LIFE

OF

LORD LAWRENCE

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LIFE
OF
LORD LAWRENCE.

CHAPTER I.

THE HOUR AND THE MAN.

MAY—JUNE 1857.

THE story of the Indian Mutiny is a thrice-told tale, and one which, in spite of its romantic interest and the labour which I have necessarily spent in studying it as a whole, I have no intention of attempting to tell here again. My task, as the biographer of Sir John Lawrence, is more limited, but perhaps not less difficult. It is to restrict myself, as rigidly as possible, to the history of those movements which, inspired by his energy, controlled by his prudence, and carried out by his resolution and that of his lieutenants, first, secured from imminent danger the province over which he ruled, then made it the storehouse, the arsenal, the recruiting ground, the base of operations for much that was done outside of it, and, lastly, led up to the crowning achievement of his life—it might have been the crowning achievement of any life—the siege and capture of Delhi. The siege of Delhi, indeed, under all its circumstances, in the historic interest attaching to the city, in the strength, the numbers and the resources of the besieged, in the weakness, the privations, the difficulties of the handful of men who, perched on a ridge at one corner of its vast circumference, with their rear and both their flanks exposed to attack, called themselves its 'besiegers,' finally, in the momentous stake involved in the success or the abandonment of the operations, stands forth with few parallels in modern history.

Even thus limited, the field which I have to attempt to cover is sufficiently vast. The chief actors in it are so commanding and their deeds are performed in so many widely scattered places, and with such varying degrees of responsibility and power, that it will be a task of no slight difficulty—perhaps the greatest of all my difficulties—to group them, in proper relief and in their due proportions, round the man whom, whether they agreed with or differed from him, whether they deemed him too cautious or too impetuous, too merciful or too severe, too self-sufficing or too ready to listen to what everyone had to urge, all alike recognised as their ruling spirit; as one whose character, whose judgment, and whose will were felt instinctively by all to be the best security that everything which he willed, or decided, or did—whether it commended itself to their judgment or not—would, in the long run, turn out right.

Before the Mutiny had run its course, but after its crisis had come and gone, an application reached Sir John Lawrence from the Resident at Berar, asking him for a few hints as to his system. 'It is not our system,' he sent back word, 'it is our men.' And it was the men whom his brother and he himself had first brought together, and then kept together by the methods I have described in previous chapters; the men whom he had recognised, in spite of all their angularity, as having 'grit' or 'backbone' in them; who, now, in the time of trial, instinct with his spirit, and with his simple-minded devotion to the public service, rose to the emergency, were not afraid to face responsibility, and each in his respective sphere, very often in utter ignorance of what was being done by others, contributed his part towards the great deliverance.

What, then, we may ask, first, were the resources of the Punjab? For such, we may be sure, was the question which crossed and recrossed the mind of the Chief Commissioner when, on receipt of the startling message at Rawul Pindi, he consumed, as I have mentioned in the first chapter of this biography, his own thoughts in silence, pondering the full magnitude of the danger, and the means by which he might best meet and overcome it.

The Punjab was the frontier province of our empire, and, as such, it had a larger force—European and native—than,

perhaps, any five other provinces in India taken together. The European force consisted, in round numbers, of twelve regiments—of about, that is, eleven thousand men. The Hindustani force, who were chiefly Regulars, numbered thirty-six thousand, and the Punjabi local force, chiefly Irregulars, fourteen thousand men. An enormous army this! But was it a source of weakness or of strength? It will be observed that the Hindustani force, over which there was reason to think that the spirit of mutiny and discontent had already, in great part, spread, was half as large again as the European and the Punjabi taken together. The Latin proverb, 'the more slaves, the more enemies,' was therefore one which, *mutatis mutandis*, might be applied with as much truth to the pampered Sepoys of the Punjab, as to the down-trodden Roman slaves. And if this were so, then, our enemies under arms in the Punjab, and trained by ourselves, out-numbered the Europeans in the proportion of three to one!

But what of the Irregulars? were they staunch or not? If staunch, the province might be able to hold its own till succour came from without; if not, the game was clearly up. The chances must have seemed to the eager and anxious mind of the Chief Commissioner, as they seem to us now, when we judge by the event, almost equally balanced. On the one hand, were the memories of the Khalsa and of Runjeet Sing, of Ferozeshah and Chillianwallah, hardly as yet ten years old. There was the gulf not yet bridged over—even if there was no active feeling of hostility—between the dark-skinned native and the fair-skinned and intruding foreigner. There were the dispossessed, and, therefore, necessarily, in some degree, discontented nobles. There were thousands of Sikh warriors, now peacefully cultivating their fields, but men whose right hands had, assuredly, not forgotten their cunning, and in whom the cry of 'The Guru and the Khalsa!' might yet stir yearnings unutterable, and rally them to the battle-field. On the other hand, there was the grand fact that the country was peaceful, was prosperous, was contented, and that it had been governed by the Lawrence brothers, during the past eight years, as few countries have ever been governed. There was the hatred of the Sikh for the Mohammedan who had persecuted him, and

whom he had persecuted in turn. There was the contempt of the hardy Punjabi, whatever his caste or his creed, for the less manly races of Oude or Bengal. Finally, there was the hope of plundering the revolted city, the home of the Mogul, under the *Ikbal* of the Company.

And how was the army, whose component parts I have just described, distributed? The European part of it, on which alone, in the first instance, we could place our full reliance, was massed chiefly on two points: first, at or near Umballa, on what had been our frontier line before the conquest of the Punjab; and, secondly, at or near Peshawur, our most advanced outpost towards Afghanistan. At Umballa and the adjoining stations there were four, and in the Peshawur valley three out of the whole number of twelve European regiments. But even at these two most favoured points, the European troops were considerably outnumbered by the Hindustani. At Lahore, at Rawul Pindi, at Ferozepore, at Jullundur, and at Hoshiarpore, the disproportion was greater still; while at Umritsur, Sealkote, Goordaspore, Jhelum, and Mooltan, there were either no European troops at all, or they formed quite an insignificant fraction of the whole. As for the Irregular force, the most critical element in the coming struggle, they were distributed impartially along the frontier of six hundred miles, from Huzara to Mithancote; and since the annexation they had been, as we have seen, sufficiently employed in rendering that difficult country secure from the raids of the robber tribes outside of it. And even if they should prove staunch to us, the question still remained whether to withdraw them from the frontier and employ them elsewhere, would not be to call down upon us other and greater dangers from beyond. Of two regiments belonging to the Irregular Force, special mention should be made here. At Hoti Murdan was the famous Guide Corps under Daly, who, as experience had shown, and was soon to show again, were ready to go anywhere and do anything in our defence; while at the frontier posts, above Peshawur, was another regiment, called, from the romantic valour which it had shown in the defence of Khelat-i-Ghilzai, in the first Afghan war, the Khelat-i-Ghilzais—and who, like the Guides, might, it was hoped, be depended on to do equally good service now. Once more, besides these, there was

the Military Police—the Lahore division of them, under the command of Richard Lawrence, 'Dick's Invincibles,' as his brother used to call them. They were a body of men some fifteen thousand strong, who, being drawn from much the same classes as the Irregular force, might be expected to go with them, whether for us or against us.

There was thus, it will be seen, no single place of importance in the Punjab which could be looked upon, at the moment of the outbreak, as beyond the reach of anxiety. But if there was no point of danger which was held by a force on whom we could depend, neither was there any which was without at least one man on whom full reliance might be placed, a man and not a machine, one who would do all that was practicable, and, perhaps, not a little that seemed impracticable, in our defence. At Lahore were Montgomery and Macleod, Arthur Roberts, the Commissioner, Richard Lawrence, the Chief of the Police, James Macpherson, the Military Secretary, each of them a host in himself, and each of them, it will be remembered, either bred up in the school, or the warm, personal friend of the Chief Commissioner. At Peshawur, the most dangerous post of all, were Edwardes, the Commissioner, Nicholson, the Deputy Commissioner, and Sydney Cotton, in command of the Regulars. At Kohat and, happily, within hail of the Peshawur authorities, was the Brigadier of the frontier force, and the hero of a score of frontier fights, Neville Chamberlain. At Mooltan were Hamilton, the Commissioner, and Crawford Chamberlain, the Commandant of the first Irregular Cavalry, better known as Skinner's Horse. Over the Trans-Sutlej territory presided Lake, over the Cis-Sutlej, Barnes, both of them men after John Lawrence's own heart. At Ferozepore were Marsden, and Van Cortlandt of Khalsa fame; at Umritsur, Cooper; at Umballa, Forsyth; at Jhelum, Brown; at Loodiana, the most turbulent of cities, Ricketts; at Jullundur, Farrington; at Kangra, Reynell Taylor. Finally, at Rawul Pindi was Edward Thornton, the Commissioner of the District, and at the same place, as luck would have it, the great civilian chieftain, with his soldier's heart, who was thence, during the first three months of the Mutiny, to sweep his whole province with his searching glance, to hold it in his iron grasp, and as time passed on, wielding,

by his own inherent force of character, no less than by the irresistible march of events, almost the powers of the Governor-General and Commander-in-Chief in one, was to praise and to condemn, to punish and to reward, to command and to forbid, to stimulate every enterprise, to sanction every appointment, to direct every movement of troops, from the gloomy portals of the Khyber even to the ridge before Delhi.

The absence of Sir John Lawrence from Lahore served to throw the responsibility and the credit of dealing the first and most decisive blow at the rising mutiny, on those he had left behind him there. Perhaps it was well that it was so. Perhaps it was also well that the telegraphic communication between Lahore and Rawul Pindi was interrupted for the time, and that the message which flashed to the capital of the Punjab early on Tuesday morning, May 12, the news of the capture of Delhi by the mutineers, did not reach the Chief Commissioner by the same route. For it was these difficulties of communication which entitled or compelled his subordinates to act at the outset, as he himself was entitled and compelled shortly afterwards to act on a wider field—at once and with decision—and so gave, at the very beginning of the Mutiny, a splendid example of what could be done by men who were not afraid of that bugbear of officials everywhere—the bugbear of responsibility.

