unconventional manner, her formal presentation having been fixed for a later date.

A few days later, that is to say, on April 14th, 1879, the Emperor himself was attacked while returning to the Winter Palace on foot. Near the Ministry of Foreign Affairs a man passed by, saluted, and immediately afterwards began firing at the Emperor with a revolver. Luckily his Majesty was wearing a cloak at the time, and the day being windy the flapping about of the cloak disconcerted the assassin's aim, and enabled the monarch to dodge each shot. The perpetrator turned out to be a provincial schoolmaster named Alex. Solovieff. After that the Emperor had to be attended by police and military in his goings abroad, Count Louis Melikoff being appointed a sort of dictator for the interior. The Count, on one occasion when Lord Dufferin called upon him, showed the latter the back of his coat which had been furrowed by the pistol bullet of an assassin, the ball fortunately just missing the spine.

The next attempt was that famous one on December 1st, 1879, on the Royal train from Livadia to Moscow, when the engine was blown off the line, the luggage van capsized and two passenger carriages derailed. A tunnel had been dug from an adjoining house to a spot just below the metals where a mine was fired. As a rule the train containing the Imperial party went first, but on this occasion the baggage train preceded, and

the change of plan saved the Emperor's life. After the attempt the house was examined but found empty and the perpetrators were never discovered.

The still more terrible explosion at the Winter Palace took place about two and a half months later. Lord and Lady Dufferin were engaged to dine with General Chanzy, the French Ambassador, whose acquaintance the former had made in Syria, many years before. On their way to the French Embassy a loud explosion was heard. Among the guests already assembled there was M. de Giers, afterwards Minister for Foreign Affairs.[1]

Every one had heard the thunderous report which shook the whole town, but M. de Giers was probably the only person present who guessed its real character.

Lord Dufferin thus describes the incident of the explosion, which had taken place in the basement of the enormous Winter Palace, beneath the guard-room, where the soldiers of the Finland Regiment were dining.

The Royal guests assembled in the drawing-room that evening were, amongst others, the Duke and Duchess of Edinburgh, the latter and her husband being then on a visit to her father, several of the grand dukes and their wives, and Prince Alexander of Bulgaria, but owing to

[1] In his article in the Boston, Mass., *Youth's Companion*, obligingly communicated to me by Messrs. Perry, Mason & Co., Lord Dufferin thus speaks of M. de Giers, a personage often regarded over here as the *ne plus ultra* of Russian Anglophobism: "One of the most moderate, sensible, and straightforward statesmen I have ever known."

his being late, instead of the dinner beginning at seven, the entry of the party into the dining-room was delayed for some ten minutes.

Suddenly there came a blinding flash, followed by a roar such as might portend the day of judgment, the gas was extinguished, windows blown in, and all for a time was in darkness and dire confusion, but so far as the first floor was concerned no material damage was done either to the furniture or the fittings, and no one was hurt. . . .

In the centre of the hall below, a black chasm, occupying nearly the whole of its breadth and two-thirds of its length, yawned beneath the feet of the onlooker like a gigantic quarry. Dead bodies, torn limbs, and wounded men bathed in blood were lying about in all directions or had fallen into the abyss below. On one side a partition wall had been blown down, and the huge stones of the pavement had been hurled with unspeakable violence against the stone-vaulted roof of the apartment. Fortunately, the pillars which supported the structure remained intact, otherwise the whole of that part of the palace would have crumbled down and many more of its inmates would have perished.

Among the visitors were two friends of the Dufferins, Captain Haig and Miss Corry (sister of Lord Rowton), in attendance on the Duke and Duchess of Edinburgh; the premature death of Miss Corry being, no doubt, hastened by the nervous shock consequent on this terrible event.

Of the sixth and unhappily fatal attempt Lord Dufferin was almost an eye-witness. The good Czar had witnessed a parade of some four or five thousand men in a huge riding-school, and after exchanging a few words with Lord Dufferin, who was on horseback, the two parted, the former riding

off to his Embassy and the other getting into his brougham. The Czar was being driven along the Catherine Canal when a bomb exploded immediately below the carriage.

Splinters of the bomb or of the floor of the carriage must have slightly wounded the Emperor's lower limbs, for there were traces of blood on the seat. But the Emperor himself seems to have been unconscious of the injury, for ordering the coachman to stop, he got out and walked toward the assassin who, after vainly endeavouring to defend himself with a revolver, had been caught and pinioned by a bystander. His Majesty remarked to the head of the police, Colonel Dvorketsky, who had followed in a sleigh, "Voilà un joli monsieur!" An instant after another assassin standing in the little crowd that had collected flung down a second bomb at the Emperor's feet, and when the smoke had cleared away, both the thrower of the bomb, the Emperor, and sixteen other persons were seen lying on the ground, either dead, senseless or cruelly injured.

Lord Dufferin says :

> Had the Emperor followed what is the accepted rule in all cases of an *attentat* and driven straight home to his palace after the first explosion, instead of stopping to get out, he would have again escaped from the hands of his enemies: but when urged to do so, he replied, "No: I must see to the wounded."
>
> The effects of the explosion upon his Majesty's person were terrible. One leg was shattered to the top of the thigh; the other was severed below the knee, the abdomen was torn open and the poor corpse mutilated in other ways.

Thus perished in the prime of life, by one of the most useless and stupid crimes ever recorded in history, the liberator of the Serfs of Russia![1]

The focus of international politics was now to shift from St. Petersburg to Constantinople, and it was no small tribute to Dufferin's capacity and genius, that his guiding hand was again to pilot the ship of State in another venture, amid the rocks and quicksands of the Near Eastern question. With the Porte the problem of the hour was the transfer of Thessaly from Turkey to Greece, as recommended by the Berlin Congress. Considerable difficulty had arisen from Greece's immoderate demands. She was pressing on the cession of Crete and Epirus, as well as Thessaly, and even when the Great Powers had formulated suggestions for the transfer of the greater part, but not the whole, of the two mainland provinces, she still clamoured for the three important fortresses of Janina, Metzovi and Larissa, the keys of Albania, and the strategic defence of the Mussulman power in those parts.

This was the main Turkish question confronting the Powers of Europe; but the gathering thunderstorm in Egypt no doubt helped to persuade the Government of Mr. Gladstone that Lord Dufferin

[1] One cannot help comparing with the above, Mr. Seton Merriman's wonderfully graphic description, in "The Vultures," of the same incident. The novelist, however, makes the event as having occurred on March 12th, Lord Dufferin on March 13th. The latter is the correct date. It is said that on that very day the Czar had signed a ukase for various administrative reforms.

was the man to be deputed to the spot. His reception in audience by the Sultan has been picturesquely described by Mr. W. J. J. Spry, R.N., of H.M.S. *Antelope.*

On the appointed morning H. B. M.'s Ambassador, accompanied by a large and distinguished suite, embarked at Therapia on board the despatch boat *Antelope*, and passed pretty villages, mosques and minarets, Imperial palaces and harems, grand konaks of the Ministers, yalis of wealthy Greeks and Armenians, bright gardens all aglow with orange and lemon trees, and hundreds of variegated plants and flowers. As the city is neared, one approaches great ironclads flying Turkish colours, stately passenger ships of Lloyds, the Messageries and other companies, and bluff corn ships waiting to be off to Odessa or the Danube, lying side by side with Greek feluccas, Italian brigs, and Turkish coasting craft, while like dragon-flies, the caique of the Moslem waterman, and the steam-launch of the rich Effendi, flit here and there over the water.

The *Antelope* moored off the Dolma-Bagtche Palace, and all those who were to take part in the ceremony landed on the long flight of marble steps which descend from the colonnade to the sea. In the Guard-house the party was received by the Master of the Ceremonies, the Grand Chamberlain, and other officials, and was conducted to the Imperial State carriages.

Lord Dufferin in his Minister's uniform, and

wearing the sky-blue riband of a Knight of St. Patrick beside other orders and decorations, was seated with the Grand Chamberlain in an open laudau drawn by four horses, preceded by mounted cavasses and outriders. Eight similar carriages were provided for his suite, and the *cortège* drove off to Yildiz, a handsome palace of white stone, built in the Italian style on the summit of a hill, and surrounded with the loveliest of gardens. It commands a magnificent view of the Bosphorus and the Asiatic shore, while on the other side it overlooks Stamboul and Pera.

On approaching the palace a military band struck up the British National Anthem, and a guard of honour was drawn up at attention. The great iron gates flew open, and in a vestibule of the palace the party were received by Munir Bey, Grand Master of the Ceremonies, who with the Earl led the way, all following up a broad stairway, beautifully carpeted. Handsome oil paintings of battle and other scenes hung on the walls, and clocks and vases of great beauty stood on ornamental brackets and pedestals.

As soon as the Audience Chamber was reached, the suite took up its position, while his Excellency advanced and was presented by Munir Bey to the Sultan. His Imperial Majesty stood at the further end of the chamber: Assym Pasha, Minister of Foreign Affairs, and other ministers in gorgeous uniforms and decorations were grouped around. The introduction was very cordial, and Lord

Dufferin addressed his Majesty as follows, speaking clearly and distinctly in French:

Her Majesty the Queen and Empress, my August Sovereign, has deigned to appoint me her Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary to your Imperial Majesty, her friend and ally.

I have the distinguished honour of placing in the hands of your Imperial Majesty the letters which accredit me in that capacity to your Majesty's Court.

Having already visited the Ottoman Empire, it is with feelings of deep satisfaction that I again find myself in the capital of your Imperial Majesty, as the representative of a Power which sincerely desires the happiness of your Majesty's reign, and the well-being and prosperity of your Majesty's people.

