident in the distribution of impure serum rendered inoculation unpopular, and made the masses conclude that the remedy was worse than the disease. Gradually the community was left to adopt its own remedies. Segregation was enforced among themselves without a government order, areas of infection were abandoned. Thus the people began to work out their own salvation, but the price was heavy, and the toll great. Science has still to speak the final word on a human scourge that may spread far and wide.

Lord Curzon started with a very full programme of projects and schemes, how many they were may be gathered from the fact that he divided them into dozens. Prominent in the first dozen was the creation of a new Frontier Province on the right bank of the Indus. This was not an original idea, it was Lord Lytton who first conceived it, but there can be no doubt that it was the Durand Treaty with the Amir that hastened its realization. Up to this period the Punjab extended to the western districts beyond the Indus up to the tribal territories, and the policy civil and military to be adopted radiated from Lahore. That policy had

gradually become the main consideration and affair of the Supreme Government, although the execution of the details was left to the Provincial authority. As the subject increased in importance it was not unnatural that the Supreme Government should desire to control the situation without any intervening body. Other Viceroys had thought very much the same thing, but they had done nothing. With Lord Curzon to think was to do.

In 1901 he issued his fiat that a North-west Frontier Province under a Chief Commissioner was to be formed beyond the Indus, and that it should be entirely subject to the Governor-General in Council. This was followed by a change in the procedure observed towards the border tribes. Conciliation rather than coercion was to be the order of the day, and in proof of it the military posts were entrusted to local levies raised among the tribes themselves, while the regular garrison was drawn backwards to Peshawar and Attock. This retirement did not apply, however, to the Khyber, for a permanent bridge was thrown across the Kabul river at Nowshera, and a strong fort constructed at Dargai to command and secure the crossing. The administrative change may be considered to have justified itself, but even the lapse of twenty-five years has not sufficed to remove all doubt as to what the permanent relations with the Pathan tribes who dwell within what has become the British-Afghan boundary will be.

It is time to take a glance at the Afghan situation, which must always react on the relations with the Pathan tribes. In September, 1901, the Amir Abdurrahman, after several illnesses, died. This " strange, strong, self-willed man," to use Lord Dufferin's description, had welded Afghanistan once more into a single kingdom. His eldest son, Habibullah, who was then about 30 years of age, succeeded to the throne without any opposition or disturbance. This was perhaps the strongest proof that could be furnished of the change Abdurrahman had brought about in Afghanistan, where peaceful successions had never been known. The first acts of the new ruler were those of indulgence. He pardoned many who had offended his father, he increased

the pay of the army, and he announced publicly his attachment to the British alliance. For three years after his accession the only news that came from Kabul was to the effect that all was quiet, and that the new Amir was holding his own in his father's style and spirit. In 1904, when Habibullah found that he could not carry out his intention to visit India at that moment, a mission under Sir Louis Dane, the Foreign Secretary, was sent to Kabul for the purpose, to use Lord Curzon's words, of "clearing up all the doubts or misunderstandings that had arisen out of our different agreements with the late Amir, and also to bring about a renewal of those agreements, freed from such ambiguity, with his successor." At the same time there was no question that Russian activity in the matter of railways in Central Asia and her desire to establish commercial relations with Afghanistan were not without their influence in deciding Lord Curzon to send this fresh mission.

Lord Curzon's treatment of frontier questions may be summed up by quoting his own words in his farewell address on leaving India—

"Confidence at Hunza, confidence at Chitral, confidence in the Khyber, and the Kuram, confidence all down the frontier to Baluchistan. That is no mean boast. I observe that all the people who have for years depicted me as a somewhat dangerous person, and who warned India seven years ago of the terrible frontier convulsions that she was in for under my rule have found it a little difficult to account for the seven years' peace that has settled down on the land. Two explanations have lately been forthcoming. The first is that the tribes had been so severely handled by my predecessor that they have not had a kick left in them for me. The second is that having concentrated all my unholy propensities in the direction of Tibet, where, however, for some unexplained reason I did not begin until I had been in India for four years, I had nothing left for the tribes. I can hand over the frontier to my successor with the happy assurance not only that matters are quiet, but that the principles determining our action whether as regards tribal militia, or border military police, or frontier roads and

railways, or tribal control, are clearly laid down, and are understood."

In 1901, after a glorious reign of sixty-four years, Queen Victoria, the first Empress of India, died venerated and beloved throughout the far-stretching Empire upon which the sun never sets. Her son and successor, Edward VII, whose wide knowledge of affairs and men, and whose ability and tact were known to all who had the honour to be admitted to his presence, carried on the work that the illustrious Queen had commenced, and gave the task of government a new virility. Unfortunately he had reached a mature age before his accession to the Throne, and his health was no longer robust. A long reign was denied him, but he crowded much brilliant achievement, many acts of sound and far-seeing statesmanship that consolidated the Empire, and averted national peril, within the brief compass of eight years.

On 1st January, 1903, by command of the King-Emperor, the Viceroy held a grand Durbar at Delhi for the purpose of proclaiming the Coronation of His Majesty Edward VII as King and Emperor of India. The Durbar was held in an amphitheatre specially constructed for the occasion on a site three miles beyond the famous Ridge. The number of spectators present within the arena was over 16,000, and included the Duke and Duchess of Connaught, representing the King and Queen Alexandra. There were present all the principal Ruling Chiefs of India, one hundred in number, with their retinues, a large number of Indian notabilities from every Province and City of India, and all the officials, civil and military, of high rank. It was the largest and most brilliant assemblage of the kind that up to that time had ever been witnessed in India, and for the splendour of its surroundings and the impressiveness which marked the proceedings throughout it was declared to be unequalled in the history of similar ceremonies. The route from the Viceroy's Camp to the amphitheatre was closely lined by troops, and on the plain opposite the entrance to the amphitheatre 40,000 troops were drawn up in full view of all the spectators. The massed bands of the assembled regiments

performed selections of music during the ceremony. After the Herald had read the Proclamation, Lord Curzon addressd the assembly in a brilliant oration, from which the following passages may be taken—

"Nowhere else in the world would such a spectacle be possible as that which we witness here to-day. I do not speak of this great and imposing assemblage, unparalleled as I believe it to be. I refer to that which this gathering symbolizes, and those to whose feelings it gives expression. Over a hundred rulers of separate States, whose united population amounts to sixty millions of people, and whose territories extend over fifty-five degrees of longitude, have come here to testify their allegiance to their common Sovereign. Loyalty to the Sovereign is synonymous with confidence in the equity and benignity of his rule. It is not merely the expression of an emotion, but the record of an experience and the declaration of a belief. For the majority of these millions the King's Government has given freedom from invasion and from anarchy; to others it has guaranteed their rights and privileges, to others it opens ever-widening avenues of honourable employment; to the masses it dispenses mercy in the hour of suffering; and to all it endeavours to give equal justice, immunity from oppression, and the blessings of enlightenment and peace. To have won such a dominion is a great achievement, to hold it by fair and righteous dealing is a greater. To weld it by prudent statesmanship into a single and compact whole, will be, and is, the greatest of all."

Then followed the reading of the gracious message from the King-Emperor to his Indian lieges, renewing and repeating the pledges of the great Queen-Empress Victoria, thus giving to the peoples and Princes of India a fresh charter of their liberties and rights—

"It gives me much pleasure to send a message of greeting to my Indian people on the solemn occasion when they are celebrating my Coronation. Only a small number of the Indian Princes and Representatives were able to be present at the ceremony which took place in London, and I accordingly instructed my Viceroy and Governor-General to hold

a great Durbar at Delhi in order to afford an opportunity to all the Indian Princes, Chiefs, and peoples, and to the officials of my Government, to commemorate this auspicious event. Ever since my visit to India in 1875 I have regarded that country and its people with deep affection; and I am conscious of their earnest and loyal devotion to my House and Throne. During recent years many evidences of their attachment have reached me, and my Indian troops have rendered conspicuous service in the wars and victories of my Empire.

"I confidently hope that my beloved son, the Prince of Wales, and the Princess of Wales, may before long be able to make themselves personally acquainted with India and the country which I have always desired that they should see, and which they are equally anxious to visit. Gladly would I have come to India upon this eventful occasion myself had this been found possible. I have, however, sent my dear brother, the Duke of Connaught, who is already so well known in India, in order that my family may be represented at the ceremony held to celebrate my Coronation.

"My desire since I succeeded to the Throne of my revered mother, the late Queen Victoria, the first Empress of India, has been to maintain unimpaired the same principles of humane and equitable administration which secured for her, in so wonderful a degree, the veneration and affection of her Indian subjects. To all my feudatories and subjects throughout India I renew the assurance of my regard for their liberties, of respect for their dignities and rights, of interest in their advancement, and of devotion to their welfare, which are the supreme aim and object of my rule, and which under the blessing of Almighty God will lead to the increasing prosperity of my Indian Empire and the greater happiness of its people."

Immediately after the death of Queen Victoria the demand for a suitable memorial was raised on all sides, but opinions varied as to the form it should take. The matter had to be considered from many points of view, and Lord Curzon gave it his close consideration. As he was embellishing Calcutta with many fine public buildings, it was very natural

that he should decide in favour of a Memorial Hall in that city. This he conceived would be the most appropriate and enduring monument to her great reign and beneficent work in India. The Victoria Memorial Hall, with its vast and varied collections of Indian art, was due to his inception and initiative, although its completion was not reached until after his departure. "I believe," he said, "that if we raise such a building as I have sketched and surround it with an exquisite garden, we shall most truly, in the words of Shakespeare, find a tongue in the trees and a sermon in the sculptured stones, that will proclaim to later generations the glory of an unequalled epoch, and the beauty of a spotless name."

Reference has been made to the creation of the Indian National Congress in the time of Lord Ripon, and when Lord Curzon arrived in India its activities had greatly increased as well as its belief in its own importance. This annual assembly was becoming a sort of Parliament, which had created itself without any Constitutional Charter or authority. It had its uses. The spoken word is always easier to deal with than the suppressed, and as a sounding board for the voice of certain sections of the educated community it could be heard. But when it claimed to be representative in a national sense, its credentials called for critical examination; when it pretended to have found panaceas for half the ills of mankind, its proposals could not but be subjected to close inspection and analysis.

One of its established articles of faith was to extend a welcome to every new arrival. Each and every Viceroy was expected to bring the Millennium, and when it was discovered that he had not, the Congress would turn and rend him, denying the least merit to his good intentions and best efforts. So it was in Lord Curzon's case. He was welcomed as a reforming Viceroy, and then in a little time nothing that he said or did was treated with even an approach to fair play. Lord Curzon was not a man to sit down quietly under attack, but curiously enough he never came into open collision with the Congress. No subject would have been more topical, and yet he eschewed it. In a war of words

few men could better hold their own. His armour of self-conscious right repelled their shafts ; his silence blunted the points of their poisoned arrows.

The eloquent Bengali or Maratha of the Poona School, who has found so congenial a sphere in posturing at the Indian Congresses, is but one among many types of Indian races, character, and sentiment. They are entitled to a hearing, but it must be borne in mind that there is no weighty public opinion behind them. If they have any backing, it is that of the never absent element in any country, of discontent with the human lot, dissatisfaction with their own, and the darker sentiments and passions of sedition fermenting in the back of the minds of their ambitious and reckless leaders. Englishmen in their official or other work in India are brought into close contact with men of different races and of a very different stamp to such as these, Mahomedan gentry, many trained at Aligarh University, Chiefs of ancient lineage, Hindu officials, whose administration has built up and preserved the fortunes and existence of so many of the Feudatory States, and the still greater body of educated Indians of all parts of the country, who take no part in political agitation, although their zeal and interest in social and industrial reform are as strong as could be. These men with thinking minds are a factor in the world of Indian opinion ; they are the greater factor because behind them is the weight and force of the best opinion in India. Perhaps the assurance of their existence gave Lord Curzon the strength to endure the gibes and calumnies of the Congress.

There is one aspect of the question that cannot, however, be ignored. The members of the Congress are the products of English education. For some reason or other they have associated themselves with one political party in England, the extreme wing of the Liberals, and they have looked to the ferment of drastic changes there to bring about drastic changes among themselves. They have not stopped a moment in their hurricane of abuse to consider where they would be themselves if that drastic change that they pretend to desire were to come about. There will be, no doubt,

some day or other, a true Congress or Parliament in India legally constituted and properly endowed, but it will only be after some evidence has been afforded of the existence of a practical spirit, an equitable frame of mind, and a sense of general justice upon which a real patriotism might be built up.

In one matter Lord Curzon fills a unique place among the Viceroys. He was the first to devote his attention and energy to the preservation of Indian monuments and other memorials of the past. Many of these were in a state of neglect, some were in such a state of disrepair and ruin as to forebode their early disappearance. By precept and example he imposed on the Civil Services a new duty in the conservation of ancient monuments. Later on he passed a law for the preservation of ancient monuments, and at his request a Director-General of Archaeology became a new addition to the service. Lord Curzon devoted much of his personal attention to the restoration and renovation of the dwellings in life, and the resting places in death, of those master builders, the Mogul Emperors. He relieved the Taj Mahal from its unworthy and repelling surroundings. A beautiful park has taken the place of a squalid bazaar. The adjacent buildings have been restored as nearly as possible to the state in which they were erected in the time of Shah Jehan. The other buildings associated with different Mogul princes in their original capital, the mausoleum of Itmad ud Dowlah, the tile-enamelled Chini-ka-Roza, the Mogul Palaces within the Fort received attention. Akbar's city of Fatehpur Sikri, the same Emperor's tomb at Sikandra, were also saved from destruction; the process of natural decay and man's neglect was arrested. They have been restored to their original perfection of form and detail, old gardens restored, old water channels cleared out, old balustrades renovated, chiselled bas-reliefs repaired, and the inlaid agate, jasper, and cornelian replaced.

Lord Curzon noticed with enthusiastic approbation that the skilled workmen of Agra lent themselves to the task with as much taste and zeal as their forerunners had done three centuries ago. Similar work was undertaken and

continued at Delhi and Lahore. Various departments of the administration were transferred to other quarters, and the Palaces and Halls of the Mogul Court reassumed something of their ancient aspect. Lord Curzon's enthusiasm in restoring these memorials of the past won the sympathy and support of the great ruling Princes of India, and stirred them to emulation. The Rajput Princes were foremost in the van, and none throughout the length and breadth of the land were backward. In some cases the States were rich enough to bear all the cost and the charge; in others the Supreme Government had to help. This was especially the case with regard to the extraordinary rock-fortress of Mandu, one of the most amazing natural spectacles, as Lord Curzon termed it, in the world. Rising to a height of 1,500 ft. above the Nerbudda Valley it bears upon its summit, which is 30 miles in circumference, a splendid collection of deserted fortifications, palaces, and tombs. Here an important branch of the Marathas at one time established a centre of their power in the heart of Malwa, but the Powars of Dhar have fallen from their proud estate and lack the resources to restore and preserve so vast a memorial of former times. The complete restoration of this, perhaps the most magnificent archaeological remains in the East, was not accomplished until many years after Lord Curzon's departure. But perhaps the day will come when his beneficent work as a preserver of Indian antiquities, and his example in this direction to all true Indian patriots will be remembered more to his lasting credit and fame than the political achievements of some of his predecessors.

In April, 1904—having been then over five years in India—Lord Curzon returned to England. By the existing rules such a step carried with it the vacation of the office of Viceroy and Governor-General, but no fresh appointment was announced, and Lord Ampthill was summoned from Madras to act in the interval. There was a prevalent belief that Lord Curzon's departure was not final, and that India would see him back again.

The most conspicuous incident of his brief sojourn in his own country was his receiving in the time-honoured Guildhall

the freedom of the City of London. He then described his work in India during the long period of five years. He entitled it one of reform and reconstruction. The machinery of administration had been taken to pieces, cleaned, repaired, and replaced. The improvement of the finances, despite famine and plague, had justified a reduction of taxation, the first, it was said, for twenty years. He reduced the salt tax and raised the limit of exemption from income tax. He had preserved peace on the turbulent North-west frontier. That was the pith and substance of his record, but he did not close without enunciating some high principles that should guide the future conduct of those in authority, and his words might well be written up in golden characters for all to read and faithfully treasure—

"What is the basis of British rule in India? It is not military force, it is not civil authority, it is not prestige, though all these are part of it. It must depend on the eternal moralities of righteousness and justice. Unless we can persuade the millions of India that we will give to them absolute justice as between man and man, equality before the law, freedom from tyranny and injustice and oppression, then our Empire will not touch their hearts, and will fade away. No one is more ready to admit than I, that if you put side by side the rulers of a European race and the ruled of an Asiatic, and particularly such races as the Indian and the English, where you have a small minority, face to face with a vast alien conglomeration, you cannot expect to have complete coalescence. On the one side you have pride of race, the duty of self-protection, the consciousness of power; on the other, you have struggling sentiments and stifled aspirations. But a bridge must be built between the two and on that bridge justice must stand with unerring scales. Harshness, oppression, ill-usage, all these in India are offences, not only against the higher law, but against the honour and reputation of the ruling race. I am as strong a believer as any man in the prestige of my countrymen. But that prestige does not require artificial supports; it rests upon conduct, and conduct alone."

CHAPTER XXXIV

THE EXPEDITION INTO TIBET

AFTER the abandonment of the Macaulay Mission in Lord Dufferin's time, the Tibetan question was allowed to slumber. It would have slumbered longer but for the awakened interest in the question at Peking, where the hope arose that an easier route to coerce a troublesome tributary might be found through India than across the mountain passes of Kham. The Government of India at that time thought only of the possibilities of trade in this quarter, while the Chinese Government had recourse to this track to assert its political influence and maintain its prestige. In 1890, a Chinese Commissioner arrived in India for the express purpose of arranging the Tibetan situation to the mutual advantage of the two Powers. The Tibetan authorities, recognizing the authority of the Imperial order, attended on the frontier of Sikhim at the Commissioner's summons, and a Treaty was concluded and supposed to be binding on all the parties. The authority of China in Tibet was thus confirmed by practical demonstration, and trade was to be free between India and Tibet. Everybody ought to have been pleased, but unfortunately, to limit the degree of satisfaction, these favours were only on paper. In 1893, the Treaty of three years before was supplemented by a Trade Convention in regular form, but, unfortunately, it also proved to have no real meaning. The Tibetan question continued to slumber, and no one would have thought of disturbing the dreams of its promoters, but for a very exceptional and unforeseen occurrence. The commercial side of the matter was of small, if not absolutely trivial, dimensions; the political side which had never been thought of suddenly became of transcendent importance.

In the summer of the year 1902 the British Ambassador at St. Petersburg reported the arrival at the Russian Court of a fully-accredited envoy from the Dalai Lama of Tibet,

who was credited with the desire to place himself under the protection of the Czar of Russia. To give more emphasis to his petition, it was stated that the Dalai Lama had wished to come in person to place himself at the feet of the Czar, but his Council had refused its sanction to his departure. But he had found a suitable messenger in the person of a Russian subject, Dorjieff by name, who had been resident at Lhasa for over twenty years, and who was versed in all the arts and mysteries of the Lamaistic cult.

Dorjieff was a Buriat of the Baikal region and undoubtedly a Russian subject. He was also a Buddhist, a follower and perhaps even a disciple of the Khutukhtu of Urga; and, of course, the holy city of Lhasa must have held out to him a very potent kind of attraction. Whether that attraction was the sole cause of his proceeding to Lhasa in the year 1880, and remaining there until 1902, may be disputable, but at least it seems a little extreme to imagine that he was sent by the Russian Government at that time on a secret mission to spy out the land. The probability is that the whole design originated in Dorjieff's imagination, who hoped to find favour and a more earthly reward in being the messenger chosen to place a new tributary at the foot of the Czar, and one possessing, moreover, such mysterious influence and importance as the Pope of Buddhism could scarcely fail to possess.

The interest of Russia in Buddhist Asia had always been great since her conquest of Siberia. She had many Buddhist subjects; she was at close quarters with the Taranath Lama at Urga; and her great explorers, Colonels Prejevalsky and Kozloff, had passed years in exploring the routes and desert oases across the southern stretches of Gobi, and through the region that once harboured the mighty realm of Tangut. As the Foreign Office of Russia never gave away its secrets until at least the Soviet saw ways of turning them to account, it is impossible to say whether any definite policy had ever been formulated with regard to Tibet as had unquestionably been done with reference to Persia and Afghanistan; but at all events, there can be no

question that the Russian authorities did feel some interest in and had some special knowledge of matters in Tibet.

Dorjieff's arrival in the Russian capital stimulated that interest and served to give point and directness to the latent desire to establish, despite the intervention of a huge block of Chinese territory, a sphere of influence in a new quarter which happened to be so close and conveniently placed with regard to the Indian frontier. The Russians would not have been human if they had not derived a malign satisfaction from the possibility of forestalling the British in what might be regarded as an outwork of India. Consequently they gave Dorjieff a right royal reception. He was laden with presents, and sent back to Lhasa with all kinds of promises and assurances for his master, the Dalai Lama. It was said that he brought with him the draft of a Treaty promising aid and protection to the Great Lama of Lhasa, and notifying the intention after it was signed and ratified, to depute a Prince of the Imperial family to take up his residence as Imperial Ambassador at the Court of Potala. How far this was to remain an intention or to be converted into solid fact cannot be answered, for the centre of interest turns at this point from St. Petersburg to London.

The British Foreign Office was somewhat taken aback by this unexpected incident, which might be termed a bolt from the blue, and the Government of India, being consulted, naturally pointed out that the Treaty of 1890 and the Trade Convention of 1893 were both dead letters. There was neither trade nor any other kind of intercourse between India and Tibet. It was, therefore, decided that the time had come to take some steps to clear up the situation by requiring the Tibetans to execute their promises as contained in these two formal documents. In May, 1903, letters were sent to Lhasa to both the Dalai Lama and the Chinese Amban announcing the despatch of a British envoy to Khamba Jong, where he hoped to meet their Commissioners for the purpose of starting trade relations.

Colonel (afterwards Sir) Francis Younghusband, one of the most distinguished explorers and officers in the British

service, was appointed to fill the delicate and difficult post of Commissioner; and in July, 1903, he, with a comparatively small escort, reached the appointed meeting place, which was just within the Tibetan border. But neither a Chinese nor a Tibetan representative was there to meet him, and no replies whatever were vouchsafed to the formal communications of the Government of India. Silence was an old weapon in the Lamas' diplomatic armoury, and it had before proved baffling. Was it to do so again? Lord Curzon, who had not been very enthusiastic in taking up the mission, was at least firm on one point. Having gone so far, the mission could not be recalled without danger to British prestige, or without offering a strong inducement to Russia to proceed further with her intrigue in Lhasa. He urged the Secretary of State to sanction an immediate advance to Lhasa, and to authorize him to insist among the terms of peace upon the acceptance of a British Resident in the Tibetan capital. There were no pronounced views in London on the subject of the policy to be followed in Tibet, but there was a strong reluctance to act with vigour there or anywhere else until the European situation had become clearer. The effect of a precipitate withdrawal of the British Commission could not, however, be denied, and by way of compromise, Lord Curzon was authorized to send forward an expeditionary force as far as Gyantse, the first place of trade mentioned in the arrangement of 1893.

This step necessitated the movement of troops. A small force of about 3,000 men had been collected in Sikhim as a measure of precaution; but by the time the Government sanction had been received, winter had commenced, and it was necessary to wait for the spring of 1904 before the advance could begin. The troops, commanded by Brigadier-General J. MacDonald, were got over the Jelap Pass before the snows closed it, and thus made a certain advance into Tibetan territory. The winter was passed in camp at Tuna. No hostilities occurred, the climate rendered them impossible, and still no communications of any kind were received from Lhasa. On 31st March, 1904, the force left Tuna on

the march for Gyantse. It soon became clear that whatever form their defence might take, the Tibetans were assembled in some numbers on the road.

These people, to the number of some thousands, were certainly armed; but as they did not seem to possess any regular formation, the British commander formed a plan to encircle what seemed little better than an armed crowd, and by driving them into a corner, compel them to lay down their arms without any bloodshed. The plan was well conceived and formed with the most humane intentions, and at first it seemed likely to be entirely successful, but unfortunately at the crucial moment the Tibetan commander gave the signal to fire, and a general melée ensued. The Tibetans were big burly fellows, and very much intermixed with our men. There was no opportunity to reason with them in this close struggle which a moment's weakness might have converted into a disaster. The affair at the Hot Springs cost the Tibetans a heavy toll.

The advance on Gyantse was continued, the Tibetans offering a stubborn defence at several points, and the fort or Jong of Gyantse was only carried on 12th April after fierce fighting. At this stage, and just on the eve of Lord Curzon's departure for England, permission was received from London to continue the advance to Lhasa, as it had now become clear to everybody concerned that nothing short of that step would bring the Lamas to reason. By this time the month of July had begun and with it the best season for active operations, but it was also well known that the summer was too brief to allow of any delay if the expedition was to get back to India before the return of winter.

There was one satisfactory change. The fighting at Gyantse had convinced the Tibetans that they had no chance in fighting and that further resistance would be vain. The Karola Pass, at an altitude of 18,000 ft., had been defended with a wall, and some levies were behind it; but on the approach of the troops, they wisely fled without firing a shot. On 3rd August, General MacDonald and Colonel Younghusband pitched their camp within a short distance and full sight of Lhasa.

At their approach, the Dalai Lama fled northwards, so also did Dorjieff, whose lavish promises of Russian support were now treated as pure fictions. The Dalai Lama will be heard of again in a new character, but of Dorjieff no further trace appears. When the Dalai left Lhasa, he appointed Te Rimbochi Regent in his absence, but the Tsongdu or Council retained its full power. However, Rimbochi was a man of ability and good sense, and he exercised all his influence in support of a speedy accommodation. Still the Council were divided in their views, and some of them were no doubt trusting to the return of winter to compel perhaps the British force to retire. Consequently the negotiations made slow progress, and the opinion began to be held that some strong measure of repression would have to be resorted to unless the Lamas proved less recalcitrant.

Fortunately there were other persons interested in a speedy termination of the trouble and a return to tranquillity. The Chinese Amban was very desirous to see the departure of the British, for he was counting upon a great increase to his own authority through the weakening of the Lama forces. The Nepalese resident at Lhasa, who possessed an exceptional acquaintance with the views and methods of the Lama authorities, had been instructed by the Maharaja to use all his influence and efforts to support the British demands and to induce the Council to show good sense and reason. Similar advice was given by the ruler of Bhutan, who was able to assure the Tibetans from his own knowledge that neither snow nor frozen passes could prevent the British from pursuing their end to its full and just limit. The combination of these arguments prevailed; still more did the apprehension count that if obstinacy were much longer shown, the saintly precincts of Potala would echo to the tread of armed and angry men.

As September opened, the gratifying news spread that the negotiations would at last be brought to a speedy and satisfactory termination. The Treaty passed by the Tsongdu was to be formally signed on 7th September in

the Dalai Lama's Hall of Audience within the Palace-Lamasery of Potala. The ceremony was of an impressive character, and concluded with the affixing of the seals of the Tibetan Regent and the British Commissioner. The text of the Treaty was recorded in English, Tibetan, and Chinese.

Under the provisions of the Treaty, the Tibetan Government promised to respect its obligations under the Treaty of 1890 and the Convention of 1893, and to erect boundary pillars in accordance with the provisions of those instruments; to open trade marts for British and Tibetan subjects at Gyantse and Gartok, as well as at Yatung, the regulations for these marts being those laid down with respect to Yatung in the Convention of 1893, subject to any modifications to be subsequently agreed upon; to levy no dues other than those provided for in a tariff to be mutually agreed upon; to maintain an agent at each of the marts, who should receive and forward to the Tibetan or Chinese authorities any letters from the British agent appointed to watch over British trade at the marts; to keep clear and maintain the roads from the frontier to Gyantse and Gartok; and in the absence of British consent to make no territorial concessions of any kind to any foreign Power, nor to permit any such Power to intervene in Tibetan affairs, or to send any representatives or agents into Tibet, nor to make any commercial concessions to any such Power without granting similar or equivalent concessions to the British Government. Further, the Tibetan Government was to pay an indemnity of 75 lakhs of rupees in seventy-five annual instalments; and, as security, the British Government shall continue to occupy the Chumbi Valley until the indemnity has been paid and the other conditions complied with.

In the conduct of the expedition to Lhasa on both the military and the diplomatic side, General MacDonald and Colonel Younghusband were entitled to and received the highest praise. The former showed that he was a good organizer as well as a calm and cautious leader; the latter increased his reputation by his tact and patience in negotiation. The rigours of the elevated region tried the physical

capacity of the men to the extreme point of endurance. Throughout all the fighting, only thirty-seven men were killed, including five officers; but 374 men died from the effects of the climate. Enough in this respect was learnt to prove that Tibet as the halting place for an invading army coming from the North is not the best jumping-off spot for a descent into India. An invasion of India from that quarter may be relegated to the Greek Kalends, or at least till the time when the deserts of Central Asia shall be redeemed from their condition of waterless waste.

Lord Curzon always laid more stress on the commercial advantages of breaking through the haughty exclusiveness of the Tibetan hierarchy than on the political; but to obtain the opening of the door it was necessary to convince not only the Dalai Lama, but all the monk rulers of the last of the "forbidden lands," that they could be rendered amenable to the laws of international comity and courtesy even within the walls of their sacred city. That they took their lesson to heart was shown by the marked improvement in the relations of the two neighbours that followed the withdrawal of the expedition.

The Secretary of State, Mr. Brodrick (now Earl of Midleton) had given his assent, in 1904, very reluctantly to the advance to Lhasa, and when the text of the Treaty came to London he proceeded to modify its terms in several important particulars. The indemnity fixed at 75 lakhs, payable in seventy-five annual instalments, was reduced to one-fourth of that amount. The Chumbi Valley, which it was proposed to hold for seventy-five years as a guarantee, was to be restored as soon as the reduced indemnity was paid. No consideration was paid to the argument of many Anglo-Indian and other authorities that Chumbi was a natural part of India in which the Tibetans themselves were the intruders. The reason for this exceptional consideration of the Tibetans was not at first sight apparent, although everyone agreed that, as far as the resources of Tibet were known to be readily available, the indemnity had been placed rather high; but if expert opinion had been left to

decide the point, it would have been in favour of cancelling the indemnity for the permanent retention of the Chumbi Valley.

When the Government was asked to furnish an explanation of its modifications in the Tibet Treaty, it admitted that at the time of the intervention in that country it had given Russia a promise that it had no intention of annexing or permanently retaining any portion of Tibetan territory. It was a very uncalled-for pledge to offer with regard to a position that could not be correctly or fully measured in anticipation; but the promise having been made, it was right to fulfil it to the very letter. As a matter of fact, the Chinese Government provided the amount of the reduced indemnity within three years, and the Chumbi Valley was restored to the Tibetans in January, 1908.

The promise given to Russia in 1904 was converted into a definite engagement in 1907 by the Anglo-Russian Convention. This was one of those curious self-denying bonds by which Governments sometimes tie their hands blindly, and eventually get entangled in toils of their own making. The Treaty with Tibet had given the British Government a privileged position with regard to "territorial and commercial concessions," but this was abandoned under the terms of the arrangement with Russia binding the British Government to waive these claims and not to seek anything of the kind. It is impossible to regard this later transaction as anything else than a complete "climb-down," putting an end to the contemplated development of the mineral resources of Tibet, which was thought to be the most hopeful proposition in reference to the development of its trade with India.

China also put her spoke in the wheel. By an arrangement signed on 27th April, 1906, she adhered to the Treaty of Lhasa, which she declared had been concluded under her auspices, and thus by a stroke of the pen she regained much of her old suzerainty on paper. In the same year, the Teshi Lama, who resides at Shigatze, paid a visit to India for the express purpose of meeting the Prince of Wales (H.M. the present King-Emperor) during his visit to India.