The mantle of John Lawrence had fallen, for the time, on his chief lieutenant and his life-long friend, Robert Montgomery; and by no possibility, as I have said before, could it have fallen on worthier shoulders, or on a man who, by his knowledge of the country and of the natives, of the points of danger and of the sources of our strength, above all, by the idiosyncrasies of his own character, was better able to deal with the emergency. Whatever Montgomery did he did quickly, with decision, with a will. If he did not care to estimate all the difficulties which encompassed a particular course of action, it is certain that by not doing so he often succeeded in brushing them out of his path. John Lawrence, on the contrary, with all his 'vast vigour and resolution,' was by nature cautious and circumspect, so cautious and so circumspect that his enemies have endeavoured to make capital

out of it. He liked to turn a thing over in his mind, to be sure that he saw all that was to be said for or against it, before he decided. He could on emergencies think very quickly, but he preferred to think at leisure. He 'never acted on mere impulse.' He used to remark that though, while deliberating on a difficult question, he often changed his mind, he generally came back, at last, to the view which he had taken instinctively at first. And thus, in cases of real emergency, he was able to act at once with a feeling of greater confidence than is generally the case with men of his habit of mind. Now, on the momentous question which came before Montgomery and his friends, on that eventful morning, it is hardly conceivable that, bound as Sir John Lawrence was to look beyond Lahore to the safety of his whole province, and, beyond that again, to the safety of the empire, he would not have felt more misgiving than they appear to have done; and it is certain that when he first heard of the disarmament, he was inclined, in spite of its success, to question its wisdom. It is highly characteristic of his absolute honesty of mind that he expressed his doubts on the subject. If it is true with most people, that 'nothing succeeds like success,' it was not, in his mind at all events, the whole truth. 'Montgomery has done,' exclaimed a high authority at the Headquarters of the army, when he first heard of the disarmament, 'either the wisest or the most foolish thing in the world.' And the utterance, if it was oracular, was also strictly true. What might not have been the result, if the Sepoys at Lahore had refused to lay down their arms, and rising in open mutiny had, some few of them, been cut down at once, while the remainder scattered broadcast over the country, carrying with them the flames of violence and war? In that case, the evil we most dreaded would have been precipitated upon us by our own precautions. There would have been no time to send messengers to the more remote stations in the Punjab to warn them of what was coming; and the Sepoys of Mooltan, and of half-a-dozen other important places, in which the Europeans were few in number, seeing that the case had been prejudged against them at Lahore, and feeling that their turn would come next, would have anticipated the evil day, and rising in all parts of the country,

have given themselves one chance more. The question, indeed, in those early days, whether it was better to appear to shut our eyes to the mutinous feelings of the Sepoys, or to arouse them further, to show our suspicions or to conceal them, was a question on which there might well be great differences of opinion, and it was as fortunate for the Punjab that it possessed a chief ruler who, with his wider responsibilities, would have thought twice before he made the first plunge, as that it had others, in the positions next below his, who, seeing the immediate danger, determined, without the hesitation of an hour, to be the first to strike the blow. Again and again, in the course of the Mutiny, did this momentous question come to the front. And it is to be noticed that while officers in command of regiments were, from the most honourable feelings, almost always for delay, and for trusting their men to the end, the civilians, with John Lawrence at their head, were almost always for immediate action. The difficulties, indeed, of making a decision were greatly lessened when once the ice had been broken, and the success of the first attempt at Lahore was an omen—valuable not to the superstitious or the over-anxious alone—of the ultimate result.

The story of the disarmament has been often told before, but it has so important an influence on everything that followed, and is so characteristic of the men whom it was the delight of the Chief Commissioner to gather round him and to honour, that I must indicate its general outlines. The telegram from Delhi reached Lahore early in the morning of May 12, and Montgomery, before the secret had oozed out, at once summoned the chief civil officers to a Council. There was no time for delay; for secret information had reached him through Richard Lawrence that all four regiments in the great cantonment at Mean Meer, five miles distant, were prepared to follow the example of their Delhi brethren, whatever it might be. 'Sahib, they are up to this in it,' said a trusty Brahmin clerk who had been commissioned to enquire into their feelings as they strolled into the city to his master, Richard Lawrence, and as he spoke, he significantly laid his finger on his throat. This was enough for Montgomery, and a motion was brought forward and unanimously agreed to by the Council, that it was desirable that the Sepoy regiments should be at once de-

prived of their gun-caps and ammunition. But the Civil officers had no authority in such a matter, and so Montgomery and Macpherson rode over to Mean Meer to urge the necessity for action on the Brigadier in command. General Corbett was, at first, naturally taken aback at the boldness of the proposal, but, to his infinite credit, in the course of the afternoon, he made up his mind to go even further, and to deprive his troops not merely of their ammunition, but of their arms.

A ball was to be given, that very night, to the officers of the one European regiment in the station, and as profound secrecy was essential to the success of the intended disarmament, it was not postponed. A dreary amusement enough the dance must have seemed to those few officers who were in the secret, and who felt that they must pass at the dawn of day from the ball-room to the parade-ground, which might well prove their grave! The thoughts of one and of another may well have leapt back to that other ball-room at Brussels, which heard 'the cannon's opening roar' and ushered in the crowning victory of Waterloo.

A general parade had been ordered in the usual course for the morning of the 13th, and Montgomery and Macleod, Macpherson and Roberts, Richard Lawrence, Robert Egerton and Hutchinson, rode over to the ground, prepared to witness the successful execution of the bold step decided on by Corbett, or to be among the first to fall if it should miscarry. The Sepoy force consisted of three regiments of foot, the 16th, the 26th, and the 49th, and of one light cavalry regiment, the 8th. The Europeans who were to disarm them consisted of five companies only of a single regiment, the 81st, with twelve guns. The Sepoy regiments appeared on the ground, quite unconscious that there was anything unusual in preparation. A simple manœuvre brought them face to face with the Europeans, and made it dangerously easy for them to count their foes. While they were thus drawn up, a Staff officer read aloud to them the orders of the Brigadier. He praised them heartily for their past conduct, but ended by announcing that, as an evil spirit seemed to be abroad in the Indian army, it had been thought advisable to save them from others—and it might be from themselves, by taking from them—their arms. While he was still speaking the five hundred Europeans fell back between

the guns which had hitherto been concealed behind them, and left the Sepoy regiments to look down the twelve black throats of the cannon, which were already loaded with grape, while the gunners stood by with port-fires lighted. Just as he ceased to speak, the word of command, 'Eighty-first, load!' rang clearly forth. It was a thrilling moment, a moment in which half a lifetime must have seemed to pass. There was, it is said, a slight hesitation, but the ringing of the ramrods as the charges were rammed home, spoke eloquently in favour of obedience, and so some two thousand muskets, and some seven hundred sabres soon lay piled upon the ground. The Sepoy garrison of the fort which commands Lahore was disarmed at almost the same moment by three companies of the same 81st Regiment, and the capital of the Punjab was safe from the mutineers. The whole of the responsibility for these measures rested with Brigadier Corbett, and to him, therefore, must be assigned the chief share of the credit.

Nor were Corbett and Montgomery content to secure Lahore alone. Before the day so big with the destinies of the Punjab—and if of the Punjab, then of India—had come to an end, a company of the same valiant regiment, which, without the firing of a single gun, or the shedding of a single drop of blood, had disarmed seven times their number, was speeding away in native carts, which had been hastily collected, to Umritsur. Close to Umritsur and commanding it was Govindghur, a fort named after Govind, the famous Guru. Hard by was the Golden Temple and the Pool of Immortality. The whole place thus served as a rallying point to the Sikh nation, whether we regard them as the conquering commonwealth of the Khalsa or as the enthusiastic votaries of a reformed creed. Hence its supreme importance. Govindghur was held by a native garrison, but before the next morning dawned, the English troops had traversed the thirty intervening miles, and were safely ensconced within its walls.

On the day preceding the disarmament at Lahore trusty messengers had been sent out by the ready hand and head of Montgomery to Ferozepore, which was one of the largest arsenals in India; to Mooltan, which, with its important trade and the historic reputation of its citadel, was guarded by only one company of European artillery; and to the fort of Kangra, on

the influence of which among the mountain tribes of the far north I have already had occasion to dwell. Thus, within forty-eight hours of the receipt of the news from Delhi, Lahore and Umritsur had been saved, the garrisons of Govindghur and Ferozepore strengthened, Mooltan and Kangra warned!

But Montgomery's attention was not confined to the great towns and arsenals. Messengers were despatched in every direction to the small civil stations scattered over the country, bidding the officers send in all their treasure to the nearest military station under the escort of Punjabi police, to distrust the Hindustani guards, to stop all Sepoys' letters passing through the Post Office. 'Whilst acting vigorously,' so he summed up his admirable and spirit-stirring instructions, 'and being alive to the great importance of the crisis, I would earnestly suggest calmness and quietude. There should be no signs of alarm or excitement. But be prepared to act, and have the best information from every source at your disposal. Sir John Lawrence being absent from Lahore, till he arrives, I should wish that, every day or two, a few lines should be sent to me informing me of the state of feeling in your district, &c. &c. I have full reliance on your zeal and discretion in this important crisis.'

Well might Sir John Lawrence, writing a few days later to the man who had so spoken and written and acted on his behalf, say, in a burst of genuine enthusiasm, which was rare in him, except when a piece of extraordinarily good work called it forth, 'Your Lahore men have done nobly. I should like to embrace them; Donald, Roberts, Mac (Macpherson), and Dick are, all of them, *pucca* trumps,'—one of his very highest terms of praise. And, in more dignified phrases, he wrote officially, 'Mr. Montgomery, neglecting no precaution, admits of no alarm, and inspires all with confidence and zeal. . . . Indeed,' he continues, 'all officers, civil and military, are displaying that calmness and energy which, under such circumstances, might be expected from English gentlemen, and are a sufficient guarantee that all that is practicable will be effected by them.'

And how meanwhile was it faring with Sir John Lawrence himself? The first telegram, containing the news of the outbreak at Meerut, reached him early on the morning of Tuesday,

the 12th, while he was still in bed. He had been suffering terribly from neuralgia for the last two months, and on the previous evening the doctor had rubbed his temples with aconite in order to relieve the intensity of the pain. 'It is a deadly poison,' says John Lawrence, writing to Edwardes on the 13th, 'and in the night it worked into my eye and I was nearly blinded.' Such was his condition when the news came. But Lady Lawrence well remembers how, worn out with pain and sleeplessness as he was, he at once left his bed, and sent off telegrams and letters in every direction. After breakfast Edward Thornton, the Commissioner of the Division, looked in, and while he was conversing with his chief, and while Lady Lawrence and her niece were in the act of pouring a lotion into the injured eye—little wonder is it that the most trivial circumstances of such an epoch-making moment impressed themselves indelibly on the minds of those who were present—the second and more fateful telegram, containing the news of the capture of Delhi and the murder of the Europeans, was brought in and read aloud. The conversation was cut short. It was a time for thought and not for words. For the telegram, rightly apprehended, brought the news that a local outbreak of discontented Sepoys, which might have been stamped out by vigorous measures on the part of General Hewett who commanded the Brigade at Meerut, had, by his fatal vacillation, been transferred to Delhi and had been transformed into a vast political revolution, which aimed at nothing less than the empire of India. No record has reached my hands of what John Lawrence thought, or said, or wrote on the rest of that eventful day. But the upshot of it all may be seen in the masterly batch of letters, extraordinary alike in their quality and in their quantity, which he wrote, on the following day, to the Commander-in-Chief at Simla, to the Commissioner at Peshawur, to the Brigadier-General at Peshawur, to the Brigadier in command of the Frontier force, and to the Governor-General. They lie before me in one of his big folio volumes, and show that, without having held personal communication with anyone, he was already master of the situation.