The sentiments of harmony which inspire the relations between Turkey and Great Britain exist as they have done in the past. I venture to assure your Imperial Majesty that I shall spare no effort to bind more and more closely the ties of friendship which so happily unite the two countries.

Mr. Spry says that his Majesty seemed about forty years of age, was rather above the medium height, broad across the chest, wore both beard and moustache, and had a grave face lit up by keen, restless, and ever-watchful eyes. He spoke clearly and distinctly, without any such gestures as Orientals often indulge in: he was attired in the uniform of military Commander-in-Chief, with the green sash and decorations of the Imperial Orders of the Osmanieh and Medjidie.

When Lord Dufferin had reached the paragraph

that he would spare no effort to bind more closely the ties of friendship which so happily united the two countries, a pleasing smile flitted across the Sultan's features, his eyes sparkled and lighted up an otherwise triste and weary expression. Before he became Sultan he is reported to have been quite cheerful, but the cares of sovereignty had changed him sadly.

After his Majesty's reply (which was nothing but a short echo of the address), he desired that his Excellency would present his numerous suite, which was accordingly done. The Sultan wore a more pleased and friendly look as the proceedings went on. The ceremony over, all "backed out" of the Royal presence, except Lord Dufferin, who was summoned to a private audience which lasted an hour.[1] The suite repaired to an anteroom where sherbet and cigarettes were served, and the Englishmen were presented to Said Pasha, the Grand Vizier, Osman Pasha, the hero of Plevna, and many others. Before leaving, coffee was served in golden cup holders, mounted with diamonds. Mr. Spry was under the impression that in Abdul Aziz's time, these ornaments were retained as perquisites by the visitors, and his

[1] One of the most interesting accounts of an interview and conversation with Abdul Hamid is recorded in the late M. de Blowitz's little book, "Une course à Constantinople." (Paris, Librairie *Plon.*), 1884. It shows the Sultan's personal views and aims in his own words, and on the whole, in a reasonable light. The audience was secured for M. de Blowitz's through Lord Dufferin's personal intervention and good offices with the Sultan.

secret chagrin at seeing them carefully retrieved by the attendants was keen.

On another occasion our Ambassador's reception by the Sultan was of a less ceremonious and gorgeous character. Some of Lord Dufferin's spare time was occupied in sailing up and down the Bosphorus in a small cutter, *The Lady Hermione*, which he had himself designed, and used to navigate single-handed.[1] Not unfrequently he would jump on board his tiny craft, and seek relief from the worrying importunities of the Porte officials. But on one of the exciting and anxious days that preceded the bombardment of Alexandria, the Sultan sent in hot haste for the British Ambassador, and succeeded in intercepting him before he boarded his cutter. Lord Dufferin, as has been well remarked in a sympathetic obituary notice that appeared in *The Times*, ever showed great coolness and self-control at moments when a weaker man would have been excited and flurried, and on this occasion considerably astonished and impressed the Sultan by strolling up to the Palace in yachting costume, with an air of complete unconcern, as if he had come to pay an unceremonious friendly visit.

Social life at Therapia was undeniably pleasant,

[1] Mr. J. McFerran, C.I.E., Lord Dufferin's personal and private secretary, wrote a description of this craft, and I believe the account is included in the Library at Clandeboye. He was a faithful and esteemed friend of the family, and is interred in the circular Campo Santo at Clandeboye, near his beloved master, and the monument to the latter's eldest son.

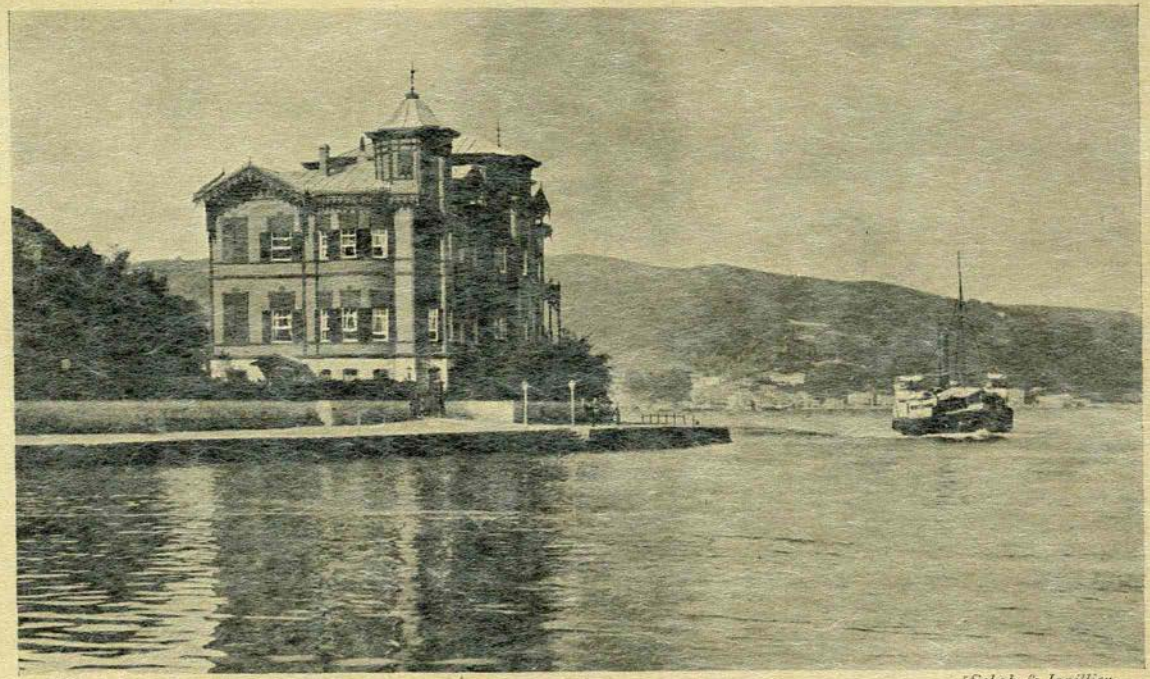

Photo by] [*Sebah & Joaillier.*

BRITISH EMBASSY, THERAPIA.

[*To face p.* 178.

the lawn tennis ground, surrounded by groves of lovely trees, was an attraction to both sexes and diverse nationalities. Several of the residents were expert hands, and the Renshaws and other players of wide reputation put in an occasional appearance. A ball at the Italian Embassy gave opportunity for a novel cotillon, where the Ambassador of Great Britain with some other of his colleagues were harnessed with silken bonds and driven round the room, Lady ——, whip in hand, handling the ribbons. At a given signal, the steeds escaped from their reins, each secured a partner, and joined in the mazy, rythmic valse. Garden parties at the British, French and Persian Embassies, a paper chase at Therapia, another diplomatic ball, and a still more festive fancy-dress dance on board the *Antelope*, provided endless excitement for the European society. At the last-named, Lord Dufferin wore the garb of the County Down Hunt Club, and the Countess was attired as "Mrs. Sheridan" in Sir Joshua's picture, her costume being white, with a large Gainsborough hat trimmed with black and white plumes. There was a variety of other costumes of the most fascinating and brilliant description. Chinese mandarins in brocaded silks, Hungarian nobles with sumptuous furry jackets slung over their shoulders, Afghans and Japanese, while among the ladies were Grace Darling, Cherry *Un*ripe, Albanian, Bohemian, Greek and Russian *paysannes*, Dolly Varden, Ruth, Princess Sheherezade, Sophia Primrose,

a Tunisian lady, Olivette, and a crowd of other fascinating belles.

These agreeable scenes had to be relinquished towards the close of 1882 to enable the Ambassador, in his new capacity of High Commissioner for Egypt, to deal with the critical state of affairs in that country.

CHAPTER IX

THE MISSION TO EGYPT

THE POSITION ON SUPPRESSION OF REBELLION — MILITARY, POLITICAL AND JUDICIAL NEEDS—IRRIGATION—SURVEYS —THE SUDAN—GENERAL REFLECTIONS

EGYPT'S serious difficulties had undoubtedly been brought about, in the first instance, by the extravagance of Ismail. When he came to the throne in 1863, the Egyptian debt amounted to a little over three millions of pounds. By the end of 1876 it was already estimated at ninety-one millions, and in reality considerably exceeded this figure. During this same period the taxation of the land, the principal source of revenue, had increased about fifty per cent. The subsequent events, including the institution of the Caisse de la Dette, marking the era of international interference in the finances of the country, were followed by the Dual Control and the deposition of Ismail.

In 1875 impoverishment of the fellah had reached such a pitch that the ordinary resources of the country no longer sufficed for the most urgent necessities of the administration, and the Khedive, having repeatedly broken faith with his

creditors, could not raise any more loans in the European market. The taxes were habitually collected many months in advance, and the colossal floating debt was increasing rapidly.

It is unnecessary to trace step by step the events which led up to the military disturbances of 1881 and 1882. These belong rather to the history of Egypt, and have not only been frequently told, but are actually in the recollection of most educated persons, while Lord Milner's admirable work,[1] published ten years after, has supplied a picturesque and authoritative review of the early and momentous years of the British occupation that ensued.

Lord Dufferin's deputation as High Commissioner and share in this great task covered but a very short period of time, from November, 1882, to May, 1883, but the result was all-important. He arrived at Cairo within two months of Arabi's defeat, and yet already Egyptian affairs were getting into a decided tangle, especially in the matter of the trials of the rebel leaders. It is practically acknowledged that had the Khedive and Riaz Pasha, his Minister of the Interior, been allowed to have their own way, Arabi and his colleagues would have had short shrift meted out to them. But, thanks to Lord Dufferin's interposition, the capital sentences passed on them were commuted to banishment, and even that modified punishment has been since wiped out by the permission

[1] "England in Egypt," by Alfred Milner, late Under-Secretary for Finance in Egypt. (*Arnold*, 1892.)

accorded to the culprits to return from Ceylon, whither they were deported, to their mother country. The exercise of the prerogative of mercy was an undeniable relief to the public sentiment, both at home and on the Continent; it was followed by no untoward consequences, and was not misconstrued as an act of weakness.