As a religious Pontiff, the Teshi Lama is scarcely inferior to the Dalai Lama, and this line of priest-dignitaries has been ever careful to keep itself aloof from the intrigues of Lhasa. During the expedition, the Teshi Lama, whose district and place of abode lies considerably to the west of the route it followed, had observed an attitude of benevolent neutrality, and had disclaimed all sympathy with the Dalai Lama's aberration of judgment under Dorjieff's influence, and then of his stubborn obstinacy in rejecting all honourable terms of settlement.

One more incident remains to close this period in Tibetan relations with India. The Chinese Government having saved its face in the diplomatic world by the arrangement in 1906, resorted to more vigorous steps than it had taken for a long time to establish its hold more tightly on Lhasa, where the Dalai Lama had returned from his involuntary pilgrimage to Mongolia. On the return journey, he paid a visit to Peking, but its results were disappointing to him. The Council reinstated him in office, but his authority, which had been supreme and unquestioned, was enfeebled, and he was but the shadow of a name. The Chinese were quick to see this; and the Amban, having obtained some troops from the Western provinces, took over the control of mundane affairs at Lhasa.

This revolution occurred in the year 1909. Once more the Dalai Lama became a fugitive, and on this occasion he turned his steps towards India. In February, 1910, he reached Darjeeling, where he petitioned the Government of India to take up his cause and restore him to his pontifical Throne. Even if it had been willing, and there was no reason why it should have been, the British Government was precluded from interfering in the political affairs of Tibet by its Convention with Russia. It had also given its assent in a practical manner to China's pretension to hold Tibet as a feudatory by the agreement of 1906. The Dalai Lama had no other course than to return whence he came and to put up with the limitations placed upon his power and dignity by the Chinese authorities, and this state of things will no doubt continue until some new turn of the

political wheel at either Peking or Lhasa evolves a fresh set of characters and a new situation.

The advantage that accrued to India from the termination of the long drawn out troubles with Tibet was that the security of a disturbed frontier was thus attained. The task of pacification had begun in Sikhim, and thence it had been extended to Bhutan. The slave marts in the former had been closed, the fertile districts of Cooch Behar had been relieved from the raids of the Bhuteas. Then Sikhim had to be protected against the raids of the Tibetans, and gradually the Rajas of these Himalayan States were won over to the cause of law and order. They ceased to look to Lhasa for approval, and turned their gaze to Calcutta for directions and orders. Finally, the Tibetans have been led to see a better way, and to leave their neighbours alone. Trade spreads slowly on these Alpine heights, and the open season is but brief, yet the signs of greater intercourse are not wholly discouraging. At least, peace seems to prevail on a firm basis, and no ambitious mind is likely to be enticed to adventure once again beyond Nature's great dividing line of eternal snow.

CHAPTER XXXV

LORD CURZON'S SECOND PERIOD

WHEN Lord Curzon returned to England in April, 1904, it was well understood that it was not a final farewell. His reappointment for a second period, although of an unprecedented character, took no one by surprise, and generally speaking it was thought that he had well deserved the honour. He had still a very full programme to meet, and some matters appeared to fall especially within its scope. He had his critics as well as his admirers, he could not be described as popular, and yet no one attempted to deny his good intentions and his capacity in the execution of his plans. It was predicted that his second period would enable him to complete his work, and to show results that would silence those who had failed to join the chorus in his praise.

The first and indeed the most important question with which he had to deal was that of the subdivision of the unwieldy and immense Province of Bengal. It was not exactly a new question, indeed, it might be described as an old question, going back more than seventy years. But latterly it had become more pressing, not merely on account of the increase of population, but from the weight of the work and responsibility thrown upon the administration. Before his departure in 1904, Lord Curzon had made a tour through Assam and the Eastern districts, and he had delivered addresses stimulating local opinion in Dacca and Chittagong. While in London he had gone into the subject with the Secretary of State and the permanent officials, with the result that his plan was fully approved, and he went back to India to put it in execution. It would not be going too far to declare that he returned to India mainly on this account, or perhaps it would be better to say, that if his plan had not been sanctioned by the Secretary of State he would not have returned at all.



Photo by *Bourne & Shepherd*

THE MARQUIS CURZON OF KEDLESTON 466

The excessive bulk of Bengal had long been admitted to be an administrative defect. In 1836 it had been reduced by the detachment of Agra, but the addition of Assam after the first Burmese War had swelled its territory to far larger dimensions than before. At first, this addition was not felt to be so much of a burden as it became later on, because the conditions in the new possession admitted of a much looser system of administration than prevailed in the Gangetic delta. The increasing importance of Assam, however, had latterly called for a more perfected system, and closer attention to its needs and development. The valley of the Brahmaputra was regarded at Calcutta too much as a step-sister or distant cousin. Latterly the material facts had grown very glaring. In area Bengal was represented by 190,000 square miles, and its population had reached seventy-eight and a half millions, a total upon which every census revealed a steady and sometimes a remarkable increase. In comparison with that total no other administrative unit in India possessed more than half the same population, and few as much as that.

It has been well said that the duties incumbent on the head of an Indian Province are immense and almost crushing in volume. The Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal was, prior to its elevation into a Governorship, always a civilian of over thirty years' standing. He was expected to know every district in his province, and to be acquainted with its resources and needs, as well as with the character and aspirations of its peoples. He was required to cultivate the friendship of the leading members of the Hindu and Mahomedan communities, on whose advice he had to rely generally, and from whom he had to look for support in moments of difficulty. He had to possess an intimate personal knowledge of the local civil service, for otherwise he could not regulate promotion or distribute praise and censure with an equal hand. It goes without saying that it is physically impossible for those varied and voluminous duties to be performed by one man, no matter how able and helpful his assistants may be, when the population reaches a total of eighty millions.

Experience had shown that the Lieutenant-Governors were hopelessly overweighted. Several holders of the office had injured their health permanently or broken down under the strain, and forced to seek premature retirement. Others declared that it was physically impossible to get through the day's work, with the result that arrears steadily accumulated. The case for some change was beyond challenge. It was there. Lord Curzon did not make it. Rumours of coming alterations of system were in the air, and exaggerations and perversions of the intentions of Government were spread abroad. Even before the project was produced it was criticized and condemned by many from motives of self-interest, by others because the subject seemed to offer a favourable opportunity for attacking the Government.

It was inevitable that the change should arouse some opposition and adverse views in both the Indian and the European communities. It was thought likely to diminish the importance of Bengal; it might bring up rivals to the commercial supremacy of Calcutta; it would certainly enable Assam and the hill districts on its borders to develop their resources in a state of independence and freedom of control. Some zemindars did not like the idea of their possessions on and beyond the new dividing line being transferred from one administration to another, of which they knew nothing. The political agitator took up the attack. The change, from his standpoint, was intended to break up the solidarity of the Bengali nation, and it was denounced as a political move. As this cry seemed to meet with ready acceptance it was kept up with renewed vigour. The agitation against partition had attained considerable dimensions, even before it was definitely decided upon. The new arrangement, arrived at for weighty practical reasons, would not have been abandoned even if the agitation had swelled to more formidable dimensions. It was a necessary administrative step, and the factitious nature of the opposition was speedily revealed, after a very brief interval.

The new Province, entitled Assam and Eastern Bengal, came into official existence in October, 1905. It was composed of Assam and fifteen districts taken from Bengal,

with the seat of government fixed at Dacca. Its area was 111,567 square miles, and its population (in 1901), 30,961,459. This still left a population of nearly fifty millions within the limits of Bengal proper, which continued to include Bihar and Orissa. Whatever the Bengalis may have continued to think about the separation, it was soon made clear that there was a very strong local opinion in favour of the change. The individuality of the peoples of Eastern Bengal was stimulated. The Mahomedan communities of Dacca and Barisal asserted themselves, the traders of Chittagong became more enterprising, and the Buddhists, of whom there were large numbers scattered through the Province, were not sorry to escape from Brahmin shackles. The details are to be found in the annual Administration Reports to show that the change in the administrative sense was in every respect beneficial, and a success.

In his seventh Budget Speech at the end of March, 1905, Lord Curzon stated that in the following year he hoped to carry to completion the third dozen of his contemplated reforms, of which the first two dozen had been already accomplished. At that moment it is quite clear that thoughts of possible resignation, or premature retirement, were far from Lord Curzon's mind.

In October, 1902, Lord Kitchener, who had added to the reputation he had made in the Soudan by the great military and administrative services he had rendered to the Empire in South Africa, arrived in India to take up the post of Commander-in-Chief. It was well known that he had come to institute reforms in the administration of the Anglo-Indian army, which would render it better able to take part in the larger operations of modern warfare. Lord Curzon at first had welcomed his co-operation. He said in Council—

"We are fortunate in possessing as Commander-in-Chief the first soldier in the British army. He comes to us here with his unrivalled experience and energy. He is addressing himself to the problems of providing India with the army that she needs, and of equipping and distributing that army in the manner best adapted to secure the defence of the country."

In dealing with the very delicate situation which arose in the year 1906, there does not appear to be any justification for the suggestion that there was a personal antipathy between the Viceroy and the Commander-in-Chief, and that their differences were of the nature of a duel between two strong men. It is proper and probably quite in accordance with the real truth, to describe the passage as arising solely from two opposite views of administrative principles and official relativity.

Originally, the Commander-in-Chief in India was by virtue of his office a member of the Governor-General's Council, and he was supposed to have supreme control in army matters, subject only to the right of veto possessed in reserve by the Governor-General. That right, so far as available records show, was only asserted on one occasion, the instance being when Sir Henry Hardinge by that authority restrained Sir Hugh Gough from making a premature attack on the Sikhs at Ferozeshah. But that was a case of one soldier correcting another. If Sir Henry Hardinge had been a civilian would he have asserted his civil authority, and would the Commander-in-Chief have obeyed it on a matter of strictly military competence? These are interesting points, but they need not detain us. The incident has an application to the situation between Lord Curzon and Kitchener, although that did not arise on "th' ensanguined field of Mars."

When the new definition of the duties of the Commander-in-Chief at the time of Lord Roberts's tenure was made, the Commander-in-Chief ceased to have ex officio a seat on the Viceroy's Council, but the Secretary of State reserved to himself the right to nominate him when he pleased. At this time there still existed a post that was created at the end of the eighteenth century in the person of a Military Member of Council, whose duty it was to advise the Viceroy on questions and matters generally relating to the Army. This subdivision of supreme army control was obviously open to abuse, and to the clashing of two separate authorities. The relations between Viceroys and Commanders-in-Chief had always been anomalous and sometimes strained.

Was the presence of a Military Member possessing the Viceroy's ear likely to improve them? The good feeling that prevailed among all the officers of the Anglo-Indian army, their loyalty to each other, and their strong *esprit de corps* had generally averted unpleasant collisions. But Lord Kitchener did not belong to the Anglo-Indian forces, nor had he ever served in India. He had laboured and shone in solitary greatness elsewhere. The Bengalis termed Lord Curzon an autocrat, but if there was any foundation for the charge it is quite certain that Lord Kitchener would have dwarfed him among autocrats.

The Secretary of State had, of course, nominated Lord Kitchener to the Viceroy's Council, and the Military Member of the time was General Sir Edmond Elles. At Simla, as in Calcutta, they had their separate Departments, and although they were close together, all communication between them was transacted by correspondence. When the Commander-in-Chief had a proposal to put forward for the Viceroy the procedure was to submit it through the Military Member, and, of course, it would be accompanied by that official's observations and criticisms, and very often they were not recorded on paper. The mere idea of such a supervision, of such an interception of his plans and projects at half-way by an officer probably his junior, and certainly without his experience in the larger operations of war, was intolerable to the proud and haughty spirit of the conqueror of Khartoum, and the pacifier of the Transvaal.

Lord Kitchener, therefore, drew up a plan for the creation of a single Army Department under the control of the Commander-in-Chief, and to centre in it the direction of all military administration. The obvious consequence of the adoption of this proposal would be the abolition of the Military Membership of Council as a useless office and an unnecessary expense. Now no unprejudiced mind will hesitate in according to Lord Kitchener's plan the merits of simplicity, despatch, and economy, and, strictly limited to the army as it was to be, it does not appear evident how it could interfere with or diminish the Civil authority of the Viceroy, unless, of course, he wished to intermeddle

over much in military matters, when, of course, his need of the support of a military dependent on the Council would be obvious.

When this plan was submitted to the Viceroy in Council, Lord Curzon vigorously opposed it, and refused to accept it. In the subsequent discussions a great point was made of the fact that all the members supported the Viceroy's view, and agreed with him in turning it down, but these same members had, so far as records go, always fallen in with Lord Curzon's views, and endorsed them with such unanimity that he had several times declared in public that he and his Council had always seen eye to eye and acted together. But Lord Curzon seemed to forget for the moment that Lord Kitchener was no ordinary person, and one not at all likely to accept with meekness a rebuff.

The argument of the Viceroy and his Council was to the effect that the tendency of the plan was to concentrate military authority in the hands of the Commander-in-Chief, and to subvert the supremacy of the civil power by depriving it of independent military advice. This camouflage of words could not hide the ruffled feelings behind them. The civil power, as it was styled, remained absolutely intact. With it rested the question of peace and war, Lord Kitchener did not claim the right to mobilize the army, or to start military expeditions, all he asked for was that the Commander-in-Chief should have the right of placing his proposals before the Viceroy in Council without any intermediary, and that they should be freed from the inspection and suggestions of a military member, who whether competent or not, was not entitled, in Lord Kitchener's opinion, to offer them at his expense.

The plan with the comments and objections of the Viceroy in Council was passed on to the Secretary of State for his decision, and trusting to the invocation of the hidden " civil power," Lord Curzon appears to have had no doubt that his views would be endorsed by the Secretary of State. But Lord Curzon had apparently overlooked the fact that Mr. Brodrick had been Secretary of War during the Transvaal campaigns, and that he knew a great deal about Lord

Kitchener. Remembering his great services to the State, it was not to be expected that he would humiliate Lord Kitchener to exalt Lord Curzon. His decision was of the nature of a compromise. The main points in Lord Kitchener's plan were adopted, but the office of Military Member of the Council was retained. At the same time his functions were changed, the range of his authority was diminished, and he ceased to be the intermediary between the Commander-in-Chief and the Viceroy.

For a moment it seemed as if the incident would not give rise to any untoward consequences, as Lord Kitchener, satisfied in the main with Mr. Brodrick's decision, drew aside, and took no further part in the affair. The protagonists remaining were the Secretary of State and the Viceroy of India.

At this moment the occupant of the post of Military Member of Council, Sir Edmond Elles, was due to retire. Lord Curzon seized this opportunity to put forward, in a slightly changed form, his strong view that the Viceroy should have on his Council the assistance of an officer thoroughly acquainted with the Indian Army, and entitled by his rank and experience to express an opinion on the political, financial, and administrative aspects of all military proposals. His opinion was to provide the Government with adequate means of information in opposition to the plans and proposals of the " newly constituted military power." Lord Curzon concluded by declaring that in his opinion the new scheme could only be worked with advantage if the new Minister of Supply (the new title for the Military Member), were to be a military officer of great experience, and fully empowered to advise the Viceroy in military matters. To complete his representation Lord Curzon added that he proposed to nominate General Sir Edmund Barrow to be the first Minister of Supply.

The Secretary of State promptly vetoed this proposal. He was certainly not going to allow Lord Curzon to carry his point against Lord Kitchener by a side wind. General Sir Edmund Barrow, he replied, was of far too high a rank for the post. Besides, he was already designated for a

superior command. Mr. Brodrick did not stop there. He added that it would be proper for the Viceroy to consult the Commander-in-Chief as to the most suitable officer for the appointment, with due regard to the kind of work which the Minister of Supply would be expected to perform. This was too much for Lord Curzon. He sent in his resignation at once, and it was accepted with equal promptitude. Lord Curzon's resignation was announced on 20th August, and the appointment of the Earl of Minto as his successor was published on the following day.

This unexpected and abrupt ending of Lord Curzon's Viceroyalty was an unfortunate termination to what might have been pronounced a very brilliant rule, if it had only run its full course. The incident revealed the autocratic side of his character, and both his judgment and temper seem to have failed him in his treatment of what regarded in its true light, was a minor question. He had come to India with a set programme of his own, and he had carried out much if not the whole of it in his own way, without seeking the counsel of any man. Some of his plans were of great importance, others were trivial, but whether important or trivial he counted them all in to make up a great score. As he was supreme among his Councillors he forgot that there were others outside the magic circle who had not yielded to his spell. He forgot Lord Kitchener, he entirely overlooked Mr. Brodrick, and before he realized the facts of the case he had got himself entangled in a knot, out of which his pride and his vanity, both seriously wounded, would not allow of his extricating himself. The shock he received on finding that his wish was not to be law disturbed his judgment, and led him to see things in a false light. When everything went as he willed he concealed his autocratic tendencies under a manner of patronizing and condescending graciousness; when he discovered that he could not have his own way, that he could not move all the men he came in contact with like pawns on a chess-board, he grew peevish and irritable.

At the same time, his many good points must not be overlooked. If he had a great opinion of himself, he had a

still greater of the dignity and responsibilities of his high office as Viceroy of India. He carried himself well, and he never failed to let every one know and feel that he stood before them as the Sovereign's representative. Towards the Indian Princes he was courteous and conciliatory. He called them on many distinct occasions his " colleagues and partners " in the task of administration, but he did not form any close friendship with any of them, although some that could be named might have offered him useful advice on several occasions. In fairness, however, it may be remarked that the co-operation of the ruling chiefs was not so much sought in his day as it has become since. The Chiefs' Colleges were doing good work, but they had not yet borne their full fruit. The Imperial Cadet Corps was in embryo. The Council of Princes, although proposed by several of his predecessors, had not taken any definite form. It was the transition stage from suspecting aloofness to one of complete mutual confidence.

Lord Curzon's attitude towards the peoples of India is entitled to the highest praise. He held the balance even, he would not listen to any ban of exclusion in the way of employment against the children of the soil, he impressed on every European the duty of courtesy, kindness, and conciliation. To the Mahomedans of India he said—

" Only by the assimilation of Western thought and culture can the Mahomedans of India hope to recover any portion of their former sway. Adhere to your own religion, which has in it the ingredients of great nobility and of profound truth, and make it the basis of your instruction, for education without a religious basis is, though boys at school and at the University are often too young to see it, like building a house without foundations. But consistently with these principles press forward till you pluck the fruit of the tree of knowledge, which once grew best in Eastern gardens, but has now shifted its habitat to the West."

To the students of Calcutta University, of whom the great majority were and are Hindus, he used words, not less stimulating, of advice and exhortation. They were the more

worthy of remembrance, because they contain wise admonitions of conduct and serious political truths—

"The spirit of nationality is moving in the world, and it is an increasing force in the lives and ideals of men. Founded on race and often cemented by language and religion, it makes small nations great, and great nations greater. It teaches men how to live, and in emergencies it teaches them how to die. But for its full realization a spirit of unity and not of disintegration is required. There must be a sacrifice of the smaller to the larger interest, and a subordination of the unit to the system. In India it should not be a question of India for the Hindus, or India for the Mussulmans, or, descending to minor fractions, of Bengal for the Bengalis, or the Deccan for the Maratha Brahmins. That would be a retrograde and a dissolvent process. Neither can it be India for the Indians alone. The last two centuries during which the English have been in this country cannot be wiped out. They have profoundly affected the whole structure of national thought and existence. They have quickened the atrophied views of the East with the life-blood of the West. They have modified old ideals, and have created new ones. Out of this intermingling of the East and the West, a new patriotism and a more refined and cosmopolitan sense of nationality are emerging. It is one in which the Englishman may share with the Indian, for he has helped to create it, and in which the Indian may share with the Englishman, since it is their common glory. When an Englishman says that he is proud of India, it is not of battlefields and sieges, nor of exploits in the Council Chamber or at the desk that he is principally thinking. He sees the rising of standards of intelligence, of moral conduct, of comfort, and prosperity among the native peoples, and he rejoices in their advancement. Similarly, when an Indian says that he is proud of India it would be absurd for him to banish from his mind all that has been, and is being done for the resuscitation of his country by the alien race to whom has been committed its destinies. Both are tillers in the same field, and both are concerned in the harvest. From their joint labours it is that this new and composite

patriotism is springing into life. It is Asian for its roots are embedded in the traditions and the aspirations of an Eastern people; and it is European because it is aglow with the illumination of the West. In it are summed up all the best hopes for the future of this country, both for your race and for mine. We are ordained to walk here in the same track together for many a long day to come. You cannot do without us. We should be impotent without you. Let the Englishman and the Indian accept the consecretion of a union that is so mysterious as to have in it something of the divine, and let our common ideal be a united country and a happier people."

Apart from great natural visitations, such as famine and plague, Lord Curzon's stay in India was free from any grave political anxiety. The unrest had not accentuated, political plotting had been stayed, the worst forms of sedition were suppressed. He was entitled to the credit of this moderation of Indian fermentation and turbulence. He had conciliated the powerful, but he had not neglected the poor. He had reduced the salt tax to the lowest point on record, which alone would have gone straight to the hearts of the people; he had relieved agricultural indebtedness, which had won over the ryots; he had established Agricultural Banks, and he had given much employment in Calcutta by the construction of public buildings, and the creation of new parks and gardens. He would have been a great social reformer if politics had not absorbed so much of his attention, and if that course had been prescribed for him as his exclusive rôle.

And yet, despite the seeming calm of his sojourn in India, his mind was uneasy about the future. He could not avoid giving expression to the haunting question that is always before us in India like a riddle of the Sphinx. He asked, "What is in the heart of all these sombre millions, whither are we leading them, what is it all to come to, where is the goal?"

CHAPTER XXXVI

THE EARL OF MINTO

As the work accomplished by the Earl of Minto in India has been somewhat overshadowed and obscured by that of Mr. John (afterwards Viscount) Morley in London, it will be an act of historical justice to contribute in some measure towards the faithful exposition of his share in measures of great purport and lasting importance. The fear was expressed by more than one Viceroy, after the transfer to the Crown and the introduction of Parliamentary responsibility, that the Governor-General on the spot would become little more than a cypher under the authority of the Secretary of State in Whitehall. This fear has not yet been fully realized, but occasions have occurred when a masterful Secretary of State has seriously tried the temper and patience of the Viceroy of his time. Of all Secretaries of State, Morley was not the least masterful, and by his Council he was regarded with some awe as a tyrant in spite of his claim to be only a philosopher. With Lord Minto he had to deal with a man of the world of great urbanity and unruffled temper, and thus it happened that these two very opposite characters worked in concord instead of in collision.

Lord Minto had only just given up the charge of Canada, when he was informed that he had been nominated Viceroy of India in succession to Lord Curzon, and that his departure would have to be hurried on account of the visit of the Prince and Princess of Wales to India, already announced for the coming cold season. Lord and Lady Minto landed at Bombay on 17th November, where they were received by Lord Curzon, who sailed for England. The Prince and Princess had arrived a week earlier, and were then on their way by sea to Madras and Burma before reaching Calcutta, where the new Viceroy and Lady Minto were ready to welcome their Royal Highnesses on their arrival on the 29th December.

During the twelve days that the Royal party remained in the then capital of India, a busy round of celebrations, sight-seeing, and festivities kept every one so fully employed, that there was no leisure for any but the most urgent Departmental affairs. Still, the Prince and Princess impressed upon Lord Minto the conviction which they had already formed during their tour that the great need of the time was closer sympathy between the governed and the governing classes in India. By their gracious attitude, all the good feeling first engendered by their father's visit to India in 1875 was strengthened and extended. The Royal tour came to an end with a great Durbar at Quettah on 17th March, whence the Prince and Princess proceeded to Karachi to sail for England.

At the beginning of 1906, a General Election had brought about the fall of the Balfour Government, and the Liberals came into office with a great majority. Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman was the new Premier, and he selected Mr. John Morley for the post of Secretary of State for India. Early in 1906, therefore, Lord Minto found himself in relations with very different men from those who had appointed him. It was not known exactly what Mr. Morley proposed doing, but it was quite certain that he would do something not merely to justify his Chief's selection, but also to prove that he was bent on departing from the example and routine of his predecessors. It was said by his admirers that he was out to make war on bureaucracy. They found their expectations ungratified. But it must be recorded that at the first he inflicted on his friends and supporters a great disappointment. It had been anticipated with confidence that his first step would be to annul the partition of Bengal, which so many of the extreme Members of his Party had described to the electors as an act of Curzonian tyranny. He let it stand. The necessity for partition in the administrative sense was too incontestable to admit of its being disturbed.

The decision, added however, to Lord Minto's troubles. The agitation in Calcutta and generally throughout Bengal was at its height when Lord Minto arrived, and the Swadeshi leaders had resorted to a Boycott of Europeans. It was

even proposed to boycott the Royal visitors, but Lord Minto sent for Mr. Gokhale and warned him sternly of the consequences. But when it became known that the new Government was no more likely than the old to cancel the partition, then the excitement and fury of the agitators became intensified. The movement spread to students and even schoolboys, and the greater part of the vernacular Press incited them to commit acts of law-breaking.

The first Lieutenant-Governor of Eastern Bengal was Sir J. Bampfylde Fuller, and he had found the agitation and ferment of Hindu boys in the schools of Dacca particularly annoying in the midst of the calm with which the Mahomedan community had accepted and were adapting themselves to the new situation. He resolved to take decisive measures. In the previous year the Bengal Government had prohibited students from taking any part in public agitation, and the heads of colleges and schools had been warned that if this order were disregarded, State aid would be withdrawn and the Calcutta University would be requested to disaffiliate the offenders. But this regulation was still in a transitional stage, and it was not deemed proper to enforce it at this juncture. Of this consideration Sir Bampfylde was not aware when he wrote requesting the Home Department to enforce the regulation against two offending schools in Dacca. This request was met with a suggestion from that office that the Lieutenant-Governor should withdraw it "on account of the political objections" to its adoption. For some reason, Sir Bampfylde renewed his request in a letter to the Viceroy, using the unfortunate expression that if it were not sanctioned, he must resign. No one is indispensable, and it is perilous for even the highest official to use the term "resignation" to enforce an argument. Lord Minto accepted his resignation.

Almost at the same moment, Lord Minto had appointed a Committee to consider and report upon his first proposals in the matter of reform. He laid down four definite projects. They were (1) a Council of Princes; (2) an Indian Member of the Viceroy's Executive Council; (3) increased Indian representation on the Legislative Councils of the

Viceroy and also of the local governments; and (4) prolongation of the Budget debate, with an increased power to move amendments. Two of the members of the Committee reported in favour of the adoption of the measures proposed, and two against them. The question was then brought before the Viceroy's Council, where the opposition was more pronounced; but before continuing that subject, it will be as well to conclude the description of the incidents nominally arising out of the Partition of Bengal, but really relating to efforts of open sedition.

Until the year 1907, although agitation had been very pronounced in Bengal and recourse had been made to the boycott as a form of rebellion, there had been an absence of open acts of violence, which was the one redeeming feature in the situation. But at this period the position worsened. Europeans and Mahomedans were assaulted in Dacca by gangs of young men belonging to the student class, and, in Calcutta, labour riots occurred which appeared to be stimulated by outside influence. The seditious movement spread to Lahore; and when the extremists found that they could not compel the Moderates at the National Congress meeting, held that year in Surat, to adopt their resolutions, they broke up the meeting with such outrageous manifestations, that the aid of the police had to be called in to restore order. Some of the ringleaders came within reach of the law, and one of the most notorious, named Lajpet Rai, at Lahore, was sentenced to deportation.

In the following year the situation became aggravated by recourse to violence. Bombs were thrown, many of the disaffected had obtained revolvers, and attempts to wreck trains were frequent. Two English ladies were murdered by miscreants, who threw bombs; a Crown witness was killed while in prison; more than one police inspector was shot dead; and, finally, an attempt to assassinate Sir Andrew Fraser, the new Lieutenant-Governor of Eastern Bengal, while on a visit to Calcutta, only failed because the pistol missed fire. The outrages were resumed in 1909, and not confined to Bengal. The Public Prosecutor of Bengal was shot at Alipur; an English civilian was murdered at

Nassick; and in London itself, the Secretary of State's own political A.D.C., Sir Curzon Wyllie, was killed, as well as a Parsi doctor, at a reception at the Imperial Institute. Finally, an attempt was made to assassinate the Viceroy and Lady Minto on the occasion of their visit to Ahmedabad. Two bombs were thrown at their carriage as they drove through the streets. The aim was good, but by a miracle the bombs did not explode. It was thought they were dummies. A man picked up one and was blown to pieces.

All these crimes were the deeds of students. The time had arrived when the Government could defer vigorous action no longer. Mr. Morley was compelled to address Lord Minto in the following words: "If these disorders spread, the hopes of the Reform Party and their British sympathizers would be frustrated inevitably, as there must be an end of all real reform."

It became necessary to strengthen the hands of the Government by the introduction of special legislation. The vernacular Press had applauded the bombers and incited others to follow their example. Mr. Morley thereupon sanctioned the reversion to the Press law of Lord Lytton's day, which had been repealed by his successor, Lord Ripon, and the new Bill granted more summary powers and imposed severer penalties. Lajpet Rai and his confederate, Ajait Sing, had been deported under an old Act of 1818; it was deemed necessary to pass a "Regulation of Meetings Ordinance" prohibiting the holding of seditious meetings in the Punjab, as well as Eastern Bengal. The English Explosives Act also was extended to India.

In the Punjab the effect of this measure was electric, for it showed that the vigour of the Government was not sapped, but only restrained. Attempts had been made to tamper with the discipline and loyalty of the troops, and more particularly among the reservists and pensioners who were settled in the Chenab Canal Colony. In the latter case, the colonists had some genuine grievances, which gave intriguers their opportunity. The Punjab Government had introduced some alterations in the nature of their holdings,

which appeared to them an infraction of their original tenure. The Bill bearing on the subject passed by the Punjab Legislative Council was sent up to the Viceroy for sanction. He examined it and also the complaints of the colonists. Lord Minto concluded that the latter were justified, and he refused to sanction the Bill, although all his advisers considered that at such a moment concession would be deemed due to weakness and fear. Lord Minto rejoined: "I hate the argument that to refuse to sanction what we know to be wrong is a surrender to agitation and an indication of weakness. It is far weaker to my mind to persist in a wrong course for fear of being thought weak." The agitation in the Chenab districts died down at once, and general tranquillity was restored throughout the Punjab.

It was about this time that Mr. Morley made his reply to the criticisms of the extremist section of the Liberal Party, who accused him of going over to the side of the Conservatives. He selected his opportunity when addressing his constituents at Arbroath—

"In the policy I am endeavouring to follow in regard to India, I must repudiate the charge that I am abandoning Liberal principles. The first and commanding task of Britain in India is to keep order, quell violence, and sternly insist on impartial justice. Mr. Keir Hardie has said that what suited Canada would suit India. This was not merely untrue; it was the height of political folly. The Government of India would neither be hurried by impatient idealists nor driven into needless coercion by repressionists. The situation was not dangerous, but required serious and earnest attention. They wanted to rally the moderates, if they could not satisfy the extremists; their line would remain the same. I will not allow myself to be deterred from pursuing to the end a policy of firmness and slow reform."

Under the Indian Criminal Law Amendment Act, a group of anarchists were arrested in the Punjab, and charged with the offence of plotting "to make war upon the King." Sentenced by the Provincial Court, an appeal was carried on their behalf to the High Court at Calcutta. Although

it was held by that tribunal that the literal charge was not sustainable, they were convicted of conspiracy which would lead to breaches of the peace and public disorder. Eighteen of the conspirators were pronounced guilty, four receiving life sentences and the others long terms of imprisonment. The effect of the Great Anarchist case was to strengthen the arm of authority and to repress the ardour of the disaffected.