His first duty was to secure the safety of his own province;

but the immediate steps towards that end were already being taken unknown to him, by Montgomery at Lahore, and, with his full knowledge and consent, by Edwardes and Nicholson at Peshawur. His second duty, and hardly second in his own mind, as his telegrams and letters show, was to make his province the means of retaking Delhi. The tendency of official life —if a man be not a really great man—is to narrow the intellect, to make him take an official view of everything, to enslave him to the maxims or traditions of some petty clique or some strong-minded chief. In India this is, perhaps, less the case than in some countries which are nearer home. There, if anywhere, it may be truly said that 'none are for a party and all are for the state,' but even in India the tendency may be observed. 'He sat at the feet of so-and-so,' is a phrase which we read till we are tired of it, in the writings of Anglo-Indian historians and essayists. But it is the confession of a fact. It is, perhaps, inevitable that it should be so. Things are done on so vast a scale in India, the sphere of even a District-officer is so wide, the work to be done is so far beyond his utmost energies, he has so many thousands or tens of thousands of dependents and so very few equals or superiors, that it is little to be wondered at if his District forms his world—a good-sized world, it is true—but still his world. And small wonder would it have been, if John Lawrence, responsible as he was for the safety of so vast, so warlike, and so inflammable a province as the Punjab, had thought that he would be doing his duty right well if he held it firmly in his grip, kept within bounds the 36,000 mutinous Sepoys it contained, and opposing an impregnable barrier to the further spread of revolt from the side of Delhi, or to invasion from the side of Afghanistan, preserved a foothold in his own part of India for English rule, till reinforcements were sent out from England to recover the capital of the Moguls.

But Sir John Lawrence, though he had been brought up among Indian officials, and was one of the best and ablest of them himself, had not got a merely official mind. His spirit was imperial, not provincial. He was able to look beyond the Punjab, to the vast empire of which it formed the youngest part, and instead of sacrificing India to save his province, he

would have been prepared, under certain circumstances, as we shall see hereafter, to sacrifice his province in whole or in part, if haply he might save the empire. So while he sent off by letter and by telegram his warm approval of the proposals made by the knot of good men and true at Peshawur, to ensure the safety of the Punjab, and was elaborating and suggesting many others of his own, he never, for an instant, lost sight of the greater object which lay beyond, and which was, henceforward, for four long months to fill so much of his mental horizon.

A selection from the stirring telegrams and letters which he wrote on the first of these hundred and twenty days must perforce be made; and those to the Commander-in-Chief and Governor-General will, perhaps, best show how he had already girded himself for the struggle; how, seeing where the real point of danger lay, he was already able to predict what course —if there were any delay or vacillation on the part of the authorities—the Mutiny would surely take; and how, in furtherance of his object, he was prepared to brush out of his way all the cobwebs of officialism, of etiquette, and of routine. It will be remembered that as Chief Commissioner of the Punjab he had no technical or legal right to make any suggestions at all to the Commander-in-Chief. The Commander-in-Chief was subject indeed to the civil power, but not to the power of the Chief Commissioner of the Punjab; and had General Anson not been able to see that this was no time to stand on ceremony, he might well have been disposed to tell 'the cobbler not to go beyond his last.' It was almost as creditable to the favourite of the Horse Guards, that he was able to recognise the stern integrity of purpose and the statesmanlike insight which underlay the vehement expostulations brought to him hour after hour, or post after post, from Sir John Lawrence, as it was to Sir John Lawrence that he was able, with a volcano beneath his feet, to trouble himself about the more momentous possibilities which lay beyond.

Here is his first telegram, which, though it was addressed to Douglas Forsyth, the Deputy Commissioner at Umballa, was intended for immediate transmission to the Commander-in-Chief:—

May 13.

I think that all the European regiments in the hills and the Goorkha regiment at Jutogh should at once be brought down to Umballa, and arrangements be made for securing that cantonment. In the meantime, if the Meerut force has not disarmed or destroyed the mutineers at that place, peremptory orders from the Commander-in-Chief should go down to do so. A large portion of the European force from Meerut, with such native troops as can be trusted, should then march on Delhi, and a picked brigade from Umballa also go down, by forced marches, by Kurnal to Delhi, so that our troops can operate simultaneously from both sides of the Jumna. The city of Delhi and the magazine should be recovered at once. Get the Maharaja of Puttiala to send one regiment to Thaneysur, and another to Loodiana.

His first letter to the Commander-in-Chief ran as follows:

Rawul Pindi: May 13, 1857.

My dear Sir,—I enclose a copy of a telegraphic message which I have just sent to Mr. Forsyth, the Deputy Commissioner at Umballa. I presume that the European force at Meerut has, by this time, acted against its own mutineers, but if it has not done so, peremptory orders should, I think, be sent down by express to this effect. There are probably 1,800 Europeans of the different arms, who should be able to do this at once.

The next step will be to recover Delhi and its magazine; the latter is the arsenal for all Upper India. A picked force moving from Meerut and Umballa, and operating simultaneously from both sides of the Jumna, if they acted vigorously could not fail to recover Delhi. Unless this be done the insurrection will assuredly spread, and our European troops become isolated, and, perhaps, be gradually destroyed in detail.

I calculate that the European regiments of infantry and cavalry, after settling affairs at Umballa, and collecting everything worth caring for, might safely march two-thirds of their numbers towards Delhi. This place is ten moderate marches distant; the troops could do it in six or seven. By decisive measures at once we should crush the mutineers, and give support to the well-affected or timid. Time, in such matters, seems to be everything.

For the country this side the Sutlej, up to the Khyber, I make the following proposal. Collect at this place, and subsequently march on to Jhelum, the following Movable Column: two European regiments of infantry, viz. H.M.'s 27th from Nousherah, and six picked companies of the 24th from this place. Add to these

the Irregular Cavalry from Shumshabad, and two Punjab corps of Infantry; this force to be commanded by a selected officer, say Brigadier Sydney Cotton, to move on any point and crush rebellion and mutiny. The frontier will be quite safe. Sealkote, Lahore, Ferozepore, and Jullundur can hold their own. The places where danger is to be apprehended are where there is no European force, such as Jhelum, Hoshiarpore, Mooltan, and Phillour. The Movable Column, by its very name, would do much good, and by rapidly advancing on any point where danger was to be apprehended would crush mutiny and rebellion.

Everything now depends on energy and resolution. A week or two hence it may be too late. If your Excellency will sanction these arrangements, Brigadier Sydney Cotton and I will arrange all the details. I will send him a copy of this letter, and request he will have H.M.'s 27th Regiment ready to move at an hour's notice. Peshawur, with two European regiments, will be quite safe; and as it is the native Regular army we have to guard against, I consider that that portion of it which is on the frontier, from its isolation and position in a strange country, is less dangerous than elsewhere. The people of the country will, I have no doubt, remain quiet so long as the native army keep quiet, and even afterwards, if we act vigorously and decisively. No delay on account of the season of the year, or for any other reason, should be allowed to weigh with us.

I make no apology for writing to your Excellency plainly and fully. I consider this to be the greatest crisis which has ever occurred in India. Our European force is so small that, unless effectively handled in the outset, and brought to bear, it will prove unequal to the emergency. But with vigour and promptitude, under the blessing of God, it will be irresistible.

Yours very faithfully,

H.E. General the Hon. George Anson. JOHN LAWRENCE.

P.S.—Should you not consider that Brigadier S. Cotton can be spared, any able officer you like might command the Movable Force. I would name Brigadier Chamberlain, but his army rank is a difficulty.

The telegram sent off on the same day to Edmonstone for Lord Canning, is as characteristic as that to Forsyth for General Anson.

All safe as yet in the Punjab, but the aspect of affairs most threatening. The whole native Regular army are ready to break

out, and unless a blow be soon struck, the Irregulars, as a body, will follow their example.

Send for our troops from Persia. Intercept the force now on its way to China, and bring it to Calcutta. Every European soldier will be required to save the country if the whole of the native troops turn against us. This is the opinion of all leading minds here. Every precaution which foresight can dictate is being taken to hold our own, independent of the natives.

Sir John Lawrence enclosed a copy of his letter to General Anson in one of his own to the Governor-General, and from this last I give the following extract:—

Rawul Pindi: May 15, 1857.

My Lord, . . . We have mutiny at Meerut, mutiny and massacre at Delhi, and all but mutiny at Umballa. What the cause of all this is, it is difficult to divine. I hear that the cartridge question was the commencement of the feeling, and that now the Sepoys think the Government mean to deprive them of their bread, or, in other words, to get rid of them. I am told that the circulation of the chupatty some months ago was connected with this feeling. The 'chupatty' was the symbol of their food, and its circulation was to say that they should hold together or they would lose it all. Be this as it may—that the worst feeling prevails generally in the native army can admit of no doubt. Our European force in India is so small, that it may gradually be worn down and destroyed. It is of the highest importance, therefore, that we should increase our Irregular troops as soon as possible. By my plan, without unduly adding to the number of native troops, we shall be strengthening ourselves in this class of soldiers, while the promotion it will give will prove highly popular. These extra companies can hereafter form the nucleus of new regiments.

I myself am inclined to think that the Native Artillery and Irregular Cavalry will prove faithful as a body. They do not come from Oude and its vicinity, are mostly Mohammedan, and have few sympathies with the Regulars. But, in the event of an emergency, I should like to have power to raise as far as one thousand horse. I will not do this, of course, unless absolutely necessary.

The proposal for increasing the number of Irregular troops, to which Sir John Lawrence here alludes, had already been made by telegraph. It was to the effect that three companies of fifty men each should be added to each Punjab regiment, to each Sikh corps, and to each police battalion—the whole

addition amounting to 4,320 men. By this bold and vigorous action at the very beginning of the revolt, he showed that he already realised the extent to which it was likely to spread, and that he had already made up his mind to trust his subjects and to arm them, under proper conditions, against the Sepoys. On the same day he recommended that all leave be stopped, and that all officers in Cashmere should be recalled. He ordered all Sepoys' letters passing through the post to be opened, and, if their contents were suspicious, detained. He ordered local levies to be everywhere raised which were to take charge of out-stations and relieve the suspected Native Infantry guards. He begged Brigadier Campbell at Rawul Pindi to attempt, by full explanations on the subject of the cartridges, to disabuse the minds of his men of the fancies which had gathered round them. He suggested to Edwardes, to Cotton and to Chamberlain, the component parts of the Moveable Column and its early movements. In particular he ordered the Guides to come from Hoti Murdan to Noushera, and be ready to start for Rawul Pindi at an hour's notice. 'It is want of action,' he wrote to Edwardes, 'rather than the want of means, which may prove disastrous to us;' and already, by this first day's work, he had given pretty good reason to think that, so far as the Punjab and its officers were concerned, neither the one nor the other would be wanting.