The High Commissioner also vetoed the experiment which had already been set on foot of quelling the country by a foreign gendarmerie, recruited from all sorts of countries—viz., Asia Minor, Epirus, Austria, and Switzerland. Some of these, Albanians by nationality, had actually created a riot in Alexandria, and were accordingly disbanded, while the recruiting of other undesirables in Geneva and elsewhere was stopped.

Instead of the foregoing, a scheme for a reorganised Egyptian gendarmerie and police was drawn up by Lord Dufferin, Sir Archibald Alison, and Sir Edward Malet, and sanctioned by Lord Granville. The force had rather peculiar duties to discharge, owing to the proximity of the desert, and the necessity of controlling the wild Arab tribes that infested its borders. It had thus to be, in a measure, a mounted force, and invested with a semi-military character. At the same time, for economical and other reasons, it had to be trained to discharge the civil duties of a rural police. The total number of the gendarmes for 1883 was 4,400 men, with 2,562 horses, costing at the rate of about £29 for each mounted and

about £16 10*s.* for each unmounted man. The total effective civil force amounted to 7,757. Its administration was placed under the Minister of the Interior, and its command was entrusted to General Baker, with the title of Inspector-General.

The new *régime* in Egypt of course necessitated a complete change in the financial control, and at the request of the Egyptian Government the old "Dual Control" of 1879 was abolished. Instead thereof a European Financial Adviser was appointed, Sir Auckland Colvin being the first person nominated to the post. This change was soon followed by a very welcome circular from the new Minister of the Interior, peremptorily forbidding the application of the *kurbash*, or lash, which, in spite of orders, had till then continued to be used with horrible severity at the caprice of petty officials.

In the meantime the British Parliament was about to meet, and a general report from Lord Dufferin was anxiously looked for. It was of course too soon to expect a scheme of re-organisation, for it was not three months since the High Commissioner had arrived in Cairo, and his hours had been greatly occupied with current business. But, nevertheless, he found time to draw up some very masterly papers, one of which has achieved world-wide repute. It is dated February 6th, 1883,[1] and, as Lord Milner truly says, it is impossible for any one well acquainted with Egypt to read

[1] "Command Paper." Egypt, No. 6 (1883) C.—3529. The Report was translated into French and Arabic and part of it into Turkish.

those various despatches, of which the one specially referred to is the chief, without admiration.[1]

One of the earliest sentences strikes a note which dominates throughout this notable State paper. After reference to the circumstances of our intervention, it adds:

> Europe and the Egyptian people, whom we have undertaken to rescue from anarchy, have alike a right to require that our intervention should be beneficent and its results enduring; that it should obviate all danger of future perturbation, and that it should be established on sure foundations, the principles of justice, liberty, and public happiness.

In spite of the evidence of history, Lord Dufferin was persuaded that it ought to be no difficult task to endow the Egyptian people with good government. The moment was propitious, and the territory of the Khedive had been recognised as lying outside the sphere of European warfare,

[1] "The writer's mastery of the subject is extraordinary. Behind all his formal civility to the misleading catchwords, the impracticable ideals, which he felt bound to treat with respect, there is a manly grasp of fact, and a clear appreciation of the essential needs of Egypt, and of the true remedies for her distress. No man knew better than Lord Dufferin that it was not paper constitutions, even of the most approved pattern, not emancipating decrees, even if glowing with the spirit of modern Liberalism, not courts or codes hastily copied from those of Western Europe, which could restore the prosperity of Egypt, and give her inhabitants either bread or justice. It was the slow, disagreeable work of reforming in detail, in the performance of daily duties, the several branches of the administration, until order should gradually be evolved from chaos, and until, under competent guides armed with adequate authority, native officials should gradually acquire the habits of energy, equity, self-reliance, and method."—"England in Egypt," p. 78.

while the protection of the Suez Canal had been declared to be an object of common solicitude. The fellahin race no longer occupied the same odious position to which foreign oligarchies had formerly consigned it, and several personages of that origin had been promoted to posts of honour and authority, while the fellahs themselves had showed unexpected signs of appreciation of their legitimate political interests and moral rights. There was, indeed, a strong belief in many quarters that order in Egypt could only continue to exist under the combined discipline of a couple of foreign schoolmasters, and the domestic *kurbash*, or, in other words, that the Egyptians were plainly incapable of managing their own affairs.

Lord Dufferin desired to press upon the British Government a more generous policy. The creation, within certain prudent limits, of representative institutions, of municipal and commercial self-government, and of political existence, untrammelled by external importunity, though aided, as it was obliged to be for a time, by sympathetic advice and assistance. No middle course was, in his opinion, possible.

The Egyptian Army had been disbanded by Khedival decree on September 19th, 1882. A new force of native Egyptians, some six thousand in number, was created to replace the others. The great temptation of a Ruler in the position of the Khedive would be, after the events of 1882, to surround himself with unnecessary troops, a

step which in all ages had been the resource of Oriental dynasties. Lord Dufferin had little difficulty in showing that it was far preferable to have recourse to such military aspirants as might be found among the Egyptians themselves; and the subsequent conduct of the native troops under Lord Kitchener has proved that the former was in no way mistaken. But as the officers were always the weak element in Egyptian armies, a leaven of English officers was introduced, and has since been increased. According to the "Statesman's Year Book," there are now (1902) about a hundred of our officers serving in the Egyptian Army.

In addition thereto there was, and still is, the British army of occupation of rather fewer men, towards which an annual contribution is made by the Egyptian Government. The total expense of the native army, police, and constabulary was estimated to amount to £E.519,741, being actually £100,000 less than the votes for the same three services in the normal Budget of 1881.

Having arranged for the material security of the country, the next point was its political requirements. A paper constitution was useless, for the germs of constitutional freedom were non-existent. "Despotism," as Lord Dufferin pointed out in one of those picturesque but convincing metaphors that he knew so well how to handle, "not only destroys the seeds of liberty, but renders the soil on which it has trampled incapable

of growing the plant. A long enslaved nation instinctively craves for the strong hand of a master, rather than for a less constitutional *régime*, and a mild ruler is more likely to provoke contempt and insubordination than to inspire gratitude."

To use the phrase that is so often used about India, Egypt was not ripe for self-government, and had the fates decreed that Lord Dufferin's Viceroyalty of India had preceded his mission to Egypt, I have great doubts whether his statesman-like scheme for the tentative regeneration of the fellah would have been characterised by the same trustful liberalism that actually pervaded it. The air and the traditions of India are all dead against any experiments in the direction of representative government; and even so masculine an intellect as that of Lord Dufferin, might have ventured less confidence in the Oriental character, had he been compelled to form his opinions of the fellahin with the warnings of a benevolent, but still despotic Anglo-Indian bureaucracy ringing in his ears.

At the same time, it was clearly right to give the various native communities a choice of the person or persons with whom their suffrage might be deposited, and there may have arisen this consoling reflection that, however unfavourably such an experiment might turn out, it could not possibly prove worse than, or even so bad as the misgovernment and anarchy that had prevailed so far. Consequently the following institutions were devised:—

1. *Village Constituency.*—Composed of representatives of each circumscription, chosen by manhood suffrage and forming the depositories of the village vote.

2. *Provincial Councils* (varying in number from four to eight members).—Chosen by the spokesmen of the villages.

3. *The Legislative Council.*—Consisting of twenty-six members, of whom twelve are nominated by the Khedive on the advice of his Ministers, and sixteen are elected by the Provincial Councils.

4. *The General Assembly*—of eighty members, eight Ministers, sixteen Members of the Legislative Council, forty-six Delegates, elected by the spokesmen of the villages.

5. *Eight Ministers responsible to the Khedive.*

6. *H.H. the Khedive.*

The chief requirement of Egypt was undoubtedly justice. A true, cheap and simple system of justice would, as the High Commissioner pointed out, "prove more beneficial to the country than the largest constitutional privileges. The structure of society in the East is so simple, that provided the taxes are righteously assessed, it does not require much law-making to make the people happy, but the most elaborate legislation would fail to do so if the laws invented for them were not equitably enforced."

At that time (in 1883) there was no real justice. None of the occupants of the Bench in any of the Courts had legal training, and there were no

real laws to guide their proceedings. At one time the French codes were invoked, at another the regulations formerly in force before the old Mixed Tribunals, and at another the precepts of the Mohammedan religion. Accordingly, Lord Dufferin recommended the Egyptian Government to modify the Civil, Commercial, and Maritime Codes now in use by the International Courts, so as to adapt them as far as possible to the requirements of the people. To the Committee appointed in 1880, Nubar Pasha, Judge Hills, and Judge Moriondo were added, and with their assistance the existing codes were supplemented, enlarged, and amended. The most important feature, however, of the new project, consisted in the introduction into the indigenous tribunals of a European element—a change which was universally acknowledged to be absolutely essential. Arrangements were made for getting men of high character and training from the justiciaries of Holland, Belgium and Switzerland, and liberal salaries were attached to the posts. There was one European on the Bench of every *mudirieh* or Province (fourteen in number) and two in each Appeal Court (of which there were two, one for upper and one for lower Egypt). Lastly, a Privy Council Tribunal was added for important cases between the Egyptian Government and its subjects.

How far speedy success could be prophesied for the scheme was a very moot point, for the difficulties were plainly declared by Lord Dufferin to be

"enormous." But he had little doubt that initial obstacles would be eventually surmounted, and that the project of endowing the country with native justice would in time become a reality.