During this period of agitation and disloyalty among the Hindus, chiefly Bengalis and Maratha Brahmins, the Mahomedans of India remained quiescent, but none the less observant of the signs of the times. They had no objection to the partition of Bengal; they thought that it would be beneficial to their hitherto overshadowed communities in the new province. But when the rumours spread of proposed constitutional changes, based upon the admission and extension of electoral rights, they began to feel apprehensive lest their scattered communities, totalling, it is true, over sixty million persons, but none the less forming in almost every locality a minority, would be swamped by their religious and racial opponents, and that as a great political body in the State they would be reduced to a position of more or less permanent inferiority and subservience. This possibility was too disturbing to be tolerated. The Mahomedan leaders determined to take action not by public agitation, but by representation of their views and needs in the right quarter. An important and influential delegation, headed by H.H. the Aga Khan, was received by the Viceroy at Simla in October, 1906.

The memorial, which was drawn up in clear and appropriate terms, set forth the claims and views of the Mahomedan population. It referred to their well-proved loyalty to the British Government, and also to the fact that they were the immediate predecessors of the English in holding a single and supreme rule in India. The delegates asked for guarantees that their rights should be protected, and that in any case they should not be relegated to a position of helpless minority by the assertion of the purely numerical superiority of the Hindu population.

The address concluded with the expression of the view that the " position of the Moslems should be commensurate not merely with their numerical strength, but also with their political importance and the value of the contribution which they made to the defence of the Empire." It was also claimed that Mahomedans should be elected by exclusively Mahomedan electorates. The reference to their contribution towards the defence of the Empire was well pointed. Mahomedan troops formed a large part of the Indian Army. Their regiments had served in every quarter of the Empire. The Bengalis had never been heard of in military circles; their contribution to Imperial defence was nothing at all.

Lord Minto made a very sympathetic and encouraging reply. Both he and Mr. Morley admitted that they had a leaning towards Moslems, and the feeling found expression in the Viceroy's response to the address—

" The pith of your address, as I understand it, is a claim that, in any system of representation, whether it affects a municipality, a district board, or a legislative council, in which it is proposed to introduce or to increase the electoral organization, the Mahomedan community should be represented as a body. You point out that in many cases electoral bodies as now constituted cannot be expected to return a Mahomedan candidate, and that if by chance they did so it would only be at the sacrifice of such a candidate's views to those of a majority opposed to his own community, whom he would in no way represent; and you justly claim that your position should be estimated not merely on your numerical strength, but in respect to the political importance of your community and the service that it has rendered to the Empire. I am entirely in accord with you. Please do not misunderstand me, I make no attempt to indicate by what means the communities can be obtained, but I am as firmly convinced, as I believe you to be, that any electoral representation in India would be doomed to mischievous failure which aimed at granting a personal enfranchisement regardless of the beliefs and traditions of the communities composing the population of

this continent. In the meantime I can only say to you that the Mahomedan community may rest assured that their political rights and interests will be safeguarded in any administrative organization with which I am concerned."

Before Lord Curzon left for home he had sent more than one invitation to the new Amir, Habibullah, to visit India. The Amir had expressed his regret that he did not feel able at that moment to quit his country. Some anxiety was felt as to the genuineness of this excuse, but Sir Louis Dane's mission removed all serious ground for anxiety. Shortly after Lord Minto's arrival in India, it was reported that the Amir was very desirous of seeing something of India, whereupon the Viceroy sent him a very cordial and pressing invitation to come as his personal guest, and Habibullah at once replied in the affirmative. It transpired later that his reason for declining Lord Curzon's invitation had been an inappropriate reference, as he deemed, to the Coronation Durbar of the King, and the Afghan majesty took offence at being invited to a Durbar of feudatories and vassals. He said, in his reply, that "the attitude adopted by Lord Minto is so friendly and free from motives that I cannot possibly hesitate to accept the invitation of his Excellency, which is couched in such terms of kindness expressing a desire for an interview between friends." Perhaps it was as well that Coronation Durbars do not take place every year, or Lord Minto might have fallen into his predecessor's pitfall.

The Amir's visit to India was an extraordinary success in the personal sense, and it was entirely free of political significance so far as any fresh engagements were concerned. He thoroughly enjoyed his visit, as Lord Minto described him: "He is simply irrepressible, more like a boy out of school than anything else. Not a word of affairs of State." At the same time, his goodwill and feelings were won over in a sense that could never have been applied to either Shere Ali or Abdurrahman. They had their aims and objects; he only wanted to get a glimpse of a new world and to enjoy himself. His farewell

message had the ring of truth; events showed that it was sincere—

"Before I came to India we called ourselves friends, now I find myself in such a position that our friendship which was before like a plant is now like a big tree. I have gained much experience in India and from that experience I hope to benefit my country in the future. Let me say that at no time will Afghanistan pass from the friendship of India. So long as the Indian Empire desires to keep her friendship, so long will Afghanistan and Britain remain friends."

That these were no empty words was well proved by his loyal and friendly attitude during the whole period of the Great War, in spite of the strenuous efforts of German and Turk envoys to induce him to swerve from that attitude and to embarrass the British by demonstrations on the Indian frontier.

Not long after the Amir's visit, some of the tribes of the frontier, having recovered from the chastisement of ten years before, resumed their old avocations. The system of holding the intervening region by tribal levies had proved a dubious success, and the authorities were again driven to consider whether it would not be more economical in the long run to fully occupy the country up to the Durand line instead of sanctioning continual punitive expeditions of purely temporary effect. Habibullah is affirmed to have declared that "till the British frontier reaches the frontier of Afghanistan, we never can have peace. So long as these tribes have not been subdued by the British, there will be trouble and intrigue." The argument would have had more force if there had been any reason to believe that the tribes on the Afghan side of the frontier were any more law-abiding than on the British side, and such evidence as was forthcoming pointed to a very lax Afghan authority in their districts.

Lord Minto was undoubtedly in favour of a more vigorous policy, one that he called modified occupation—

"We could hold the country by the construction of one or two roads, or rather by the improvement of the existing

roads by means of tribal labour and the establishment of a few advanced posts, leaving the tribes as heretofore to carry on their own tribal administration as we have done in the Swat valley and other districts. Why should we have a nest of cut-throats at our doors when all our experience has taught us that the mere evidence of British strength means not only safety to ourselves, but happiness and prosperity to the districts we have pacified? Putting aside the loss of life and property consequent upon perpetual frontier outrages, the pacification of Waziristan would, in the long run, be far less expensive than a succession of expeditions. . . . The state of affairs on our frontier is becoming simply disreputable. We cannot afford any longer to disregard the safety of our own subjects. We shall have to fight and, of course, we are sure to win. But in doing so, are we to spend lives and money and throw aside what we may gain with the knowledge that in a few years' time we shall have to repeat the same expenditure which our frontier experience has told us we can so well avoid?"

The ink was hardly dry on this letter when news came of the most daring raid ever committed in the annals of the Border. A band of the Zakka Khel Afridis broke into the fortified town of Peshawar, killed a certain number of civilians and soldiers, carried off arms and booty, and made their escape. An expedition into the Zakka country was inevitable, but Mr. Morley limited his sanction to "the punishment of the Zakka Khels, and neither immediately nor ultimately, directly nor indirectly, will there be occupation of tribal territory." The expedition was entirely successful, but during its progress it became known that the tribes within the Afghan frontier were threatening to join the Zakkas. Perhaps they would have done so openly if an extraordinary attack by Afghan regular troops, who had got out of hand, on Lundi Kotal had not been repulsed. The trouble was not confined to the Zakkas, and tranquillity was not restored till late in the summer of 1908.

On 1st November, 1908, at a great Durbar at Jodhpur, the capital of the Rahtore Rajputs, Lord Minto read a

gracious message from the King-Emperor on the fiftieth anniversary of the transfer of India to the Crown, in which it was announced that the principle of representative institutions must be extended and enlarged, and that the measures to be taken to that effect would shortly be announced. The King's message concluded with these words: "For the military guardianship of my Indian Dominion I recognize the valour and fidelity of my Indian troops; and at the New Year I have ordered that opportunity should be made to show in substantial form this my very high appreciation of their martial instincts, their splendid discipline, and their faithful readiness of service."

Except with regard to the Reforms, the relations between Lord Minto and Mr. or, as he had become in 1908, Lord Morley, were not free from clouds; and but for Lord Minto's unfailing tact and good temper they could not but have entailed a serious rift and probably a complete break. Lord Morley knew nothing about the details of Indian government, but he interfered in the most trifling matters. His appointments were not generally happy, and he sometimes revealed his conviction that the Viceroy was only the agent of the Secretary of State. He did not intend to be offensive, and when his errors were pointed out he was often apologetic, but none the less he seemed imbued with the conviction that the House of Commons was supreme, that he was its sole representative, and that Viceroys and Governor-Generals were only created to obey. At the same time Lord Morley was sometimes inclined to pessimism. He declared: "If the Reforms do not save the Raj nothing else will!" But Lord Minto administered a fine correction of this outbreak of feebleness verging on despair—

"The British Raj will not disappear in India as long as the British race remains what it is, because we shall fight for the Raj as hard as we have ever fought if it comes to fighting, and we shall win as we have always done. My great object is that it shall not come to that."

The warning of the late Nizam to a high Anglo-Indian official was couched in the same language. "Blow hot, or blow cold as you please, but never forget your strength."

CHAPTER XXXVII

THE MORLEY-MINTO REFORMS

WE have now to describe in a connected narrative the Indian Reforms which are associated with the names of Morley and Minto. At the very commencement of the business Mr. Morley recommended patience, careful study of the problem to be solved, and deliberation in selecting the true remedial measures. He declared that India is not England. You cannot, he said, "transplant British institutions wholesale into that country. That is a fantastic and ludicrous dream. I have no thought of endowing her with a Parliament." Finally, he deprecated hurry or precipitancy, for they would have the effect infallibly of setting the clock back. These were Mr. Morley's leading conclusions at the start, he adhered to them to the end.

It was a piece of good fortune that Lord Minto, appointed by a Conservative administration, and without any special call to take up Indian problems with the zeal of a reformer, had himself come to the conclusion that the time had arrived to increase and extend the co-operation of Indians in the task of governing their own country. He prepared a draft of possible changes in the administration to that end, and what is more remarkable, and to his credit, is that he did not allow the prevailing unrest, even when followed by boycott and outrage, to disturb his judgment or alter his plans. He submitted his proposals to the Secretary of State, and thus set the ball rolling. Mr. Morley made this perfectly plain in his statement on Indian affairs in the House of Commons in June, 1907: "At the end of March last the Viceroy informed his Legislative Council that he had sent home a despatch to the Secretary of State, proposing suggestions for a move in advance. It emanated entirely from the Government of India—we have given approval to the establishment of a Council of Notables. The second proposal is the acceptance of the general principle of an enlargement of

the Legislative Councils, both the Governor-General's and the Provincial Legislative Councils. Lastly, the Secretary of State has the privilege of nominating members of the Council of India. I think the time has come to nominate safely and justly one, and it may be two, Indian members."

A further feature of the proposed scheme was that more time and fuller opportunities were to be given for the discussion of the Budget, and for the examination of the expenditure of the different Departments, thus admitting that the co-operation of Indians of suitable position and adequate knowledge might prove most valuable in connection with financial matters and problems. These proposals met with general approval, and had what the French call "a good press."

Mr. Morley was able to give immediate effect to his decision to nominate Indian members to the Secretary of State's Council at Whitehall. In August, 1907, he made two such appointments, one a Hindu gentleman, and the other a Mahomedan. The former was Mr. K. G. Gupta of the I.C.S., and the latter Syed Hussein Bilgrami of Hyderabad. Not long after these opening scenes Mr. Morley accepted a peerage, and left the House of Commons for the House of Lords which relieved the strain on his strength, as he was beginning to feel the weight of years. During two sessions in the Lower House he had displayed equal patience and firmness. He was patient in mastering his subject as well as towards his critics, who came from the extreme wing of his own party. He was firm in resisting the pressure brought to bear upon him from one side, because he did not hesitate to punish and repress lawlessness, and from the other because he deemed that the work of progressive and remedial legislation must go on in spite of unrest and even outrage. He was not in favour of endowing India with a Parliament, but he was not ill-disposed to the Congress. Defining his policy broadly it might be said that he was of opinion that India had reached in her political evolution a stage between the old strictly bureaucratic régime, and the Government by representative and constitutional institutions, which is the ideal in England. The time had come to take a step

forward, and no extraneous circumstances served to turn him from his course.

But at the same time, the outbreak of lawlessness produced a halt in the execution, if not an abandonment, of the programme. Lord Minto had set a fine example. At the moment that he was passing through the Legislative Council, defensive measures on the part of the State for the good and safety of the general community he declared, "No anarchical crime will deter me from endeavouring to meet as best I can the political aspirations of honest reformers." Almost at the same moment Lord Morley was making a strong appeal to the moderates representing what he called "the better sense of India." He expressed himself in the following terms—

"I will not be in a hurry to believe that there is not a great body in India of reasonable people, not only among the quiet, humble, law-abiding people, but among the educated classes. I will not believe that there is not a great body of reasonable people of that kind. I do not care what they call themselves, or what organization they may form themselves into. But I will not be in a hurry to believe that there are none such people, and that we cannot depend on them. When we believe that we have no body of organized reasonable people on our side in India—when you, gentlemen, who know the country say that—and mind you, you must have that body of opinion among the educated classes as well as among the great masses, because it is the educated classes in all countries and in all times who make all the difference, I say that on the day that we believe that, we shall be confronted with as awkward, as embarrassing, and as hazardous a situation as has ever confronted the rulers of the most complex and gigantic state in human history. I am confident that if the crisis comes it will find us ready, but let us keep our minds clear now. There have been many dark and ugly moments in our relations with India before now. We have such a dark and ugly moment before us, and we shall get through it, but only with self-command, and without any quackery or cant, whether it be the quackery and cant of order or of sentiment."

At this point it will be appropriate to indicate some of the main conclusions that controlled the position, and affected the passage of the reforms into legislative value. The unrest in India, accompanied by inexcusable and criminal outrages, had imperilled the policy of progressive reform. If the Government had declared that in face of them the question must be shelved till a more favourable situation had been brought about, no one in England would have raised the smallest objection. That alternative was repudiated by both Lord Minto and Lord Morley. The reform policy was to follow its regular course. But, at the same time, their hope and faith lay in the belief that, as elsewhere, men of moderate and sound views formed the bulk of the educated community in India. They relied on their co-operation. They looked for the support of the best and most enlightened elements in the country, but what was true in 1908 is not less so to-day. Europeans and cultured Indians have a great task which they can share together for the maintenance of peace and content in India, thus promoting the best interests and the material welfare of all its peoples. Practical work by practical men is what India needs, not the fantastic schemes and idle dreams of mere theorists.

On 18th December, 1908, Lord Morley set forth the reforms which he proposed to introduce in the form of a Bill during the coming session. He divided them under seven heads. The first related to the Legislative Councils. At present, he said, the maximum and minimum numbers of Legislative Councils are fixed by statute. We propose to ask Parliament to authorize an increase in the numbers of these Councils, both the Viceroy's Council and the Provincial Councils.

The second related to the membership. Members are now nominated by the Head of the Government, either the Viceroy or the Lieutenant-Governor. In the strict sense of the term no election takes place. The nearest approach to it is the nomination by the Viceroy upon the recommendation of the majority of voters of certain public bodies. We do not intend to abolish nomination, but we propose to

ask Parliament in a very definite way to introduce election working alongside nomination, with a view to the aim admitted in all previous schemes, including the due representation of the different classes of the community.

The third applied to the discussion on the Budget. The Indian Councils' Act of 1892 forbade either resolutions, or divisions of the Council in Financial discussions. This prohibition was to be repealed.

The fourth related to debates or discussions within the Council. We propose to invest Legislative Councils with power to discuss matters of public and general importance, and to pass recommendations or resolutions on to the Government. The Government will deal with them as carefully or as carelessly as they think fit.

The fifth was to extend the power that at present exists to appoint a member of the Council to preside.

The sixth referred to Bombay and Madras. Each of these Presidencies had an Executive Council, by the new Bill they were to be doubled.

The seventh related to Executive Councils for Lieutenant-Governors. These were non-existent. Parliament was to be asked to sanction their creation. These Councils were to consist of not more than two members, and at the same time the power of the Lieutenant-Governor to overrule his Council was to be defined.

There was an additional head to the Reforms, but it was not numbered 8, because the sanction of Parliament was not required for its execution. This was the nomination of an Indian member to the Viceroy's Executive Council. This point was clearly put before the House of Lords by the Secretary of State. He said—

"This is the question of an Indian Member on the Viceroy's Executive Council. The absence of an Indian Member from the Viceroy's Executive Council can no longer be defended. There is no legal obstacle or Statutory exclusion. The Secretary of State can to-morrow, if he likes—if there be a vacancy on the Viceroy's Council—recommend His Majesty to appoint an Indian Member. All I want to say is, that if during my tenure of office there should be a vacancy

on the Viceroy's Executive Council, I should feel it my duty to tender to the King my advice that an Indian Member should be appointed. If it were on my own authority only I might hesitate to take that step, because I am not very fond of innovations in dark and obscure ground, but here I have the absolute and the zealous approval and concurrence of Lord Minto himself. It was at Lord Minto's special instigation that I began to think seriously of this step. I quite admit that it is a very important step, but I think this concurrence points in the right direction. Anyhow this is how it stands, that you have at this moment a Viceroy and a Secretary of State who both concur in a recommendation of this kind. I suppose, if I may be allowed to give a personal turn to these matters, that Lord Minto and I have had a very different experience of life and the world, and we belong, I dare say, to different schools of national politics, because Lord Minto was appointed by the party opposite. It is a rather remarkable thing that two men differing in this way in antecedents should agree in this proposal, Lord Minto zealously concurring in it, even instigating it."

The noble peroration to this introduction of the Reforms must be given to complete the picture—

"We believe that this admission, desired by the Governor-General and desired by us, of the Indians to a larger and more direct share in the government of their country, without for a moment taking from the central Power its authority, will strengthen the foundations of our position. We require great steadiness, constant pursuit of the same objects, and the maintenance of our authority which will be all the more effective if we have along with our authority the aid and assistance in responsible circumstances of the Indians themselves.

"Military strength, material strength we have in abundance. What we still want to acquire is moral strength, moral strength in guiding and controlling the people of India in the course on which time is launching us. I should like to read a few lines from a great orator about India. It was a speech delivered by Mr. John Bright in 1858, when

the great Government of India Bill was in another place. I would like to read his language, and I hope your Lordships will like it. Mr. Bright said: 'We do not know how to leave it, and therefore let us see if we know how to govern it. Let us abandon all that system of calumny against natives of India which has lately prevailed. Had that people not been docile, the most governable race in the world, how could you have maintained your power for one hundred years? Are they not industrious, are they not intelligent, are they not—upon the evidence of the most distinguished men the Indian Service has ever produced—endowed with many qualities which make them respected by all the Englishmen who mix with them? I would not permit any man in my presence without rebuke to indulge in the calumnies and expressions of contempt which I have recently heard poured forth without measure upon the whole population of India.'"

After this citation from Mr. John Bright in 1858, Lord Morley resumed: "The people of India do not like us, but they scarcely know where to turn if we left them. They are sheep literally without a shepherd. However that may be, we here, at least in Westminster, have no choice and no option. As an illustrious member of the House wrote—'We found a society in a state of decomposition, and we have undertaken the serious and stupendous process of reconstructing it.' Macaulay, for it was he, continued, 'India is like Europe in the fifth century.'

"Yes, a stupendous process, indeed. The process has gone on with marvellous success, and if we all, according to our various lights, are true to our colours, that process will continue. Whatever is said, I for one—though I am not what is commonly called an Imperialist—so far from denying, I most emphatically affirm that for us to preside over the transition from the fifth European century in some parts, in slow uneven stages up to the twentieth—so that you have before you all the centuries at once as it were—for us to preside over that and to be the guide of a people in that condition is, if conducted with humanity and sympathy, with wisdom and political courage, not only a human duty

and a great national honour, but what was called the other day one of the most glorious tasks ever confided to any country."

It is now pertinent to describe the measures taken to satisfy the demands of the Mahomedan community as presented in the address to Lord Minto at Simla. Lord Morley's first proposal was one for mixed or composite electoral colleges, in which Mahomedans and Hindus should vote together. This plan had been rejected in anticipation by the delegation headed by the Aga Khan, and Lord Morley revealed an imperfect acquaintance with the true Indian situation when he suggested that such composite action would bring the two great communities more closely together. The Government of India, knowing the country and its peoples, objected to this part of the scheme, and the plan was abandoned.

To leave the Secretary of State in no doubt as to what they needed and asked for, a body of Mahomedan leaders and men of influence waited upon him at the India Office. Their cardinal demands were three, a separate register, a number of seats superior to their numerical proportion, and that, if a Hindu were appointed to the Viceroy's Executive Council, a similar post should be conferred upon a Moslem. On the first two points Lord Morley declared that these demands should be met in full. With regard to the third point, which lay outside the scope of the Bill, he did not see his way to give satisfaction. This demand was susceptible of the interpretation that the Mahomedans wished to impose on the Government the condition of any Indian appointment being made to the Executive Council that there should be two such appointments. This was obviously beyond their legitimate province, but it was equally clear that the solution of the point lay in alternating nominations, which was eventually put in practice. Thus when Mr. Sinha the first occupant of the post retired, his successor was Syed Ali Imam.

Some doubts arose in India among the Mahomedans as to whether the definition of the electoral colleges was as clear and explicit as was desirable, and some of Lord Morley's

supporters in the House of Commons revealed a misunderstanding of how they were to be formed. The cloven foot of the mixed electorates seemed to emerge from a cloud of verbiage, and the Viceroy had to telegraph his views, expressing the hope that the pledges to the Mahomedans would be fulfilled to their complete satisfaction. This induced Lord Lansdowne to intervene in the debate with the weighty comment that "he trusted that the confidence the Mahomedans had in the Government of India in respect of the arrangements to be made from their representation would not be misplaced. The pledges given to Mahomedans had been of the fullest and most emphatic character, and it would be a public disaster if anything worked out which would leave it open to Mahomedans to contend that the pledges of the Government had not been fulfilled to the utmost."

With the introduction of the Indian Reform Act, the purely official régime that had hitherto obtained in India ended. It became half official and half popular. The enlarged powers of the Legislative Councils made each of them a kind of deliberative Assembly, a very suitable training ground, if properly used, for eligibility to the conference in the fullness of time of a national Parliament. The Legislative Councils in India and Burma after the passing of the Act into force were eight, with a total membership of 370. Of that number 134 were to be elected, 54 nominated outside the official classes, and 182 representing the latter. That the official classes should be placed in a minority by the voluntary act not only of the British Government, but of the Governor-General in Council, was the most striking proof of the change that was taking place in the relations between Britain and India.

There was one question connected with the new law that claims notice before we close. Reference has been made to persons deported in the times prior to the passing of the Act. Both Lord Morley and Lord Minto felt that under the new system of government these sentences should be annulled. There was a slight difference of opinion between them as to the proper moment of making the announcement,

and the best method of giving it effect. Lord Minto also considered that no deportee ought to be eligible for election to a Legislative Council. At first Lord Morley, who had always been a little sensitive on the subject of deportation, not because he had any feeling of sympathy with Indian deportees, but simply because he had been criticized by members of his party for inconsistency with the attitude he had adopted towards the Conservatives when they had resorted to similar measures in Ireland, showed reluctance to concur with Lord Minto's views, and at the eleventh hour it seemed possible that a serious difference might arise between them. But Lord Minto's arguments were so cogent, and his manner of expressing them so conciliatory, that the Secretary of State was won over to accept the soundness of his view. The following is the text of the letter of the Viceroy which prevailed in carrying his view—

" What is our main duty ? Surely it is, in the first place, to govern India with due regard to the welfare and peace of its population—not to attempt, irrespective of those interests, to conform with principles which the political training of years may have rendered dear to the people of England, but which are totally inadequate to the conditions we have now to deal with in this country. It is such guidance of the Government of India by a Parliament totally ignorant of local conditions which, if it is to represent a generally accepted principle in our administration of India, is, I must regretfully say, in my opinion, certain to prove disastrous. Political disqualification in England, and in India, just awakening to political life, and governed largely by the mere prestige of British authority, cannot be judged by the same standard. A released political prisoner who becomes a member of Parliament in no way threatens the safety of the Constitution, but the election of Lajpet Rai for instance, to the Viceroy's Legislative Council, would set India in a blaze. We must not forget that our Councils will be comparatively small, and that the introduction into them of a stormy petrel would have a very different effect to a similar introduction into the historic atmosphere of the House of Commons."

Lord Morley not merely gave way, but he went farther, by conceding to the Viceroy a discretionary power that exceeded what he had asked for. The deportees were permitted to return as the natural complement of the proclamation of the new Act—Lord Minto's suggestion—and at the same time a power of veto was vested in the Viceroy with reference to any unsuitable person proposed for election to a Legislative Council.

When it is remembered that so many outrages and acts of sedition in India accompanied the discussions in Parliament of the Reforms, it must be deemed a remarkable circumstance that they were steadily persisted in, and that the responsible Minister did not take his hand from the plough. There can be no doubt that this result was due to the unwavering steadfastness of the Viceroy. If he had only chosen to declare that, in his opinion, the state of India did not admit of any change in the existing order of things there can be no doubt that the British public would have accepted his view, and that the introduction of the Reforms would have been indefinitely postponed. But Lord Minto took a broad view of the position. He knew that there was an India outside Bengal and beyond the reach of Bengali intrigues. He was convinced that the best way to appease unrest was to persist in the course marked out, and to extend to the Indian peoples some of the rights and privileges of a share in the government of the country. He also wanted and saw the need of the co-operation of moderate men in the community. To give what is just and what the times call for even under provocation, is not evidence of weakness, but proof of the consciousness of strength. "Let justice be done, even though the heavens should fall."

The passing of the Indian Reform Act was therefore due, in the main, to the cordial co-operation of Lord Morley and Lord Minto in their common task. In one of his private letters the former called the latter "an able, straightforward, steadfast, unselfish, and most considerate comrade in tasks of arduous public duty." Both in the House of Commons, and afterwards in the House of Lords, he paid many tributes to his wise and practical statesmanship, and he gave full

recognition to the fact that much in the new Act was due to his suggestion and initiative. It was a happy combination of two distinct intellects, each supplementing the other and supplying their defects if any existed. It was happy for their cordial relations, it was happy also in its results for India.

Lord Minto was not the less an admirer of Lord Morley, because he had better opportunities than any one else of knowing his foibles and shortcomings, and in his farewell letter on the completion of their joint task he gave expression to his feelings in the following words—

"No one knows as well as I do how much India owes to the fact of your having been Secretary of State through all this period of development, and I hope you will never think that I have not truly realized the generous support that you have so often given me at very critical moments, or that I have not appreciated the peculiar difficulties which have surrounded you at home, and from which I have been spared."

As their connection with India began at the same period, so did it end almost simultaneously. In October, 1910, Lord Morley resigned the Indian Secretaryship for the lighter post of President of the Council. On 23rd November of the same year, Lord Minto handed over the Viceroyship to his successor. The former, although a valetudinarian and a septuagenarian at the time of the Indian Reform Act, lived on to the great age of 85; the latter, although much his colleague's junior, reached a premature grave in 1914.

CHAPTER XXXVIII

LORD HARDINGE OF PENSHURST

LORD MINTO'S successor, like himself, was the descendant of a former Governor-General. Mr. Asquith's choice, in consultation with Lord Crewe, had fallen upon Sir Charles Hardinge, the grandson of the first Viscount Hardinge, whose career in India has been described. Sir Charles Hardinge had followed the career of diplomacy, and in that sphere he had gained the approval of King Edward for his tact, suavity, and inscrutability. The thoughts of Sir Charles Hardinge were a sealed book to the most inquiring of German agents. King Edward had marked him out for some signal promotion, but the monarch's death seemed to close the door of its fulfilment. Still the late King's high recommendation remained on record, and it was well known that he had considered Sir Charles Hardinge to be qualified in every way to uphold the dignity of his Viceroy in India.

There was one obstacle in the way. The term of Lord Kitchener's command in India had expired some months before Lord Minto's tenure of the Viceroyship was due to close, and he had returned to England with the keen desire to be the next Viceroy. Lord Minto supported his candidature in the strongest terms, praising above all things his sound political judgment. There is no doubt that Mr. Asquith was strongly in favour of his claims, but he felt bound to consult Lord Morley on the subject, as the author of the new system in India which was still under trial. Lord Morley took great exception to the appointment, alleging that the nomination of a soldier would destroy half the effect of his own measures. Mr. Asquith could not but defer to the views of his colleague about India, although he did not share them. It was then remembered that Lord Kitchener was a confirmed bachelor, and with an approaching visit to India of the new King and Queen in view, it was felt that with a Viceroy without a wife there would be



Photo by W. & D. Downey

H.M. KING GEORGE V. AND H.M. QUEEN MARY

a flaw in the situation. Very reluctantly, and to Mr. Asquith's regret, Lord Kitchener had to be passed over, and some one then seems to have reminded the Prime Minister of the late King's wishes with regard to Sir Charles Hardinge. His appointment followed, and King George thereupon raised him to the peerage as Baron Hardinge of Penshurst, his elder brother holding the hereditary title of Viscount Hardinge.

Although Lord Hardinge had been in India for more than a year before the time arrived for the event, and things had not stood still in that interval, it will be most convenient and suitable to deal with the memorable Royal visit before resuming the thread of the general narrative. In compliance with the general desire and expectation in India, the King-Emperor had notified his intention of coming to India with the Queen-Empress to hold a Coronation Durbar at Delhi. It will be remembered that King Edward had entertained the same desire, but the dubious state of his health had prevented his carrying out that intention, and he had sent the Duke and Duchess of Connaught to act for him and Queen Alexandra. There was no similar cause to prevent King George from coming in person to India. The visit which he had paid when Prince of Wales to India, together with the Princess, had proved that the climate possessed no terrors or perils for them.

Such an event as the coronation or any other form of inauguration of an Emperor, whose sway extended throughout India and over many adjacent territories that had never been included within its wide domain, was unknown within the range of recorded history. The Proclamation of the Imperial Title Durbar, in 1877, and King Edward's Coronation Durbar in 1903, were now to be consummated by the presence of the Sovereign and his Consort in person to receive the fealty and homage of their Indian subjects. To add, if possible, increased authority to the whole proceedings, the Marquis of Crewe had accompanied their Majesties to represent the Cabinet, and he was the first Secretary of State to visit India. Great was the occasion, pregnant with immeasurable promise and possibilities. It was only

necessary for the historic scene to be provided with a worthy setting, and that was Lord Hardinge's business.

The spot selected and prepared for the ceremony was almost the same as that chosen in 1903, and in the main the preparations were on the same lines. But there were some important additions, and amongst others may be mentioned the provision of a place from which the general public could view the imposing processions and some part, at least, of the great central ceremony. A mound was constructed, as no ordinary scaffolding could have withstood the rush of the spectators, with a surface area capable of accommodating 50,000 people. All the princes of note and high position, over 130 in number, were present with their retinues, and the separate camps of the more important would each have accommodated a small army. A larger military display was provided than on any former occasion, and it was stated that over 60,000 men of the Anglo-Indian armies were present on the ground. That, at least, was the total of the troops reviewed by the King-Emperor before his departure from Delhi.

Apart from its superb pageantry and glorious significance, the Coronation ceremony was completed by an address from the King-Emperor which invested it with historical importance for all time. He notified several changes of the first degree of importance, and he announced the granting of boons and favours to many different classes of the general community.