Edwardes and Nicholson were, each of them, anxious to have the command of the Mooltani Horse or to accompany the Moveable Column, the formation of which they had been the first to suggest. But this proposal the Chief Commissioner thought proper to decline.

I am much obliged to you and Nicholson for the offer of your services, and there are no two men whose services would be more valuable. But I do not think that you could possibly be better placed than where you now are, particularly if Sydney Cotton is moved. The general will require all your help.

There was true wisdom in this. The hour might come, if the Mutiny ran its course, when Nicholson would be even more useful in the interior of the Punjab or at Delhi than at Peshawur. But so long as there were in the Peshawur valley

some 6,000 mutinously disposed native troops with arms in their hands, and with less than 3,000 Europeans to watch and to overawe them; so long as the Mohmunds, the Afridis, the Eusofzyes and a dozen other semi-hostile bordering tribes had not declared themselves; and so long again as behind them, although happily beyond their mountains, lay the old Afghan Ameer whom, for purposes of our own, we had deprived temporarily of his crown, and permanently of his pet province, and whom we had only half conciliated by our two recent treaties, John Lawrence felt that Peshawur was the post of danger, and that at the post of danger there was need of the services of the man whose presence on the frontier, in view of his resolute will and his commanding character, he had long since declared to be worth the wing of a regiment.

And there was greater wisdom still in the answer which Sir John Lawrence gave a few days later to the new shape which the proposal of the Peshawur authorities took, that Nicholson, if he was not to be in command of the Mooltani Horse, or to have any other important military post, might at any rate accompany the Column, as its chief political officer. John Lawrence saw instinctively, that such an arrangement would be unfair to his subordinates, whom he had selected with so much care, and had then placed in the spots best suited to them. It would be undesirable to supersede their local experience and to lessen their sense of responsibility by attaching any such political officer to the Column. It was the right, as it was the duty and the pride, of each Punjab officer to be responsible for his own district. More than this he would not ask. With less he could not be content.

Another proposal made by the Council at Peshawur that General Reed, who was the senior military officer in the Punjab, should move down to Rawul Pindi, was warmly approved by Sir John Lawrence. The chief civil and military authorities in the province would thus be found in the same place, and, as those who made the proposal foresaw, pretty much in the same hands. General Reed was not a man marked out by nature to take the lead in troublous times, nor was he a man to stand unnecessarily upon his dignity. On the contrary, he was wise enough and patriotic enough to allow himself to be

guided by the clearer head and stronger will with which, for the time being, he was brought into contact. He went down on the 16th to Rawul Pindi with Chamberlain, and, on the evening of the same day, Edwardes was summoned by the Chief Commissioner to join the party. And so, during the next few days there might have been seen sitting, in one of the three rooms on the ground floor of John Lawrence's small house in the cantonments, a Council of War, composed of Reed, Edwardes, and Chamberlain, while, in the adjoining room, sat and worked, as few men have ever worked, the Chief Commissioner, with James his 'acting' private secretary. It was from this last room that the spirit-stirring telegrams or letters, which lie before me in such rich abundance, passed forth daily or hourly to Nicholson and Cotton at Peshawur, to Montgomery and Macpherson at Lahore, to General Anson at Umballa, to Bartle Frere in Scinde, to Lord Elphinstone at Bombay, to Lord Canning at Calcutta, and to Mangles, the Chairman of the Court of Directors, at home.

I quote by preference here one of the last. For it is characteristic of John Lawrence's intellect and of his grasp of the situation, that he was able to write to the then unknown Chairman of the Directors, pointing out, not so much the danger to his own province, as to the empire at large, putting his finger on the chief blots of our military system: and even now, in 'the greatest crisis,' as he calls it, which had ever occurred in India, suggesting the remedy.

Rawul Pindi: May 15, 1857.

My dear Sir,—I make no apology for writing to you at such a crisis. I enclose a copy of a note I have addressed to Lord Elphinstone. So far as we can yet learn the Irregular troops will prove faithful; but the disaffection in the native Regular army seems general, and, I may add, universal. By God's help we are strong enough in the Punjab to hold our own. But the state of Bengal and the Upper Provinces seems most critical. Between Calcutta and Agra there cannot be more than five or six thousand European soldiers, and these are scattered about the country. Even at Meerut, where there are some eighteen hundred European soldiers of all arms, we hear that they have not acted on the offensive, but apprehend attack.

The present *émeutes* have been excited, apparently, by the new

cartridges. The Sepoys have got an idea into their heads that the paper is dipped in cow fat, and there is no getting it out of them. They seem to have made up their minds that their religion is in danger. It is vain to talk and to reason with them. Corps which have not committed themselves protest that they are loyal, until the moment when they break out. Officers seem to think that some other cause must exist, but this I doubt. Men who are ignorant and prejudiced, when once they have taken up an idea, do not easily give it up. However, it is very probable that cunning and designing men have fanned the flame. The *émeute* among the 3rd Cavalry, who are nearly all Mohammedans, is most unaccountable, and I should suppose that some mismanagement has given rise to an ill feeling amongst them—which not being promptly allayed—the men have gone with the Regular native infantry.

What makes the state of affairs so serious is that nearly all the latter class come from Oude and its vicinity, and the majority are Brahmins. Thus they have the same prejudices and feelings, and can combine with a perfect confidence in one another. The European officers of the native Regulars do not mix sufficiently with their men, are unable to fathom their real sentiments, and do not sympathise sufficiently with them in every-day life.

The Irregulars have no common feeling with the Regulars, and being composed of mixed races, and commanded by officers whose qualities have been called forth by their position, are much more reliable. Still they are mercenaries, and bad example is catching.

This seems to me the greatest crisis which has as yet occurred in India; and it will require great good management to weather the storm. I most strongly urge that a large body of European infantry be despatched to India as soon as may be possible. After what has occurred, it would be the extreme of fatuity not to strengthen ourselves in this way. Something of this kind seemed necessary to show the unsoundness of the present military system. Nothing short of it would, I believe, convince some people, or counteract the influence of class interests. From a false *esprit de corps* officers will not, in ordinary times, admit that anything is wrong. The whole Regular native army should be reorganised and remodelled. Native troops should have few officers. But these should be well selected, and readily removable if they prove a failure. Many officers with native troops do harm, for they have nothing to do, try to get away, and failing to do so, become discontented. All the native army should be on the Irregular

system, and the saving which would be effected would cover all the expense of a sufficient addition to the European force.

But, amidst all his pressing anxieties, the Chief Commissioner's sense of humour never deserted him, nor was the conversation confined, even in these first days, to the Mutiny alone. One who was present still remembers the animation with which in the verandah outside his house, in the cool of the evening, so remote a subject as Ruskin's marriage was discussed, Edwardes, the most literary of the party, naturally taking the lead in the conversation; while another recollects how the Chief Commissioner himself, in one of his early morning rides on a breezy day, meeting a native who was employed in the Telegraph Department, asked him, with a serious face, what was the cause of the noise he heard in the wires? The man replied that he did not know. 'What!' said the Chief Commissioner, 'you in the Department and not know as much as that?' The man, little thinking that the Sahib was having a joke at his expense, and, perhaps, imagining that the sound might have more to do with the Mutiny than he was likely at that early stage to know, replied: 'Please, my lord, I have only been a short time in the office; but I shall soon know all about it.' So again, when Barnes, Commissioner of the Cis-Sutlej States, who had been doing excellent work in bringing the great protected chiefs of his division to stand by us in our hour of need, telegraphed to the Chief Commissioner, that General Anson was talking of entrenching himself at Umballa instead of marching on Delhi, the answer flashed back, by the leave or the suggestion of the Chief Commissioner, is said to have been, 'Clubs, not spades, are trumps; when in doubt, take the trick.' It was an answer which the Commander-in-Chief, who had published a standard work on whist, would quite appreciate, and it would help, moreover, to carry off those more serious and drastic messages, in which John Lawrence, clinging to his great purpose, kept urging, at all hazards, an immediate advance on Delhi.

And what was happening at Head-quarters meanwhile? The news had reached Umballa on the 11th, and a son of General Barnard had been despatched with it post-haste to Simla. He reached his destination on the 12th, and had the

Commander-in-Chief been able to realise its vast importance, that night, we may feel sure, would have seen him far down the road to Umballa in front of his troops; and, once there, he would have been straining every nerve in that great city, the military and civil centre of the district, for an immediate advance towards Delhi. As it was, he arrived only on the morning of the 15th, and then, if not before, he must have received the stirring letter from the Chief Commissioner which I have already quoted. A second followed hard upon it urging him to make one more effort to recall the Sepoys to their duty by the issue of a new order, abolishing not only *the* new cartridges, but all new cartridges altogether.

It is perfectly useless our saying that the Sepoys should trust in our word that nothing objectionable is used in making up these cartridges. They will not believe it. They feel that their religion is in danger, and are ready to resist and even break out. The very precautions which are taken by us to guard against the danger add to their alarm. . . . There seems to be nothing for it but to give way in this matter for the present at any rate, to be warned by what has occurred, to take measures to add to our European force in India, and to re-organise our native system.

I consider it my duty to write to your Excellency without reserve. The communications with Calcutta are said to be cut off, and, at any rate, time does not admit of a reference to the Governor-General. Our policy is to act at once, to recall the disloyal to a sense of duty, to assure the wavering, and to strike with effect against those in revolt.

The suggestion as regards the cartridges was at once complied with. But it was too late. It is difficult to say what might not have been the result of such a proclamation, had it been issued by General Anson when he was on his way to Simla in April, amidst unmistakeable signs of rising mutiny, but before a drop of blood had been shed.

Three days later, foreseeing the objections to a 'forward policy,' which, according to approved precedents, would be urged upon the Commander-in-Chief by his advisers at Umballa, John Lawrence wrote again, hoping to minimise their effect, and he was able to make his advice more palatable, by the good news that the Guides were already on their march for

Delhi, and that the Movable Column for the Punjab was not merely forming, but was already, in a great measure, formed.

Rawul Pindi: May 19, 1857.

My dear Sir,—The *Guides* go from this to-morrow, and expect to be at Lahore on the 25th, and will march thence *viâ* Ferozepore to Kurnal. The Movable Column will be at Wuzeerabad on the 25th, and be there joined by H.M.'s 52nd, the Artillery, and one N. I., all from Sealkote.