This hope has not been very speedily realised. Justice, in the narrow sense pertaining to the Egyptian Courts of law and their work, is still a branch of government from which British influence has been largely excluded. It was not until 1889, that our Government showed a serious interest in the condition of the Native Courts, which, more than any other Courts, concerned the happiness of the toiling millions; and it was only with the appointment of Mr. (now Sir John) Scott in 1890, that practical steps were taken to improve them. The whole story is well told in Lord Milner's book, and is a striking proof, with all our good faith and vigilance, how gross oppression and native corruption managed to thrive unseen under the ægis of our virtual protectorate. But there is every indication that now-a-days we are attaining the goal of Lord Dufferin's anticipations.

Irrigation has been a primal necessity for thousands of years in the basin of the Nile. Theoretically, that great vital artery contains the potential vivification of a far larger expanse than is benefited therefrom even at present. As Lord Milner says, an undreamt-of prosperity may await the land of the Pharaohs. It is all a question of water. But in 1883, the service was most inefficient, new works were required, and even more

urgent were the repairs of the existing works. Embankments against inundations during a high Nile required to be mended, the shoals deposited near the intakes of the main arteries needed dredging, and the removal of the annual accumulations of silt throughout the entire system was a crying want.

The repairs of the canals were executed by *corvée* or forced labour, which was utilised in a most wasteful and oppressive manner, five hundred men being liable to be called out for two or three weeks for work which three hundred men could finish in three days. And few of these poor creatures had picks, the majority having to delve with their own bare hands and fill the baskets with the loose earth and sharp stones. A report by an "M.P.", an eye-witness, quoted by Lord Dufferin, describes the excavation of a canal a mile long by forty thousand men, the entire forced labour of one province. These poor labourers worked from sunrise to sunset, with a brief spell of rest at midday for a meal consisting of bread supplied by their relations, dipped in the water of the Nile. They wore felt skull-caps on their heads, exactly like those represented as the workmen in the bas-reliefs of the fourth dynasty. Many were suffering from eye disease;[1] the heat at the

[1] Ophthalmia is terribly rife in Egypt and other hot, sandy climes. At a Mansion-House meeting I was present at in 1897, Mr. John Tweedy, F.R.C.S., gave some interesting particulars regarding the activity and virulence of the disease, and at the same time mentioned some remarkable statistics. When Napoleon landed in Egypt he had

bottom of the excavation was intense, while at night it was very cold and yet they had only the bare earth to sleep on and in the same calico rags they had worn during the day.

It was often spite, favouritism, or corruption which led to these unfortunate cultivators being dragged from their homes, and their neighbours left free and unmolested; so the bitterness of feeling engendered by such a system may be imagined, while from an economic point of view the cost of the *corvée* must have been prodigious, as it meant the annual withdrawal from agricultural work of from one hundred thousand to one hundred and thirty thousand men for a period varying from sixty to one hundred and twenty days.

In the distribution of water great abuses unfortunately prevailed. These arose chiefly from the arbitrary powers with which the engineers were entrusted, who regulated the construction of dams and sluices, and the erection of pumps. The pumping was done mainly by small portable steam

with him some thirty-two thousand troops. Within two months, so it was said, every one of those men was attacked with ophthalmia. During the English occupation of the country, at the beginning of the century, a similar disaster overtook our soldiers. Out of one battalion alone of seven hundred men there were six hundred and thirty-six cases of ophthalmia, ninety of these men being rendered blind of one or both eyes. In the campaign of 1882, though there was unhappily an outbreak of ophthalmia, thanks to the minute and careful precautions taken not a single man lost his sight. A more striking proof of the beneficial effect of modern surgical and medical science could scarcely be found. It is gratifying to see that Sir E. Cassel has just devoted a large sum of money towards the investigation and extirpation of this fearful disease.

engines, owned by capitalists who sold the water. One man alone was said to be making fifteen thousand pounds a year by this means, and people like that were naturally interested in opposing any improved canalisation which would mean the spontaneous flow of water over the adjoining fields.

Lord Dufferin's principal remedy for this was to seek a thoroughly experienced and competent irrigation engineer as chief of the department, with the assistance of a staff of trustworthy inspectors. To this officer was to be entrusted the repair of old works, the erection of pumps, the distribution of water and the employment of labour, including the dismissal of incompetent and untrustworthy employés. He would also advise as to the construction of new works; in concert with the Mudirs and Provincial Generals he would regulate the *corvée* so as to obtain a maximum of work with a minimum of inconvenience to the peasantry, and would inquire through the agency of his Inspectors into any complaint of unfair distribution of water.

Of course such an officer was bound to encounter difficulties and opposition. The rich landed proprietors, the owners of pumps, the regulators of the *corvée* and everybody who made money out of the existing discreditable condition of affairs, had a strong vested interest in its continuance. But by all who remembered the rainless character of Egypt and its complete dependence on the Nile for its existence and wealth, the enormous

importance of a complete reform of the irrigation system was better appreciated.

Indian engineers were summoned to Egypt in 1883 and 1884, and out of an incredible tangle of blunders and corruption, order and progress were gradually evolved. The successive triumphs won by Sir Colin Scott Moncrieff and his able adjutants not only diminished the maintenance cost of the old works, but, by making them more efficient, largely increased the productiveness of the country. The restoration of the barrage at the apex of the Delta in 1891, and the recent completion of the Assiut barrage and the Assuan dam are three great achievements which have worthily crowned the indefatigable labours of this useful department.

Another embarrassing question was the disposal of the Daira Sanieh and Domains, vast properties consisting of about one-fifth of the whole cultivated land of Egypt, and formerly belonging to the Khedive and his family. It is beyond the scope of this biographical sketch to review, in any detail, the steps gradually taken to diminish the enormous incubus of debt which had been contracted on the security of these lands, and on which the State had covenanted to pay interest. Lord Dufferin saw clearly that the only feasible course was to get the lands sold and replaced in the occupation of the cultivators of the community; and this is the plan actually pursued, though it will be two years before the Daira and Domains Commissions are abolished.

In a long catalogue of departmental misgovernment it would have been strange indeed if the highly technical business of land surveys had not figured. Cadastral surveys have in many countries had to undergo incessant modifications according to the ideas of professional or administrative theorists, and the field of experiment in Egypt formed no exception from the general rule. The cost had been excessive and the results small. The requirements were, of course, no different from those of most other countries, viz., (1) a topographical map of the country based upon proper triangulation for administrative and engineering purposes ; and (2) a cadastral survey to insure proper levy of land tax, to facilitate the transfer of land, and to register and secure landed rights.

A good survey combines both, but when we reflect that for many years such a combination was never attempted in India, we can hardly be surprised that its advantages were not immediately perceived in Egypt. In 1881 Mr. Gibson, a Superintendent of Revenue Surveys in India, was appointed, and after careful study of the whole question he submitted a scheme which appears to have been that eventually adopted.

One of the most serious and distressing subjects connected with the social condition of the country was the enormously increased indebtedness of the fellahin. The problem here was not very different from that in India, where, under native rule, the creditor received little or no assistance in recovering

Photo by] [*M. Bonfils.*

AN EGYPTIAN CULTIVATOR.

[*To face p.* 196.

his debts, and resorted to ordinary methods of dunning ; to fasting before the debter's door (when those within the house are in honour bound to follow his example); and in extreme cases to suicide with the view of involving the defaulter in blood-guiltiness.

The Egyptian peasants maintain that in former days the creditor was not armed with the power of foreclosing and expropriating the debtor from his holding, nor under Mohammedan law could the case go against him by default. But just as in India the introduction of British Codes invested the creditor with new powers, so in Egypt the International Tribunals have on the one hand stimulated the fellah's borrowing instincts by constituting his holding a legal security, and on the other they have armed the mortgagee with far too ready and extensive powers of selling up the encumbered owner.

The consequence of adapting the Procrustean laws of the West to the utterly unsuited conditions of the East, was that within six years the mortgage debts of the fellahin had risen in round numbers from less than £500,000 to £5,000,000, a vast proportion of this representing accumulated interest at thirty-six per cent. per annum! The Egyptian peasant does not look forward, and, like a child, is prone to gratify his immediate desires at any sacrifice. As a consequence he is enticed into most imprudent arrangements, which eventually lead to his ruin and expropriation, the procedure of the Mixed Tribunals unduly favouring the interests of the mortgagees. Lord Dufferin's suggestions for remedying this crying evil was the

establishment of Agricultural Banks,[1] assisted by Government, the working capital of which would be found by local capitalists, or the utilisation of the Crédit Foncier, supported by the guarantee of Government and converted practically into a department of Government.

An important question, growing out of the foregoing, was how far the assessment of the land tax, which represented an annuity about £E500,000, could be considered as compatible with the well-being of the cultivators. Lord Dufferin was of opinion that the inequalities of assessment, and consequent dissatisfaction, were glaring, and that the decreasing fertility of the soil, from over-cropping and from the growing scarcity of the water supply, was rapidly reducing the value of the land, and rendering the assessment unduly onerous.

The suggested relief, however, came from a different quarter. It was the *corvée*, or forced labour, which pressed most hardly on the fellah. On this great grievance the Dufferin Report scarcely touched, for its author was of opinion that it was one of those laws which, having existed for thousands of years, was accepted as a sort of providential dispensation, not open to question, and practically impossible to abolish altogether. Lord

[1] An exhaustive and interesting work on People's Banks has been written by Mr. Henry W. Wolff. (*P. S. King*: second edition, 1890). It deals more particularly with co-operative banks in France, Germany, Italy, and Switzerland, but the principles and experience are of course of far wider application, and it is truly, as its author claims, a "record of social and economical success."

Dufferin could perhaps hardly have dared to anticipate the fortunate concurrence of favourable conditions which enabled Nubar Pasha and Riaz Pasha to initiate and finally to carry through the means for the eventual abolition of this detestable and ruinous institution.