Among the changes the most dramatic was the transfer of the official capital of India from Calcutta to Delhi, the old historic capital of the Mogul dynasty, and of many other rulers in more ancient times. The second announcement in order of importance was the cancelling of the separation of the two Bengals, and its restoration to a single unit. But the question of excessive bulk remained, and was too real and apparent from the view of administrative requirements to be ignored. The reunion applied to the fifteen districts detached from Bengal, but it did not apply to Assam which was constituted a separate and distinct Chief Commissionership. Even then Bengal was too big, and the

western districts of Bihar, Orissa, and Chota Nagpore were withdrawn to form a separate Lieutenant-Governorship. What Bengal recovered on the eastern side it lost on the western, but in compensation it was raised to the rank of a full Governorship, the first holder of the post being Lord Carmichael.

These changes may have been intended to reconcile the people of Calcutta to the transfer of the administrative capital of India to Delhi. The official view at the root of this change was that Calcutta was essentially a centre of commerce, and that Delhi was more suitable as the capital of an Empire. The practical argument of position also possessed great force. Calcutta was at a remote extremity of the peninsula, whereas Delhi was as near as possible in the middle of the country. It was not to be denied that in any time of great emergency this would result in a great saving of time in the execution of the measures required by the situation. When it is remembered that the original partition of Bengal caused so much excitement, and raised up such a storm of controversy spread over so many years, the far more sensational and wide reaching changes of the Coronation Durbar of 1911 were received with singular calm and composure, thus proving that the agitation of seven years before had been purely factitious, and taken up by political plotters for sinister ends.

The second part of the King's address enumerated the boons and favours that were to bring home the coronation ceremonies as a memorable affair to all the races of India, so that they might ever associate them with their own interests. Whereas the celebrations were primarily for the great ones of the earth, it was a happy thought to do what was possible to bring the mass of the people within the range of their influence. The first boon was a special grant of 50 lakhs to be assigned exclusively as a commencement of what was termed popular education.

Then came, as has not been unusual in all civilized States on the occasion of the accession of a new Sovereign, mitigations of sentences and terms of imprisonment passed on those who had offended against or broken the laws.

Selected prisoners, on account of good conduct or for other reasons, were to be released. Persons in custody for debt were to have their liabilities treated as discharged, and to be set free.

Finally, favours and rewards were bestowed on the following grounds. Services rendered to the State in any capacity were to be rewarded by grants of land, the traditional recompense assigned from time immemorial by the rulers of India to those who served them well and loyally. The lower ranks of the public services were granted half a month's pay as a benefaction. The same present or gift was to be given to the non-commissioned officers and men of the Indian Army. To complete the King-Emperor's appreciation of the services, discipline, and loyalty of his Indian troops, he announced that the much coveted order of the Victoria Cross was to be thrown open to all. No one who examines this long list will fail to be impressed by its generous, and discriminating character, and by the thoughtful care in trying to bring all classes within the range of the Royal dispensation.

Before the Durbar broke up a special ceremony was held to mark the beginning of the new City of Delhi that was to rise as a complement to the old. The King-Emperor laid one foundation stone, and the Queen-Empress laid another. Then the royal pair resumed their journey, for it had been expressly laid down that their absence from England should be confined to three months. But the King had one visit to pay that he could not forgo. In 1907 the Maharaja, Sir Chandra Shamsher Jung of Nepal, had made all the preparations to give the Prince of Wales a fortnight's shoot in the famous Terai, the greatest hunting preserve in India, or for the matter of that in the world. But at the eleventh hour a sudden and severe outbreak of cholera had compelled the abandonment of the visit. Now that the Prince had become the King-Emperor the invitation was renewed and accepted. The preparations made by the Maharaja were on a more colossal scale to accord with the increased rank and dignity of his guest, and the King, as a thorough sportsman and splendid shot, must have enjoyed what even

in his unique experience would have been a welcome and well deserved relaxation from the cares of State.

During this excursion Queen Mary had explored Agra with her characteristic thoroughness, and visited others of the ancient cities of Northern India. Then they proceeded together to pay their farewell visit to Calcutta. Their visit was marked by the most cordial demonstrations of loyalty and affection, and it was hard to believe that it could be the centre of political agitation, and a harbour of sedition and unrest. The festivities in the deposed official capital culminated in a great historical Pageant, depicting the varied course of India's history. On 10th January, 1912, the Emperor and Empress sailed from Bombay on their return to England. What they thought of their reception in India, and the impression it left on their minds, is revealed in the following letter from the King-Emperor to Mr. Asquith, the Prime Minister of the day—

"From all sources, public and private, I gather that my highest hopes have been realized. All classes, races, and creeds, have united in receiving us with unmistakable signs of enthusiasm and affection. The magnificent display at the Durbar was the outcome of wise and well considered plans, brilliantly carried out through the untiring efforts of the Viceroy and those who worked under him. Our satisfaction will be still greater if time proves that our visit has conduced to the lasting good of India, and of the Empire at large."

One year after the Coronation Durbar, Delhi witnessed a terrible and very nearly a tragic episode. The Viceroy was expected to take a parental interest in the creation of the new city of Delhi, and he paid visits periodically to see how the new Government buildings, including the Viceroy's own residence, were proceeding towards completion. On 23rd December, 1912, he made a semi-State visit into the old city, accompanied by many of the leading Chiefs of the Punjab. They were all on elephants, and the Viceroy, accompanied by Lady Hardinge, was seated on one of exceptional height, towering above the rest. When they reached the Chandni Chowk (the Silver Square), the principal

square in Delhi, a bomb was thrown from the roof of one of the houses overlooking it. It struck the hind part of the howdah, killing an attendant, and severely wounding the Viceroy, who was struck in several places in the back. Lady Hardinge providentially escaped all injury, and the Viceroy had sufficient strength before he fainted, from loss of blood, to exclaim, " Go forward ! "

The house from which the bomb was thrown was quickly identified, and searched from top to bottom, but crowded as it was with sightseers it is not surprising that the miscreant or miscreants succeeded in making his or their escape, and no clue to their identity was ever discovered, in spite of the large rewards offered for any information. Such evidence as there was pointed to there having been only a single criminal, whoever may have been behind him. Lord Hardinge's recovery was slow, and he did not improve his chances by insisting on attending in person the opening meeting of the Imperial Legislative Council in January, 1913. On this occasion, referring to the attempt upon his life, he made the following magnanimous declaration—

" I assure you and the whole of India that this incident will in no sense influence my attitude. I will pursue without faltering the same policy in the future as during the past two years, and will not waver a hair's breadth from that course. My motto is still ' Go Forward ! ' "

The status of Indians in British self-governing colonies began to attract serious attention soon after Lord Hardinge's arrival. Their attitude to the subject varied. In South Africa they were admitted subject to a Labour indenture. Canada and Australia refused them admission on any ground. To South Africa a larger and increasing migration set in with a development of the difficulties springing out of an inferior position, but there was no corresponding movement to the other countries. In 1913, however, a party of emigrants to the number of 300, chiefly Sikhs from the Punjab, were despatched as a tentative measure in a ship bound for Vancouver, with the object of forcing their way into Canada by its great Western port. This plan was said to be due to German intrigue, which was very active in the East during

the years immediately preceding the outbreak of the war, but whoever conceived it could have known very little of Canadian opinion and regulations. On reaching Vancouver the party was not permitted to land, and had to return whence they came. Naturally after two long sea voyages the men were not in the best of spirits or tempers when they arrived at Budge Budge. Trains were ordered to carry them back to the Punjab, and the first body of them was sent off quietly enough. The others got out of hand, some of the men had revolvers, and used them against the police, who then fired in self-defence. The riot did not end without considerable bloodshed.

It is improbable that this affair had any connection with the Punjab conspiracy case which came to light soon afterwards. This was undoubtedly the handiwork of the banished student Har Dayal, who was carrying on an active anti-British propaganda in the United States. He worked through others who were his dupes, for he was too prudent to trust himself within reach of the authority of the Government of India. He succeeded in obtaining the support of some twenty or thirty students, pledged to follow his orders and those misguided young men made their way separately back to India, where they established their headquarters at Lahore. Their mission was to overthrow British rule by resorting to murder. Their plot was fortunately discovered before any harm was done, because they were found to possess a formidable arsenal of bombs and lethal weapons. Much treasonable correspondence was discovered in their possession, and after trial they suffered the extreme penalty of the law. In different parts of India minor outrages continued to happen, the most serious of which was the assassination of a magistrate at Trichinopoli in South India; but the effect of the attempted assassination of Lord Hardinge had been the exact opposite of what was intended, for it had excited general detestation and horror, and created wide and genuine sympathy with the intended victim. It was then revealed what a hold Lord Hardinge had established on the good will and admiration of the community at large, for on all sides he was hailed as "Our Viceroy,"

a very remarkable tribute, carrying with it a warning to the secret plotters that their bolt was shot.

To summarize the definite achievements with which Lord Hardinge's name will be ever associated, it may be stated that during the period of his authority in India, Bengal became a Presidency, with a Governor in Council; Bihar and Orissa a Province with a Lieutenant-Governor in Council, and with a majority of elected Members in the Legislative Council; Legislative Councils with non-official majorities in each were given to the Central Provinces and Assam; Bihar and Orissa was invested with a High Court; and an Executive Council for the United Provinces, and a High Court for the Punjab were promised, and might be described as on the way. He was a strong advocate of decentralization, and of investing the local administrations with increased powers of initiative, thus avoiding tedious references with the inevitable attendant loss of time and perhaps also of opportunity. He wrote in one of his despatches—

"A further change that I regard as very desirable is greater decentralization and less interference from the very top to the lowest rung of the administrative ladder, and the recognition that to endeavour to attain a deep uniformity in this country, where such wide variations in habits and thoughts exist, can only lead to local discontent and ultimate failure. While the Imperial Government retains and must retain the power of initiative in policy, and control, it should steadily and on broad lines delegate more and more power to Local Governments to dispose of matters of merely local or secondary importance. In pursuance of this view it has been my policy to give as much freedom as possible to local Governments, and never to override them except under the most urgent necessity, bearing always in mind that it should be the part of the Government of India to control, and theirs to administer."

But while his administrative reforms redounded to his credit, it was his educational policy that provided his strongest claim to the admiration and gratitude of posterity. Many other rulers had done something in the same direction, but as the founder of schools and universities he placed

himself at the head of them all. He doubled the sum spent annually on education, and while he gave a fresh impetus to primary education, the number of pupils in these schools showing a greater increase than the mere cost would imply, he did not neglect the higher education. He impressed the need of universities on both the Hindu and the Mahomedan communities, and he took the leading part in the creation of the Universities at Dacca, Kashi, and Patna. Lady Hardinge seconded these efforts by taking up the cause of female education, and it was very appropriate that she should endow the new city of Delhi with a Medical College that bears her name.

An event was now imminent that overshadowed every other matter during the remaining period of Lord Hardinge's Viceroyship. In the early summer of 1914 ill health had necessitated Lady Hardinge's return to England, but it was hoped that there would be no serious consequences, and that she would be able to rejoin her husband for the concluding year of his period of office. Providence, harsh as it seems in so many of its ordinances, was unkind in this instance, and the illness had a fatal termination. In India, there was a widespread feeling of sorrow for the loss of a sincere friend, and of sympathy with the bereaved husband. Her whole-hearted and kindly sympathy with Indians, and especially with the women of the country, had endeared her for all time to the people, and it was well known how much she had helped her husband in his efforts to improve the general condition of life throughout the peninsula.

At that moment the Great War broke out in Europe, and soon its effects extended to the greater portion of the globe. India herself had early evidence as to its consequences when the *Emden* bombarded Madras and sank two millions' worth of property before it received its quietus at the hands of the Australia cruiser, *Sydney*. The call from England to India for help was urgent, and it was very largely due to Lord Hardinge's good work and influence that the opportunity was seized to demonstrate to the Empire and also to the world at large that India was to be a source of

This anxiety was much increased by uncertainty as to the intentions of the Amir of Afghanistan. His attitude was reserved, and when it became known that German and Turk officers were residing in Kabul, it was feared that despite all his promises of warm friendship Habibullah might succumb to the same influence as the Sultan. No doubt he was in a difficult position with regard to his own supporters. They included some who were anti-English, and their views were supported by several Indian revolutionaries at Kabul, who represented that an uprising in India was certain to ensue. The German officer, Hentig by name, was also emphatic that his ruler must triumph in Europe, and that news of the capture of Paris might arrive at any moment. Habibullah is credited with the reply to both groups of instigators that he would defer his decision until it was seen whether any of their predictions would come true, and so he allowed them to remain in his capital until the end of the year 1915 was approaching. By that time, no rebellion having occurred in India, and Paris not having fallen, he dismissed them. Some of these prophets of ill omen were captured in Persia.

At the earnest request of the British Government, which appealed to his sense of duty, Lord Hardinge, against his own inclinations, had consented to the prolongation of his office to March, 1916. To the death of his wife was added in the early scenes of the war the loss of his eldest son, who died of wounds received at the front in France, but with Lord Hardinge public duty controlled private affliction. To his influence and incitement was due the immense development of recruiting in India during the years 1915–16, when it was realized that the speedy end of the war was no longer to be hoped for. The ruling Princes of India, his friends and admirers, threw themselves energetically into the task by not only increasing their contingents, but by encouraging their subjects to join the British-Indian army. The Maharaja of Nepal, never behindhand on such occasions, contributed over 200,000 men from first to last to the fighting forces of the Empire. Thus the total of India's contribution to the combatant forces of the Empire swelled

to a total of more than a million men. If anyone had suggested that result as a possibility even on the eve of Lord Hardinge's arrival, he would have been derided and treated as a fool. It revealed the true heart of India, of which unrest in Bengal gave a false or at least much exaggerated and perverted an impression.

One incident clouded Lord Hardinge's closing term in India, the advance up the Tigris, with its attendant disaster at Kut. It cannot be described here, but it may be said that it was an instance of the spirit of adventure out-running discretion and prudent preparations. A Commission of Inquiry was instituted, with the result that Lord Hardinge was blamed for a catastrophe with which he had really nothing whatever to do. As Lord Balfour said in the House of Commons after the issue of the Report, "It would be scandalous to make Lord Hardinge the scapegoat. It makes my blood boil to think that he should be sacrificed while we go free." But it was at the bar of Indian opinion that Lord Hardinge was most fully exonerated. Indian troops formed the bulk of the unfortunate captives of Kut, and their losses and sufferings have never been adequately described. Yet no blame was cast on Lord Hardinge, for it was well known that the root of the folly was traceable to London, and not to India.

In the history of Empires composed of many alien races, there has never been a more striking instance of loyalty and devotion than that afforded by the participation of India in the Great War. She might have said that there was no call on her to send her fighting men to Europe, and that all she could be expected to do was to maintain order within her borders, and to provide for their defence. But she responded to the call of the Empire in danger, just as if she formed part of the European Continent, and were attached by nature to the shores of England. She was attached by a stronger link, the tie of a common duty and a common humanity. She, not less than England, felt that the cause of civilization and the future comity of nations were at stake, when the German hordes, trampling on their own solemn promises, broke ruthlessly and brutally over the

frontier of Belgium. It demonstrated for all time that India was not less responsive to the call of Right and Justice than her European sisters.

In the latter years of his administration, Lord Hardinge had taken a very active part in endeavouring to remove or at least to mitigate some of the legitimate grievances of Indian emigrants to other parts of the Empire. He began his efforts long before the war gave India an undeniable claim to an attentive and considerate hearing. The matter of Indian indentured labour in South Africa, with its attendant stigma of inferiority, was the one to which he gave his particular and immediate attention, because it provided, as he rightly thought, the issue that seemed most susceptible of speedy accommodation. This hope was fully realized, because he was able to bring General Smuts round to the view that this form of servitude was not in harmony with the spirit of British justice, as well as being an affront to the natural pride of the Indian people. Before he left India in March, 1916, he had the assurance that these regulations would be abrogated, although the formal notification to that effect was not announced until after the arrival of his successor.

Before his departure he made a great speech, proclaiming his sympathy with the legitimate aims of India, but at the same time giving expression to some friendly advice for guidance. Among much else he said—

"During the past few months I have seen mention made in speeches at meetings in the country and in the Press of self-government, Colonial self-government, and Home Rule for India. I have often wondered whether those speakers and writers fully realize the conditions prevailing in Dominions such as Canada or Australia, which render self-government possible. I wish that some of these could visit the Dominions and see for themselves. A study of the history of these Dominions will show that the development of their present self-governing institutions had been achieved not by any sudden stroke of statesmanship, but by a process of steady and patient evolution, which had gradually united and raised all classes of the community to the level of their



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LORD HARDINGE OF PENSHURST

enhanced responsibilities. I do not wish for a moment to discountenance self-government for India as a national ideal. It is a perfectly legitimate aspiration, and has the warm sympathy of all moderate men. But in the present position of India it is not idealism that is needed, but practical politics and practical solutions of questions arising out of the social and political conditions in this country. We should all look facts squarely in the face, and do our utmost to grapple with realities. To lightly raise extravagant hopes and to encourage unrealizable demands can only tend to delay and not to accelerate political progress. I know that this is the sentiment of many wise and thoughtful Indians. In speaking thus frankly, it is far from my intention to create a feeling of discouragement, for nobody is more anxious than I am to see the early realization of the just and legitimate aspirations of India, but I am equally desirous of avoiding all danger of reaction from the birth of institutions which experience might prove to be premature."

Among all the Viceroys of India, none established more intimate personal relations with the people of the country of all classes than Lord Hardinge. He was their friend, and they knew it; he was their counsellor, and they heeded him; he was "their own Viceroy." That was a rare triumph of character, and mutual confidence. They felt that he could be trusted, for after all he was an English gentleman, which is something distinct from a British official. In the moment of physical suffering at the hands of a base plotter he remained steadfast to his purpose; domestic affliction never interrupted the course of his official work; and even the injustice with which he was treated in the Mesopotamia Report, after all he had done to bring India whole-heartedly into the war, and to induce all the Chiefs and all her peoples to renew and sustain their efforts till victory was achieved, never brought from his lips a murmur of complaint. He was satisfied in his own conscience, he was strengthened by the unqualified and undiminished support of India, and how could India close her heart to one who left her with so touching an adieu on his lips as that which follows?

"I have trusted India, I have believed in India, I have

hoped with India, I have feared with India, I have wept with India, I have rejoiced with India, and in a word, I have identified myself with India. India's response has been a wonderful revelation to me, and sometimes I feel as if she has in return confided her very heart to my keeping."

CHAPTER XXXIX

THE CHELMSFORD-MONTAGU ERA

LORD HARDINGE'S successor was Lord Chelmsford, who reached India in March, 1916. He had been Governor in succession of two of the most important States of the Australian Commonwealth, and he had thus been brought into contact with the problems arising out of what was becoming known as "the colour" barrier. It is well to remember, however, that at this period the question did not apply in Australia to India, but to Japan. Still, the fact remained that the new Viceroy possessed personal knowledge of the views held about Asiatic intrusion in the outlying parts of the British Empire, which were quite distinct and different from those held in England itself.

The war had now reached its most critical phase, and it was recognized that its conclusion would clearly depend on which side had the best staying power. It left no leisure for the careful consideration of any matter that was not essentially relative to the issue of the great struggle that was draining the life blood of so many nations. The new Viceroy's first business was to stimulate India's efforts, to praise what she had done, and to bring home the need for her to do more. He singled out for especial commendation the services rendered by the Imperial Service Corps of many of the ruling Princes, and he enumerated the different fields in which they had distinguished or were distinguishing themselves—France, Egypt, Mesopotamia, and East Africa. The necessity of retrieving the Kut disaster had also led to the concentration of large forces at Basra for the purpose of a fresh advance to Bagdad. It was imperative that the exulting Turco-Germans should be overthrown and dispersed on the Upper Tigris. Among those forces were new contingents from those Princes, and freshly raised Indian troops in very considerable numbers. At this time official returns showed that 276,000 recruits had joined the ranks of the regular Indian Army since the war began, and that

of these not fewer than 135,000 had come from the Punjab alone.

The European garrison of India, which had been reduced to the lowest point possible, was now being restored to something approaching its original strength by the drafting of Territorial regiments from England, and early in 1917 it became necessary to pass an ordinance instituting compulsory military service for all Europeans between the ages of 16 and 50. These defensive measures were deemed necessary not only because there was reason to apprehend fresh enemy efforts working by means of Indian revolutionary exiles, voluntary or compulsory, to promote discord, strife, and confusion within the country, but also on account of the frequent raids, small or great, on the Northwest frontier. Of the latter the most important was the attack by 6,000 Mohmand tribesmen on the fort of Shabkadar. They were repulsed, and a squadron of aeroplanes, employed for the first time on these borders, completed their discomfiture.

Lord Chelmsford was not allowed much time to become accustomed to his new surroundings before the facts relating to the internal situation of India were forced upon his attention. A memorandum signed by nineteen out of twenty-seven elected members of the Imperial Legislative Council was presented to him for consideration. Their views were termed by themselves moderate, but their cardinal request was to subordinate the executive power to the legislature, although no legislature with supreme authority was in being, or on the way to creation, unless, of course, it was the House of Commons in London, which was already supreme. The nineteen signatories were composed of twelve Hindus, five Mahomedans, and two Parsis. While their views did not satisfy the extremists, they raised the suspicions of some of the best informed Indians, who affirmed that the terms of their address were due to Brahminical influence, and drawn up under Brahminical tutoring. According to these "the authority of the British rulers in the existing circumstances of India was alone able to hold the scales evenly between creeds and classes."

These latter views were much strengthened by the publication, through the efforts of the Aga Khan, of the last political message prepared by Mr. Gokhale before his death in 1915. Mr. Gokhale was the most intelligent and enlightened Indian leader that had appeared in his generation, that is to say, while he was strong in his demand for reform and progress he was not blind or indifferent to the material facts of the situation. The essential requirements for tranquillizing India according to his views were (1) a wide measure of provincial autonomy, (2) an extension of the elective principles, and (3) a reduction in the controlling power of the India Office. It will be perceived that the two first suggestions were covered by Lord Hardinge's recommendations, and with regard to the control of the India Office it existed more in the imagination of Indian visitors than in any substantial fact.

During the early part of the year 1918 the position with regard to the war materially improved. The Turks had been driven from the Upper Tigris, Bagdad and Mosul were occupied by the British. In Palestine they had also been vanquished and expelled, and the Sultan felt compelled to sue for peace, and to open the Dardanelles. In East Africa the Germans were at last overthrown as completely as they had been in West during the early stages of the war. In Europe, the United States had come into the war with untouched resources and fresh spirit. The end was at last in sight.

But, unfortunately, there was no corresponding improvement in the internal situation of India. Political unrest persisted, the forces of anarchy were enlisted in support of a movement which aimed with naked effrontery at nothing short of the subversion of British power and authority, and foreign intriguers fishing in troubled waters were devoting their chief efforts to create trouble for Great Britain all over the world. The demoniacal war-spite which had revealed itself in 1914 fully confident of a sweeping triumph was now turned into the rancour of failure and defeat, and as Great Britain was regarded as the chief author of the overthrow of these plans of universal domination, so now

was it the chief object of their vindictiveness. Self-protection, and not only that but the necessity of maintaining order, security, and the majesty of the law, compelled the adoption of precautionary measures.

The question of seditionary movements and anarchical intrigues, and of the best methods of coping with them, was submitted to a Commission, presided over by Mr. Rowlatt, and in due course it made a Report advocating special legislation, and advising the exercise of the authority inherent in every form of government. Having denounced the evil influence that the writing and teachings of Mr. Tilak exercised over the minds of the youthful student class generally, it went on to call attention to the abundant proof that existed in and outside India of the nefarious schemes of revolutionary agents in the United States, Germany, and other European countries. It then set forth the precautionary measures that the State should take for the protection of society, and for the preservation of its own existence. In consequence of this powerful Report and its alarming statements, two Bills were introduced and passed, vesting extensive powers and an enlarged measure of active interference in the Government. These were the Indian Criminal Law Amendment Bill (No. 1), and the Criminal Law Emergency Bill (No. 2). The powers vested in the Executive by these laws were very extensive, and included prompt arrest and summary trial, the measures of defence most dreaded by law-breakers.

These new regulations raised a storm of agitation, and unfortunately many of the Moderates, overlooking the fact that these powers would only be used under serious provocation which law-abiding citizens would never think of offering, joined temporarily in swelling its volume. Mr. Gandhi came forward to head a movement of revolt, and to keep his followers together, he instituted a vow of Satyagraha, which signifies civil disobedience. Some of his followers attempted to draw a distinction between civil disobedience and passive disobedience, but it is not easy to see any distinction between them when the common object was to reduce the Government to a state of impotence, and to

bring its executive machinery to a standstill. In addition to the vow, or rather to give it more point and meaning, a Hartal or day of mourning was instituted, and these occasions were made the excuse for vast gatherings of the people among whom seditious literature, full of wicked lies and slanders, as distributed.

Unfortunately the Punjab became the scene of the worst outbursts of popular unreason, and in that province, inhabited by warlike races, it was far more necessary to arrest the course of sedition than among an unwarlike people like the Bengalis. This became the weightier consideration with the authorities, and public gatherings of any considerable number of persons were strictly prohibited under the new Regulations. Amritsir, the religious capital of the Sikhs, became the most turbulent centre of the movement. Banks and hospitals were raided, many Europeans, including women, were murdered in cold blood, and it became necessary for the executive to restore order under military law. The incidents are too near our time to admit of full judgment. It will suffice to say that after every other course had been tried, force was the only weapon left to the Government for the restoration of tranquillity and order. In that respect the measures resorted to attained their desired object.

An event occurred at this time in Afghanistan which exercised a profound influence on the situation in that quarter. On 22nd February, 1919, the Amir Habibullah was assassinated in his camp in the Lughman Valley. All things considered, he had certainly fulfilled his promises in the trying period of the war, and there was every reason to believe that he would continue to remain firmly attached to the British Government. No sure light has ever been thrown on this ruthless murder, and the real promoters of the plot have never been revealed. But his brother, Nasrullah, the visitor to London, was suspected of being at least privy to the crime, and his prompt attempt to make himself master of the throne lent colour to the report. The Amir's eldest son, Inayatullah, who had visited India in the character of Heir Apparent, was then proclaimed his successor, but his reign was brief, for he almost immediately

resigned in favour of his younger brother Amanullah, the son of Habibullah by his favourite wife; and this prince is still the reigning sovereign at Kabul.

Inayatullah does not appear to have greatly regretted or resented being set on one side, and so far as is known, his relations with his supplanter remained amicable. But it was otherwise with Nasrullah, who was tried for complicity in his brother's murder, and sentenced to imprisonment for life. At the same time an Afghan Colonel was executed for having done the deed. There have been rumours from time to time that Nasrullah, who was certainly hostile to England, had been released and entrusted with a minor part in the Amir's Council.

Amanullah's first proclamation to his people was that he intended to base his external policy on the continuation of the alliance with Great Britain, but his actions belied his words. It seems that very soon after his accession several Russian officers and others arrived at Kabul from Bokhara, which had just been overrun by the Soviet. In consequence of that step the Russians had become the close neighbours of the Afghans without any intervening State. There is no doubt that they made many promises to the Amir, and among others they are said to have assured him of an annual subsidy of £100,000 in case he did anything to forfeit the one that his father and grandfather had received from the Government of India.

Excited by the new prospect of acting in the character of an ally of Russia, and forgetting that her promises have often been made of pie-crust, the Amir committed an act not only falsifying his own words, but of open hostility. In May, 1919, his troops crossed the frontier and invaded British territory. He had apparently overlooked the facts that the Great War was over, that the European garrison was again at full strength, and that there had never before been such a large number of trained and veteran troops in the Indian Army. The Afghans and their ruler soon discovered that they had burnt their fingers when aeroplanes were dropping bombs on Jellalabad and Kabul. Whatever Russia might do on another occasion, it was quite clear that

at that moment she could do nothing, and accordingly the Amir sent his envoy to India to propose the restoration of peace.

In July a conference took place between the Afghan representative and the British authorities at Rawul Pindi, and what was called a preliminary peace was concluded on 6th August. The conditions of the Government of India were the cancelling of all arrears of the subsidy, the stoppage of the subsidy, and the withdrawal of the privilege of importing arms and ammunition. On their side the Afghans promised to refrain from hostilities, and to withdraw their forces from the proximity of the Indian frontiers. Some time afterwards Sir Henry Dobbs was sent to Kabul on a special mission to give a permanent form to this arrangement. The most remarkable incident of this visit was that the Government of India, abandoning its old claim to control the external relations of Afghanistan, assented to the Amir's wish to establish diplomatic relations with other countries, and thereupon he at once deputed an envoy to Moscow. His legations were ultimately established in due form in London, Paris, Rome, and other capitals, and the respective countries in their turn sent their Ministers to Kabul. When we look back at the past in Anglo-Afghan relations this turn of events must be pronounced strange and almost inexplicable. The only vestige left of the old pretensions was the stipulation that if Russia were granted the right to establish Consulates the Government of India should have the same.

It is not very surprising that after this Russian influence began to increase in Afghanistan. The Soviet had obtained the right to install her legation in the Afghan capital, and the truth had to be faced that directly or indirectly much hostile propaganda began to filter through into India from that quarter. Lord Chelmsford, speaking on this subject, declared: "The chief danger from Russia is not a Bolshevist invasion, but that they might seek to penetrate by propaganda where they have no power of penetrating by force of arms."

The principal matter with which Lord Chelmsford's name,

in conjunction with that of Mr. Edwin Montagu, the Secretary of State, will be associated is the introduction of the Indian Constitutional Reforms, which were the sequel to the Minto-Morley changes of ten years before. Lord Morley had expressed the hope that the Government of India Bill would keep things quiet for twenty, or possibly thirty, years, and events had moved so rapidly that within half the shorter period a further step forward was being called for in imperative tones. Strength was given to the demand by the services India had rendered, and was still rendering, in the war, of which the conclusion was not at that moment in sight. Under ordinary circumstances the question would have been allowed to stand over till Peace was restored, but it was recognized that the circumstances were exceptional, and that it would not be right to keep the educated and enlightened communities in India waiting in doubt as to whether anything would be done or not to satisfy their expectations, in so far as they were reasonable. The intention to act could be revealed even if the moment for taking action might have to be postponed for the eventuality referred to.

On 20th August, 1917, Mr. Edwin Montagu, speaking as Secretary of State for India, made the following announcement in the House of Commons on behalf of the Government of the day—

"The policy of His Majesty's Government, with which the Government of India are in complete accord, is that of the increasing association of Indians in every branch of the administration, and the gradual development of self-governing institutions, with a view to the progressive realization of responsible government in India, as an integral part of the British Empire. They have decided that substantial steps in this direction should be taken as soon as possible, and that it is of the highest importance as a preliminary to considering what these steps should be that there should be a free and informal exchange of opinion between those in authority at home and in India. His Majesty's Government have accordingly decided, with His Majesty's approval, that I should accept the Viceroy's invitation to proceed to

India to discuss these matters with the Viceroy and the Government of India, to consider with the Viceroy the views of local Governments, and to receive with him the suggestions of representative bodies and others.

"I would add that progress in this policy can only be achieved by successive stages. The British Government and the Government of India, on whom the responsibility lies for the welfare and advancement of the Indian peoples, must be judges of the time and measure of each advance, and they must be guided by the co-operation received from those upon whom new opportunities of service will thus be conferred, and by the extent to which it is found that confidence can be reposed in their sense of responsibility."

Several qualifying conditions were laid down as axioms in this exposition of the Government plan of reforms, and as they appear to have been either overlooked or imperfectly appreciated, it may be as well to enumerate them. In the first place, the solid foundation upon which the whole superstructure of reform was to be erected is stated to be the fact that "India is an integral part of the British Empire." Those extremists who would wish or who are agitating for the separation of India from the British Empire would, therefore, contribute by their own act to the cancelling or withdrawal of all reforms, past, present, or to come. The meaning of the reservations "gradual development," "progressive realization," and "successive stages," is sufficiently obvious, and the concluding qualification that the Government "must be guided by the co-operation received from those upon whom new opportunities of service will thus be conferred, and by the extent to which it is found that confidence can be reposed in their sense of responsibility," should never be put out of sight.