I do sincerely hope that you will be able to disengage the Meerut force by an early date, so as to enable it to act. Entrenched at Meerut, it may be safe for a time, but can do no good, and the people of the country will become demoralised, and, eventually, food will fail. Free the Meerut force, which has allowed itself to be paralysed, scour the country, disarm the native troops who have mutinied, or who are known to be faithless; and then act according to circumstances. If Agra and the North-West are in danger, I would say move down from place to place, uniting with the European troops, and destroying the enemy. We shall be all safe this side of the Sutlej, and be able to help you with native troops, like the Guides and others.

If you leave one native Regular corps at Umballa, with a proper proportion of Europeans, and all your ladies, European women and treasure collected together, and take on the other native corps, all will go well. *What we should avoid is isolation, and the commanders of stations each looking to his own charge, and not to the general weal.* Many will, I fear, counsel delay and caution, but such a policy must prove ruinous. In marching the Europeans, I would take as many elephants and other animals as possible, to carry the weary and footsore. Between Meerut and Calcutta we have but five regiments of Europeans, scattered over the country at wide intervals. What is to become of them, and all our countrymen, if we only hold our own at points where we are strong?

One observation can hardly fail to suggest itself here. Though it was on Delhi that John Lawrence's eyes and hopes were fixed, he was far from denying that other places might call, even more imperatively, for the presence of our troops. On two points only he insisted: one was the necessity for action, for action that is of some kind or other. Do something to show that you are not afraid; take the initiative; waverers will infallibly join those who show the boldest front; inaction at Meerut has lost us Delhi; inaction at Umballa may lose us

India. Such was the gist of all his exhortations. Second, and only less important: take a wide view; do not act as they have done and are still doing at Meerut; think not merely of the safety of your own cantonment, your own fort, your own force, or even your own province, but think of India as a whole. What wiser or more opportune advice could have been given? If John Lawrence, as a civilian, had a necessarily imperfect appreciation of the purely military conditions of the problem, he had, what was much more important, a complete grasp of its moral and political conditions. He knew the people of India thoroughly, and, knowing them, he had a right to point out what dangers must be dared, and what rules of warfare disregarded.

General Anson, if he found at Umballa much to perplex, found also not a little to aid and to encourage him. The Cis-Sutlej Division, the most difficult and complicated in the Punjab, was in excellent hands, and so also were nearly all its districts. Barnes, the Commissioner, Douglas Forsyth, the Deputy Commissioner of Umballa, MacAndrew, one of the Assistant Commissioners, and George Ricketts, the Deputy Commissioner of Loodiana, had been doing all that men could do to meet the crisis. Already Forsyth, anticipating the telegram of the Chief Commissioner which I have quoted, had summoned the 'protected' Maharaja of Puttiala, whose dominions were almost surrounded by our own, to do his part towards securing the safety of his protectors. Already the Maharaja had responded to the appeal, had come down to an interview, had placed his whole force at our disposal, and had sent forward a detachment to Thanesur, to guard the Grand Trunk Road, the main artery of communication between the Punjab and Delhi. Already the Raja of Jheend, another of those great 'protected' chiefs, without even waiting to be summoned, had concentrated his troops, and was nearing the cantonment of Kurnal, a point still further down the road, and was thus acting, at the same time, as the vanguard of the English army and as a breakwater against the mutineers, if, in the enthusiasm of their first success, they might be disposed to advance against us from Delhi. Already the Raja of Nabha, the third of our protected or protecting chieftains,

was on his way to Loodiana, the other point of danger specified by John Lawrence in his telegram of May 13. The civil treasury and civil lines at Umballa had already been transferred to the protection of the trusted Sikh police. The ferries of the river had been placed under strict watch and ward, and the numerous smaller Sikh chieftains whom we had confirmed in their jagheers, on condition of an annual payment, had been called upon by Barnes to furnish a contingent of men instead—and had already complied with the demand.

All this looked well enough. But there were also grave obstacles to an advance, for which the Commander-in-Chief was only partially responsible. He had left behind him something like mutiny even among the faithful Ghoorkas at Jutogh, and something still more like panic, and panic of the most disgraceful kind, among the European inhabitants of Simla. The European regiments, which had come down promptly enough from the hills to Umballa, found there what is the usual, it may almost be said the invariable, state of things when an English force is called upon to act in an emergency. Nothing was ready. There was a lack of tents, of medical appliances, of carriage, of baggage animals. There were no heavy guns, no reserve artillery ammunition. Even the supply of small ammunition had run short. The siege train was at Phillour, some eighty miles off, and there was no escort available to bring it up. Cholera had begun to show itself in the overcrowded barracks, and, worse than all, the mutinous spirit which the Commander-in-Chief had coquetted with and had left behind him, as though it were of no account, in the Umballa cantonment when he passed on to the hills at Simla in April, had been smouldering on ever since, and had burst into a momentary flame on the day of the outbreak at Meerut. On that occasion the mutineers had been coaxed rather than coerced into submission, and Anson now saw clearly enough that he could not afford either to take such men with him to Delhi, or to leave them behind him, with arms in their hands, at Umballa. Why not then follow the example of Lahore, and utilising the large European force at his disposal, render the disaffected Sepoys at least innocuous by disarming them at once?

In vain did General Anson himself receive evidence of

their mutinous spirit when he ordered them 'to advance by wings,' and they declined to do so. In vain did Sir John Lawrence urge upon him by letters and by reiterated telegrams the step which instincts of self-preservation seemed to demand. The officers of the mutinous regiments still protested their belief in the men. Anson yielded his better judgment to them, and met the appeals of the Chief Commissioner by that *non possumus* which, with those who once allow themselves to plead it, is so omnipotent. The arms which he allowed the mutineers to retain were, of course, soon used against us, and what might have been done, thoroughly and at once, without firing a shot, was only half-done, later on, with much expenditure of time and trouble and life.

But we must take care not to blame Anson unjustly, and he and the Chief Commissioner shall henceforward speak on this and other subjects for themselves. On his arrival at Umballa on May 17, Anson replied to the Chief Commissioner as follows:—

My dear Sir John,—I have received your letter dated the 13th, the main purport of which was to urge the immediate recovery of Delhi. Things are, however, altered since that date. The whole of the army (native) may be said to be in a state of mutiny. None are to be depended upon. There were two great objects, besides the prestige of success which you contemplated, the saving of the lives of the European community and the recovery of the magazine. The former, it is ascertained, have been mostly sacrificed; the latter was blown up.

But it was, and is, impossible to move for want of tents, &c. The second European regiment only arrived this morning—and all of them having been brought in such a hurry, and so quickly—they have nothing with them. We hear that many regiments have joined the mutineers in Delhi, the gates of which are closed, and guns mounted on them. The walls would be nothing against guns of heavy calibre. But we have none nearer than Phillour, and only two troops with six-pounders. At Meerut there is a light field battery of nine-pounders. My intelligence from Meerut is very scanty. I instructed General Hewitt to be prepared to join me with all the force he could spare, after providing for the protection of the cantonments. I have not heard from him what this would be.

We cannot count upon our two Native Infantry regiments and

one of cavalry. They have not committed themselves, and the Major-General and their commanding officers represented their conduct as so good, that I gave them to understand they should be trusted, and would march wherever the force marched. They objected, I was told, to be divided into wings, and said they would be true if allowed to go with their colours. There is, however, no faith to be placed in any, and I should be heartily glad to be rid of them. The refusal of the Nusseree battery to come into the plains is a most serious misfortune. I am glad to say they have not been violent, but I am told they were apparently determined to have their own way, and I have been obliged to send one hundred men of the 75th back to Kussowlie, to afford protection to that place and Simla. We have therefore enemies in our rear, and it is difficult to say from what quarter they may not come. . . .

It becomes now a matter for your consideration, whether it would be prudent to risk the small European force we have here in an enterprise upon Delhi. I think not. It is wholly, in my opinion, insufficient for the purpose. The walls could, of course, be battered down with heavy guns, when we got them up. The entrance might be opened, and little resistance offered, but so few men in a large city with such narrow streets, and an immense armed population who know every turn and corner of them, would, it appears to me, be in a very dangerous position. And if six or seven hundred were disabled, what would remain? Could we hold it with the whole country armed against us? Could we either stay in or out of it? My own view of the state of things now is, by carefully collecting our resources, having got rid of the bad materials which we cannot trust, and having supplied their places with others of a better sort, it would not be very long before we could proceed, without a chance of failure, in whatever direction we might please.

Your telegraphic message, informing me of the measures you have taken to raise fresh troops, confirms me in this opinion. I must add also that this is now the opinion of all here whom I have consulted upon it, the Major-General and Brigadier, the Adjutant-General and the Quartermaster-General and Commissary-General. The latter has however offered a positive impediment to it in the impossibility of providing what would be necessary for such an advance under from sixteen to twenty days. I thought it could have been done in less, but that was before I had seen Colonel Thomson. Indeed, it is very little more than forty-eight hours since I came here, and every hour produces something which may alter a previous opinion. . . . It would give me great satisfaction to have your

views upon the present crisis, for I would trust to them more than to my experience.

Yours very truly,
GEORGE ANSON.

It was not long before the Chief Commissioner gave again his views upon the crisis, and it is hardly necessary to say that they did not agree with those of the Commander-in-Chief. I cannot afford to omit a single word of his letter.

Rawul Pindi: May 21, 1857.

My dear Sir,—I telegraphed last night my reply to yours of the 17th. I do not myself think that the country is anywhere against us certainly not from here to within a few miles of Delhi. I served for nearly thirteen years in Delhi, and know the people well. My belief is that with good management on the part of the civil officers, it would open its gates on the approach of our troops. It seems incredible to conceive that the mutineers can hold and defend it. Still I admit that, on military principles, in the present state of affairs, it may not be expedient to advance on Delhi; certainly not until the Meerut force is prepared to act, which it can only be when set free. Once relieve Meerut, and give confidence to the country, no difficulty regarding carriage can occur. By good arrangements the owners will come forward. But in any case it can be collected.

From Meerut you will be able to form a sound judgment on the course to be followed. If the country lower down be disturbed, and the Sepoys have mutinied, I conceive it would be a paramount duty to march that way, relieve each place, and disarm or destroy the mutineers. If, on the other hand, all were safe, it would be a question whether you would consolidate your resources there, or march on Delhi.

I think it must be allowed that our European troops are not placed at this or that station, simply to hold it, but to be ready to move wherever they may be required. Salubrious and centrical points for their location were selected, but so long as we maintain our prestige, and keep the country quiet, it cannot signify how many cantonments we abandon. But this we cannot do if we allow two or three native corps to checkmate large bodies of Europeans. It will then be a mere question of time; by slow degrees, but of a certainty, the native troops *must* destroy us.