Education was always a hobby of Lord Dufferin —as witness his numerous speeches in Canada—and it naturally attracted his special attention in Egypt. There were, indeed, lower and upper primary schools, a high school in Cairo, a variety of technical and professional schools, foreign mission schools, and the world-famous El-Azhar University, but the results in most cases were far from satisfactory. *Primâ facie* the Egyptians ought to be the most thoroughly educated people on the face of the earth. Unfortunately the contrary was the case.

The Egyptian boy is naturally precocious, and has a special aptitude for languages and mathematics, but having arrived at a certain stage, he no longer continues to make a proportionate progress in the higher branches of study. Early marriage is one of the chief influences which wean him from the pursuit of learning, many of the young students who sit upon the school benches having already taken upon themselves the responsibilities of a wife. Defective sight[1] is another frequent impediment to advancement.

It is probably in this department that Egypt has made the least striking progress. Lord Dufferin was, indeed, careful to lay his finger on

[1] See Note, page 192.

the principal defects of each class of schools, one general and crying need being a body of qualified Inspectors, with an Inspector-General at the head. Even Lord Milner seems to confess that educational reform has been of slow growth, though he claims that there is no branch of Government where of late years the spirit of reform has borne richer fruit. But he adds truly enough, that people had to live before they could be taught, and that famine was worse than ignorance. What the Government had to fight for in 1882-3 was the very existence of the people, the defence of person and property, the maintenance of justice, and the efficient preservation of those public works upon which life depended. Since then the task has been the careful but slow process of putting new wine into old bottles.

One of the most astonishing abuses which confronted Lord Dufferin was the enormous number of the salaried officials. Every Pasha had a number of adherents who looked to him for favours, and whose importunity he had no compunction in rewarding at the expense of the State. The total number of natives in the Civil Service in 1883 was fifty-three thousand, costing rather more than one and a half million pounds (Egyptian). Lord Dufferin declared that if one-third of these men were dismissed there and then, the work of the Ministries they encumbered would be all the more efficiently performed.

The number of European employés was one thousand and fifty-four at the end of 1882; one

hundred and forty being English, one hundred Maltese (under English protection), two hundred and forty French, three hundred Italians, one hundred and four Greeks, eighty Austrians, and thirty-five Germans. Their entire salaries came to £305,000, so that the Europeans represented two per cent. of the total number and fifteen per cent. of the total cost.

These as well as the natives required to be reduced in number, and Lord Dufferin's remedy was a competent Commission, whose duty it would be to study the requirements of each department and determine the number of its staff, as well as reduce the extravagant liberality of the Pension Code. But at the same time he gave emphatic warning against any concession to the unreasonable cry for getting rid of a large proportion of the Europeans. For some time to come it was clear that European assistance in the various departments would be absolutely necessary. Were they withdrawn the whole machinery of government would fall into inextricable confusion. "It is frightful to contemplate," remarked Lord Dufferin, "the misery and misfortune which would be entailed on the population, were the Financial, the Public Works, and analogous departments to be left ungarrisoned by a few high-minded European officials. The Government would quickly become a prey to dishonest speculators, ruinous contracts, and delusive engineering operations from which they are now protected by intelligent and capable men,

But apart from the material benefits conferred by the assistance of Europeans . . . they are establishing a standard of integrity, zeal, and efficiency, which we may hope will eventually be permanently consolidated in all the departments of the State."

As regards the Sudan, which at that time was in the thrall of the Mahdi, Lord Dufferin was unable to write confidently or hopefully. But he was opposed to the ideas then rife in some quarters, that Egypt should withdraw from thence, and reminded his Government that the basin of the Upper Nile was capable of producing inexhaustible supplies of sugar and cotton. He felt himself, however, bound to remark, that Egyptian administration in the Sudan had been almost uniformly unfortunate.[1] They had lost about nine thousand men in the preceding year and a half, while it was estimated that forty thousand of their opponents had perished. Reinforcements to the extent of ten thousand men had been despatched to Khartoum, but these seemed to be raw, undisciplined men. In the meantime Egyptian garrisons at various scattered posts were cut off from communication with their base. Colonel Hicks, a distinguished retired Indian officer, had joined the army, and been deputed by the Egyptian Government as chief of the staff, but this was not done with Lord Dufferin's concurrence.

[1] One rather conspicuous exception occurs to me, *i.e.*, Lupton Bey's administration of the Bahr el Ghazal province, which was financially a success, and would have ranked still more brilliantly had its governor been better supported from Cairo.

It is noteworthy that Lord Dufferin's first suggestions towards the habilitation of the Sudan was a railway from Suakin to Berber, or perhaps to Shendy on the Nile. This has never been carried out and is admittedly as urgent now as it was then.[1] The cost was estimated then at only a million and a half, and I need hardly remark that, had Lord Dufferin's suggestion been acted upon at the time, it would have profoundly modified subsequent history, for even if Hicks's disaster had not been averted, Gordon's mission would have had a different ending.

The completion of this enterprise would at once change all the elements of the problem. Instead of being a burden on the Egyptian Exchequer, these equatorial provinces ought to become, with anything like good management, a source of wealth to the Government. What has hitherto prevented their development has been the difficulty of getting machinery into the country, and of conveying its cotton, sugar, and other natural products to the sea. The finances of the Sudan once rehabilitated, the Provincial Administration would no longer be forced to visit its subjects with those heavy exactions which have been in all probability at the bottom of the present disturbances, and the natural expansion of commerce would eventually extend the benefits of civilisation for some distance through the surrounding regions. I apprehend, however, that it would be wise upon the part of Egypt to abandon Darfur, and perhaps part of

[1] In Lord Cromer's Report (1903) he remarks: "The construction of the Suakin-Berber Railway is absolutely essential to the well-being of the Sudan. All the testimony which I received during my recent visit to the Sudan strongly confirmed me in the opinion which I had previously held on this subject."

Kordofan, and to be content with maintaining her jurisdiction in the Provinces of Khartoum and Sennaar.

The construction of the railway, supplemented by roads, would have also been useful in the suppression of the slave trade, which was another matter anxiously considered by Lord Dufferin. A Convention had been entered into between England and Egypt in 1877, but in various respects it needed amendment. One weak point was that, though it defined certain offences and provided for their trial, it did not specify the punishment. The result was that the sentences pronounced by the special tribunals were, as a rule, inadequate. The Manumission Bureaux had done good work at slight expense, and in five years over eight thousand slaves had been set free. But the disposal of the slaves had not proved satisfactory, and the Red Sea Service had been a failure and had to be suppressed. The effect of the Bureaux had brought home to every male slave that he could obtain his freedom whenever he liked. The female slaves, owing to the seclusion of harem life, were not so well informed as to their legal status. But, on the whole, the slaves were well treated, and perhaps better cared for than domestic servants in England. Unfortunately, in the Sudan, slavery, though checked, was still universally prevalent. The mutilation of children was still carried on, and since General Gordon's departure no punishments had been inflicted sufficiently heavy to deter the slave traders from their nefarious practices.

Lord Dufferin proposed, therefore, the conclusion of a new Convention between the two countries according to which slavery would entirely cease in Egypt and its dependencies some years after the date of signature. Various detailed reforms were also indicated so as to further the great work in view. No good, however, could be effected, as Lord Dufferin truly remarked, unless the Egyptian Government was made to realise that in the question of the suppression of the slave trade England was in earnest, and until the employés, from the Governor-General downwards, were made to feel that their interest lay in checking, not in encouraging, slavery and the slave trade.

Other minor but still important topics claimed and received attention in the same Report. Lord Dufferin was in favour of endowing the Mixed International Tribunals with a criminal jurisdiction over foreigners, whose numbers had for years been increasing fast. As far as he could ascertain, the courts in question were perfectly competent to exercise the jurisdiction. In respect of Commercial Conventions, the Egyptian Government contended that its right to conclude such agreements ought not to be contested, as it was by some of the Powers, notably by the Porte and by France. This disability was particularly felt in the matter of the Customs, which were regulated by the treaties concluded between the Porte and the Foreign Powers in 1861 and 1862, and which

were made without any regard to the special commercial requirements of Egypt. The loss to the Egyptian revenue in consequence of its dependence on the Turkish Custom regulations in the respects referred to amounted to about £200,000 per annum, a sum equivalent to more than a fourth of the Customs revenues of the country. Litigation and smuggling would also be diminished by such a reform, and its total benefit to the Egyptian Treasury was estimated at not less than £30,000 per annum.

Lord Dufferin also drew attention to the exemption of foreigners from taxation,[1] a state of things which begot a sense of injustice in the native mind. It was one of various grievances which would have been remedied had not the Egyptian Government laboured under the disadvantage, in its relations with foreign Powers, of not having any Agents of its own through whom to press its complaints.

While enumerating all the above needs, Lord Dufferin did not omit to acknowledge that sincere efforts had been made by the Egyptian Government during the preceding three years to improve the administration of the country. The Com-

[1] This, by-the-bye, prevails at the Treaty Ports in China, and may have to be redressed in favour of the native Chinese taxpayer at some not distant date. At present the European residents there are very inadequately taxed. I am not quoting only from my own observation in China, but mainly from that of the late Chinese Minister in London, who had gone into the matter most carefully, and held strong views thereon, as he explained to me more than once.

mission of Inquiry instituted in 1878 had specified various points as needing urgent attention, and considerable parts of their programme had been carried out. The taxes were at last levied under due authority only. Every peasant knew exactly what and when he had to pay, the collection of the land revenue was closely followed and controlled by the Minister of Finance. Great progress had been made in perfecting the system of accounts. Budgets were punctually submitted, and strictly observed. The Government had an account current with the Imperial Ottoman Bank which enabled it temporarily to meet, if need be, current expenditure instead of forestalling the taxes. Twenty-nine taxes, yielding in all a revenue of £377,308, had, either in part or in whole, been abolished as vexatious, while the land revenue had been increased by £150,000 levied on the *Oochuri* or privileged lands.