Mr. Montagu proceeded to India, where he remained eight months, and on 22nd April, 1918, the elaborate Report on "Indian Constitutional Reforms," signed by Lord Chelmsford and Mr. Montagu was made public. It is a very remarkable State Paper, but it is only necessary here to summarize the changes that resulted therefrom.

The modifications introduced into the organization of the

India Office were important in their way, although of no spectacular effect. They were to contribute to celerity in the despatch of business, and to the better representation of current Indian thought by men acquainted with the conditions of what may be described as contemporary India. The appointment of Lord Sinha to act as Under-Secretary of State, and the creation of a separate Department under a High Commissioner, whose mission is to look after purely Indian interests outside the political sphere, were both expressive of the desire to make Indians acquainted with the machinery in England for exercising what had been termed Parliamentary control over Indian affairs. Reference has been made to the occasional clashing of the respective powers of the Viceroy in Council, and the Secretary of State. It was laid down that the former is to preserve indisputable authority in matters judged by it to be essential in the discharge of its responsibilities for peace, order, and good government.

Changes in the executive were to be an increase of the Indian element in the Viceroy's Council, the abolition of the existing limit as to its numbers, and power to appoint members of the Legislature to a position analagous to that of Parliamentary Under Secretaries.

With regard to the Legislature, the Viceroy's Legislative Council was to be changed into a Council of State and a Legislative Assembly. The Council of State was to be composed of fifty members, and the elected members were to be equal to the nominated. The Legislative Assembly was to be composed of a hundred members, of whom two-thirds were elected and one-third nominated. The latter in its powers to introduce and discuss bills, and in its freedom of debate might be described as the first step towards providing a Parliamentary institution.

Provincial Governments were to have the widest independence in legislative administration and financial matters compatible with the due discharge of their own responsibilities by the Government of India. The Executive and Legislative Councils were to be constituted on similar lines to those adopted for the Viceroy's. Limited powers of

taxation and borrowing were to be granted to the Provincial Governments.

A Council of Princes was to be formed on a definite and permanent basis. Conferences had been held on several occasions by the invitation of the Viceroy, but it was now held necessary to replace these meetings by a Council of Princes as a permanent consultative body. The Council was to meet at least once a year to discuss matters on an agenda approved of by the Viceroy. The Council was to act as a House of Lords, or perhaps more correctly as an Imperial Diet. The Council was in the regular way to meet by summons, but it had the privilege of suggesting an extraordinary session for matters of exceptional or sudden importance. All Chiefs entitled to the salute of eleven guns were by right to be Councillors, and in addition they were to have the power of nominating Ministers or Dewans to assist with the work of the Standing Committee. It was computed that the number of qualified Princes would be over one hundred.

In the public service any racial disqualifications that might remain were to be abolished, and a fixed percentage of superior posts in the Civil Service was to be reserved for Indians, beginning at thirty-three per cent and increasing annually by one and a half per cent until it reached fifty, or an equality with those from England. Finally, all these changes were to be subjected to review by a commission ten years after the first meeting of the new legislative bodies. The names of the Commissioners thus appointed were to be submitted for the approval of Parliament. Later Commissions with similar powers were to be appointed at intervals of not more than twelve years.

The Report discussed many important matters besides those embodied in the proposals upon which the New India Act of 1919 was framed. It deals with the demand coming from more than one quarter for separate communal representation, similar to that given to the Mahomedans. These requests came from minorities in every sense of the word, which could not be held comparable with the rights of the Mahomedans who formed one-fifth of the population of the

Peninsula. It was granted in the case of the Sikh community alone. Then there was the difficult problem of the rural population generally embodied under the comprehensive term of the ryots, although it includes small landholders and yeomen farmers.

The Report called attention to the fact that, "On the other hand, is an enormous country population, for the most part poor, ignorant, non-politically minded, and unused to any system of elections, immersed indeed in the struggle for existence. The rural classes have the greatest stake in the country, because they contribute most of its revenues, but they are poorly equipped for politics, and do not at present wish to take part in them. They are not ill fitted to play a part in affairs, but with few exceptions they have not yet done so."

In contrast with this picture of the rural class at present but slightly interested, if at all, in political subjects, may be presented that given of what is styled the politically minded portion of the people of India—

"Our obligations to them are plain, for they are intellectually our children. They have imbibed the ideas which we ourselves have set before them, and we ought to reckon it to their credit. The present intellectual and moral stir in India is no reproach, but rather a tribute to our work. The Raj would have been a mechanical and iron thing if the spirit of India had not responded to it. For thirty years the educated Indian has developed in his Congress, and latterly in the Moslem League, free popular convocations which express his ideals. We owe him sympathy. He has made a skilful, and on the whole, a moderate use of the opportunities which we have given him in the Legislative Councils of influencing Government and affecting the course of public business, and of recent years he has by speeches and in the Press done much to spread the idea of a united and self-ruling India among thousands who had no such conceptions in their minds. Helped by the inability of the other classes in India to play a prominent part, he has assumed the place of leader; but his authority is by no means universally acknowledged."

The reception of the Report in India was of a mixed character. The extremists at once declared it to be inadequate and disappointing. That was the inevitable, for no matter what it contained, they would not have been satisfied, or at least they would have continued to agitate and declaim. The Moderates were more than pleased, they were even surprised at the extent of some of the concessions in unexpected directions. The immediate effect of the Report was to divide the Indian National Party into two sections. The Moderates decided to give the new changes a fair trial, the Extremists proclaimed their disagreement and their resolve to continue their opposition. Unfortunately the latter were in the majority, and their aggressiveness intimidated many of the Moderates who had no inclination for heated altercations. Whatever the future might reveal, it was clear at once that the new Constitutional Reforms were not to enjoy at first a fair voyage.

Mr. Gokhale who was certainly the greatest and most clear-minded statesman India has produced during the present century, and whose early death was a great loss to his country, had always preached the doctrine of work rather than words. He had called for the elevation of the depressed classes who have to be brought up to the level of the rest of the people, a doctrine distasteful to the Brahmins. He pleaded for universal elementary education, the higher education of women, the improvement of the economic conditions of the ryots, the extension of industrial and technical education, building up the industries of the country by co-operation, and above all, the promotion of closer relations between the different communities, not excluding the European. All these recommendations relate to practical affairs. They would benefit the country at large and its inhabitants without any distinction. But time, patience, and perseverance are necessary to ripen such a harvest, and those are the qualities in which the ambitious self-seeker, desirous only of being proclaimed a leader, must necessarily be deficient. He throws them aside because they are useless for his purpose. He is in a hurry.

For the working out of the Reforms, so that they may

realize the intentions of those who framed them, and thus bring to pass the next stage in the evolution of India, her leaders are expected to show themselves capable of statesmanship and self-restraint. The work that lies before such patriots is most arduous, and will not be rewarded by a cheaply gained and ephemeral popularity. It demands men who are thinking of their country and their fellow countrymen, and not of themselves, men who have the enduring interests of India at heart. It is true that they must possess courage and fixity of purpose, that they must not fear responsibility, and that they must not shrink from the heavy task of leading their party in the direction that their conscience may dictate.

Apart from the Report, in which he shared the toil of preparation and the burden of responsibility with Mr. Montagu, the Viceroyship of Lord Chelmsford does not present any striking feature for notice. Perhaps the period of the closing half of the war is too near our time to allow of a fair judgment. At all events, it closed with the triumph of the Allies, and in that triumph India could claim her fair share of praise and reward. It was quite clear that a new era was dawning, and even the excesses of the Extremists could not put back the clock. In every country there have been and still are, persons who love agitation for its own sake. But the times in India call for men of a calmer mood, who are not afraid to look facts in the face, and who realize that to rush hastily into the morass of precipitate action will only provoke a catastrophe that may never be retrieved. Dark as the outlook may have appeared on many occasions, discerning persons aver that they are able to perceive the signs of a coming improvement. Reason seems to them to be asserting its legitimate sway in the minds of the mass of the people, although time and patience are still needed to produce any clearly definite results. But as the eventful year 1929 draws nearer, the words of the King-Emperor to "Forgive and Unite," seem to acquire a deeper meaning than ever.

CHAPTER XL

LORD READING'S VICEROYALTY

LORD READING arrived in India on 2nd April, 1921. On his appointment he had used these memorable words as an explanation for his selection "at this solemn juncture of Indian history" to take up the position of the King's representative in India—

"To be the representative of the King-Emperor in India is to be the representative of Justice. I leave the Judicial Bench not forsaking or abandoning the pursuit of justice, but rather pursuing it in larger fields." Justice, he added, was to be combined with legality or, in other words, in accordance with the Laws.

The question of immediate importance was the application of the India Act of 1919, embodying the Chelmsford-Montagu Reforms, which were summarized in the preceding chapter. The reception of the Act in India had not been what was expected by its promoters. Those who welcomed it and appreciated its merits were more or less silent, those who objected to its terms and proclaimed its inadequacy shouted to the housetops and drowned the thin small voice of praise.

The system then introduced was based on equality of work, and responsibility between Europeans and Indians engaged in the Public Services and other departments of the administration. The new system of collaboration was styled dyarchy, to differentiate it from division which had at one time been contemplated—division signifying two separate and distinct administrations, one European, and the other Indian working side by side. It was hoped by investing Indians with a defined amount of authority and responsibility which was to be extended as time went on, that causes of friction would be removed, and that association would bring in its train mutual confidence and lasting concord. To give the Reforms a better chance of influencing

Indian opinion in their favour, the King-Emperor had deputed the Duke of Connaught, in 1920, to preside at the inauguration of the new Councils in his name and on his behalf. Owing, however, to continued manifestations of discontent and disloyalty, it was thought necessary to put off the projected visit of the Prince of Wales.

In face of this situation of anxious uncertainty, Lord Reading resorted to the very unusual course of inviting the principal leaders of the reactionary parties to visit him for the purpose of a friendly discussion. Mr. Malaviya and Mr. Gandhi went to Simla, and had several long interviews with the Viceroy. They must have had some beneficial effect, for Mr. Mahomed Ali and Mr. Shaukat Ali—the leaders of the Mahomedan party at that time acting in concert with the Hindu gentlemen named—issued a public notice expressing their sincere regret for certain speeches that they had made inciting to violence, and giving a solemn public undertaking that as long as they remained associated with Mr. Gandhi they would not deliver any further similar speeches. The immediate object of these private conferences was attained in the marked diminution in incitements to violence.

Lord Reading was led by this momentary success to express the belief that in the end "we shall satisfy the Indians and bring them to sympathetic co-operation and goodwill with us in working for that great purpose which lies before us, viz. to lead India to that high destiny which is in store for it when it becomes the partner in our Empire, when it has attained its full development and risen to those heights which the imagination of man in my judgment is as yet incapable of comprehending, when India shall have obtained that place among the Councils of the Empire, which shall enable her to exert her influence upon the Councils of the World."

Lord Reading always had taken an optimistic view of any situation with which he had been called upon to deal. In one of his speeches he declared pessimism to be a fell disease. In India his hopes were based on the assumption that Indians throughout the whole country, and that the

British, with himself, would all work in unison, and in the closest co-operation for the development of Indian resources, for India's prosperity, so that India might become beyond all doubt contented, prosperous, and happy. He fully recognized that for the realization of his hopes the hearty and effective co-operation of the Indian peoples themselves was essential. As he was working for them so he expected them to work with him. For complete and enduring success no other course would answer. It was uncertain how far the enlightened section of the Indian people had grasped the full significance of their part in the business of cordial co-operation. They were to participate in the efforts for good as well as in its benefits. Had this truth been admitted, and had it established itself in the minds of the general community? The recompense of the future depends very much on the joint efforts and active participation of the governed and the governing, on the British and the Indians working together. Everything lies in that happy and salutary combination.

Lord Reading's relief from anxiety and disappointment was but brief. The forces of discontent and opposition, after a brief pause, resumed their character of active hostility, and were never more pronounced than on the eve of the Prince of Wales's visit during the cold season of 1921–2. The Viceroy felt compelled to give a first warning that the Constitutional Reforms had emanated from the British Parliament, that they were in force under what might be called a limit of time and reason, and that under certain circumstances, which he was most reluctant to contemplate, they might be modified or wholly withdrawn. This statement received confirmation from a declaration made by the Premier (Mr. Lloyd George) in the House of Commons to the effect that " the changes introduced under the Chelmsford-Montagu reforms were in the nature of an experiment. They must be treated as an experiment, a great and important experiment, but still an experiment. It remains to be seen whether a system adapted to Western needs is quite suitable or not for India." When the qualifications referred to in the last chapter are borne in mind,

it will be seen that there was nothing so very startling in this statement which was, moreover, almost self-evident.

But it made the extremists more violently enraged than would have been expected by those who had not appreciated the fact that once the reforms were put in practice their political mission, so far as agitation went, would die a natural death. Lord Reading publicly explained the Premier's statement as signifying a solemn warning to those who might be inclined to pursue a deliberate policy in the Legislature of paralysing the action of the Government by reducing the administration to impotence. He declared that it was directed not at those who would work the reforms, but at those who seemed determined to do their utmost to wreck them. The Premier's words indicate not a change in the policy of the British Government, but the inevitable consequences of mischievous short-sighted and hostile action. Many of those who propose to become members of the Legislature threatened to destroy it, but they seem to overlook the fact that at the same time they will destroy the reformed Constitution. Lord Reading concluded with these grave words—

"I detain you for a moment to point out that in my judgment there is no ground for suggesting that the word 'experiment' denotes a change of policy. I think it requires but a very cursory study of the Reforms, including the Preamble and other parts of the Statute, to realize that the plan adopted was a constitutional experiment. Is it not a perfectly legitimate use of popular language to refer to a new and hitherto untried departure as an experiment? May not every new venture by human beings be properly described as an experiment until it has achieved its object?"

Notwithstanding this wise counsel and these serious admonitions, the extremists formed the majority in the Councils after the elections, and they resorted to systematic obstruction within the Chamber, which, outside the boycott, became the popular manifestation of excited feelings until it was found that it was injurious to material interests. But for two years threats of violence and open revolution were to be heard on all sides, and the practice of



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THE EARL OF READING 536

non-co-operation developed into a system of hostile voting by a majority deaf to remonstrance and to reason. It was openly boasted that the Government when brought to a standstill on the executive side must surrender. It was forgotten that all Governments possess and must continue to possess means of making themselves heeded if they choose to resort to them. The agitators overlooked the Viceroy's reserved powers. That it might be necessary to have recourse to them Lord Reading was very regretfully brought to admit. He said—

"I will not attach undue importance to these threats of violence and revolution, but a vigilant watch will be kept on any such preparations, and I give you my assurance that my Government will make use of all its resources to combat and quell the forces of disorder should they become manifest."

In the course of the year 1923 the situation became more confused and threatening. Mr. Gandhi had to be arrested and imprisoned for inciting his followers to open acts of sedition, and an attempt was made to boycott Lord Reading as a measure of reprisal. This ridiculous intention, which found its chief manifestation at Allahabad, was really self-destructive, for the movement aroused some counter-opposition, and led a few sensible men to point out that, despite all their boasting, the Swarajists had not brought the millennium. Personal attacks on Lord Reading having failed to receive much support outside the inner directing body, they were turned on Ministers in London, and Lord Peel, of all people in the world, was singled out for attack as autocratic and unsympathetic. As compared with either Lord Morley or Mr. Montagu, Lord Peel was the least autocratic Minister who had ever sat in the chair of the Secretary of State in the India Office, and as to his alleged want of sympathy, Lord Reading showed how baseless was the charge—

"I do not understand your description of his position as autocratic, for he is a Minister of His Majesty's Government responsible to the British Parliament. As regards Lord Peel personally, I wish to express my obligation to him for his unremitting efforts thoroughly to understand and weigh

carefully Indian opinion in all questions, and for his unvarying desire to further the best interests of India in every way. The many occasions on which India has had cause for gratitude to Lord Peel are perhaps better known to me than to the public at large."

When Lord Reading arrived in India there was another question of the first importance besides the application of the Constitutional Reforms that awaited his intervention. Mahomedan India was deeply stirred by the misfortunes of the Sultan of Turkey, and resented the harsh terms imposed upon him by the Treaty of Sèvres. This treaty, drafted under the influence and almost at the bidding of Pan-Hellene zealots, was of brutal severity. It deprived the Sultan of all the attributes of sovereign power, it left him a helpless captive in his Palace, and it reduced his territorial possessions in Europe and Asia to the dimensions of a minor vassal State. But it was worse than this, because it was a double breach of faith. It broke the promises given to the Turks themselves when they consented to sign an armistice at a most convenient moment for the Allies. It broke the promise given at the beginning of hostilities with the Sultan in 1914 to the Indian Mahomedans, that nothing should be done with regard to the Sultan and Turkey that would touch their susceptibilities or encroach upon the rights and authority of the potentate whom they regarded as Caliph.

Even before the Treaty of Sèvres was concluded, a mandate was given to Greece to enforce its conditions in Smyrna, Thrace, and the Troad. The barbarities of the Greeks, culminating in the massacre of Smyrna raised no protest. It was generally assumed that the day of the Turks had ended, and that there was no limit to the coming triumph of the Greeks. At least they had made their way to the borders of Anatolia. But, despite their predicament, the Turks refused to ratify the Treaty of Sèvres, and in India and other Mahomedan States the voice of indignant protest grew louder. Even in London, among the members of the Moslem community, and their numerous friends who had always clung to the Turkish alliance since the Crimean war,

there was a loud outcry at the folly as well as the injustice of the terms proposed. The Aga Khan gave faithful expression to these views when he declared, "We ask unitedly for a full revision of the Treaty of Sèvres."

Signs were not long in coming that the repudiation of this severe and impracticable arrangement, as it stood originally, was considered necessary in different directions. The Governments of France and Italy declined to support its enforcement in favour of Greece. Even in the British Cabinet the Moslems had found a firm champion in the person of Mr. Montagu. He and Lord Chelmsford had both persistently represented the views of the Indian Moslems, and supported them to the full extent of their opportunities. Lord Reading took up the subject in the same spirit—

"Since I have been Viceroy I have done the utmost in my power to continue to represent these views to His Majesty's Government. These efforts of the Indian Moslems have not been fruitless. The recent deputation of your fellow countrymen has put the views of Indian Moslems before the Home Government, and as you are aware, this deputation received the most sympathetic consideration and a promise that the Treaty of Sèvres should be modified very much in favour of Turkey. I trust that a just and reasonable Peace may result from the endeavours of the Allied Powers between Greece and Turkey, which will content the Moslems and particularly the Indian Moslems, who constitute so great and important a portion of the population of His Majesty's Empire."

During this earlier period of the controversy the view was generally held that the combatant strength of the Turkish nation had been shattered, and that the Greeks would certainly be able to establish their authority to the farthest limits of their mandate. Success was to cover up everything doubtful or discreditable in their procedure, and the poor Sultan, broken in spirit and power, would be only too glad to accept the small mercies extended to him. The Greek usurpation went on in Europe as well as Asia. Eastern Thrace, with the fine city of Adrianople, passed

into their hands. The Sultan was helpless. No champion seemed likely to present himself for the salvation of the Ottoman State.

The Greeks, under their King Constantine, the ex-Kaiser's brother-in-law, advanced in the summer of 1921 with the intention of overthrowing the government established at Angora. They boasted that they would finish the business begun at Smyrna amid the ruins of Angora, and the first skirmishes strengthened the opinion in European capitals that they were likely to succeed. Just at the moment when their assured triumph was beginning to be proclaimed came news of a different character. The Greeks had met with reverses, they were retreating, and instead of reaching Angora they were compelled to take up a defensive position behind the river Scheria. This had the effect of inducing Britain, France, and Italy to call upon Greece to evacuate Asia Minor, and to leave them to devise some fresh arrangements. This step was taken in March, 1922.

Did the Greeks comply with this request from the three Great Powers of Europe? No, they conceived the dazzling idea that if they captured Constantinople by surprise they would be able to make the Great Powers dance to their music. This was too much for even that "great but eccentric genius," Mr. Lloyd George, and the Greeks were warned off Rodosto, but allowed to resume their attack on Anatolia. On 4th August Mr. Lloyd George in the House of Commons went out of his way to extol the prowess of the Greeks, their marvellous strategy, and despite the orders given in the previous March, upheld their right to Eastern Thrace and Asia Minor. This was no doubt intended to give King Constantine a good send off on his Anatolian raid. Within four weeks of the Prime Minister's extraordinary vaticination, the Greek army was overthrown and routed, and the relics of the force were only able to escape from Smyrna under the guns of the European fleets. The victorious forces of Mustapha Kemal occupied Smyrna, and at the same time pressed on in other directions to the shores of the sea of Marmora. For their part the Greeks gave their great strategist, Constantine, his final dismissal.

The task that then devolved on the British Government was thus duplicated. It had still to satisfy the Indian Moslems, but a more immediate problem was to come to some arrangement with the victor. It was necessary to drop the Greeks and to accept the fact that a stronger force than the decaying power of the Sultan had risen in Turkey. Mustapha Kemal was in overwhelming force on the scene, and it was quite clear that neither France nor Italy would join in any attempt to resist his further progress. An armistice was concluded at Mudania, but the condition imposed by the Angoran conqueror was that the Greeks should evacuate Adrianople and the whole of Eastern Thrace within fifteen days. Thus at one stroke the Greek dreams were shattered in both Europe and Asia, and Hellenic megalomania for that period, at least, received its quietus.

Eighteen months after the signature of the Armistice of Mudania, and with many dubious phases and stormy passages intervening, the Treaty of Lausanne superseded the dropped and discredited arrangement originally concluded at Sèvres. Its ratification by the British Parliament in March, 1924, restored friendly relations between the British Government and the new Moslem power of Angora, and we must all hope that gradually a firm and lasting friendship will be established, recalling the old Anglo-Turkish alliance, which ought never to have been severed.

There was one dramatic incident of this period that cannot be passed over. In March, 1922, when everything was uncertain, the Viceroy in the name of the Government of India, after consultation with all the Provincial Governments, telegraphed to the Secretary of State the three cardinal points demanded by the Moslems of India. They were (1) the evacuation of Constantinople, (2) the suzerainty of the Sultan in the Holy Places, and (3) the restoration of Ottoman Thrace, Adrianople, and Smyrna. These it will be noted were the terms realized by the sword of Mustapha Kemal, but that moment had not arrived when Lord Reading sent off his memorable telegram.

When Mr. Montagu received this communication he

decided to publish it on his own responsibility, for as he said afterwards in his defence, "I had been fully seized of the grave difficulties which have resulted from the Treaty of Sèvres in India, and I felt it to be my duty to do anything in my power to support the Government of India."

The publication made an immense sensation, and this was heightened when it was discovered that the publication had not been made with the definite assent of His Majesty's Ministers. The consequences of what was deemed Mr. Montagu's indiscretion were that he resigned his office, and the Mahomedans of India lost a good and staunch friend. Fortunately, Lord Reading remained to carry on their battle single-handed.

An attempt was made by a very prominent Minister to deny the right of the Indian Moslems to express an opinion about the course to be followed in Thrace, but it was so unquestionable that they had that right, and even without it the resolution, to protest loudly against the flagrant breaches of the Premier's pledges of 1914 and 1918, that no one paid much attention to this querulous complaint. On 26th July, 1923, twenty-five Moslem members of the Imperial Legislature presented an address to Lord Reading in which they gave expression to their feelings of gratitude—

"The general interest evinced by your Excellency ever since you assumed charge of your high office, and the thorough and uniform care taken by the Government of India and Lord Chelmsford to place the Indian Moslem view-point before His Majesty's Government inspired us with the hope in September last when the pro-Greek attitude of the then British Premier (Lloyd George) was creating a crisis in the Near East, that the only constitutional way open to us of successfully helping our Turkish co-religionists was to approach the representative of our august Sovereign. It is our pleasant duty to acknowledge that that hope has been realized.

"We have assembled here to-day to express our deep sense of gratitude to your Excellency and the Government of India on the signing of the Turkish Peace Treaty. The part played by your Excellency and the Rt. Hon. E. S.

Montagu will be gratefully remembered by us and future generations. Throughout a period of stress and storm your Excellency never allowed your sense of true statesmanship to be influenced by the passing events of the day. The telegram of the 28th February, 1922, which embodied the views of the Provincial Governments, including the Ministers, showed how rightly your Excellency's Government had gauged the real situation.

"Its publication was followed by the forced resignation of Mr. Montagu, which gave a shock to our community, no less than to the rest of our countrymen. Good, however, cometh out of evil. The event went a long way in dispelling the atmosphere of distrust and suspicion in which a large section of our co-religionists were working, and they began to realize that whatever might be the attitude of the British Cabinet, your Excellency's Government had wholeheartedly undertaken to champion our cause. It is most fortunate that India had at this critical time, as the head of the Government, a statesman of your Excellency's sympathetic imagination, strong will, and wide experience. The chequered course of events at Lausanne has at times been the cause of great anxiety, but we have reason to believe that during all this period of high tension your Excellency's Government has never relaxed its efforts.

"Your Excellency is aware of the high respect and admiration which the Moslem world entertains for Mustapha Kemal Pasha, whose wonderful genius has brought a glorious victory to the Turkish arms, but if there is one lesson to be taken from history more than another it is that military victory unless followed by true statesmanship snatches away from the hand of the victor the fruit of the victory. We rejoice to think that the Turkish hero combines in himself the qualities of a great general and of a true statesman. The attitude of the Turkish Government under his guidance encourages in us the hope that Turkey and Britain will realize the mutual advantages of the friendly understanding ripening into an Anglo-Turkish *entente*."

The indirect consequences of the Treaty of Lausanne were as beneficial as the direct. A great and terrible war

between Britain and the Turks, which would have brought Soviet Russia into the field at once, and probably the Germans before it closed, was averted, and in India Moslem opinion resumed its natural calm.

The feeling revived that with regard to the internal situation in India it was better for the Mahomedan community to act with the British than with the Hindus. Obstruction in the Councils was gradually being recognized as an exhibition of foolishness, and more than one prominent Mahomedan leader has latterly come forward to support a saner policy and a more dignified attitude. The movement is one that seems certain to spread.

Lord Reading must often have wished that it were possible to find as satisfactory a solution of Hindu unrest as he had found for the removal of Mahomedan doubts and suspicions. But this gratification and fair reward for all his pains and efforts was long denied him. In 1923 an event occurred in the Home sphere which stimulated the seditious movement, and led the Extremist leaders to assure their followers that all they asked for would be granted. The experiment of a Labour Government with a minority in the House of Commons was adopted in consequence of neither of the old Parties possessing a clear majority. It was at once assumed in Swarajist circles that this meant the triumph of their views, for by some curious line of reasoning the Labour Party was credited with the design of abrogating all the standing rules of government, and plunging all the peoples into an ocean of disorder and chaos. They failed to appreciate the fact that, whatever the name of the Party in office, "the King's Government must be carried on." The year 1923 was the stormiest on record, threats of revolution and exhortations to violence resounded on all sides. Mr. Ramsay MacDonald, the new Premier, saw the need of applying a cold douche. On 6th January, 1924, he declared in the House of Commons that "no Party in England is to be cowed by threats of force."

In the course of the year 1924, Mr. Gandhi was released from confinement by the Bombay Government, on the score of ill health. Perhaps reflection had brought some

practical wisdom in its train, for certainly his views seemed to be moderated if not entirely changed. But if Mr. Gandhi had grown more reasonable, there were others to take the place he seemed desirous of quitting. Notwithstanding Mr. MacDonald's warning, strengthened by Lord Olivier's declaration that the policy of the new administration, as of the old, was embodied in the India Act of 1919, the Extremist leaders declared that it would be easy to force the Labour Government into conceding all that the Swarajists asked for, and without delay. In fact, some of them had the boldness to declare that Mr. MacDonald and his Party, despite their words, really wished their hands to be forced. In refutation of this charge Lord Olivier made a fuller and more binding statement. Lord Reading had stated that the British Government, no matter what Party held office, must adhere to certain obvious basic foundations from which no system of regular authority could or would depart. The Extremists were clamouring for a Round Table Conference, and for a statutory commission to consider an immediate extension of the Constitution. To both these demands the Secretary of State in the Labour Cabinet gave an emphatic negative.

India, having recovered from the worst phase of the depression that followed the war and the restoration of peace, is now advancing on all sides towards increased prosperity within her own borders, and increased consideration in the eyes of the world outside them. But she is no more free than other States from the risk of a check and set back, and if that contingency were to present itself it might well be followed in her case by a long period of suspended animation. What is required to avert this great national catastrophe? Political wisdom and self-restraint, and a large measure of that patience which Lord Reading has so often recommended.

During this recent period there have been brought into sharp conflict in Indian political circles two rival and opposing forces—the one styled wreckers or revolutionaries, believing in the efficacy of the Boycott, and advocating the methods of Red Russia. Regardless of the consequences

or the future they demand everything at once, they will not listen to delay, and they seem inclined to risk all they have acquired—and it is much—sooner than allow a little space for reflection and observation. The second force are the men of calm vision and clear judgment, few in numbers, perhaps, but in the long run more likely not merely to gain but to retain the ear and support of the serious minded section of the community. But they have been backward in coming forward, or perhaps they cannot accustom themselves to the blows and rough play of political contests. When they find themselves flouted and their advice unheeded they retire from the fray to concern themselves with their own affairs and interests. But unless they can be braced up to take their part in the struggle, worse things than chagrin and disappointment will befall them, and the country of which they should be the main support. There are signs of a revival of energy and public spirit among those who should form the élite of modern India, and upon whose efforts and example the future of the whole country will depend.

In the beginning of the year 1925, Lord Reading found it necessary to take a brief holiday in England, pending his arriving at a decision to accept the offer of a renewal of his post. His absence necessitated the vacation of the Governor-Generalship, but no fresh nomination was made, and the Earl of Lytton, Governor of Bengal, took over his duties in the interim. At this time the Conservative Party had been restored to power, and the Earl of Birkenhead held the office of Secretary of State for India. Both the Viceroy and Lord Birkenhead felt the need of close consultation about the situation in India, and more especially as to the working so far of the new Constitution. Lord Reading left England early in July on his return to India, and it fell to Lord Birkenhead to make the first official statement on the situation in India at that moment.

In reply to an interrogation by Lord Olivier, the Secretary of State declared that no decisions had been arrived at between either himself and the Viceroy or by the Cabinet. Before any conclusions could be arrived at, it was necessary

to have the opinions of the Government of India and also of the Legislative Assembly. The Secretary of State then went on to remind the House that the reforms of 1919 were extremely bold, and had been decided on in the atmosphere of post-war idealism. The problem was to accommodate Eastern and Western minds to one another, and there was no parallel in history for such a partnership. Has the Constitution succeeded? It has neither entirely succeeded nor entirely failed, that was Lord Birkenhead's judgment; and the implication was that the Constitutional Reforms might have to be pronounced a failure, with the consequence that the system of governing India will have to be reconsidered. In other words, he declared that the whole question would have to pass again through the melting pot. Finally, there was the stern warning to the revolutionaries that there would be no "Lost Dominion" in India until the British Empire itself was splintered in doom.

Lord Reading opened the Legislative Assembly at Simla on 20th August, and taking up Lord Birkenhead's statement he gave point to its meaning in the following words—

"This speech was made after careful study of the problems and after full consideration of the views which I had presented in numerous conferences as the result of my experience in India . . . I look upon the Secretary of State's address as a message of sympathetic encouragement to India, at least to those *who are desirous of advancing to responsible self-government within the British Empire.* If we are to advance towards a solution of our problems we must get rid of the elements of bitterness and suspicion which breed their evil progeny, and try whether a spirit of goodwill may not prove a solvent for the difficulties which have hitherto seemed to defy solution."