We are doing all we can to strengthen ourselves, and to reinforce you either by direct or indirect means. But can your Excellency suppose, for one moment, that the Irregular troops will

remain staunch, if they see our European soldiers cooped up in their cantonments, tamely awaiting the progress of events?

Your Excellency remarks that we must 'carefully collect our resources.' But what are these resources, but our European soldiers, our guns and our material? These are all ready at hand, and only require to be handled wisely and vigorously to produce great results. We have money also, and the control of the country. But if disaffection spread, insurrection will follow, and we shall then neither be able to collect the revenue nor procure supplies.

Pray only reflect on the whole history of India. Where have we failed when we acted vigorously? Where have we succeeded when guided by timid counsels? Clive with twelve hundred men fought at Plassey, in opposition to the advice of his leading officers, beat forty thousand men, and conquered Bengal. Monson retreated from the Chumbul, and before he gained Agra his army was disorganised, and partially annihilated. Look at the Cabul catastrophe. It might have been averted by resolute and bold action. The Irregulars of the army, the Kuzzulbashes—in short our friends, of whom we had many—only left us when they found we were not true to ourselves. How can it be supposed that strangers and mercenaries will sacrifice everything for us? There is a point up to which they will stand by us; for they know that we have always been eventually successful, and that we are good masters. But, go beyond this point, and every man will look to his immediate benefit, his present safety.

The Punjab Irregulars are marching down in the highest spirits, proud to be trusted, and, eager to show their superiority over the Regular troops, ready to fight shoulder to shoulder with the Europeans. But if, on their arrival, they find the Europeans behind breast-works, they will begin to think that the game is up. Recollect that all this time, while we are pausing, the emissaries of the mutineers are writing to and visiting every cantonment.

It seems to me lamentable to think that in no case have the mutineers yet suffered. Brigadier Corbett has indeed managed admirably. With six weak companies and his artillery, he disarmed three regiments, and thus rendered them harmless. Brigadier Innes seems to me to have missed an excellent opportunity of teaching the Sepoys a lesson, which would have cowed them for hundreds of miles round. Her Majesty's 61st Regiment repulsed, without an effort, the attacks of the 45th, but the Sepoys got off with little loss. And, even then, they had not the heart to keep together, but seem to have thrown away their arms and dispersed. At Delhi the Sepoys have murdered their officers, and taken our

guns, but, even there, they did not stand. No number of them can face a moderate body of Europeans, fairly handled. Of late years even when fighting under our own banners, in a good cause, with European officers at their head and English comrades at their side, they have seldom done anything. As mutineers, they cannot fight. They will burn, destroy, and massacre, but not fight.

I should suppose that any pledges which were given to the Umballa Sepoys were forfeited when they refused to obey orders, to march by wings; and, in this view of the matter, I would disband them after taking away their arms. The horses of the cavalry would enable our Europeans to move forward without distress. But if you still consider that faith must be kept with men who have kept, and will keep, no faith with us, then, by all means, take one regiment with you, making such arrangements as will prevent their suddenly turning round and dealing a deadly blow against our Europeans.

I cannot comprehend what the Commissariat can mean by requiring from sixteen to twenty days to procure provisions! I am persuaded that all you can require to take with you must be procurable in two or three. We have had an extraordinarily good harvest, and supplies must be abundant between Umballa and Meerut. The greater portion of the country is well cultivated. We are sending our troops in every direction without difficulty, through tracts which are comparatively desert.

Our true policy is to trust the Maharaja of Puttiala, and Raja of Jheend, and the country generally—for they have shown evidence of being on our side—but utterly to distrust the Regular Sepoys. I would spare no expense to carry every European soldier; at any rate, to carry every other one. By alternately marching and riding their strength and spirits will be maintained. We are pushing on the Guides, the 4th Sikhs, and 1st and 4th Punjab regiments of Infantry from distant parts of the Punjab in this way.

If there is any officer in the Punjab whom your Excellency would wish to have at your side, pray don't hesitate to apply for him. There is a young officer now at Head-quarters, who, though young in years, has seen much service, and proved himself an excellent soldier. I allude to Captain Norman, of the Adjutant-General's office. Sir Colin Campbell had the highest opinion of his judgment, and when he left Peshawur, it was considered a public loss.

There is, in my judgment, no single letter in the whole of Sir John Lawrence's correspondence during the Mutiny which

brings one side of his character more vigorously before us. It is impossible, as we read, not to see the man as he wrote it, not to feel something of that *vis viva* which communicated itself to everyone within the sphere of his influence.

What was thought of Sir John Lawrence's letters and telegrams, at the time, by those who best knew what need there was for them, I find strikingly illustrated in a book called 'Service and Adventures with the Meerut Volunteer Horse during the Mutinies.'

> Mrs. P—— and her husband (says the writer, R. Dunlop, who had never been a subordinate of John Lawrence) had been exceptions to the sadly general exhibition of fright during the Simla panic. Her husband had gone down to take his place where manhood should; and she spoke confidently and cheerfully, as a brave-hearted Englishwoman ought, of the tremendous task which was still before us. She too spoke, as all were speaking, of Lawrence: Lawrence, who not only got through Herculean labours himself, but sternly forced all malingerers to do their duty; who, with the authority of a master-mind, flashed message after message of abrupt command wherever the electric shock was necessary. One of the earliest victims of the struggle had sunk, she said, killed by an attack of Lawrence's telegraphic messages!

In a letter which reached Rawul Pindi the day after the above letter was written, but was not, of course, an answer to it, the Commander-in-Chief dwelt on his difficulties and denied that there had been any undue delay. 'Nobody could wish more than myself that we could have got away sooner. There were no tents, no ammunition, not twenty rounds per man in the pouches of the Europeans.' The troops could not, he said, have moved forward without carriage. The camels and the bullock train which had brought them down from the hills had been obliged to return to fetch the tents, and, even so, an advance party had been sent on to Kurnal on the evening of the 17th. He thought, therefore, that the remark which he had seen in a telegram of James to Barnes to the effect that 'the delay of the Commander-in-Chief was fatal' was not justifiable.

John Lawrence replied, expressing his regret if any of his remarks had given pain, explaining his general views, and making suggestions which, from his intimate knowledge of Delhi, he thought might be useful.

Rawul Pindi : May 23, 1857.

My dear General Anson,—I enclose copy of Captain James's telegraphic message to which you allude in your letter of the 19th. From it you will perceive that it does not bear the objectionable interpretation which you suppose. I should greatly regret if any message or letter of mine should annoy you. I have written warmly and strongly in favour of an advance, because I felt assured that such was the true policy. However much we may be taken by surprise, our military organisation admits of prompt action. The country is almost sure to be with us, if it were only that we save them from trouble. And this will more especially be the case in an affair like the present, when we have really to contend only with our own troops, with whom the people can have no sympathy.

If there be any place where the population will rise against us, it is in the Peshawur valley, where the people are naturally turbulent and highly bigoted and fanatical, and where the chiefs are hostile to us. Yet, so far, we have found them well-disposed. While the chiefs keep aloof, the heads of villages are coming and bringing their quotas of men. . . . I cannot comprehend why Colonel Thompson requires so much supplies. To carry so much food with the troops is to encumber the Column and waste our money. To guard against accidents, three or four days' supplies should be taken, but no more. My belief is that ten thousand troops might march all over the North-West, and, provided they paid for what they required, no difficulty in obtaining supplies would be experienced.

I still think that no real resistance at Delhi will be attempted. But, of course, we must first get the Meerut force into order, and, in moving against Delhi, go prepared to fight. My impression is that, on the approach of our troops, the mutineers will either disperse, or the people of the city rise and open their gates. An officer of intelligence with a few Irregulars might move from Meerut to Shahdaruh, on the left bank of the Jumna, about three miles from Delhi. There he would be perfectly safe, and could open a communication with the loyal inhabitants. He should be, if possible, well acquainted with the country about Delhi, and have some money with him. He would then get hundreds to go and bring him all the information he could desire. There is no difficulty in passing across the river at many points. There are many ferries, both above and below the city. I have myself crossed it at midnight on horseback with a party of sowars. But, even in flood, the people cross by holding on at the tail of a buffalo, and will, in

this way, pass unsuspected and bring information. I think also that a couple of hundred sowars might push on to within a mile or so of Delhi along the high road *viâ* Kurnal, Paniput, and Soniput. Our troops are moving down as fast as possible; but it must be some time before they can be brought to bear in your quarter. . . .

P.S.—I strongly recommend that no permanent arrangement be made to supply the place of the Regular native troops who have committed themselves. Now, if ever, will be the time for a change of system.

It will be seen that what most of all distressed John Lawrence in the position of affairs at Umballa was the delay of *sixteen* days required by Colonel Thompson, the Commissary-General, for the collection of supplies! During that time he believed—as he believed also when looking calmly back at all the circumstances of the case when the Mutiny was over—that, if we gave no sign of acting on the offensive, the whole population between the Jumna and the Sutlej would rise, and that the chiefs of Puttiala, Jheend and Nabha, who performed such excellent service afterwards would, even if they stood by us, be deserted by their own troops, or else be compelled by them to join the insurrection. He could not forget how, ten years before, Major Broadfoot, the Governor-General's 'Agent for the frontier,' had managed to raise supplies for the advance of our army at the beginning of the Sikh war from this very place, in the space of a few days only, though the Commissary-General of that time had told Lord Hardinge that a month or six weeks would be necessary! Still less could he forget how, when Lord Hardinge had written to him as Collector of Delhi, after the terrible battle of Ferozeshah, begging him to do his utmost to get carriage for the reinforcements, he had himself, in a very short space of time, collected together four thousand carts and beasts of burden, and, with the utmost good will of their owners, had despatched them to bear their part in the great victory of Sobraon. His urgency, therefore, now was justified by facts. What had been done once might be done again. And happily it was done, in much the same way, by an appeal to the civil authorities, Barnes and Forsyth, who, knowing the country as no one else knew it at that moment, and having powers of command which could hardly belong to the military authorities, managed to gather together, in less

than a week, two thousand camels, two thousand bearers, and five hundred carts!