It is beyond the scope of this book to give the figures of the Budget, but it is interesting to note that, excluding the Daira and Domains income and charge from both sides of the account, the total actual debt of Egypt in 1883 was 79½ millions, and that out of a total income of 8⅓ millions, Egypt paid something less than 3¾ to her creditors. At the present day, though the debt (exclusive of the Daira and Domains loans) is over 93 millions, the charge is under 3½ millions, while the revenue has risen to over 11 millions.

In an eloquent conclusion Lord Dufferin summed

up the situation with a view towards considering how things would work. He remarked :

Had I been commissioned to place affairs in Egypt on the footing of an Indian subject State, the outlook would have been different. The masterful hand of a Resident would have quickly bent everything to his will, and in the space of five years we should have greatly added to the material wealth and well-being of the country by the extension of its cultivated area and the consequent expansion of its revenue; by the partial, if not the total, abolition of the *corvée* and slavery, the establishment of justice and other beneficent reforms. But the Egyptians would have justly considered these advantages as dearly purchased at the expense of their domestic independence. Moreover, her Majesty's Government and the public opinion of England have pronounced against such an alternative. But though it be our fixed determination that the new *régime* shall not surcharge us with the responsibility of permanently administering the country, whether directly or indirectly, it is absolutely necessary to prevent the fabric we have raised from tumbling to the ground the moment our sustaining hand is withdrawn. Such a catastrophe would be the signal for the return of confusion to this country and renewed discord in Europe. At the present moment we are labouring in the interests of the world at large. The desideratum of every one is an Egypt peaceful, prosperous, and contented, able to pay its debts, capable of maintaining order along the Canal, and offering no excuse in the troubled condition of its affairs for interference from outside. France, Turkey, every European Power, must be as anxious as ourselves for the attainment of these results, nor can they be jealous of the means we take to secure them.

After referring to the creation of representative institutions in the country, to the necessity of

giving these a free and fair trial, and of furnishing the persons who had staked their future on the existence of the Government with some guarantee that it would endure, the despatch continued :

How can we expect men born under a ruthless despotism to embark on the duties of an Opposition—which is the vital spark of constitutional government—to criticise, condemn and countervail the powers that be, if to-morrow the ark of the Constitution to which they trusted is to break into fragments beneath their feet? Amid the applause of the Liberal world a Parliament was called into existence at Constantinople; a few months later it disappeared, and its champion and fugleman is now languishing in the dungeons of Taïf. Unless they are convinced that we intend to shield and foster the system we have established, it will be vain to expect the timid politicians of the East to identify themselves with its existence. But even this will not be enough. We must also provide that the tasks entrusted to the new political apparatus do not overtax its untried strength. The situation of the country is too critical, the problems immediately pressing on the attention of its rulers are too vital to be tampered with, even in the interests of political philosophy. Various circumstances have combined to render the actual condition of the Egyptian fellah extremely precarious. His relations with his European creditors are becoming dangerously strained. The agriculture of the country is rapidly deteriorating, the soil having become exhausted by over-cropping and other causes. The labour of the *corvée* is no longer equal to the cleansing of the canals. As a consequence the desert is entrenching on the cultivated land, and unless some remedy be quickly found, the finances of the country will be compromised. With such an accumulation of difficulties, native statesmanship, even though supplemented by the new-born

institutions, will hardly be able to cope, unless assisted for a time by our sympathy and guidance. . . . We can hardly consider the work of re-organisation complete, or the responsibilities imposed upon us by circumstances adequately discharged, until we have seen Egypt shake herself free from the initial embarrassments which I have enumerated. This point of departure once attained, we can bid her God-speed with a clear conscience, and may fairly claim the approbation of Europe for having completed a labour which every one desired to see accomplished, though no one was willing to undertake it but ourselves. Even then the stability of our handiwork will not be assured unless it is clearly understood by all concerned that no subversive influence will intervene between England and the Egypt she has re-created.

Looking back from our present standpoint on the lengthy and thoughtful despatch, which I have imperfectly summarised, the reflection arises, Did Lord Dufferin underrate the difficulties of the task which he reviewed, and was he unduly optimistic in his forecast? Lord Milner acknowledges that Lord Dufferin left the country in May, 1883, amid a shower of congratulations, for the fair vision of a reformed and autonomous Egypt seemed, after all, not to be so very difficult to realise. But he adds that Lord Dufferin certainly glossed over the deep-rooted obstacles which his scheme of reform was bound to encounter, and, above all, the length of time which would be required to accomplish it. And that he concealed from both parties the disagreeable side of the business—from the Egyptians the long period of irksome control and

training through which they would have to pass on their road to a civilised independence; from the English the corresponding period of close attention to the affairs of Egypt and the effort, anxiety, and risk which such attention involved.

Lord Milner wrote with the memory of his own anxious and wearisome duties as Under-Secretary for Finance still weighing heavily upon him, and it was natural that he should be tempted to contrast the many years' toil of those who had undergone on the spot the heat and burden of the actual work of reform, with the programme outlined in Lord Dufferin's easy and eloquent periods. But this comparison makes scanty allowance for the two gigantic disasters which it was impossible to foresee, and which befel Egypt in the very year of Lord Dufferin's departure, viz., the cholera epidemic, and the annihilation of Hicks Pasha's army in Kordofan. Lord Milner does, indeed, refer to these as evidence of the dramatic disappointment which awaited Egypt's hopeful well-wishers. But the fact for which he does not make adequate allowance, appears to me to be this, that it was not permitted to Lord Dufferin to watch over, water, prune and tend the plant on whose critical condition and future growth he was called to advise. Or, if I may be forgiven another simile, his was the part of the distinguished specialist who is hurriedly commissioned to prescribe for an urgent malady. The case needs as much care in the after treatment as in the original

diagnosis, and it is rather a tribute to the merits of the physican than otherwise, that he should be unable to devote his continued energies to the patient's complete restoration to health. The public needs could ill-spare Lord Dufferin's detention over one case, while even larger Imperial questions required his attention elsewhere.[1]

[1] While these pages are passing through the press, Lord Cromer's Reports on Egypt and the Sudan have come to hand, showing in the case of the former that during the last twenty years' taxation to the extent of about £E1,600,000 annually has been remitted, and that the rate of taxation per head of population has sunk from about a guinea in 1882 to sixteen shillings in 1902.

CHAPTER X

THE INDIAN VICEROYALTY

LORD RIPON'S DEPARTURE—AFGHAN BOUNDARY DEMARCATION —FEELING BETWEEN BRITAIN AND RUSSIA—AMIR'S VISIT TO VICEROY—PENJDEH SENSATION

IN the Autumn of 1884, while serving as British Ambassador in Constantinople, whither he had returned from Cairo, Lord Dufferin received intimation that he had been nominated to succeed Lord Ripon as Viceroy of India, and on November 13th of that year he sailed from London for Bombay accompanied by Lady Dufferin, Lady Helen Blackwood, and several members of his personal staff. On his way to India, Lord Dufferin was busy, as might be surmised by any one conversant with his character and habits. The Bengal Tenancy Bill, amongst other matters, had been specially commended to his notice by the Secretary of State, and he mastered these and other papers *en route*. But he also made time to read Mr. Bosworth Smith's "Life of Lord Lawrence" in two volumes, and took the opportunity, after perusal, to write a very deserved and

gratifying letter to the author, which the latter has kindly placed at my disposal.

S.S. "TASMANIA,"
November 27th, 1884,
SUEZ.

MY DEAR MR. BOSWORTH SMITH,—

I cannot refrain from writing you a line of thanks for the extraordinary pleasure and profit I have derived from your Life of Lord Lawrence. It is one of the best biographies I have ever read in my life, giving such a clear picture of your hero in such strong and bold outlines, and accompanied by so many details which enhance the charm and individuality of the character without either confusing the narrative or the image you have presented to us. But what a subject it is with which you have had to deal! What simplicity, strength and majesty were in the man, and how unfailing, unswerving and unresting was his sense of duty! And again, how dramatic his gradual ascencion (*sic*)[1] to the place appointed for him, and the unfolding of the scenes in the Punjab, as they led up to the crisis at Delhi! It has quite appalled me, too, to think that I should have been called upon to sit on that throne which was once filled by so imperial a figure. However, I will do my best to follow in his footsteps, and to profit by the landmarks he has erected for all time to guide his less experienced successors.

I hope you will forgive me for troubling you with these lines, but I could not help liberating my soul on shutting up your beautiful volumes.

Yours very sincerely,
DUFFERIN.

The party arrived at Bombay on the 8th and at Calcutta on December 11th, and was received by the retiring Viceroy with all the etiquette accom-

[1] I believe there is authority for this old spelling.