Lord Reading went on to say that he had not quite abandoned the hope that a spirit of co-operation might yet be forthcoming from that large section of public opinion which had hitherto stood aloof, and that the political attitude of those who had hitherto declined to shoulder any responsibility might undergo a change. It is also necessary

to remember, he went on to declare, that the re-examination of the Constitution need not occur in any named year, but only when the British Government was persuaded that there had been genuine co-operation by responsible Indian political leaders in working the existing constitution.

The Viceroy's speech was not entirely devoted to the wordy polemics of the political arena. He took up the long neglected development of the agriculture of India, the true basis of the prosperity of her people, and he announced a proposal for the establishment of an All-India agricultural organization which would help towards co-ordinating the activities of the various provincial departments. The currency question was also to be submitted to a specially selected Commission, and the protection of Indian industries, where necessary, by the imposition of a tariff, was also placed on the order of the day. The outstanding feature of this new departure, directing the attention and interest of the country to more essential matters than politics, was the effort it implied to stimulate the opinion, and to attract the support and co-operation of those silent millions whom no other administration prior to the British had thought of benefiting and conciliating.

That an improvement in the political situation might at last be approaching was indicated by the speech made by Mr. Patel on accepting the chairmanship of the Legislative Assembly. He declared that for his part he would spare no effort to work the Constitution with the desire to make it successful, and that, so far as possible, he would not encourage wilful obstruction. If his authority and powers have not equalled his good intentions, he has at least set an example to others. Better progress in the pursuit of political sanity has been more visible in the Provincial Assemblies than in the Imperial, and in Bengal, of all parts of India, the Swarajists have experienced a marked set-back. Several Mahomedan gentlemen have severed their connection with the Swarajists, and one of the most important of them, Sir Abdul Rahman, is endeavouring to form a party pledged to co-operate with the administration.

On 20th January, 1926, Lord Reading addressed the

Indian Legislative Assembly at the opening of its Session in Delhi for the last time, as his departure from India had been definitely fixed for the end of the following March. Notwithstanding the slight gleams of hope elsewhere, the extreme Party was in an unquestionable majority in the Assembly, and still bent on using it for the obstruction of public business and the defeat of Government measures, with the old idea of bringing the administration to a standstill. The tones of Lord Reading's remarks were those of reproach and regret. He said—

"I strove, on my return from England, to persuade the political leaders of India to grasp the hand of friendship and goodwill held out to them, and to abandon the attitude of threat or menace. I sought to convince them that this was the surest and quickest way for India to travel along the road to her ultimate aims and aspirations. To my great regret I must confess that realization has fallen short of the extent of my hopes. So far appeals made with the object of promoting harmony and concord have failed to evoke that clear and definite response from India which should have been unmistakable in its manifestation, and left no room for doubt or ambiguity. A more generous response would, I feel sure, have evoked generous action; the heart of Britain would have been won by the immediate and sympathetic acceptance of the advances she had made, and a new situation would have been created, based upon mutual trust and goodwill . . .

"I had cherished the hope that the attitude of the government would have made a more cogent appeal to the generous minds of India. But it would appear that the opportunity is not to be seized, and that it is to be allowed to lapse. Indeed, in some quarters at least, I gather that the present intention is to reject it. Yet I believe that there is a beginning in the growth of better relations. I wish the evidence had been more marked, but nevertheless I think I have discerned it. I wish it had been more definite, unmistakable, and general. It is my earnest prayer that the hopes to which I still cling may not be disappointed, and that a new era may dawn in Indian progress—an era

of more sympathetic understanding, more widespread trust, and more universal goodwill."

Two events in the closing months of Lord Reading's rule will be long remembered to his credit among patriotic Indians, the foundation of an Indian Royal Navy, and the stand he made to obtain some measure of justice for the Indian immigrants in South Africa. In the latter case, he has at least obtained a respite for calmer reconsideration of the projected new Law. But it cannot be doubted that the position of Indians in other parts of the British Empire must be largely affected by their conduct in their own country, and by their attitude towards their European and other British members of that Empire. They cannot traffic with the enemies of the Empire, and at the same time claim the rights of Imperial citizens. They must take up their position as loyal subjects of the King-Emperor with all the others, if they are to remain within the portals of the Empire on an equal status. It is for them to decide their course, to stand by it, and to reject all the insidious teaching of the emissaries of Red Russia, which can only lead to their loss, and probably ruin.

The time is too short to attempt to assign Lord Reading's exact place among the Viceroys of the last half-century. But one thing is certain. None of them came on a mission with greater sympathy in his task. He brought in his hands a gift, the carrying into practice of the new Indian Act, which embodied the Chelmsford-Montagu Reforms. Those reforms were, as Lord Birkenhead declared, extremely bold. The extremists denounced them as inadequate, but if a referendum could have been made to English opinion they would have been pronounced excessive and premature, and if it were possible to imagine that the hitherto ungrateful and ungracious attitude of the Swarajist groups is to continue, then a curtailment and not an extension of those self-governing privileges might be surely anticipated.

Lord Reading came to India, in his own words, to uphold Justice and to enforce Legality, which is obedience to the laws. He was patient and long-suffering. He declared that he was averse to the employment of force, and he

showed it. The sedition-monger and the agitator became lulled in the belief that whatever they did or said he would not strike. He gave warnings, he repeated them, and then he struck his blow. Gandhi, the Mahatma, the supposed idol of his followers, was arrested and thrown into prison. Not a blow was struck on his behalf, the warlike Bengalis, despite their threats, acted like a pack of sheep, and a discerning Moslem uttered the pregnant phrase, "Gandhi was clapped in jail and not a dog barked!"

Those who love their country, who wish to see her deserve to attain the status of a Dominion, will often turn to Lord Reading's speeches for wise counsel. He set before them the merit of patience above all things, for the mixed conditions of Indian society do not allow of any immediate comprehensive establishment of self-government on Western lines. He called upon them to co-operate with and not to obstruct or reject the efforts made by the British Parliament to gratify their aspirations. He bade them remember that the reserved force retained by every Government was adequate to maintain order, and punish those who disturbed it. Lord Reading gave an example of firmness in execution, as well as of beneficence in intention, from which it will be found that in neither respect can any of his successors depart.

INDEX

ABDALI tribe (Barukzais), 147
Abdul Kudus Khan captures Herat, 370
—— Rahman, Sir, 548
Abdullah Jan, Shere Ali's son, 313
—— Jan's mother, dubious story, 353; her previous offer, 354
Abdurrahman Khan, Afzul's son, flees to Bokhara, 299; Kabul massacre story, 353; return of, 358; occupies Balkh, etc., *ib.*; negotiations with Lepel Griffin, 359–64; helped, 364; doubts about, 368; and Ayoob, 369–70; a shrewd bargainer, 370; need of money, 371; granted a fixed subsidy, *ib.*; invited to India, 378; takes Penj-deh calmly, 379; and Lord Dufferin, 379–82; Ishak's rebellion, 383; objects to Roberts's mission, 425; letter to Lord Salisbury, *ib.*; improved situation, 426; and Sir H. M. Durand, 430–2; and Mittai, 434; invitation from Queen Victoria, 435; death of, 445; succeeded by his son, Habibullah, *ib.*
Abercrombie, General Sir John, in Egypt, 77; takes the Mauritius, 81
Abkari (excise), 220
Abul Fazl, 17
Abyssinia, expedition to, 302; a complete success, 303; cost debited to India, *ib.*
Achin, in Sumatra, 29
Achmuty, General Sir S., commands Java expedition, 82; wins battle of Cornelis, 83
Addiscombe, 201
Aden, 330
Adoption, fully recognized, 285. See Chapter XVI
Aeroplanes bomb Kabul, 524
Afghanistan, Baber, 15; events in, 127; rival claimants in, 298–9; Russian officers in, 349; Shere Ali under their influence, 350; Afghanistan (*contd.*)—
repulse of Chamberlain mission, *ib.*; war ensues, 351; occupation continued, 355; need of definite policy towards, 365; anxiety about, 513; Germans and Turks, 514; Amir staunch, *ib.*; succession scenes in, 523
Afghan disasters, the, described, 154
Legations, 525
Afridis, close the Khyber, 435; defeated, 436
Afzul Khan flees from Gujerat, 182; his narrow escape, 183; death of, 298
—— ud Dowla (Nizam), 273
Aga Khan heads delegation to Viceroy, 484; demands revision of Treaty, 539; Mr. Gokhale, 521
Agra, Mogul capital, 3, 15, 17, 18, 71, 73, 74; workmen of, 452
Agriculture in India, 548
Agricultural population in hands of moneylenders, 416
—— Chemists' Department, 416
Ahmedabad, 5, 482
Ahmed Shah founds Durani dynasty, 48; conquers Punjab and Kashmir, *ib.*; crosses the Sutlej, *ib.*; opposed by Marathas, *ib.*; great victory at Panipat, 48–50
Ain-i-Akbari, 17
Aix-la-Chapelle, Treaty of, 32
Ajait Sing, 482
Ajmere, 5, 20; Lord Mayo at, 315; Mayo College, 319
Akbar, Emperor, restores Mogul fortunes, 16; conciliates the Rajputs, 17; his Ministers, *ib.*; interest in England, *ib.*; rule described, 18–9.
—— Khan (Dost's son) as Afghan leader, 149; his character, *ib.*; his ability, 150; negotiates with Macnaghten, 151; feigns co-operation, 152; murders Macnaghten, *ib.*; his English

Akbar Khan (*contd.*)—
prisoners, 154; defeated at Jellalabad, 157; battle of Tezeen, 161; his prisoners safe, 162
Aldworthe, Nicholas, 12
Alemandaw Queen, the, Burma, 391; her daughter, *ib.*; perpetrate a massacre, *ib.*
Alexandra, H.M. Queen, 447
Aligarh University, 451
Ali Imam, Syed, Executive Council, 497
—— Kadr, Nawab, 46
—— Musjid, 161, 350, 351
—— Verdi Khan, 39
Aliwal, battle, 174
Allahabad, 61; occurrences at, 249; attempt to boycott Lord Reading, 537
Alompra, Emperor, 84
Alum Bagh, 262, 263, 264
Amanullah becomes Amir, 524; first proclamation, *ib.*; ties with Russia, *ib.*; burns his fingers, 525; Mr. Dobbs's mission, *ib.*; a strange turn, *ib.*
Amarapura, 191, 192
Amazon River, discovery of, 5
Amban at Lhasa, Chinese, 460
Ambar, 33
Amboyna, 3; massacre of, 6 [72
Ameer Khan surprises detachment,
—— —— (of Tonk), 294
American War of Independence, 37
Amherst, Earl of, Governor-General, 84; war with Burma, 85–7
Ampthill, Lord, Madras, 453; acting Viceroy, *ib.*
Amritsir, riots at, 523; suppressed, *ib.*
Amrut, Baji Rao's brother, 68
Anarchist Case, the Great, 483–4
Andamans, convict station in, 320; need of reforms, *ib.*; Lord Mayo's murder, 321
Anderson, Lieut., murdered, 179
Anglicists, the, 118
Anglo-Russian Commission, an, 372; another, 432
Angria, pirate chief, 65
Anne, Queen, 89
Anson, General Sir George, 242, 247
Amwar-ud-Din, 28, 30
Arabic, 117
Arakan, 87
Archaeology, Director-General of, 452
Architecture, Mogul, 20, 21
Arcot, question of succession at, 33; defence of, 34
Argaum, battle, 70
Argyll, Duke of, 307, 325, 326
Ariakuram, 32
Armagon, 6
Army, reorganization, 419; warlike races selected, 420
Arni, battle, 34
Arq, at Kabul, 431
Artillery, Mogul, 22
Ascension, 3
Asmar, 431
Asquith, Mr., and Lord Kitchener, 502; letter from the King, 507
Assam, 84, 85, 87
and Eastern Bengal, 468; new province, 469; separated, 504
Assaye, fierce battle, 70
Attock, 188
Auckland, Lord, appointed Governor-General, 132; relief works for famine, 133; sends Burnes to Kabul, 134; takes up Shah Shuja, 136; lack of motives, 138; issues Simla manifesto, *ib.*; soft as putty, 139; in the hands of the Politicals, *ib.*; decides to continue Afghan adventure, 142; leaves Macnaghten to decide, 145
Aungier, Gerald, 12
Aurangzeb, Emperor, and the English in Bengal, 9; receives Norris, 11; deposes his father, 21; becomes emperor, 22; his wars, 22–23; angry with Hindus, 23; completes Mogul conquest of India, *ib.*; and the English, 24; death, 25; a long peace, 39.
Australia, not like India, 516
Austrian succession, war of, 28
Autobiography, Amir's, 379; tribute to Lady Dufferin, 383
Ava, 87, 190, 396
Avitabile, General, 173
Ayerst, Lieut., murdered, 439
Ayoob Khan, at Herat, 356; advances on Kandahar, 360; victory at Maiwand, 361; defeated

Ayoob Khan (*contd.*)—
by Roberts, 363; escapes to Herat, *ib.*; his campaign against Abdurrahman, 369–70; flees to Persia, *ib.*; end in India, *ib.*
Azim Khan, Amir, 298; dies, 299

BABER, Emperor, early career of, 14; invades India, 15; death, *ib.*; his memoirs, *ib.*
Bagdad, battle, 47; Great War, 521
Bagyidaw, king of Burma, 190; sends envoy to Calcutta, *ib.*; insane, 191; deposed, *ib.*
Bahawalpur, Nawab of, 180, 258
Baillie, Col., severe defeat by Hyder Ali, 55
Baird, Sir David, released by Tipu, 56; at Seringapatam, 59; captures Cope, 81
Baiza Bai-Gwalior, 169
Bailly Guard Gate, the, 257
Baji Rao I, 63
—— Rao II, Peshwa, 67; seeks English support, *ib.*; restored, 68; shifty views, 69; forms anti-English league, 75; defeated, 76; long pursuit and capture, *ib.*; last of the Peshwas, *ib.*; dies, 210; adopts Nana Sahib, 211
Bala Hissar at Kabul, 141, 142, 148, 149, 150; partly destroyed, 355
Balaji I, 63
—— II, 63
Balfour, Lord, quoted, 515
Bamian Pass, 142
Banda, 3
Bandula, Burmese commander, 85; killed, 86
Bannu, 179
Bantam, House of Trade at, 3
Bappooji Sindhia, 72, 73
Barisal, 469
Barlow, Sir George, modifies terms to Holkar, 74
Barnard, General, optimistic, 242; in command, 247; at Delhi, 257; death, 259
Barodia, 268
Barrackpur, troops at, 240; trouble at, 241
Barrow, General Sir E., 473
Barukzai family (Afghan), 129; dynasty, still reigning, 162
Bassein, 64, 66
—— Treaty, 67
Bastille, the, 30, 35
Batavia, 82
Batta, meaning of word, 103; halved, 104
Beaconsfield, Earl of, appoints Lord Mayo viceroy, 305; justifies his selection, *ib.*; appoints Lord Lytton viceroy, 336; his second surprise, *ib.*; his telegram, 338; proposes addition to sovereign's titles, *ib.*; Empress of India, 339 summons Indian troops to Malta, 343; resigns, 359
Beas, River, 175
Begum, title, 339
—— Kothi, slaughter in the, 266
Behmeru, 150
Belgium, German violation of, 516
Benares, 15, 76, 249
——, Raja of, 61
Bengal, 6; described as "the best flower in the Company's garden," 10; its Nawab Nazim, 39; administration passes to the Company, 46; permanent settlement, 105; Army and *sati*, 112, 113, 114; education, 171; zemindars and ryots in, 301; fixed rents and free contracts, *ib.*; famine in, 324; Tenancy Bill, 384–5; its excessive size as administrative unit, 467; its Partition, 468; Partition agitation, 479–80; Partition cancelled by King George, 504; separation of Bihar, etc., 505; becomes a Presidency, 510
Bengal-Assam line, 417
Benson, Colonel, 191
Bentinck, Lord William, and renewal of charter, 98–9; early career, 100; Governor of Madras, *ib.*; Vellore Mutiny, 101; in Sicily, *ib.*; operations in Spain, 102; in Italy, *ib.*; refuses Madras, *ib.*; appointed Governor-General, 103; his instructions, *ib.*; reduces batta, 104; effects economies, *ib.*; opium arrangement, 105; puts down Thugs, 106–8; abolishes *sati*, 108–14; his Minute, 114; "washes out a foul stain," 115; reforms

Bentinck (*contd.*)—
administration, 116; assisted by Macaulay, 119–20; raises status of natives, 122; freedom of the Press, *ib.*; efforts for progress, 123; acts in Mysore, 125; occupies Coorg, 126; Runjit Sing, 127; Shuja-ul-Mulk, 128; Simla, 129; Darjeeling, 130; steam navigation, *ib.*; on position in India, 232–3
Berars, cession demanded, 218; temporary assignment, 219
Berhampore, 240, 241
Berlin Conference, peace in Europe, 350
Bertie, Admiral, 81
Betwa, river, 269
Bhagirathi, 42
Bhairam Khan, 16
Bhamo, seized by Chinese, 393; occupied, 397
Bhonsla, the, 64; joins Sindhia, 69; peace with, 74; Fund, 210
Bhopal, Mahomedan State, 75; loyalty of, 261; contingent, 268; Begum of, and Prince's visit, 332
Bhutan, trouble with, 297; treaty cancelled, *ib.*; fresh treaty, 298; and Tibet Treaty, 460
Bihar, Sur dynasty in, 15
—— and Orissa, 505, 510
Bijapur kingdom, 22, 23
Bird, Mr. R. M., 105
Birkenhead, Earl of, declaration by, 547
Bithoor, 251, 256
"Black Hole," the, 40
Black Mountain, trouble in, 404
Blood, Sir Bindon, campaign in Swat, 435
Board of Control created, 90
Boigne, de, French general, 68
Bokhara, 143
Bolan Pass, 140, 160
Bombay, Charles II, 6; sovereignty, 7; its cramped position, 64; and the Marathas, 64–5; Prince of Wales, 331; anti-plague measures, 438–9
Bombay-Burma Trading Co., fined, 395
Boorhanpore peace, 71
Boscawen, Admiral, 31, 32
Bourquin, 52
Boycott, a, 480
Brasyer's Sikhs, 255
Bright, Mr. John, 372, 496
Broach, 74
Broadfoot, Major George, preparations at Jellalabad, 156; overrules Sale, *ib.*; opposes surrender, 157; brings Sale round to his views, *ib.*; defeats Afghan attacks, *ib.*; Agent at Lahore, 172
Brodrick, Mr. (Earl of Midleton), and Tibet, 462; modifies treaty, *ib.*; Kitchener-Curzon difference, 470–4
Broughton, Dr. Gabriel, and Shah Jehan, 8–9
Browne, Sir Samuel, 351
Brydon, Dr., 154, 156
Buckingham and Chandos, Duke of, 331
Budge Budge, incident at, 509
Budlee-ka-serai, battle, 248
Bunas, river, 73
Bundelkhand, famine in, 297
Burke, Edmund, 61
Burma, early relations with, 84; first war, 85–7; internal troubles in, 392–3; annexed, 397; seven years' jungle warfare, 397–8; boundaries fixed with Siam, France, and China, 398; raised to Lieut.-Governorship, 398; judicial Code introduced, *ib.*; Legislative Council, *ib.*; High Court, 399; civil administration, *ib.*; garrison, *ib.*; military and civil police, *ib.*; rice, 400; teak, *ib.*; possibilities in Western China, *ib.*; China's pretensions compromised, 403
Burmese, character of the, 88, 400; encroach on India, 190
War, third. See Chap. XXIX
Burne, Sir O. T., present at Lord Mayo's murder, 321
Burnes, Alexander, mission to Lahore, 127; visits to Kabul, 134; murdered in Kabul, 148
Burney, Colonel, Resident at Ava, 190–1
Burrows, General, advance to Girishk, 361; retreats, *ib.*; defeated at Maiwand, 361

Bukherut Gungee, 256
Busra, Turks defeated, 513
Bussy, at the Court of the Carnatic, 35; joins Lally, 36; quarrels with Lally, *ib.*; taken prisoner, 37; death of, 38, 52
Buxar, battle, 46, 220

Calcutta, factory, 6; a commercial city, 340; the Maidan of, 405; riots, 481; historical pageant, 507
—— College, 118
—— University, 418, 475
Calpee, 268; taken, 268
Cambay, Gulf of, 4, 5
Campbell, Sir Archibald, 85
——, Colin (Lord Clyde), at Chillianwala, 181; at Gujerat, 182; and the Sikh soldiers, 183; as Commander-in-Chief, 262; first advance on Lucknow, 263; relieves garrison, 264; historic meeting with Outram and Havelock, *ib.*; return to Cawnpore, *ib.*; defeats Tantia, 265; prepares to attack Lucknow, *ib.*; his caution, 266; restrains Outram, *ib.*; failure of his plan, 267
——, Sir George, Bengal famine, 324
——, Brigadier, cavalry at Lucknow, 267
Campbell-Bannerman, Sir Henry, Prime Minister, 479
Canada and its Governor-General, 291; not like India, 516
Canals for irrigation, 297
Canning, Viscount (afterwards Earl), Governor-General, 235; speech, *ib.*; sends expedition to Persian Gulf, 236; treaty with Dost Mahomed, *ib.*; introduces uniform conditions of service, 238; rejects Anson's proposal, 242; fails to appreciate danger, *ib.*; refuses to enrol Volunteers, *ib.*; confiscation in Oudh, 243; weakness of, 244; orders Delhi to be retaken, 247; vetoes John Lawrence's proposal, 258; doubts about transfer, 277; appointed the first Viceroy, 279; proclamation to Oudh, 281; reply to Queen's letter, *ib.*; criticized by
Canning (*contd.*)—
Lord Ellenborough, 282; does not resign on public grounds, *ib.*; Durbar at Lucknow, 283; speech to the Taluqdars, 284; full recognition of adoptions, 285; durbars at Umballa, etc., 286; efforts at reconciliation, *ib.*; finances, 287; his calmness and clemency, 288; Wilson's tribute, 289; loses his wife, *ib.*; broken in health, returns home, 290; farewell address, *ib.*; death, *ib.*
, Lady, death of, 289; buried at Barrackpur, *ib.*
——, George, statesman, 235
Cantonment, outside Kabul, 150; evacuated, 153
Cape of Good Hope, taken from the Dutch, 81, 84
Carnac, Major, 48
Carnatic, Nawabs of, 211–12
Caron, French Governor, 26
Cartridge question, 239
Cashmere, independent State by Gulab Sing, 175; troops in Chitral, 433
—— Gate (Delhi), 259
Castlereagh, Viscount, 163
Catalonia, 101
Cavagnari, Sir Louis, treaty of Gandamak, 352; sent to Kabul, 353; massacred, 354
Cavenagh, Colonel Orfeur, prompt action, 241
Cavendish, Lady Dorothy, 100
——, Thomas, navigator, 1
Cawnpore, situation at, 251; massacre, 252–3; Windham at, 264; worsted by Tantia Topi, 265; second battle of, *ib.*
Census in India, first, 319
Central India, situation in, mutiny, 260
Chakdara, 435
Chalt, 424
Chamberlain, Sir Neville, Delhi, 260; in Umbeyla war, 294; mission to Kabul, 350; repulsed, *ib.*; inquiry into Kabul massacre, 367
Chanda Sahib, 33; at Arcot, 34; defeated, *ib.*
Chandernagore, 26; Clive takes, 41
Chandni Chowk at Delhi, 507

Chandoo Lall, Minister at Hyderabad, 218
Chandra, 294
—— Shamsher Jung, Sir, Maharaja of Nepal, 506; war services, 514
Changama, 52
Charasiah, battle, 354
Chardeh Valley, 357
Charikar, 150
Charles I, 10
—— II, and Bombay, 6; renews licence, 10
Charnock, Job, 9
Chatham, Earl of, 12
Chelmsford, Lord, ex-Governor of two Australian States, 519; part in the war, *ib.*; receives a memorandum, etc., 520; end of war in sight, 521; precautionary measures against sedition, 522; the Rowlatt Report, *ib.*; new powers *ib.*; nature of danger from Russia, 525; co-operates with Mr. Montagu, 525–6; their Report, 527; close of his term, 532
Chenab, river, 294
—— Canal Colony, grievances removed, 482
Child, Sir John, the first "Governor-General," 13
——, Sir Josiah, 13
Chillianwala, desperate battle at, 181–2
Chin Hills, 398
China, trade with, 90; its profitable nature, 93; thrown open, *ib.*; expedition diverted to Calcutta, 261; war and peace, 291; Treaty of Tientsin, 292; Convention of Peking, *ib.*; on the Pamir, 432; and Tibet, 455, 460, 463, 464
Chinhat, battle, 254
Chini-ka-Roza, 452
Chinsura, 44
Chittagong, 84, 466, 469
Chitral, affairs in, 433; rivals, *ib.*; siege of Residency, *ib.*; successful defence by Mr. Robertson, *ib.*; annexed, 434
Chota Nagpore, 505
Christ Church, Oxford, 291
Christianity, rumours, 239
Chumbul, river, 73, 170
Churchill, Lord Randolph, invites foreign officers to India, 388
Chuttanuttee, 6, 9. See Calcutta
Cis-Sutlej Chiefs, right of adoption, 286
Civil Service, first ratio for Indians, 344
Clerk, Sir George, 206
Clive, Robert, early career of, 31; seizes Arcot, 33; defends it, 34; his victories, *ib.*; destroys Dupleix city, 35; returns home, *ib.*; in Bengal, 36; hastens to Bengal, 40; takes Chandernagore, 41; and Omichand, 41–2; Plassey, 42–3; receives Jaghir, etc., 44; defeats the Dutch, 45; receives Mir Jaffir, *ib.*; returns to England, *ib.*; final return to India, 46; obtains the Dewanni, *ib.*; contrasts Marathas and Hyder Ali, 51
Colbert, French statesman, 26
Colvin, Mr. Russell, 120
Commander-in-Chief in India, new status, 470; and Viceroys, *ib.*
Company's European Army, insubordination of, 284; discharged, 285
Connaught, Duke of, represents King Edward at Delhi, 447; inauguration of new Councils, 534; Duchess of, represents Queen Alexandra, 447
Constantine of Greece extolled by Mr. L.-George, 540; vanquished and expelled, *ib.*
Coorg, annexed, 126
Coote, Eyre, wins battle of Wandiwash, 37; at Plassey, 42; defeats Hyder Ali at Porto Novo, 55–6
Cornelis, battle, 83
Cornwallis, Marquis of, attacks Tipu, 57; alliance with Marathas and Nizam, *ib.*; imposes terms of peace, 58; second time Governor-General, 74; dies, *ib.*; Bengal Permanent Settlement, 105
Coromandel coast, 6
Coronation Durbar, Imperial, 503–6
Corunna, 101
Cossimbazar, 39

Cotton, General, 86
—— manufactures and India, 327; duites repealed, 343
Court, General, 173
Courtens Association, 10
Crewe, Marquis of, first Secretary of State to visit India, 503
Criminal Jurisdiction Bill, the Ilbert Bill, 374; agitation against, 375; modified, *ib.*
—— Law Emergency Bill (No. 2), 522
Cromwell grants a new Charter, 10
Cuddalore, 32
Curzon of Kedleston, Lord (afterwards Marquis), his travels and training, 441; appointed Viceroy, *ib.*; first speech at Bombay, 442; confronted by famine, *ib.*; his extensive measures, 443; plague spreads, 444; forms N.-W. Frontier Province, 444–5; sends Sir Louis Dane to Kabul, 446; summary, *ib.*; Proclamation of Coronation Durbar, 447; brilliant oration, 448; Victoria Memorial Hall, 450; the National Congress, *ib.*; preserver of Indian monuments, 452–3; visit to England, 453; great speech at Guildhall, 454; the Tibet mission, 458; advance to Lhasa, 459; commercial advantages, 462; second period, 466; Partition of Bengal, 466–8; his contemplated reforms, 469; tribute to Lord Kitchener, 469; difference with him, 470–3; difference with Mr. Brodrick, 473–4; resigns, 474; his work, 474–5; his last speeches, 475–7; his parting riddle, 477

Dacca, 466, 469; disturbances, 481
D'Ache, Admiral, 36
Dada Khasgi-wala, 169
Dadpur, 43
Daendels, Marshal, 81
Da Gama and Cape route, 1
Dalai Lama, sends envoy to Russia, 455; his wish, 456; flight, 460; visits Peking, 464; return to Lhasa, *ib.*; flees to India, *ib.*; again at Lhasa, *ib.*
Dalhousie, Earl of (afterwards Marquis), his record, 177; the youngest Governor-General since Clive, *ib.*; the second Sikh War, 180; hastens to the scene, *ib.*; realizes peril, 182; insists on vigorous conduct of the war, *ib.*; annexes the Punjab, 184; forms Board, *ib.*; sends the best men to the Punjab, 185; vigorous measures, *ib.*; his military precautions, 186; his peremptory orders, *ib.*; abolishes Board for Chief Commissionership, 189; takes up Burmese question, 192; sends ultimatum, 193; declares war, *ib.*; second ultimatum, 195; his views, 197; annexes territory occupied, *ib.*; holds Upper Burma in the hollow of his hand, 199; Sikhim affair, 200; Sattara lapse, 206; Jhansi case, 207; Bhonsla family, 208–9; differs with Company, 210; Baji Rao, 211; Carnatic family, *ib.*; his views on adoption, 214; the Rajput States, *ib.*; exempts Kerowli, 215; the Berars, 217–19; Oudh, 220–7; his administration, 228; broken health, 229; life given to India, 230; advocates treaty with Amir, 300
Damaun, 105
Damodar, hanged, 439; brothers hanged, 440
Dane, Sir Louis, mission to Kabul, 446
Daoud Shah, 353
Dardanelles opened, 521
Dargai, Gordons at, 436
Darjeeling, 129
Davidson, Colonel, 220
Decaen, General, 80–1
Deccan Commission, 416
Deig, battle, 74
Delhi, taken by Baber, 15; sacked by Nadir Shah, 47; Maratha garrison in, 64; British garrison in, 71; defended by Ochterlony, 73; King of, representing Mogul Emperors, 243; seized by mutineers, 246; Europeans massacred, *ib.*; magazine episode, *ib.*; siege of, 257; bombarded,