Thus one great obstacle to the advance had been removed, and in deference to repeated messages from Lord Canning as well as from John Lawrence, General Anson decided to move onward without waiting for the siege train. He wrote to General Hewitt, making all the arrangements for a junction with the Meerut force at Baghput; he sent on his own force by detachments; and on the 24th of the month he himself left Umballa with the remaining portion of the Europeans. It was his first and his last day's march. For on the following day he lay death-stricken at Kurnal, the victim of the terrible scourge which had broken out in the crowded barracks at Umballa, and which knew no distinction of rank. Sir Henry Barnard, a Crimean general who had lately come to India, and was in command of the Sirhind Division, was hastily sent for from Umballa, and arrived just in time to take over the command from the dying general and to receive his last messages. Anson's was indeed an unkind fate. With Lord Canning telegraphing to him from Calcutta and John Lawrence from Rawul Pindi, to strike a deadly blow, while the officers of his staff were telling him with one consent that it was impossible to move at all, he can have had no easy life. And everyone must regret that so brave a soldier, after surmounting some at least of his difficulties, did not live long enough to show the mettle which many believed him to possess, and to die, if not on the field of battle, at least, as did his successor six short weeks later, after measuring his sword victoriously with the enemy within sight of the minarets of Delhi. While his body still lay in the adjoining room, Barnard wrote a generous letter to the Chief Commissioner, who had so chafed at his delay, pointing out how great his difficulties had been and how strenuously he had striven to breast them. And it is not without interest to notice that on the day of his death the Chief Commissioner had himself been engaged in writing him a letter which dropped no hint of censure for the past, and dwelt chiefly on the reinforcements from the Punjab which he hoped soon to send him.

I have dwelt long and quoted largely from the correspond-

ence of John Lawrence with the Commander-in-Chief during the first fortnight of the Mutiny, because it is impossible to read even this much of it, without gaining a real insight into the character and policy of the writer. It is not so much a question of whether this or that proposal was altogether right or was urged with all the qualifications which military specialists, or those who are wise after the event, may discover. It is rather a question of his grasp of the situation as a whole, of the way in which he at once showed that he was the man to fill the gap that had been made, to fill any gap that might hereafter be made, by the spread of the Mutiny. The outbreak itself shows us that the opportunity has at length come to the man. The measures of the first few days show sufficiently that the man will not be wanting to the opportunity. That he was right in his two main suggestions to General Anson, the immediate disarmament of the Sepoys at Umballa, and the earliest possible advance towards Delhi, alike from Umballa and Meerut, hardly indeed admits of question. What the effect on India would have been hadDelhi been left, as it is understood some of the military authorities would have advised that it should, unmolested by us, till reinforcements should arrive from England, may be inferred from the influence that its name and prestige and that of the restored Mogul sovereignty did unquestionably exercise in every Sepoy cantonment and in every native bazaar from Peshawur to Calcutta, long after we had begun to threaten its existence, and down even to the moment of its fall.

As regards the mutinous Sepoys at Umballa, that Sir John Lawrence and not the military authorities on the spot was right, is shown, beyond all question, by the result. Of three regiments, one of cavalry and two of infantry, which might have been disarmed—as had already been done at Lahore, and was about to be done, without a blow being struck or a drop of blood being spilt, at Peshawur—one, the light cavalry regiment, in order that it might be made as innocuous as possible, was sent off, in detachments to places where it was not wanted, and from which the men took an early opportunity of deserting. A second, the 5th Native Infantry, was left behind at Umballa with a force to guard it, and being at last

detected in a plot to seize the guns of the siege train when it arrived from Phillour, the men were disarmed and gradually slunk off to Delhi. The third corps, the 60th, the Commander-in-Chief had proposed to take with him in his advance. But when his small European force demurred, not unreasonably, to facing the enemy with a more than doubtful enemy within their own ranks, he sent them off instead to Rohtuck, where they, shortly afterwards, mutinied, fired on their officers, and went off to Delhi to swell the rebel army.

Sir Henry Barnard was new to the country, and was therefore, encompassed by special difficulties of his own. But he lost no time in assuring the Chief Commissioner that having put his hand to the plough, he would not look back. He wrote on the day of his predecessor's death :—

It is only on this day that I expect the necessary supply of ammunition to arrive at Umballa. I have determined (I say *I*, for poor Anson could only recognise me and hand me over the command when I arrived here last night) not to wait for the siege train, but, after the exchange from six to nine pounders has been effected today, to bring up all the remainder of the force from Umballa, Mr. Barnes undertaking to convoy the train. The 60th Native Infantry I have detached to Hansi to intercept fugitives or repel advance, a threat which does not seem likely to be put into execution, but it employs them honourably and *gets them out of the way*.

And on the following day he writes again :—

I have nothing to say from Meerut. Much has got to be explained. Doubtless it is *fatal* in this country if your European troops are not at once to the fore for any service. But, as regards Umballa, all has been activity and movement; but all were in a manner paralysed, inasmuch as, instead of devoting every thought and energy to the service, the safety of family and friends came uppermost. I would pity, really, rather than condemn. I have lent every assistance in my power. General Anson placed me in command, and so long as I exercise any power you may rest assured every energy shall be devoted to the object I have now in view—namely, concentrating all the force I can collect, securing the bridge at Bhagput, securing communication with Meerut. For this object all is now in actual motion. . . . General Reed has notified his intention of coming here ; but, of course, nothing is to be delayed waiting for his arrival. I shall keep you informed of all by telegraph.

John Lawrence replied to these and other letters from Sir H. Barnard on the 31st.

My dear Sir Henry,—Many thanks for your different letters. I sincerely hope that nothing I wrote to General Anson disturbed his deathbed. I had no intention to reflect on him; to wound his feelings. What I wished to do was to show him the crisis which had arrived; the gulf which was yawning at his feet. No man would more truly desire to care for the European soldiers than I would, for I know their value. But there are times when it is absolutely necessary to expose them. Up here we could not foresee that they were so badly supplied with ammunition and the necessaries for a march.

The officers about the Commander-in-Chief could not have reflected—I mean those who were opposed to an advance—that in little more than a month the rains would intervene; and therefore that, if we delayed to recover Delhi, we should have to wait until the cold weather. But I should like to ask such officers where British India would have been by that time but in the hands of our enemies. Our troops—I mean the Europeans—where in any numbers, might have held the ground on which they stood, but no more. As regards the native Regular troops, I believe that all are disaffected and untrustworthy, and that many even of the Irregular Hindustani Horse sympathise with them. But amongst the very worst of these troops I should rank those of Umballa. What, I would ask, has been the meaning of all these fires in Umballa for the last three months? Who have been their authors? It is notorious that they have been perpetrated by the native troops.

I look on it that the only safe way to deal with mercenary troops in a state of mutiny, is to overpower or disarm them. If we don't, we are in constant danger of their suddenly turning on us, and inflicting a deadly blow. Moreover, at the best, we must employ a body of good troops to watch them, and so weaken ourselves at a time when every European soldier who is available should be brought to bear against the enemy.

So now, at length, to the intense relief of the Chief Commissioner's mind, General Barnard's force was in full march for Delhi. He reached Alipore, twelve miles from his destination, on June 5. But here he was obliged to halt till he should be joined by the siege train from Phillour, and by the force which was moving up from Meerut under Brigadier-General Wilson on the other side of the Jumna. He had not

long to wait for either. For on the following morning, after a series of adventures which those who were responsible for its safety, and who knew what turned on it, might well regard as miraculous, the Siege Train arrived. By dint of incredible exertions, the train had been equipped within seven days of the arrival of the telegram which ordered it. But Phillour was eighty miles from Umballa. There was no dependable escort to be found amongst our own troops, and between the two places rolled the broad and rapid river Sutlej, then rising from hour to hour, and bridged only by a bridge of boats which the torrent might at any moment sweep away. It was a race, in the literal sense of the word, against wind and tide, and the Siege Train won—won by two hours only. For two hours had not passed after the last gun-carriage had reached the opposite shore, before the whole bridge was swept away.[1]

The Sepoys of the 3rd Regiment at Phillour, who had offered to escort the Train, were known to be mutinous to the core; and they, too, only just missed their opportunity. In a moment of fatuity, or inadvertence, they allowed the heavy guns to cross the river in front of them, and when the bridge was swept away, they found themselves on the wrong side! Their further services were dispensed with for the present, and the ever-ready Raja of Nabha stepped into the gap and supplied an escort. On the 27th the Train reached Umballa, escaped the machinations of the 5th Native Infantry there, and caught up General Barnard on the 6th of June.

On the 7th, Wilson's small brigade, which in its short march from Meerut had already been twice engaged with the enemy, and had twice sent them flying back to Delhi, arrived, and on the following day both forces moved on together, inspired by the success which had already been won, and burning with an inextinguishable desire to revenge the brutal murder of English officers, English women, and English children on every black face that would dare to meet them in the open field.

In the brilliant battle of Budli-ke-Serai, fought in the cool of the early morning, they dislodged the enemy from a strong

[1] Cave Brown's *Punjab and Delhi*, vol. i. p. 206.

position which they had themselves selected, five miles from Delhi; and then, in a second engagement, fought beneath the full fury of the June sun, swept them from a second position some miles further on, into the city itself. The rout of the enemy was complete. We took thirteen of their guns, and found ourselves once more the undisputed masters of our own cantonments, and of that immortal 'Ridge' from which, for fourteen long weeks to come, exposed to nearly every suffering to which human flesh is heir, we were never to come down except to smite the foe, and never to abandon till the guilty city which it threatened, or, to speak more accurately, which threatened it, was in our hands.

It was a perilous prize of victory, this narrow ridge, and one which not a few of the cooler heads and braver hearts to be found in our force must, as they settled down to the work before them, have felt that, perhaps, they could have done better without. A force consisting of 3,000 men all told, of twenty field guns, and a small Siege Train, were taking up their position at one corner of its vast circumference, to besiege, or at least to menace, a city of 150,000 inhabitants, defended by strong fortifications which we ourselves had constructed and repaired, and which bristled with guns many times more numerous, of far heavier metal, and much better served than any that we could bring against them. Within the city was an arsenal where arms of every description were to be had for the asking, and the whole was garrisoned by an army of revolted Sepoys who were all the more formidable from the vagueness of the guesses we could form as to their numbers, had all been trained and armed by ourselves, were all spurred on by the fanaticism of an outraged religion or the zeal of a rejuvenescent nationality, and were, all of them, determined that since their crimes had made them to carry their lives in their hands, they would sell their lives, if sell them they must, as dearly as possible.

It might well seem, then, to our leaders, as they looked towards the great city with its famous fortress, its teeming population, its historic memories, its glorious mosques and minarets, that they had entered on a hopeless or even an absurd task. But behind that ridge there went stretching

away the Grand Trunk Road, held by faithful Sikh chiefs, and beyond the horizon, on either side of its course, lay the Punjab, the youngest and most warlike, and yet the most trustworthy of all our possessions; and over the Punjab presided the man who had held and nursed it ever since it came into our hands, had attached it to our rule, and was now prepared to strip it of its last available regiment, and of its most trusted and able officers—nay, if the need arose, to draw in its frontier, rather than allow the imperial enterprise which he had urged, and on which the safety of the whole, as he thought, depended, to be given up in despair. Those, then, who reflected that the Grand Trunk Road led up to a province every man of which was in his right place; that along it were to come to our help in rapid and continuous succession, regiments of young Sikhs who had grown up under our shadow, of old Sikhs who had fought against us, of hardy Mohammedans from the border who had often made our lives a burden to us; long lines of baggage waggons and baggage animals, vast stores of shot and shell, and of all the provisions and munitions of war; above all, men like Coke and Rothney, Daly and Taylor, Wilde and Watson, Chamberlain and Nicholson; more than this, that over the whole province, from Rawul Pindi, urging on the over-cautious, keeping back the rash, supplying the mind that moved the whole, was working, and watching, and waiting the ever anxious but never despondent John Lawrence—might well take fresh heart of grace and feel that, if the impossible could be done at all, it was through him that it would be done.