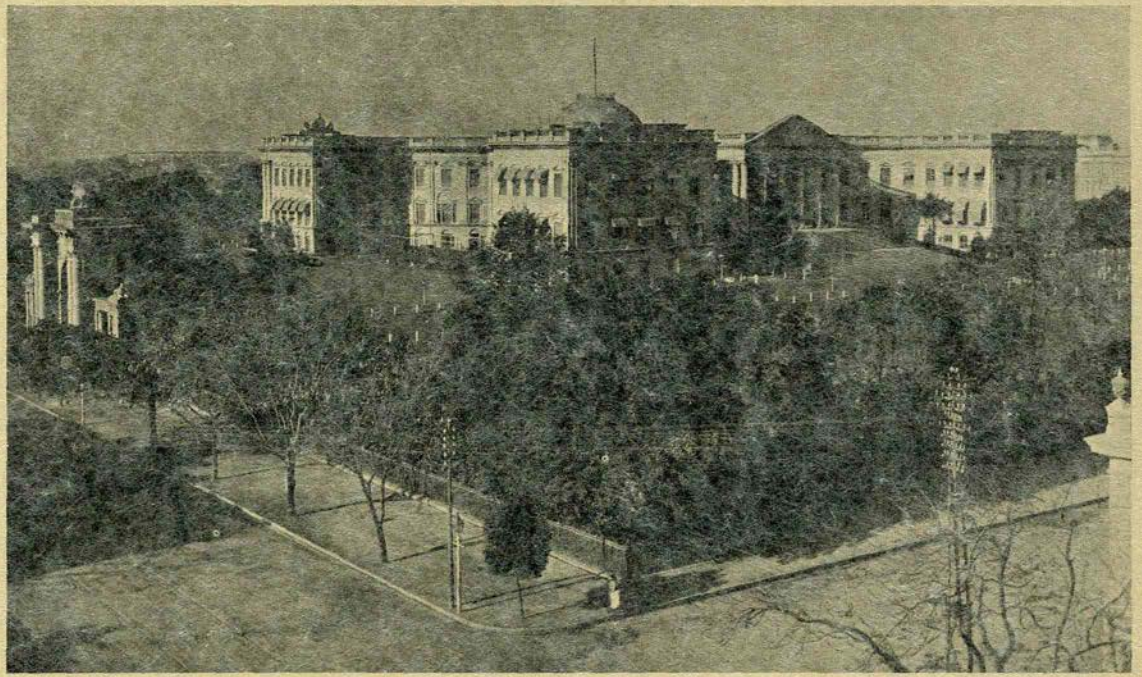

Photo by] [*Bourne & Shepherd.*

GOVERNMENT HOUSE, CALCUTTA.

[*To face p.* 214.

panying the quinquennial exchange of India's rulers. On the very day of Lord Ripon's departure, Lord Dufferin wrote about his predecessor to the Secretary of State :

He has been most kind in doing everything he could to instruct me upon all outstanding public questions, and I have been struck by the moderation, the good sense, the justice of his views, and above all by his magnanimity ; for in spite of the harsh treatment he has received, he spoke of no one with the slightest bitterness. I accompanied him to the train this morning, when a large number of natives assembled in the street and clapped and cheered him as he passed. He is to receive innumerable addresses on his journey to Bombay, where a grand reception awaits him. No Viceroy probably has ever left India amidst such general and genuine expression of goodwill on the part of the Indian population ; and I am glad to find I shall have no difficulty in following the general lines of his policy. The only respect in which I may hesitate to copy his example for the present will be in the frequency of his popular addresses. Their liberal ring irritated the Anglo-Indian mind. The Colony is easily frightened. They imagined him intent on undermining their prestige, and the applause of the natives gave a sinister point to very innocent expressions. For fear the natives might suspect I was disposed to discontinue, if not to reverse Ripon's friendly policy, I took the earliest opportunity of paying him some well-deserved compliments. In reply to one or two addresses I specially declared my intention to foster his scheme of local self-government, and on arriving in Calcutta, I referred to the principle of continuity as being a chief characteristic of our rule, and to the loyal manner in which each successive Viceroy had endeavoured to carry to a successful issue whatever projects had been conceived for the good of the people by those who had gone before him.

I have no doubt that the British Colony will be glad of the opportunity I propose to offer to them of making their peace with Government House. As they are at heart, like the rest of their countrymen, reasonable and good-natured men, there is a fair prospect of our getting our parti-coloured team to jog along together in peace and good fellowship.

I have ventured to quote this charming note at length, firstly because it seems to me a remarkably discerning as well as tactful letter for one who had been only a few days in the country, and secondly, because Sir Donald Mackenzie Wallace, his private secretary, assures us that the policy sketched out in this letter continued to be, so far as internal affairs were concerned for his four years viceroyalty, the key-stone of Lord Dufferin's administration. Also I may mention I drew Lord Dufferin's own attention to the fact that I proposed to publish the letter in my biography, and that he laughingly said he did not think it would do any harm.

His predecessor, with his wonted industry, had been working up to the very last, and left no arrears, but there was one large question still unsettled. As Sir Alfred Lyall has remarked in his article in the *Edinburgh Review* of January, 1889, Lord Ripon had, after his successful settlement of Afghan affairs turned his attention to the agrarian questions of two important provinces, and the Bengal Tenancy Bill was in 1884 still in embryo. Lord Dufferin had been specially

warned before he left England that he would have to take this up. He had accordingly taken the opportunity to study the subject on his way out, and on his arrival was prepared to deal with it. Speaking shortly, it may be mentioned that the measure grew out of the recommendations of the Indian Famine Commission. Although the landlords considered the measure as essentially a Tenant's Bill, while the tenants' representatives spoke of it as intended to subserve the interests of the landlords, and although the debate lasted some days, the Bill passed without a division on March 12th, 1885.

In the meantime, there was a most important question of foreign policy which was then coming urgently to the front—the demarcation of the northern frontier of Afghanistan. Its approximate alignment had been roughly indicated in the Anglo-Russian Agreement of 1872–3, as coinciding with the course of the Oxus River from its supposed source in Lake Victoria in the Pamirs, to Khojah Saleh, whence it ran south-west across the desert to the Hari Rud River. The latter portion, however, being independent of any natural feature, naturally required to be settled and artificially demarcated.

Arrangements were made for a joint Anglo-Russian Commission to go over the ground together with an Afghan representative, and decide which way the boundary was to run, and General Sir P. S. Lumsden was given command of the English

party, Colonel (now Sir J.) Ridgeway being second in command. The former proceeded to the spot from Europe, while Colonel Ridgeway, with the body of the mission left India in September 1884, for the purpose of joining his Chief. The Mission consisted not only of political officers, but also of a small body of Survey Officers and an escort of four hundred and fifty native troops. It arrived at Kuhsan near Herat on November 17th, 1884, where two days later it was joined by Sir Peter Lumsden. Owing to the Amir's objection to allow the British Officers to travel along the natural route through Candahar and Herat, they had to traverse that most desolate region south of the Helmand River; but the topographical information was certainly of great value, for some day the railway connecting India with the West will have to pass hereabouts.

Russia did not, however, display anxiety to fulfil her part of the demarcation agreement. When it came to carrying out her promises, the Cabinet of St. Petersburg, who had agreed in principle to the proposed arrangements, began to display a wish to back out, while all the time they were pushing troops forward. On one excuse or another the arrival of the Russian Emissaries was postponed, and the British Mission had to go into winter quarters (1884-5), and occupy their time by collecting all the topographical, ethnical, and political information about this rather obscure region.

Such was the position at the time of Lord

Dufferin's arrival in India, and it was by no means destitute of anxieties. The view taken by the India Office was that Russia's attitude was unfriendly if not menacing, and that though she might not be intent on picking a quarrel with us, there was considerable danger of a collision between her officers and those of the Amir. Some lively correspondence had taken place between General Alikhanoff (a rather notorious, hot-headed Russian Officer), and an Afghan brigadier, and, referring to this, the Viceroy wrote: "If Russian officers display so insolent a spirit on the one hand, and the Afghan Chiefs show their resentment in an equally excited manner, a collision may occur any day."

The negotiations were carried on directly between London and St. Petersburg, and as there was good ground to suspect that Russia was aiming not only at obtaining a good defensible frontier, but a basis for future aggression, the question obviously became an Imperial one. India's task was thus to represent her interests and to show how she could help in the event of war, one important factor being the attitude of the Amir, who had to be handled with an extremely light and tactful hand. The general situation was indicated from the Indian point of view in a letter from the Viceroy to the Secretary of State, dated February 10th, 1885. This admirably reasoned paper, too long for quotation, reviewed the Russian boundary proposals.

In order to make these better understood, I may explain that in most maps up to that time, the north-western portion of Afghanistan had been shown as a straight line running across the desert towards Sarakhs, which was the extreme north-eastern point of the Persian Province of Khorasan, and a meeting point for the three T-shaped frontiers.

But this simple interpretation of the old agreement in no way commended itself to Russia at present. Shortly, she proposed that her sphere or rule should not only cross the Turkoman desert, but be established in the fertile zone of Afghanistan, which is watered by the streams coursing down the northern slopes of the Paropamisus. This, of course, would give her an extremely valuable strategic base for future movements, which, if displeasing to the Amir and unresented by Great Britain, would probably end in his making common cause with his northern neighbour.

Mr. (now Sir Mortimer) Durand was then Lord Dufferin's Foreign Secretary. He held a serious and determined opinion that the Russians ought to be offered the alternative of a line drawn from Khojah-Saleh to Pul-i-khatun ("the lady's bridge"), some forty or fifty miles further south on the Hari-Rud than Sarakhs was. As a matter of fact the line was eventually traced in zig-zag fashion to Zulfikar, some thirty miles still further to the south.

Lord Dufferin's idea was that, from an Indian

point of view, it was better to make almost any sacrifice, and even to face the extremity of war, rather than agree to a frontier which would turn the Amir against Great Britain, and place the Russians in a favourable position for future aggressions; but that from an Imperial point of view it would be better to accept an unfavourable settlement, as the least undesirable of two most disadvantageous courses, rather than to break off the negotiations.

The polemic attitude of the Russian Government roused a corresponding warlike feeling in England, both in official and unofficial circles, and I understand that a broad hint was conveyed by a Member of the British Cabinet to the Russian Ambassador that it might become necessary, in the event of the demarcation falling through, for England to trace the boundary herself and regard *that* as the frontier of Afghanistan.