Delhi (*contd.*)—
259; stormed, 260; brilliant scene at, 333; selection for Durbars, 340–1; Proclamation Edward VII Durbar, 447–8; Coronation, George V, 503–6; capital transferred to, 504; the new, 506
Denison, Sir Wm., letter to Shere Ali, 299
Deported persons, sentences annulled, 498
Dera Ghazi Khan, 179
Derby, Earl of (Premier), 278; the Royal Proclamation, 279
Devonshire, Duke of (4th), 100
Dewangiri, plundered, 297
Dewanni, Imperial Firman ceding the, 46
Dhar, Powars of, 453
Dhulip Sing, placed on gadi, 172; deposed and pensioned, 184
Dinapore, mutiny, 256
Dinkar Rao, Sindhia's Minister, 270
Dir, Khan of, 433
Disraeli, Mr. See Beaconsfield, Earl of
Diu, 105
Donabeu, 86
Dorjieff, and his mission, 456–7; flight, 460
Dost Mahomed, defeats Shah Shuja, 129; Burnes's good opinion of, 134; wants Peshawar, 135; flees into Turkestan, 141; returns, 143; fails in Bamian Pass, *ib.*; voluntary surrender, 144; sent to India, *ib.*; released and restored as Amir, 162; death of, 298
Dowlut Rao Sindhia, 67; his army, 68; objects to Treaty of Bassein, *ib.*; forms a league, *ib.*; defeated by Lake, 71; makes peace, *ib.*; ratifies treaty, 74; death of, 169
Downton, Capt. N., defeats Portuguese, 4; epitaph, 5
Drake, Sir Francis, 1
Dravid, brothers, murdered, 440
Dudley, Sir Robert, 2
Dufferin, Earl of (afterwards Marquis), declines Bombay, 377; appointed Viceroy by Gladstone, *ib.*; takes up Afghan question, *ib.*; invites Abdurrahman to India, 378; news of Penjdeh, *ib.*; conference at Rawul Pindi, 380; describes Amir, 380–2; describes the Durbar, 382; Amir on, 383; Amir's request, 384; Bengal Tenancy Bill, *ib.*; evictions in Oudh, 386; support of Secretary of State, *ib*; land question in the Punjab, 387; and Lord Roberts, 388; third Burmese War, 390; ultimatum to King Thibaw, 395; war begins, *ib.*; annexes Upper Burma, 397; a remarkable achievement, 400; official visits to feudatory States, 401; on the Taj, 402; praises Indian princes, 403; Tibet mission, *ib.*; a diplomatic solution, *ib.*; restores Gwalior Fort to Sindhia, 404; Queen Victoria's Jubilee, *ib.*; advocates co-operation, 405; interest in National Congress, 406; his warning, 407–8; measures the forces operating in India, 408–9; the falling exchange, 409; letter of resignation to the Queen, 411; raised to Marquisate, 412; his grace and dignity, *ib.*; appointed Ambassador to Italy, *ib.*
——, Countess of, Amir's tribute to, 383; founds "the National Association for Female Medical Aid to the Women of India," 409–10; receives deputation of purda-nashin ladies, 410–11; "The Countess of Dufferin's Fund," 411
Dundas, Mr. (Lord Melville), 278
Dupleix, at Chandernagore, 26; transferred to Pondicherry, 27; his policy, *ib.*; desire to make France supreme, 29; repudiates convention, 30; retains Madras, *ib.*; his successes, 31; his new policy, 32; his private war, 33–35; death of, 35
"Dupleix Fattehabad" destroyed by Clive, 35
Durand, Sir Henry, quoted, 144–5
——, Sir H. Mortimer, 425, 427, 429; mission to Kabul, 429–30; the new frontier, 431; spheres of influence, 432

*Durand frontier, a heavy responsibility, 434
Durani Monarchy, 127, 134; end of the, 161
Durbars, petitions at, 19
Durbar, Empress described, 341–2; Edward VII, 447–8; George V, 503–6
Dutch and English, the, 1–8
——, the, 2, 44; their expedition crushed by Clive, 45
Dwarakanath Tagore, 109
Dyarchy, 533

East Africa, 521
East India Company, its beginning, 2; acquires a factory at Surat, 5; concentrates on India, 6; acquires Bombay, etc., *ib.*; tenure of Bombay, 7; its new policy, 7–8; fight for its rights, 9; its early charters, 10; its rival, 11; becomes the United East India Company, *ib.*; its early representatives, 12; views on Bengal, 39; obtains the administration of Bengal, 46; and Burma, 84; its charter, 89; monopoly of trade with India and China, *ib.*; Parliament intervenes, 90; Board of Control created, *ib.*; first renewal, *ib.*; second renewal, 91; third renewal, *ib.*; China trade monopoly withdrawn, 92; further limitations, 93–5; its stock, etc., 95–6; its record, 99; their servants vetoed for Governor-Generalship, 132; anxious about Afghan adventure, 145; renewal of charter in 1853, 200–2; limits right of adoption, 204; transfer to the Crown, 277
Eden, Mr. Ashley, signs treaty in Bhutan, 297
Edinburgh, Duke of, visits India, 328
Edward VII, H.M., succeeds to the Throne, 447; message to India, 448–9; tribute to Indian troops, 489
Edwardes, Herbert, hastens to Mooltan, 179; baffles Moolraj, 180; opposes Peshawar surrender, 258
Egypt, Anglo-Indian expedition to, 77
Elephants, characterized by Hawkins, 18
Elgin, Earl of (father), Viceroy, 291; Jamaica, Canada, China, *ib.*; proceeds to China, 292; finds Canning's appeal at Singapore, *ib.*; diverts troops for China to Calcutta, *ib.*; from Hongkong to Calcutta, *ib.*; treaty of Tientsin and Peking, *ib.*; his foreboding, 293; war in Umbeyla, 293–4; bad health, 294; dies at Dhurmsala, 295
Elgin, Earl of (son), selected as Viceroy, 429; the second holder of his name, *ib.*; looks forward to a peaceful term, 430; frontier troubles all the time, 436; widespread famine, 437; plague appears, 438; seditious agitation, 439; general goodwill and respect, 440
Elizabeth, Queen, signs Royal Charter, 2; interest, 17
Ellenborough, Lord, on Afghan disasters, 154; on Jellalabad garrison, 158; orders Pollock to advance to Kabul, 160; leaves Nott a free hand, *ib.*; appointed Governor-General, 163; his early career, *ib.*; three times President Board of Control, 164; arrives in India, *ib.*; his secrecy, 165; offends the Press, *ib.*; interference in Native States, 167–8; his Minute of 1843 a new departure, 168; action in Gwalior, 169; accompanies the army, 170; recalled, *ib.*; criticizes Canning, 278; his view overruled, 279; resigns, *ib.*
Elles, General Sir E., 471, 473
Elliott, Sir Charles, 346
Elphinstone, General, in command at Kabul, 148; unnerved, 150; calls for immediate retreat, 152; precipitate retreat, 153; prisoner, 154; orders surrender of Jellalabad, 156; of Kandahar, 158; death, 162
Elphinstone, Lord, Governor of Bombay, 267; his firmness, *ib.*;

Elphinstone (*contd.*)—
prepares troops for Central India, 268
Emden, damage done by, 511; sunk, *ib.*
Enfield rifle, 238
English Company, the, 11; union with the London, *ib.*, 24
English, rivalry with Portuguese, 4–6; with Dutch, 6–8; and the Moguls, 25; introduced as official language, 116–21; garrison, 234; weakened, 240; Explosives Act, 482
Enterprise, 130
Essa Khan, at Herat, 236; surrenders, and murdered, *ib.*
Eton, 291
European Army, proportional strength, 287
Europeans, indefeasible rights, 374
Evelyn, cited, 11
Executive Council, Viceroy's, 497

FAMINE, in N.W. Provinces, 133
Commission, 345; a reserve, *ib.*
general in N. India, 436–7
Relief Fund in England, 437
of 1899–1900, the worst on record, 442
Fane, Sir Henry, 139
Faridkote, 258
Fatehpur Sikri, 452
Fayrer, Sir Joseph, with Prince of Wales, 330
Female education begins, 417
Feredun Jah, last Nawab Nazim of Bengal, 46
Ferozepore, review, 139; Gough at, 179
Ferozeshah, battle, 173–4
Ferrier, French traveller, 129
Ferruckabad, battle, 74
Feudatory States, principles of interference, in, 317–8
Fitch, English traveller, 17
Fodder famine, a, 442
Forde, Major, 44
Foreign Office, controls relations with Persia, 79–80; opposed to retention of Java, 83
Forestry Department formed, 297
Fort St. David, French repulse at, 31, 40
Fort St. George, founded, 6. See Madras.
Fort William, founded, 9; plot foiled, 241
Foster, Sir William, cited, 4*n*.
Founders' Hall (City), 2
Fox, H.M.S., 192
France, in Egypt, 77; and Burma, 393, 394; refuses to support Greece, 540
Franks, Brigadier, 265, 271
Fraser, Sir Andrew, attempted assassination, 481
–, General, wins battle of Deig, 74
French, in India, the early efforts, 26; acquire Pondicherry, etc., *ib.*; relations with English, 27; Dupleix, *ib.*; his ambition, 28; first hostilities with English, 29; successes, 30; reverses, *ib.*; long and dubious struggle, 32–35; a fresh war, 36; end of contest, 37; remaining possessions of, 38; officers with Runjit Sing, 126
—— East India Company, 26; dissolved, 37
Frere, Sir B., Commissioner of Scinde, 272; complimented by Sir J. Lawrence, *ib.*; on Canning's Council, 286; with Prince of Wales, 330
Fuller, Sir J. Bampfylde, affair of students, 480
Fytche, Colonel, 390

GAEKWAR, Maratha, 64; of Baroda, and Prince of Wales, 331
Gandhi, Mr., visits Viceroy, 534; and a revolt, 522; released, 544; "not a dog barked!" 551
Gandamak, treaty, 352; British envoy at Kabul, *ib.*
Ganges, crossing at Cawnpore, 256
Canal, commenced, 133
Gardanne, General, 78
Gartok, 461
Gautky, 70; his cavalry, *ib.*
General Election of 1906, defeat of Mr. Balfour, 479
Genghis Khan, 14
Geok Tepe, 372
Geological Department, the, 416

George V, H.M. King, crowned in India, 503; his address, 504–6; lays a stone of New Delhi, 506; visits Nepal Terai, *ib.*; letter to Mr. Asquith, 507; his memorable words, "Forgive and Unite," 532
—— IV, 91
—— of Greece, King, 330
——, Mr. Lloyd-, on "an experiment," 535; extraordinary vaticination of Greek triumph, 540
Georgia, 78
Gerard, General, 433
Ghulam Haidar Khan, 430
Ghuzni, strong fortress, stormed, 141; the gates of Somnath, 161
Gift, 3
Gilgit, 424
Gilbert, Sir W. R., receives surrender of Khalsa army, 183; pursues Afzul, *ib.*
Girishk, 360
Gladstone defeated in 1874, 326; in power, 359; appoints Lord Ripon (Viceroy) to reverse Lytton's policy, 366; acquiesces in "fixed subsidy," 371; Premier for the last time, 428
Goa, 4
Goddard, Colonel, march across India, 66; takes Bassein, *ib.*
Godra-Rutlam line, 417
Godwin, General, 193, 195
Gogra, 5
Gokhale, Mr., political message, 521; a clear-minded statesman, 531
Golconda, King of, 6; kingdom, 22, 23
"Golden Letter," the, Oudh, 222, 223
Gold standard proposed, 421
Goldsmid, Sir F., Commissioner, 324
Gonds, the, 208
Goomtee, river, 257, 262
Goorkhas, regiment annihilated, 150; regiments, 265
Gordon, General, "to hold the scales even," 442
Gough, Sir Hugh, enters Gwalior State, 170; wins battles of Maharajpur and Punniar, *ib.*; first Sikh War, 173; at Ferozeshah, 174; created Viscount, 176; refuses to move on Mooltan, 179; underrates Sikhs, 181; precipitancy, *ib.*; wins battle of Gujerat, 182
Grand Trunk Road, 188
Grant, Commodore, 85
——, General Hope, 271
"Great Retribution," the, 250
Great War breaks out, 511; damage by *Emden*, *ib.*; the first Indian Divisions, 512; their services in France, *ib.*; India's part, 515–6
Greece, barbarities in Turkey, 538; massacre at Smyrna, *ib.*; occupy Adrianople, 539; advance on Angora, 540; checked, *ib.*; propose capture of Constantinople, *ib.*; armies routed by Mustapha Kemal, 540; end of Greek megalomania, 541
Griffin, Admiral, 31
——, Sir Lepel, sent by Lytton to Kabul, 358; negotiations with Abdurrahman, 359; takes independent line, 360; champions reunion of Afghanistan, *ib.*; three days' conference at Zimma, 364; recognizes Abdurrahman as Amir, *ib.*
Guildhall, London, 454
Gujerat, province, 15; crowning victory at, 182
Gulab Sing, 172; acting Minister, 175; founds a new State, *ib.*
Gulistan, treaty, 133
Gundamuck, 155
Gupta, Mr. K. G., 491
Gwalior, troubles in, 169–170; mutiny of contingent, 261; captured, 271; restored to Sindhia, 404
Gyantse, 459

HABIBULLAH, Amir, 445; accepts Lord Minto's invitation, 486; reason for declining Lord Curzon's, *ib.*; "like a boy out of school," *ib.*; promises friendship, 487; keeps his word, 514; assassinated, 523
Haffine's plague fluid, 444
Haileybury, 201

Haldane, Lord, tribute to India, 512
Halifax, tribute to Lord, 405
Hardie, Mr. Keir, 483
Hardinge, Sir Henry (afterwards Viscount), Governor-General, 171; assures employment for merit, *ib.*; reduces salt tax, 172; first Sikh War, 173; restrains Gough, 174; concludes peace at Lahore, 175; returns home and created Viscount, 176; and Oudh, 222
——, Sir Charles (Lord Hardinge of Penshurst), King Edward's appreciation, 502; appointed Viceroy and created Peer, 503; Imperial Coronation, Durbar, 503–6; murderous attempt, 508; seriously wounded, *ib.*; "Go Forward," *ib.*; opens Legislative Council, *ib.*; favours decentralization, 510; deep interest in education, 510–11; the Great War, 511; sends off three divisions, 512; altogether 200,000 men, *ib.*; consents to remain in India, 514; loss of eldest son, *ib.*; the Kut disaster, 515; Lord Balfour's defence, *ib.*; no blame on, *ib.*; sympathy with India, 516; "their own Viceroy," 517; his farewell, 517–8
——, Lady, miraculous escape, 508; returns to England, 511; death, *ib.*
Har Dyal, banished, 509
Harris, General, 59
——, Lord, Governor of Madras, 212
Harrow, 291
Hartal, day of mourning, 523
Hartington, Marquis of (afterwards Duke of Devonshire), 368
Hastings, Warren, manages the Dewanni, 60; raised to Governor-General of Bengal, *ib.*; effects radical changes, *ib.*; vindicated, 61; his financial measures, *ib.*; purifies the service, 62; sends envoy to Poona, 66; sends Col. Goddard, *ib.*; founds Calcutta College, 118
——, the Marquis, completes the overthrow of the Marathas, 75–6; and *sati*, 111–12
Hatfield, 337
Havelock, General Sir Henry, advance on Cawnpore, 255; recovers the city, 256; advance on Lucknow, *ib.*; retires to Cawnpore, *ib.*; second advance, *ib.*; relieves Residency, 257; death, 264
Hawkins, Captain, visits Agra, 3; describes Mogul Empire, 18
Hearsey, General, 242
Hector, 3
Helmund, river, 360
Henry IV (France), 26
Hentig (German), 514
Herat, 47; Persians repulsed at, 135; its siege, 136; and Russia, 234; regiments mutiny, 354; state of its fortifications, 379
Heri Rud, river, 378
Hermes, H.M.S., 192
Hewitt, Brigadier, at Meerut, 246; inactive, 247
Heytesbury, Lord, appointment annulled, 132
Hidgley Island, fight on, 9
Himu, Bihar general, 15; executed, 16
Hindoo Rao's house, Delhi, 259
Hindun stream, 247
Hira Sing, killed, 172
Hislop, Sir Thomas, wins battle of Mehidpore, 76
Hodson, Captain, shoots Delhi princes, 260
Holkar, escapes from Panipat, 49, 64; confusion in, 75; reduced, 76; succession in the State, 167, 168; remains loyal, 261; at Jubbulpore, 286
Holwell, Mr., and "the Black Hole," 40
"Home Charges," the, 409
Hope, 4
Hopetown (Andamans), 320
Hot Springs, affair at, 459
Hughes, Sir Edward, Admiral, 54
Hughli, 6, 9, 39, 40, 41
Hugh Lindsay, 130
Humayun (Mogul), his adventures, 15; death, 16
Hunter, Sir William, quoted, 188
Hunza-Nagar, a slave mart, 424; occupied, 425
Hussein Bilgrami Syed, 491

Hyderabad contingent, history of, 217–18; cavalry, 269; during the Mutiny, 273; Lord Dufferin's visit, 402
—— (Sind), 165
Hyder Ali, a solder of fortune, 51; receives jaghir of Bangalore, *ib.*; deposes Raja, 52; engages Frenchmen, *ib.*; captures Bednur and its treasure, *ib.*; narrow escape of, 53; invades Madras, *ib.*; dictates terms, *ib.*; defeated by Marathas, *ib.*; defeats Colonel Baillie, 55; defeated at Porto Novo, 56; also at Vellore, *ib.*; death of, 56

Ibrahim Lodi, 15
Ilbert, Mr. Courtenay, 373; his Bill, *ib.*
Ile de Bourbon, 81
—— ——, France, 80. See Mauritius
"Immortals of the Golden Country," 193
Imperial Institute outrage, 482
—— Library, Calcutta, 418
—— Record Office, 418
—— Service Corps organized, 420–1; employed for the first time, 421; frontier war, 435
Income tax, 307, 324
Inayatullah, proclaimed Amir, 523; abdicates, 524
India, "not a place for European Democratic Agitation," 407; evils of invasion, 427
—— Office, its mythical control, 521
—— Act of 1919, 533
Indian Criminal Law (No. 1), 522
—— Princes, confidence restored, 285; Royal Navy, 550;
—— Staff Corps, 419
—— troops employed out of India, four instances, 88
Indore, mutiny of contingent, 261; Residency destroyed, *ib.*
Indus, navigation, 127, 165, 167; as frontier, 294
Inglis, General, defends Lucknow, 254
Inland customs, 343
"Interlopers," the, 12
Ireland, Fenian movement in, 306
Irrawaddy, river, 85; rapid advance up, 396; valley secured up to Bhamo, 397
Irrigation, 417
Ishak Khan, rebels, 383; put to flight, *ib.*
Italian army, an, 101; question of Italian liberation, *ib.*
Italy, and Burma, 393; refuses to support Greece, 540
Itmad ud Dowlah, 452

Jacob, General J., warning of, 234; visits Khelat, 272; keeps borders quiet, *ib.*; death mourned by the tribesmen, *ib.*
Jaget Seth, 41
Jaipur, Maharaja of, 17, 402
Jalna, 220
James I, 3, 5, 10
Jankoji Rao Sindhia, 169
Janssens, General, 82
Jaora, loyalty of, 261
Japan, 1
Java, 3, 5; occupation of, 82–4; restored to Dutch, 84
Jayaji Rao Sindhia, 169
Jehangir, Emperor, 3, 5, 18; monopoly of jewels 19; and Sir T. Roe, 20
Jellalabad, 142, 153, 154; occupied, 351
Jeswunt Rao Holkar, 67; captures Poona, *ib.*; rivalry with Sindhia, 68; evacuates Poona, *ib.*; refuses to join Sindhia, 69; defies the English, 71; skill as military leader, 72; pursues Monson, 73; beaten by Lake, 74; makes peace, *ib.*; death, 75
Jeypore, 402
Jhansi, the Rajas, 207; the Rani, 208
——, Rani on her wrongs, 243; stormed, 269
Jind, 258
Jodhpur, King Edward's message read, 489
Johannis's House, Lucknow, 254
Joint-stock voyages, 3, 4
Jones, Sir Harford, new treaty with Persia, 79
Jubbulpore, 286

Jugdulluck Pass, 154
Jung Bahadur, of Nepal, 265; his army in Oudh, *ib.*; his co-operation, 276; entertains Prince of Wales in the Terai, 333; at Delhi Durbar, 341
Juries, European, 374
Jyntia, 87

KABUL, 14, 15, 20, 129; Russians at, 135; rising in, 148; attack on Treasury, *ib.*; Russian general at, 350; British envoy, 352; massacre, its origin, 354; occupied, 355
Kachar, 84, 87
Kachins, 393, 398
Kaisar i Hind, 339
—— i Room, 339
Kakar country, 423
Kafirs of Hindu Kush subdued by Amir, 431
Kamran (Mogul), 15
—— (Afghan) at Herat, 136
Kandahar, Persia, 47; Shah Shuja, 129; force at, in 1839–42, 147; a bright spot, 158; assault repulsed, 159; occupied, 351; re-occupied, 354; question of retention, 368
Kanwa, battle, 15
Kapurthala, 258
Karachi, 105; plague at, 438
Karikal, 26
Karola Pass, 459
Kars, capture of, 234
Kashi Rao Holkar, 67
Kashmir, 16
Kaufmann, General, Russian G.G., and Shere Ali, 349, 351
Kavanagh, Dr. (Lucknow), 263
Kaveripak, 34
Kaye, Sir John, quoted, 149
Keane, Sir John, commands first Afghan expedition, 139; occupies Kandahar, 140; storms Ghuzni, *ib.*; reaches Kabul, 141; returns to India, 142; his apprehensions, *ib.*
Kelly, Colonel, and Chitral, 433
Kennedy, General, 344
Kerowli, Rajput State, 214
Kesari, the Poona, 439
Khalsa army crosses Sutlej, 173; recrosses it, 175
Khamba Jong, 457
Kharrack, island, 79, 136, 236
Khedive, Ismail, and Prince of Wales, 330
Khelat, 272; Lord Lytton's treaty, 422
——i-Ghilzai, 152
Khetran Valley, 423
Khiva, 144; conquered, 325
Khurd Kabul Pass, 154
Khurram, Prince, 20. See Shah Jehan
Khyber Pass, 139, 161, 350, 351; under British control, 436
Kimberley, Lord, 380
Kitchener, Lord, as C.-in-C., 469; his reforms, 470; difference with Curzon, 471–3; desire to be Viceroy, 502; Morley opposes his nomination, *ib.*; Mr. Asquith yields, *ib.*
Kohat, 351
Koh-i-nor, 47
Kohistan, 143
Kora, 61
Kotah, 73
Kozloff, Colonel, 456
Kubo Valley, 190
Kunch, battle, 269
Kuram Pass, 351, 354
Kut disaster, the, 515; Report on, *ib.*; to be retrieved, 519

LA BOURDONNAIS, French Governor of Mauritius, 29; proceeds to India, *ib.*; captures Madras, 30; his fate, *ib.*; Mauritius, 80
Ladies murdered, two English, 481
Lahore, 20, 127; treaty, 175; a second treaty, *ib.*; sedition in, 481; anarchist plot at, 509
Gate (Delhi), 260
Laing, Mr. Samuel, Financial Member, 288
Lajpet Rai, deported, 481
Lake, Lord, 68; defeats Sindhia, 70; victory of Laswari, 71; moves against Holkar, 72; takes the field again, 73; surprises Holkar at Ferruckabad, 74

Lally, Count, arrives in India, 36; takes Fort St. David, *ib.*; lays siege to Madras, *ib.*; defeated at Wandiwash, 37; defends Pondicherry, *ib.*; executed, *ib.*
——, the younger, 55
—— regiment, the, 36
Lambert, Commodore, 192
Lancaster, Captain Sir James, 3
Land, chief source of Indian revenue, 104
Lansdowne, Marquis of (3rd), 98
——, Marquis of, a great statesman, 414; Lord Dufferin's tribute to, *ib.*; hopes for unbroken peace, *ib.*; the agricultural resources of India, 415; establishes Agricultural Chemists' Department, 416; stimulates Geological Department, *ib.*; institutes Deccan Commission, *ib.*; irrigation and railways, 417; waterworks in the chief cities, *ib.*; interest in education, *ib.*; speech at Calcutta University, 418; founds Imperial Library and Record Office, *ib.*; extends Legislative Councils, *ib.*; speech on the subject, 419; military changes, *ib.*; Imperial Service Corps, 420; lays down rules for application, *ib.*; financial measures, 421; closes Mints, *ib.*; close relations with ruling princes, 422; visits Khelat, *ib.*; Durbar at Quettah, 423–4; proposal to send Lord Roberts to Kabul, 425; final speech, 426; his good work not yet fully appreciated, 427; on pledges to Mahomedans, 498
Las Bela, Jam of, 422
Laswari, battle, 71
Lausanne, treaty, 541
Lawrence, Sir Henry, Resident at Lahore, 177; and the Regency, 178; opposes annexation, 184; accepts post on Board, *ib.*; obstruction, 187; transferred to Rajputana, 189; warning of, 234; in Oudh, 237; disarms cavalry, 242; begins preparations for defence, *ib.*; steps at the Residency, 250; disperses mutineers, 251; isolated, 253;
Lawrence (*contd.*)—
battle of Chinhat, 254; killed by shell, *ib.*; " tried to do my duty," *ib.*
——, Sir John (afterwards Lord), supports annexation of the Punjab, 184; appointed to the Board, 185; subserves Lord Dalhousie, 187; appointed Chief Commissioner, 189; optimistic, 242; proposes surrender of Peshawar to the Afghans, 257; overruled by Canning, 258; refuses Bombay, 295; appointed Viceroy, *ib.*; the first civilian since Warren Hastings, *ib.*; his great qualities, 296; rapid worker, *ib.*; disastrous famines, 297; founds Forestry Department, *ib.*; war in Bhutan, *ib.*; vacillating attitude towards Afghan claimants, 298; and Shere Ali, 299; " masterly inactivity," 300; land tenure and revenue, 301; supports the ryots, *ib.*; land and rent in Oudh, 302; Abyssinian expedition, *ib.*; mastery of internal questions, 303; advice to the English, 304; on Sir H. Rawlinson's Minute, 312; Secretary of State's cricitism, *ib.*
——, Major Stringer, his success, 32; taken prisoner, *ib.*; at Trichinopoli, 35
Laws of Moguls, 19
Leedes, English traveller, 17
Legislative Assembly, meetings, 547, 549
—— Councils strengthened, 418
Lenoir, French Governor, 26
Lewis, Sir J. Cornewall, 277
Lhasa, advance to, 459; Potala of, 460; treaty, 461
Lockhart, Sir William, Wazirs, 434; campaign with Afridis, etc., 435–6
Lodi, dynasty, 14; overthrown by Baber, 15
London Company, the, origin of title, 10
Loodhiana, 128
Lorraine regiment, the, 36
Louis XVI, supports American rebellion, 54; and Tipu, 57
Louis Bonaparte, Netherlands, 81

Low, Sir John, sent to Hyderabad, 218
——, Sir Robert, carries Malakand Pass, 434; defeats Umra Khan, *ib.*
Lucan, Lieut., dies of wounds, 73
Lucknow, Oudh capital, 222, 224; Residency at, 242; last centre of mutineers, 262; preparations for its attack, 265; stormed, 266–7; mutineers escape from, 267
——Bareilly railway, 417
Lughman, 431, 523
Lumsden, Sir Henry, sent to Kandahar, 300
——, Sir Peter, at Kandahar, 300; British Commissioner, 378; changes his camp, *ib.*; returns to England, 380
Lundi Kotal, 436; Afghan attack repulsed, 488
Lytton, Lord (afterwards Earl), nominated Viceroy, 336; his letter to Mr. Disraeli, 337; accepts, 338; a poet and a diplomatist, *ib.*; meets Prince of Wales on his home journey, 339; describes "Serapis," 340; arranging "Empress of India" Durbar, 340–1; presides at the Durbar, 342; description for the Queen, 343; repeal of cotton duties, *ib.*; resumes Mayo's policy, 344; goes to Madras to deal with famine, *ib.*; appoints Famine Commission, 345; Mysore famine, *ib.*; the vernacular Press, 346–7; takes up Afghan question, 348–9; the Chamberlain mission, 350; need for fresh policy, 355; willing to recognize Abdurrahman at Kabul, 358; sends Lepel Griffin, *ib.*; plan to break up Afghanistan, 359; consequences of General Election, *ib.*; resigns, *ib.*; the one man with a policy, 365
—— (2nd Earl), born in India, 339; Governor of Bengal, acts as Viceroy, 546

MACAULAY, Mr. (afterwards Lord), first Law Member, 119; great Minute on language, 119–20; quoted, 496
Macaulay, Mr. Colman, and Tibet, 403
MacDonald, General J., Tibet expedition, 458–61;
——, Mr. Ramsay, statement by, 544
McLeod, Capt., 191
Macnaghten, Sir William, 139; the Afghan adventure, 142; and Dost Mahomed, 144; decides for continued occupation, 145; his own ambition, 146; apathy at Kabul rising, 149; hoping, not acting, 151; offers reward, *ib.*; negotiates, *ib.*; meets Akbar, 152; murdered, *ib.*
Madagascar, 10
Madaji Sindhia, concludes treaty of Salbai, 67; death, *ib.*
Madava Rao, Sir T., 331
Madhu, 63
Mad Mullah, 435
Madras, 6; captured by the French, 30; restored, 32; severe famine in, 344–5
Mahabat Khan, General, 20
Maharani, title, 339
Mahé, 26, 29
Mahmud of Ghuzni, 161
Mahomed Ali (Arcot), 33
—— ——, Mr., 534
—— Jan, heads rising, 357; beaten at Sherpur, *ib.*
—— Rafik Khan, 298
—— Shah, Emperor, 46, 47
—— —— (Persia), 136
Mahomedans of India, education, 475; Memorial, 484–5; concessions to, 497; mixed Electoral Colleges rejected, *ib.*
Maine, Sir Henry, 301; his Minute against Ilbert Bill overlooked, 374
Maiwand, battle, 360–1
Malacca, 82
Malavali, battle, 59
Malaviya, Mr., 534
Malay princes, of Java, 84; States, acquired, 104
Malcolm, Captain Sir John, mission to Persia, 78; second mission, *ib.*; returns to India, 79; Governor of Bombay, 164; aphorism, 232
Malta, Indian troops at, 343

Maltun Pass, 269
Malwa, 6; 72; pacification of, 169
Mama Sahib (Gwalior), 169
Mandalay, 390; occupied, 396; Italian forts, 397; a proposed railway, 394
Mandisore, peace of, 76
Mandu, rock-fortress, 453
Manipur, 84, 85, 87; trouble in, 424
Mansel, Mr. C. G., Punjab, 185, 187; at Nagpur, 209
Man Sing, Raja, General, 17
Manu, code, 110
Marathas, oppose Moguls, 23; defeated at Panipat, 48–50; alliance with Cornwallis, 57; contingents, 260; wars with the. See Chapter VI
Marengo, 100
Mare Scourge, 3
Martaban, 85, 87, 193, 195, 196
Martin, French Governor, 26
Mary, H.M. Queen, crowned in India, 503; lays a stone of New Delhi, 506; explores ancient cities, 507
Masra, battle, Ayoob's defeat, 363
Massey, General, reverse, 357
Mastuj, 433
Masulipatam, 6, 33
Maung Ok, 192
Mauritius, Portuguese and Dutch in, 80; French, *ib.*
Mayo, Earl of, appointed Viceroy, 305; his previous services, *ib.*; his financial reforms, 306; cuts down estimates, 307; his new Budget, 308; determined to establish a balance, 308–9; departmental reforms, 309; grants to Local Governments, *ib.*; military expenditure reduced, 310; his great achievement, 311; invites Shere Ali to India, 311; nothing definite to offer, 313; but pleases Shere Ali, 314; his policy, *ib.*; intervenes in Khelat, etc., 315; sends Douglas Forsyth to Kashgar, 315; his relations with the Princes, *ib.*; speech at Ajmir, 316; interest in education of Princes, 318; Mayo College, 319; agriculture, *ib.*; holds first Census, *ib.*; interest in convict
Mayo (*contd.*)—
stations, 320; visits Andamans, *ib.*; murdered, 321; sudden termination of a brilliant career, 322
Mayo, Countess of, and her husband's murder, 320–1
Meade, Captain Sir R., 271
Mecca pilgrims, 24
Meerut, mutiny at, 245–6
Mehidpore, battle, 76
Memorial Well at Cawnpore, 253
" Merchant Adventurers," 10
Mergui, 85, 87
Merv and Herat, 372
Metcalfe, Sir Charles, on English, 120; mission to Runjit Sing, 126; acts as Governor-General, 132; Governor of Jamaica, 133; receives a peerage, *ib.*; on position in India, 233–4
Mhow, mutiny at, 261, 268
Middleton, Henry, 3
Midlothian campaign, the, 366
Military Member of Council, 470
—— service, compulsory for Europeans, 520
Mill, James, on Lord W. Bentinck, 102
——, John Stuart, 277
Mindon Min, concludes the war, 198; transfers capital to Mandalay, 199; King, 390; moves capital to Mandalay, *ib.*; sends mission to London, *ib.*; death, 391
Minerals in India, 416
Minister of Supply, 473
Minto, Earl of (first), Governor-General, 80; sends expedition to Mauritius, 80; sends expedition to the Mauritius, 81; expedition to Java, 82; his humane decision 83; and *sati*, 111
——, Earl of (second), Governor-General of Canada, 478; appointed Viceroy, *ib.*; hastens to India to receive Prince of Wales, *ib.*; the Royal Visit, 479; counters Boycott, 480; first reform proposals, *ib.*; attempted assassination, 482; new laws against sedition, *ib.*; rejects a Bill, 483; reply to Mahomedan