Unfortunately, Russia was by no means in an accommodating mood just then, and M. de Giers, usually suave and conciliatory, and personally opposed to Russia's southern progress, was obviously being driven by the war party, who had then the upper hand, into an indication to occupy the line of frontier most advantageous to Russia. At the same time it was authoritatively reported from St. Petersburg that preparations were being made for some great military movement as soon as the winter should break up.

It thus became of vital consequence to consider

what we should do in the event of the Russians suddenly swooping down on Herat. For many years, ever since the publication of Sir Henry Rawlinson's "England and Russia in the East," Herat had been regarded as the "Key of India," and though its fortifications were of no real use against modern artillery, there was no doubt that its capture by Russia would make a profound impression throughout Asia.

Lord Dufferin was, however, careful to point out to the Home Government that to defend Herat, to relieve it in the event of investment, and to maintain communication for over five hundred miles between it and Candahar, would need more British troops than India then had at her disposal.

In the event of *la grande guerre* with Russia all over the world, the Viceroy did not think that the struggle in Central Asia would assume so vital and important a phase, and he could not help feeling that in that case it would be better not to encounter the enemy at a great distance from our base. Sir Donald Stewart, the Commander-in-Chief, was strongly of the same opinion. But wherever the stand was to be made, there was no doubt that, in the event of war, a rapid advance would have to be made as far as Candahar, and accordingly preparations were made for despatching twenty-five thousand men to Quetta by the Bolan Pass. The question as to how far we should assist in the defence of Herat was deferred in view of the Amir's coming visit to Rawal Pindi.

The idea of the Amir's visiting India had been suggested by Lord Ripon, and Colonel Ridgeway had reported that Abdur Rahman was desirous of a personal interview. Both Lord Dufferin and the Secretary of State had concurred, and arrangements had accordingly been made for his Highness to repair to Rawal Pindi on March 31st.

On March 23rd the Viceroy left Calcutta, and four days later arrived at Rawal Pindi, where a very large camp had been formed, which, though of course not comparable with that of 1903 at Delhi, was far larger and more magnificent than usual, even in India. It consisted, in fact, of a group of camps, one devoted to the native Princes and Chiefs, one to each of the British and Native Armies, one to the Lieutenant-Governor, and so on. Among the distinguished guests of the Viceroy were the Duke and Duchess of Connaught, the three Commanders-in-Chief, the Lieutenant-Governor of the North-West Provinces, and the members of the Council. The only *contretemps* was the weather. In spite of the confident assurances of the local authorities, backed by the meteorological pundits, that it never rained in Rawal Pindi at that season of the year, it poured steadily for nearly a fortnight, and the grand Durbar had to be postponed till a day or two before the Amir's departure.

On the morning of the Amir's entry the rain fell in torrents, after a night of thunder and lightning, and a state procession of fifty elephants had to be

abandoned for the more comfortable shelter of a closed carriage, into which his Highness was glad to esconce himself, while the band, with a Mark Tapley-like affectation of cheeriness under depressing circumstances, played "For he might have been a Roossian. A Frenchman, Turk, or Proossian, etc. But in spite of all temptations he remains an Englishman!"

Lady Dufferin's experiences of this horrible weather were gruesome in the extreme. It may be imagined what life was like in the tents, gorgeous and spacious though they were. To pass merely from one room to another, waterproofs and thick boots had to be donned, while any one coming through a door had to put up an umbrella and jump a ditch. Several of the Viceregal party were simply washed out of their tents.

The Amir turned out to be a very interesting and at the same time a rather puzzling personage. Sir A. Lyall thus describes him in an article, referred to above:

> A stout, burly man dressed in a black uniform coat, decorated with two diamond stars, with long black boots, and an astrachan cap; a prince of frank and even bluff, yet courteous manners, quite at his ease amid a crowd of foreigners, speaking pleasantly of the first railway journey he had ever undertaken; a man of some humour in jokes, with a face occasionally crossed by a look of implacable severity, the look of Louis XI. or Henry VIII., that is now never seen in civilised life."

At Rawal Pindi he was pleased with the wet

weather, was in very good humour all round, and talked of going on to London. Three whole hours during one morning were passed by him in arranging cut flowers in forty vases, and he expressed a wish to have large floral supplies sent to him daily. At the same time, with enlightened forethought, he had been careful to bring with him his own executioner, a gentleman, who, clad in mediæval garb of red velvet and carrying the implements of his high office, viz.—an axe and a strangling rope, used to employ his enforced leisure in helping to put up the tents. During the very first of the ensuing conferences between Abdur Rahman and the Viceroy, after the latter had expounded at great length the English views on the Afghan question and had asked the Amir for a statement of his proposals and opinions, the Great Man replied, "I don't think that is a fair question."

Before meeting the Amir, Lord Dufferin referred home for definite instructions, and was assured that an attack on Herat by Russia would be regarded by her Majesty's Government as a *casus belli* and would mean war. At the same time a peaceful issue was to be sought if compatible with the necessities and dignities of the case.

The first day (Monday) was taken up with a march past, followed by a banquet and an evening party. On the Tuesday there was a grand military display, the success of which was enhanced by a bright sun and a fresh wind. The great Durbar

took place on the Wednesday, when the weather was again favourable. The picture is thus described in Lord Dufferin's own words :

The *coup d'œil* inside the tents was marvellous. All the Rajahs had stuck on their heads every diamond they possessed, including probably those belonging to their wives. Bahawalpur especially was magnificent—a handsome savage, with long ringlets rippling down his back and a kind of mitre on his head, built up entirely of jewels. I conducted the Amir to a silver chair placed on a *dais* on my right, while the Duke of Connaught sat on another on the other side. We had prepared a most handsome "Khillat" or dress of honour, in other words, a multitude of presents of every description for the Amir and his sons—sporting guns, tissues, watches, musical boxes, and every sort of curious gewgaw. While they were being laid out on the ground before him, our guest affected to be unconscious of what was going on ; but I hear that when he got home he spent a whole afternoon in examining them with the delight of a child, and admitted that no one ever had such a "khillat."

After the presentation, his Highness inquired through the interpreter whether he might say something loud enough to be heard by the whole assembly. This was quite unexpected, but permission being awarded, he made the following speech :

I am deeply sensible of the kindness which I have received from his Excellency the Viceroy, and of the favour shown to me by her Majesty the Queen Empress. In return for this kindness and favour I am ready, with my army and my people, to render any services which

may be required of me or of the Afghan nation. As the British Government has declared that it will assist me in repelling any foreign enemy, so it is right and proper that Afghanistan should unite in the firmest manner, and stand side by side with the British Government.

The Viceroy then presented the Amir with a diamond-hilted sword, which was brought in on a cushion, as a token of his Excellency's personal regard. Taking the sword in his hand, his Highness exclaimed in a loud and energetic tone of voice, "With this sword I hope to smite any enemy of the British Government."

The former words were received with a tremendous clapping on the part of the British section of the spectators, a most improper proceeding, but one which evidently pleased the Amir immensely.

Scarcely had this gorgeous and successful Durbar come to its close, when a telegram was received that a serious conflict had actually taken place at Penjdeh, between the Russian and Afghan troops. This alarming intelligence was immediately communicated to the Amir, but the fact was that it was not wholly unexpected, and the Amir certainly received it with indifference. When he was told that two companies had died at their posts, he said that of course they had, but what did it matter how many Afghans were killed? If half the natives were killed, the other half would go on fighting. Before leaving Rawal Pindi, however, his Highness showed signs of a very different

temper, and spoke of signally avenging the injury, and it was the opinion of some who knew him personally, that if he had been at the time in Cabul, surrounded by his ignorant, conceited and obsequious counsellors, and under no calming, restraining influence, he might have retaliated and so precipitated a conflict for which he was utterly unprepared. However this may be, it is certain that the long conferences with Lord Dufferin enabled Abdur Rahman to understand much more clearly the actual military and political situation, and tended to make him refrain from any inconsiderate and imprudent course of action.

On the morning of his departure the Amir was created a G.C.S.I., and he left Rawal Pindi very well pleased with his visit.

The Penjdeh fracas had naturally produced great tension in our relations with Russia. The British Government were, however, in ignorance as to the ulterior design and secret intentions of Russia, and in order to be prepared for all contingencies the reserves in England were called out and the military preparations in India were continued, one most useful feature thereof being the collection of two hundred and twenty miles of rail for the prolongation to Candahar of the railway then under construction to Quetta. Money and arms were freely given to the Amir, and British officers visited Herat and made a careful examination of its defences.

One important and most satisfactory feature of the crisis was to elicit warm and loyal expressions

of fidelity and allegiance from native princes and people of India, and to this the Viceroy made grateful reference in replying to an address from the Lahore Municipality a few days after. But when efforts were made to pursuade him to relax the stringency of the Arms Act, and to consent to the formation of native volunteer corps, the Viceroy wisely declined to allow himself to be hurried into an off-hand decision over such momentous issues.

Lord Salisbury succeeded Mr. Gladstone in June 1885. Not long afterwards premonitory symptoms of political complications arose in Eastern Europe, and Russia began to assume a more conciliatory attitude in the Afghan Frontier question. On September 10th the arrangements for the delimitation as far as Khojah Saleh were agreed upon in a formal protocol signed in London by both parties. The actual demarcation began in November and, with the exception of a dispute regarding Khamiab, a small district on the left bank of the Oxus, the ownership of which was left to be decided upon by the two Cabinets in Europe, the work was completed and the maps and protocols signed by the Commissioners. The actual erection of the demarcation pillars was to be carried out by Assistant Commissioners who were sent out subsequently for the purpose.

The Mission, having finished its task, then broke up and the British portion returned by way of Cabul, reaching the Indian frontier at Jamrud on October 31st, after an absence of about two years.