Minto (*contd.*)—
delegation, 485; invites Amir Habibullah, 486; success of his visit, 486–7; favours more vigorous frontier policy, 487–8; Durbar at Jodhpur, 488; unfailing tact and good temper, 489; confidence in the British Raj, *ib.*; submits his proposals to Mr. Morley, 490; credit of the initiative, *ib.*; co-operation with Morley, 490–8; pledges to Mahomedans to be fulfilled, 498; on deported Members of Council, 499; tribute to Morley, 501; premature death, *ib.*
——, Countess of, receives Prince and Princess of Wales, 478; narrow escape of, 482
Mints closed, 421
Miran, murders Suraj-ud-Dowla, 43; death, 45
Mir Jaffir, and Suraj-ud-Dowla, 41; at Plassey, 42; and Clive, 43; his fears, 44; intrigues with Dutch, 44–5; deposed and reinstated, 45
—— Kasim, 45, 46
Mogul dynasty. See Chapter II
—— Empire, decline of, 46–50
Mohmands, trouble with the, 520
Moncrieff, Sir R. Scott, Madras famine, 344; irrigation, 345
Mongols, the, and India, 14; converted to Islam, *ib.*
Monson, Colonel, opposed to Holkar, 72; defeated, 73
Montagu, Mr. Edwin, Indian Constitutional Reforms, 526; speech in Parliament, 526–7; proceeds to India, 527; Chelmsford-Montagu Report, 528–30; champions Moslems, 539; publishes Lord Reading's telegram, 542; resigns, *ib.*
Montgomery, Sir Robert, 295
Montreal riots, 291
Monuments, preservation of, 452–3
Moolraj, Governor of Mooltan, 178–9; baffled by Edwardes, 180
Mooltan, 178, 179; its strength, 180; captured, 182
Moosa Jan, 355
Morar, murders at, 261; troops join Rani, 270; taken by Hugh Rose, *ib.*
Morari Rao, Maratha, 35
Morley, Lord, his character, 478; Secretary of State, 479; denounces disorders, 482; speech at Arbroath, 483; his pessimism, 489; admission of emanation of Reform proposals, 490; makes Indian appointments, 491; not deterred by crimes, 492; his proposed Bill, 493–4; great speech, 495–6; concedes Viceroy a discretionary power, 500; tribute to Minto, 501; long career, *ib.*
Morse, Governor, 28; surrenders Madras, 30
Moslems of India, three cardinal points, 541; thank their supporters, 542–3
Mosul, 521
Moulmain, 87
Mount Harriet (Andamans), 321
Mudki, battle, 173
Mullah Powindah, 434
Mumtaz Mahal, wife of Shah Jehan, 20
Mundenpore Pass, 269
Munro, Major, 46, 56
——, Sir Thomas, on Vellore Mutiny, 101
Murghab, river, 378
Murray, Colonel, retires, 72; occupies Ougein, *ib.*
Murriaon, 250, 251
Murshidabad, 39, 43, 240
Mushkaf-Bolan line, 417
Mustapha Kemal, triumph over Greeks, 540; recovers Thrace, 541; armistice of Mudania, *ib.*; new Treaty, *ib.*; extolled by Indian Moslems, 543
Mutchi Bhawn, 250
Mutilation, a form of punishment, 187
Mutinies, minor, 232; the great, 240; causes and suppression discussed, 273–6
Mu Valley, railway, 417
Muzaffir Jung, 33
Myhe, river, 72
Mysore, an ancient kingdom, 51; Maharaja deposed, 125; fifty

Mysore (*contd.*)—
years of British rule, *ib.*; famine, 345; rendition of, 372

Nabha, 258
Nadir Kuli, 47. See Nadir Shah
Nadir Shah, defeats Turks, 47; invades India, and sacks Delhi, *ib.*; assassinated, *ib.*
Nagpur, 74; State, 208; its ruling family, *ib.*; lapse, 209
Nahun (Sirmur), 401
Najim-ud-Dowlah, cedes the Dewanni to Clive, 46
Nana Sahib, nephew and adopted son of Baji Rao, 211; jaghir of Bithoor, *ib.*; his pretensions, *ib.*; visits England, 243; infamy of, 251–3; routed by Havelock, 256; again escapes, 265; and the Rani, 270; a spurious, 271–2
Napier, Sir Charles, victory at Miani, 166; "Peccavi" legend, *ib.*; paucity of officers, 167; sent to India, 182; C-in-C., 186
—— and Ettrick, Lord, Governor of Madras, 323; acting Viceroy, *ib.*
Napier, Major Robert (Lord Napier of Magdala), at Mooltan, 180; at Calpee, 270; in Abyssinia, 303; Prince of Wales, 331, 332
Napoleon Bonaparte, lands in Egypt, 58; alliance with Turkey, 77; sends Gardanne to Persia, 78; Decaen to Mauritius, 80
Nasir Jung, 33
Nasrulla, Amir's son, visits England, 435; and his brother's murder, 523, 524
Nassick, European murdered at, 482
National Congress, the first, 406; and Lord Curzon, 450; only partially representative, 451; meeting broken up, 481
Native States, serious famine in, 442, 443
Nat-padi, 87
Negrais, or Diamond Islands, 195
Negus, Theodore, 302
Neill, Colonel James, disarms sepoys, 248; saves Benares and Allahabad, 249; at Cawnpore, 256; killed at Lucknow, 257
Nepalese, Resident at Lhasa, 460; as peace-maker, *ib.*
Nerbudda, river, 453
—— territories, 108
Netherlands, united with France, 77
Newbury, English traveller, 17
Nicholson, John, his bold counsels prevail, 259; defeats rebels, *ib.*; mortally wounded at Delhi, 260
Nizam, as independent prince, 52; alliance with Cornwallis, 57; offers sixty lakhs for frontier defence, 384; warning of the late, 489
Nizamat Adalat, the, 110, 111, 114
N'Maikha, river, 398
"No Man's Land," 431
"Non-interference" policy changed by Lord Ellenborough, 167–8
Non-regulation Province, created by Dalhousie, 228; Burma, 398
Norman, Sir Henry, appointed Viceroy by Mr. Gladstone, 428; resigns after sixteen days, *ib.*
Norris, Sir William, visits Aurangzeb, 11; embassy, 24–25
Northbrook, Lord, appointed Viceroy, 323; his record, *ib.*; abolishes income tax, 324; great Bengal famine, *ib.*; frontier delimitations, *ib.*; receives Afghan envoy, 325; proposes definite assurance to be given Amir, *ib.*; rebuffed by Cabinet, 326; his replies to the envoy, who departs, *ib.*; a loyal colleague, *ib.*; friction with Lord Salisbury, *ib.*; further friction, 327; resignation deferred for Prince of Wales's visit, 328; Prince of Wales's visit, 328–34; Prince's letter to, 334; formal resignation, 335
Northcote, Sir Stafford, 307
Northern Circars, 44; tribute, 217
North-west Frontier, failure of tribal levies, 487
—— —— Province, 444–5
Nott, General William, at Kandahar, 147; sends force to help Elphinstone, 151; refuses to surrender, 158; disperses Afghans, 159; march to Kabul, 160; Ghuzni and Kabul, 161
Nujufgurh, battle, 259

Nur Jehan, Jehangir's wife, 20
Nur Mahomed Shah, Afghan envoy, 314; at Simla, 325–6
Nuzzerana, 205

Ochterlony, Colonel David, 73
Olivier, Lord, statements by, 545; questions, 546
Olpherts, Captain, heroic act, 249
Omichand affair, the, 41–2
Oonao, 256
Opium, in Bengal, 105; in Malwa, *ib.*
Orakzais, join the Afridis, 435; submit, 436
Orientalists, the, 118
Orissa, great famine in, 296; terrible mortality, 297; province, 505
Orleans, diamond, the, 12
——, the Duke d', 12
Oudh, Queen Mother, 61; Nawab Nazim, 220; recognized as King, 221; Lord William Bentinck, 221; Lord Hardinge, 222; various propositions, 226; annexation of, 227; situation in, 237; Taluqdars and Lord Canning, 282; Durbar, 283; village communities in, 301; Taluqdars checked, *ib.*; tenants, etc., 386
Ougein, 72
Our Viceregal Life in India, by Lady Dufferin, 401
Ouseley, Sir Gore, mission to Persia, 79
Outram, Colonel Sir James, defends Hyderabad Residency, 166; at Lucknow, 224; commands Persian expedition, 237; at Bagdad, *ib.*; assurance about Oudh, *ib.*; supreme command in Oudh, 256; chivalrous act, *ib.*; assumes command, 257; left at the Alum Bagh, 264; leads attack on Lucknow, 266; his offers rejected, *ib.*
Overland route, the, 130
Oxenden, Sir George, defends Surat, 7

Pagan, battle, 87
Pagan Min (Burma), worse than his predecessor, 191; his deceitful reply, 192; his defiance, 193; refuses to make peace, 198; deposed, *ib.*
Palestine, conquered, 521
Palmer, William & Co., 217
Palmerston, Lord, and Queen Victoria, 277; not afraid, 278; defeated, *ib.*; selects Sir J. Lawrence as Viceroy, 295
Pamir, frontier, delimited with Russia and China, 432
Panalla, siege, 24
Panipat, battles at, 15, 16; great battle, 48–50; its consequences, 50
Paradis, Swiss officer, 30; killed, 32
Paris treaty (Persia), 237
Parliament, Act of, 1833, 121
Patel, Mr., 548
Patiala, 258; Prince stops at, 333
Patna, 44; battle, 48
Peacock Throne, the, 47
Peel, Sir Robert, 177
——, Sir William, naval brigade, 265, 292
—, Lord, Secretary of State, 537
Peeplay, 6
Pegu, annexed, 197–8
—— pagoda, 196
Peking, 292
Penjdeh, Gladstone on, 379
Pennycuik, at Chillianwala, 181
Pepper, price raised by Dutch, 2
Pepys, his Diary, 8
Pergunnahs (the 24), 44
Permanent joint stock, the, 3
Peroffsky, General, retreat from Khiva, 144
Perron (French officer), 68
Persian Gulf, 1; expeditions, 136, 513
Persia, 15; at the height of her power, 47; counterpoise to Turkey, 77; language, 117; and Herat, 236; capture it, *ib.*; war with England, *ib.*; peace concluded, 237
Peshawar, 127; raid by Zakka Khels, 488
Peshwa, the, 48, 63; their policy, 64
Peter the Great, will of, 134
Peyton, Commodore, 29; dubious engagement, *ib.*

" Phansa," 106
"Phansigars" (Thugs), 106
Phayre, Sir Arthur, Chief Commissioner of Burma, 199
Phulkian families, 258
Pindarris, the, 75–6
Piracy in the Indian Ocean, 24
Pishin, 423
Pitt, Thomas, 12
Pitt's India Bill, 90
Plague, outbreak of bubonic, 438; Commission, *ib.*; mortality, 444; inoculation, *ib.*
Plassey, battle, 42–3; its results, 44; centenary of, 278
Pocock, Admiral, 36
Poland, 5
Police murdered, 481
Pollock, General Sir G., 159; to advance as far as Kabul, 160; his preparations, 161; battle of Tezeen, *ib.*; occupies Kabul, 162; destroys Grand Bazaar, *ib.*
Pondicherry, 26, 27, 32, 37
Poona, capital of the Peshwas, 63; treaty of, 75; plague at, 438; murders at, 439; arrests, *ib.*
Popham, Capt., captures Gwalior, 66
——, Sir Home, 81
Portland, Duke of (third), 100
Porto Novo battle, 55–6
Portuguese, the, 1, 4–6
Pottinger, Eldred, at Herat, 136; succeeds Macnaghten, 152; vigorous counsels, 153
——, Sir Henry, 140, 165
Prejevalsky, Colonel, 456
Prendergast, Sir H., Burmese War, 397
Press, freedom of the, 345; regulations, 347; restored by Lord Morley, 482
Primrose, General, at Kandahar, 361; holds the place against attacks, 362
Princes at Delhi Durbar, 341
Privy Council, test case *sati*, 114–5
Proclamation of transfer to the Crown, 280–1
Prome, 86, 195
Provincial Courts, abolished, 104
Public Works Department, founded 228
Pul-i-Khisti, 378
Pulo Condore, 6
Punjab, confusion after Runjit Sing, 172; plots, *ib.*; murders, 173; British control for a period, 177; military tenure by the Sikhs, *ib.*; fresh troubles, 178; second Sikh War, 180–4; annexed, 184; Maharaja deposed, *ib.*; anxiety about, 257; Dost Mahomed and Lord Lawrence, *ib.*
—— Land Tenancy, 386–7
Purandhar, treaty of, 66
Purwandurrah, battle, 143, 144

QUETTAH Durbar, 422

RACES for army, militant, 287
Raffles, Sir Stamford, work in Java, 82–4
Raghoba (Raghonath) becomes Peshwa, 65; flees to Surat, *ib.*; treaty with English, 66
Raichur Doab, 218, 219, 273
Railways, introduction of, 228; new, 417
Rajasthan, 16
Rajghur, 63
Rajputs, 15, 16; oppose Moguls, 23
Rammohun Roy, 109
Ramnagar, fight at, 181
Ranade, hanged, 440
Rand, Mr. J., murdered, 439
Rangoon, occupied, 85; restored to Burma, 87; merchants petition Governor-General, 191; captured, 193; Burmese Resident at, 390; great port of trade, 399
Rani Regent (Lahore), 172; incites Khalsa army, 173; called the Messalina of the Punjab, 177;
—— (Jhansi) drives Sindhia out of Gwalior, 270; proclaims Nana Sahib, *ib.*; killed in battle, *ib.*
Rathgarh, 268
Rattihali, battle, 52
Rawlinson, Major (Sir) Henry, at Kandahar, 147; his precautions, 158; repulses assault, 159; his Minute, 312; Lord Lawrence's rejoinder, *ib.*
Rawul Pindi, conference and Durbar at, 380
Raymond, defeated by De Boigne, 58

Reading, Earl of, appointed Viceroy, 533; representative of justice, *ib.*; to work dyarchy, *ib.*; invites reactionary leaders to discussion, 534; talk with Mr. Gandhi, *ib.*; an optimist, *ib.*; expects co-operation, 535; deals with the "experiment" excitement, 535–6; threats of "violence and revolution," 537; the powers of the Government, *ib.*; Lord Peel attacks, *ib.*; supports the Mahomedans, 538–9; telegraphs three cardinal points, 541; publication sensation, 542; thanked by Moslem members, *ib.*; Treaty of Lausanne, 543; visit to England, 546; consultations with Lord Birkenhead, *ib.*; opens Legislative Assembly, 547; Indian agriculture, 548; second address, 549; Indian Navy, 550; South African immigrants, *ib.*; struck when necessary, 551; his firmness and beneficence, *ib.*
"Record of Rights," Punjab, 188
Reform, the Great, 91, 97; first India proposals, 480–1
Regulation No. XVII abolishing *sati*, 114
"Regulation of Meetings Ordinance," 482
Reid, Colonel Charles, 259
Residency, at Lucknow, described, 250; its defence, 254; relieved by Havelock, 257; second defence, 262
Revenue, of Moguls, 19; of India, 94
Richelieu, 26
Ridge, the, above Delhi, 248
Ridgeway, Sir West, succeeds Lumsden, 380; visits Kabul, 382
Rinderpest, 416
Ripon, Marquis of, appointed Viceroy, 366; to reverse Lord Lytton's policy, *ib.*; repeals Vernacular Press Act, *ib.*; but continues it in Afghanistan, 367; bars Yakoob Khan, *ib.*; uncertain about Kandahar, 368; Abdurrahman's requests, 371; recommends "fixed subsidy," *ib.*; introduces Criminal Jurisdiction Bill, 373; ignorant of Indian
Ripon (*contd.*)—
conditions, *ib.*; meets with no opposition, 374; never saw Sir H. Maine's objections, *ib.*; interference with European status, *ib.*; raises a storm, 375; Boycotted, *ib.*; modifies the Bill, *ib.*; his misfortune more than his fault, *ib.*; Lord Dufferin's tribute to, 376
Roberts, Sir Frederick (afterwards Lord), 351; battle of Peiwar, *ib.*; advances on Kabul, 354; victory of Charasiah, *ib.*; enters Kabul, 355; forms Sherpur cantonment, 356; defence of Sherpur, 357; his caution, *ib.*; offer to lead force against Ayoob, 362; defeats him, 363; Commander-in-Chief, 387; war preparations, *ib.*; great review, 388; at the head of 40,000 men, *ib.*; abolishes Presidential commands, 419; proposed mission to Kabul, 425
Roe, Sir Thomas, embassy of, 5, 18–20
Rohillas, the, 48; Afghan tribe, 220
Rome, religious propaganda of Church of, 1
Rori, 129
Rose, Sir Hugh, volunteers for India, 268; commands Central India Force, *ib.*; defeats Raja of Banpur, *ib.*; joined by Bhopal, *ib.*; captures passes and forts, 269; victories over Tantia, *ib.*; captures Calpee, 270; resigns, *ib.*; resumes command, *ib.*; defeats Rani, *ib.*; storms Gwalior, 271
Rosser, Major, 246
Rouen, city, and India, 26
Round Table Conference, 545
Rowlatt, Mr., 522; his Report, *ib.*
Royal monopolies in Burma, 390; abolished, 398
Royal Titles Bill, 339
Ruby mines, 394
Runjit Sing, 47; rule in the Punjab, 126; at Rupar, 127; and the Afghan adventure, 137; death of, 142; criminal and civil justice under, 187
Rupar, 127

Rupee, fall of the, 409; serious consequences, *ib.*; fixed at fifteen to the £, 421
Russell, Lord John, 177
——, Dr. W. Howard, 330
Russia, first apprehension of, 133; in Persia, 134; and Khiva, 325; pledges broken, *ib.*; broken assurances, 349; Turcoman expedition, 350; abandons Shere Ali, 352; on the Murghab, 378; General Komaroff, *ib.*; attack Afghans, 378–9; railways in Central Asia, 446; and Tibet, 455–7; Anglo-Russian Convention, 463

SADULLAPUR, battle, 181
Sahagamana, 109
St. Frais, M., 42
St. Thomé, battle, 31
Salabat Jung, 33
Salar Jung, Nawab Sir, 273, 276, 331
Salbai, treaty, 67
Sale, Sir Robert, Afghan War, 143, 144; and Jellalabad, 151; clears the passes, 154; disobeys orders, 155; his excuses, *ib.*; in favour of surrender, 157; defeats Akbar, *ib.*
Salisbury, Marquis of, at India Office, 326; friction with Lord Northbrook, *ib.*; supports Lancashire, 327; orders Viceroy to repeal duties, *ib.*; announces Prince of Wales's visit, 328; appoints Lord Lansdowne as Lord Dufferin's successor, 412
Salsette, 64, 66
Salt duty, 307
Salwen, river, 398
Samana Ridge, 436
Sanscrit, 117
Sati, custom of, 108–9; abolition of, 110–14
Sattara, 63; 205, declared an escheat, 206–7
Satyagraha, a vow, 522
Saunders, Governor, 33, 34
Scheria, river, 540
Schouvaloff, Count, 325
Scientific frontier, a, 352
Schweikovski, General, 433
Secretary of State, relations with the Viceroy, 478
Secunderabad, 220
Seistan, boundary, 324
Selim, 18. See Jehangir
Separate voyages, 2
Sepoy Army, not increased by Dalhousie, 228; growth of the, 231; different forms of engagement, *ib.*; views of, 232–4; causes of discontent, 238; introduction of Enfield rifle, *ib.*; confidence in itself, 239; reconstituted, 286; no high castes, 287
Sepoys, first foreign trained, 27
Serais, 20
Serapis, H.M.S., 330; visited by Lord Lytton, 339, 340
Seringapatam, peace of, 58; stormed, 59
Seven Years' War, the, 35
Sèvres, treaty resented in India, 538; superseded by that of Lausanne, 541
Shabkadar Fort, 520
Shah Alum, Prince, 44, 45; then Emperor, 64
Shahjahanabad, Palace, 21
Shah Jehan, Emperor, 9; Sir T. Roe, 20; troubles with his sons,

II, Emperor, 48, 50
Shah of Persia, treaties with, 78; attacked by Russia, *ib.*; and the French, 79
Shandur Pass, 433
Shannon, H.M.S., 292
Shans, Burmese tributaries, 87; States, 392, 398
Shat-el-Arab, occupied, 513
Shaukat Ali, Mr., 534
Shaw, resident at Mandalay, 391; dies, 392
Shelton, second to Elphinstone, 154
Shere Ali, succeeds Dost Mahomed, 298; his changing fortunes, 298–9; presented with six lakhs, 299; comes to India, 312; his programme, 313; disappointed, but pleased with his reception, 314; Yakoob Khan's evidence, *ib.*; alarmed at Russia's progress, 324; sends Nur Mahomed Shah to Simla, 325; disappointed, turns to Russia, 326; and the Russians, 349; breach with England,

Shere Ali (*contd.*)—
350; flight of, 351; appeals to Russia, *ib.*; death, 352
—— Ali Khan, Wali of Kandahar, 359; troops join Ayoob, 361; resigns, 367
—— Khan (Bihar), 15
—— Sing, Sikh commander, joins Moolraj, 180
—— —— (Runjit's son), murdered, 172
Sherpur, 356, 357
Shigatze, 463
Sholapore, Raja, 267
Shah Shuja-ul-Mulk, and the Koh-i-nor diamond, 47; fugitive in India, 127; first effort to recover his throne, 128; negotiations with, 137; no following, 138; enters Kandahar, 140; installed at Kabul, 141; his views, 142; opinion on Kabul rising, 148; remains in Bala Hissar, 150; requests evacuation of Jellalabad, 156; regiments mutiny, 158; murdered, 161
Shutargardan, 354
Shwe Dagon pagoda, 86, 193
Sialkot, 242
Sibi, 423
Sicily, 101
Sikandra, Akbar's tomb at, 20, 452
Sikhim, Raja, seizes Englishmen, 200; punished, *ib.*; expulsion of Tibetans, 404
Sikhs, treaty with English, 74; loyalty of, 258; attempt to enter Canada, 508; refused at Vancouver, 509; return to India, *ib.*
Simla, first visited, 129; manifesto, the, 138; its excuses vanish, 139; summer migration to, 296
Sind, 16; events in, 272
Sind, Amirs of, 127; and Shah Shuja, 128–9; and the British, 139; Indus, 165; attack Residency, 166; defeated at Miani, *ib.*
Sindhia, 64; remains loyal, 261; Gwalior Fort, 268; flees to Agra, 270; at Cawnpore Durbar, 285; striking incident, 342
Singapore, troops intercepted at, 255
Sinha, Lord, Executive Council, 497
Sirmoor Goorkha battalion, 260
Sittana, 294
Sivaji, Maratha, attacks Surat, 6; fails to capture English factory, 7; his success, 22
Skobeleff, General, crushes Turcomans, 372
Sladen, Colonel, 390
Sleeman, Colonel, 108; withdraws from Gwalior, 169; at Lucknow, 224, 226
Smith, Colonel Baird, 260
——, Mr. F. C., 108
——, Sir Harry, 174
Smuts, General, 516
Sobraon, battle, 174–5
Somatash, Afghans slain by Russians, 430
Somnath, gates of, 161
South Africa, Indians in, 508; indentured labour, 516; Indian immigrants, 550
Soviet success at Kabul, 525
Spain, 101, 102
Spaniards, the, 1
Spanish Armada, consequences of its defeat, 1
Sphinx, riddle of the, 477
Spice Islands, 1, 2, 3
Stambul, 5
State granaries needed, 437
Steel, General, 196
Stewart, Sir Donald, Kandahar, 351, 354; marches from Kandahar to Kabul, 357; battle of Ahmed Khel, 358; takes over command, *ib.*; retirement through the Khyber, 364
Strachey, Sir John, effects compromise in Oudh, 302; on Lord Mayo's finance, 310; on famine reserve, 345
Students' outrages, 482
Suchet, Marshal, 102
Suez, 130
Suffren, Admiral, 38, 54
Sully, French Minister, 26
Sultan, sues for peace, 521; opens Dardanelles, *ib.*
Sumatra, 10; exchanged with Dutch, 104
Supayalat, Princess, 391; Thibaw's queen, *ib.*

Suraj-ud-Dowla, his character, 39; captures Fort William, *ib.*; "the Black Hole" tragedy, 40; and Mir Jaffir, 41; defeated at Plassey, 42; murdered by Miran, 43
Surat, 3, 4; factory at, 5; attacked by Sivaji, 6–7, 24; treaty of, 66, 481
Susan, 3
Suttee. See *sati*
Suwarrow, 100
Swally Bay, 4
Swat, Akhoud of, 294
Sydney, Australian cruiser, sinks *Emden*, 511
Syed Ahmed Shah, Buner, 294

TAJ, the, at Agra, 20, 402, 452
Tangut, 456
Tanjore, 23
Tantia Topi, and the Rani, 243, 265, 269, 270; executed, 271
Tapti, river, 4
Tara Bai (Gwalior), 169
Taranath Lama, 456
Tavoy, 85, 87
Teheran, 79
Temple, Sir Richard, Finance Minister, 306; his Budget, *ib.*; Madras famine, 344
Tenasserim, 192
Terai, the, 271, 506
Territorial regiments in India, 520
Teshi Lama, visits India, 463–4
Tezeen, 161
Thal Chotiali, 423
Tharawaddi, King of Burma, 191; insane, *ib.*
Thibaw, succeeds to Burmese throne, 391; receives protests for massacre, *ib.*; a little frightened, 392; intrigues in Europe, 393–4; defies British, 395; defeated and deposed, 396
Thomson, Captain (Ghuzni), 141
Thugs, the, 106–8
Tibet, Mr. Colman Macaulay's passport, 403; mission dropped, *ib.*; question develops, 455; mission to St. Petersburg, 456; draft treaty, *ib.*; treaty of 1890, etc., dead letters, 457; decision to clear them up, *ib.*; British envoy sent, *ib.*; first advance, 458; collision, 459; expedition at
Tibet (*contd.*)—
Lhasa, *ib.*; treaty signed, 460; its terms, 461; modified, 462; Anglo-Russian Convention, 463; China intervenes, *ib.*; Chinese in authority, 464; improving trade, 465
Tibetans, alarm of, 403; seizure of Lingta, 404; expelled, *ib.*
Tientsin, 292
Tigris, advance up the, 519
Tilak, Gangadhar, arrested and sentenced, 439; released, 440.
Tilsit, 79
Timur sacks Delhi, 14
Tipu Sultan, makes peace, 56; sends embassies to Paris and Constantinople, 57; raids Travancore, *ib.*; war with English, 57–8; defeated and peace, 58; seeks French aid, 59; receives English ultimatum, *ib.*; defeat and death, *ib.*
Tirah, 436
Tochi Valley, 435
Todar Mull, 17
Tombs, General, and Bhutan, 297
Tonk, loyalty of, 261
Toolsa Bai (Holkar State), 75–6
Toronto, 291
Travancore, invaded by Tipu, 57
Trevelyan, Sir Charles, 120, 122
Trichinopoli, 33; besieged, 34–35; murder at, 509
Tsongdu, the, 460
Tukoji Holkar, death of, 67
Turkey, and Napoleon, 77; joins Germany, 513
Turkomanchai, treaty, 133
Turks, at war with Persia, 47; defeated everywhere, 521

UMBALLA, 242; Durbar at, 314
Umra Khan of Jandol, 433; defeated and flees, 434
United States, anti-British propaganda in, 509; join Allies, 521
Usbegs, the, 143

VANS Agnew, Mr., murdered, 179
Vellore, battle, 52; second battle, 56; Mutiny, 100
Vernacular Press, a new growth, 345; its virulence, 346; incitements to murder, *ib.*; its control, *ib.*; Press Act, repealed, 366

Vickovitch, at Kabul, 135; his end, *ib.*
Victoria, H.M. Queen, disapproves of Lord Ellenborough's strange proposal, 279; draft of Royal Proclamation, 279–80; solicitude for her family, 328; Speech (1876), 338–9; the Durbar, 343; her Jubilee celebrated in India, 404; her deep interest in India, 405; invites Amir, 434; approves of Curzon's appointment and bestows peerage, 441; death of, 447; memorial, 450
Cross opened to Indian forces, 506
Lake, 432
Memorial Hall, 450
Voice of India, 372
Volconda, 33

WADE, Sir Claude, 139
Wales, Prince of (H.M. Edward VII), visit to India, 329; his staff, 330; takes in Athens and Cairo on his way, *ib.*; Bombay, etc., 331; Ceylon, *ib.*; Madras, 332; at Calcutta, *ib.*; Delhi Lahore, and Cashmere, 333 sport in the Nepal Terai, *ib.* departure, letter to Lord Northbrook, 334–5; visited by Lord Lytton, 339
——, Prince of (H.M. George V), visit announced, 449; and Princess's visit to India, 478–9;
——, Prince of (Edward), visit postponed, 534; in 1921–2, 535
Wandiwash, battle, 36–7
Wano, attack at, 434
Wargaon Convention, 67
Waterworks, 417
Watson, Admiral, 40, 42
Waziristan, troubles in, 434
Wellesley, Marquis, ultimatum to Tipu, 59; disposes of Mysore, *ib.*; issues Proclamations, 68; ultimatum to Sindhia, 69; war with Holkar, 71; goes home, 74; Treaty of 1801, Oudh, 222
——, Arthur (Duke of Wellington), reorganizes Mysore, 59; occupies Poona, 68; victory of Assaye, 70; victory of Argaum, *ib.*; no part in Holkar war, 72, 163, 171; offer to go to India, 182
Weltevreeden, 82
West Gate at Lucknow, 267
Wheeler, Sir Hugh, and Nana Sahib, 251; surrenders, 252
White Mutiny, the, 284
Whitlock, General, Madras division, 268
William of Orange, 10, 11, 24
—— IV, 127
Willoughby, Lieut. George, heroic act, 246
Wilson, Archdale, defeats Sepoys, 247–8; in command before Delhi, 259
Wilson, Mr. James, Financial Member, 287; his reforms, 288; view of Lord Canning's work, 289
Wodehouse, Sir Philip, 331
Wodeyar dynasty, 51, 372
Women fighters, Shan, 87
Wood, Sir Charles (afterwards Viscount Halifax), 201; Secretary of State, 279, 366; Dufferin's letter to, 376
Wyllie, Sir Curzon, murdered, 482

YAGHISTAN, 431
Yakoob Beg, of Kashgar, 315
Khan, recovers throne for Shere Ali, 299; quoted, 314; released by his father, 351; signs treaty, 352; welcomes Cavagnari 353; his difficulties, *ib.*; surrenders, 355; deposed, *ib.*; restoration barred, 367
Yanaon, 26
Yandabu, 87; treaty of, *ib.*, 190
Yanoff, Colonel, 430
Ye, 87
Young Bengal movement, 372, 373
Younghusband, Colonel Sir F., mission to Tibet, 457; ignored, 458; winter at Tuna, *ib.*; Gyautse and Lhasa, 459; negotiations, 460; signs treaty, 461; tribute to, *ib.*

ZAKKA Khels, expedition against, 488; Morley's qualified sanction, *ib.*
Zimma, conference at, 31

PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN AT THE PITMAN PRESS,
B6—(9872w)