CHAPTER II.

MUTINY-POLICY OF JOHN LAWRENCE.

MAY—JUNE 1857.

IN the last chapter I have endeavoured to bring into clear relief the steps taken by Sir John Lawrence to ensure that a speedy blow should be struck, not at the limbs but at the heart of the rebellion, and have described the muster and the march of our small army, which, even then, had begun to feel something of his presence or of his spirit in its midst, from the cool heights of Simla to the burning fiery furnace before Delhi. It remained for him now to justify the advice—the foolhardy advice as many deemed it—which he had given; and while he kept his own province in hand and carried on its administration almost as though it had been a time of profound peace, to supply men and money, and all the material of war for the prosecution of that vast and perilous enterprise. How did he set about it?

Lahore and Umritsur had been saved, and Ferozepore and Phillour strengthened, by Montgomery and his coadjutors, while as yet, happily for the English rule, the disastrous news which flashed along the wires had reached the ears of the English authorities alone. But what of the more remote parts of the Punjab, of Mooltan and Sealkote, of Huzara and the Derajat? Above all, what of Peshawur? There were dangers in every course that could be taken. But a few hours' consideration sufficed to show John Lawrence the course in which there were the fewest, and he straightway plunged into it.

Trust the Irregulars and the natives of the Punjab generally, but utterly distrust the Regular army. Utilise the

Irregulars in every way you can. Bring them in from the frontier, where their work has been well done, to the points of danger in the interior of the country where they may have plenty of work of a novel kind. Add largely to the numbers of each existing regiment. Raise fresh regiments, as occasion may require, but do so under proper precautions, remembering that the weapon with which you are arming yourselves may, unless it is well wielded, be turned against yourselves. As for the Regulars, watch them, isolate them, send them to detached frontier forts, where the population are naturally hostile to them, and where it will be difficult for them to act in concert. If any symptoms of mutiny show themselves, disarm them at once. If mutiny breaks forth into act, destroy them, if possible, on the spot; and if they take to flight, raise the native populations against them and hunt them down. A few stern examples at first will save much bloodshed in the end. Find out the Sikh chiefs living in your respective districts and enlist their martial instincts and their natural hatred of the Hindustanis on your side at once. Collect camels and beasts of burden at suitable spots, so that the troops who are moving to the front may face the enemy in the best possible condition. Concentrate bodies of mounted police, so that they may move down on any threatened point in force and crush disturbance at the outset. Remove all Hindustanis from posts of trust or importance. Arrest every wandering Fakir, guard every ferry, examine every Sepoy's letter. Keep the regular work of the administration going everywhere. If you are calm yourself you will help others to be calm also. Don't be afraid of acting on your own responsibility, but keep me informed of anything and everything that happens, and of anything and everything that you do. Such, in bare outline, are the general maxims which run through all Sir John Lawrence's letters to all his subordinates throughout his province during these first days of the Mutiny.

Accordingly, in obedience to his fiat, and in some cases—notably at Peshawur and Lahore—in anticipation of it, every official in the Punjab was on the alert, and acting as if the safety of the whole province depended on his single exertions.

No thought of flight,
None of retreat, no unbecoming deed
That argued fear; each on himself relied,
As only in his arm the moment lay
Of victory.

One of the five native regiments which guarded, or endangered, Peshawur, and was considered to be the most tainted of them all, had been broken up by Cotton and Edwardes, on the day on which the news of the Meerut outbreak reached them, into detachments, and sent to guard the solitary frontier posts of Michni, Shubkudder, and Abazai, against an imaginary invasion of the Mohmunds! On the same day the suspected 55th, which was quartered at Noushera, at the other end of the Peshawur Valley, and might, perhaps, intercept free communication between it and Attock, was sent sixteen miles northwards to Murdan in the hills, the Headquarters of the famous Guide Corps. At once, by John Lawrence's directions, that matchless corps marched down under Daly to Noushera, and, without stopping to take breath there, were off again to Attock, and thence, once more—a worthy anticipation of General Roberts's march from Cabul to Candahar—moved on again, with hardly a pause, in their amazing race for Delhi. At once, by John Lawrence's special authorisation, Edwardes and Nicholson, his veteran 'wardens of the marches,' utilising their local influence and reputation, called upon the wild and friendly khans of the Derajat to raise a thousand Mooltani horse in our support. At once, from all points of the northern and western frontier, regiments of Irregulars hurried in to do garrison duty in the posts of danger, to join the Movable Column, or to prepare for an ultimate advance on Delhi. Such was the 1st Punjab Infantry under Coke, whom the unwearying patience and forbearance of John Lawrence had managed, in spite of his impracticability, to retain at Bunnoo even to this day of trial; such the 2nd Punjab Infantry, under Green, from Dera Ghazi Khan; the 4th, under Wilde, from Bunnoo; the 5th, under Vaughan, from Kohat; and a wing of the 2nd Punjab Cavalry, under Charles Nicholson, from the same place. From the cool retreat of Murri in the extreme north came down the Kumaon battalion of little

Ghoorkas, while, on the principle of compensation, the 39th Regular Infantry at Jhelum, who were known to be mutinously disposed, were, with admirable judgment, sent out, by John Lawrence's advice, to take the places of the faithful Irregulars in the lonely and distant Derajat, till, amidst the burning heat and the discomforts of the march, their mutinous spirit, and indeed, all their spirit, seemed to melt away and evaporate. Once more, too, the redoubtable Futteh Khan Khuttuck came to the front in our defence, and, raising a hundred Pathans, helped to hold for us the all-important position of the Attock ferry.

And here I may remark that it was fortunate for John Lawrence himself, and fortunate also for the Punjab and for India, that he happened, at the outbreak of the Mutiny, to be, not at Lahore but at Rawul Pindi. In the first place, the heat which had wrought such havoc with his constitution in recent years, and had all but driven him to England in this, if it had not killed him outright, would certainly have gravely impaired his powers of work. And, in the second place, if he had been at the headquarters of his Government, a thousand petty questions, which, in the admirable order that had long prevailed in his province and was not seriously disturbed even now, could be just as well settled by his subordinates as by himself would, inevitably, have been referred to him direct. A hundred official forms would have had to have been observed, and many hundreds of interviews would have been forced upon him. For everyone who had a hobby of his own—and who, in those trying days, was not likely to have many hobbies of his own?—would have been anxious to press it personally on his chief. He would thus have been overwhelmed by matters of detail, and worry would have taken much of the time and strength which might have been given to work. From all this his absence at Rawul Pindi happily helped to save him. In Montgomery, in Macleod, in Macpherson, in Roberts, at Lahore; in Edwardes, in Nicholson, in Cotton, at Peshawur, he had admirable lieutenants, men with whom to think was to act, to see a danger was to overcome it, men who worked behind his back as hard, perhaps harder, than they would have worked under his eye; while from Montgomery, in

particular, he received every second day a report which contained the pith of all the reports sent in to Lahore from all the district officers of the eastern part of the Punjab.

Nor could he, by any possibility, have been better placed than where he was. Rawul Pindi was on the Grand Trunk Road, in a position which gave him easy access alike to his northern and to his western frontier. The telegraph brought him into instantaneous communication with the important position of Peshawur, and with the master spirits who were at work under him there, while, in other directions, he could flash his wishes, his suggestions, or his commands to Lahore, to Umballa, to Jullundur, to Kurnal, to the Ridge before Delhi, and, till all communication was cut off, perhaps happily cut off, with the Supreme Government, to Calcutta itself. 'I like issuing orders by telegraph,' he used to say, 'because they cannot give me their reasons, nor ask me for mine.' He was thus near enough to every point of importance, without being too near to any one of them. He was freed from the strife of tongues, and from that multitude of counsellors in which, if Solomon could always find wisdom, even Solomon could not have found the energy, the vigour, the promptitude, the unity of action, which the crisis required. Freed from the petty worries of official life, he was able to take a calmer, a wider, and a truer view of the struggle as a whole, than those who were in the thick of it. With the exception of his 'acting' secretary, James, and of Edward Thornton, the Commissioner of the district, who used to look in each day to see him, and has, in conversation, given me a vigorous description of his energy, his calmness, and his heroism, he was quite alone, and, perched on that elevated spot, he was able,

Like falcon from her cairn on high,

to take a bird's-eye view of his whole province, to keep it all within his grasp, and to look beyond it again to Bombay and Delhi, to Cabul and to Calcutta, to the Persian war that was just over, and to the Chinese war that was just beginning, and to estimate the influence which each might be made to bear upon the whole. He knew the idiosyncrasies of each among his subordinates, the dyspeptic, the san-

guine, the cautious, the melancholic, the mercurial, the saturnine, and so was able to rate the reports they sent on to him at exactly their proper value. He knew how to administer a word of encouragement or a word of caution; how, where the occasion called for it, to pour forth a flood of generous and unstinted praise; and how again, though this was rare with such officers as he had gathered round him, to deal a sledge-hammer rebuke. He was too wise—to adopt a metaphor of which he was fond—not to give 'his horses their head.' But even the best of them felt that the coachman was always on the coach-box, that his finger was always on the reins, and that his eye was always looking ahead for dangers on the road, which they with their blinkers on—immersed that is, in the multitudinous cares of their immediate province—could not possibly see as well as he. They felt it, and they were glad of it. For they felt that he had the best of rights to rule; that if he made too little allowance for personal or private weaknesses, it was only because of his overflowing zeal for the public good; that if he plied them, when they were weary, with whips, he lashed himself with scorpions; that if he never spared them, still less did he ever spare himself.

How he worked and how he planned, what wide views he took, is known, in a measure, to all who worked under him, and to all who have ever studied the history of the Indian Mutiny. But, perhaps, few can know it so well as his biographer, who has had to follow him, day by day and almost hour by hour, through the enormous piles of documents which every corner of his province poured in upon him, and which he poured back, with interest, on every corner of his province. Each of Sir John Lawrence's subordinates knows, of course better than anyone else can do, how his chief dealt with him individually. But no one who has not had the opportunity, which has fallen to my lot, of studying the correspondence as a whole, can know so well how he dealt with them collectively, how he held every thread within his hand, how he swept with his eye the petty process of raising a dozen *sowars* in the Derajat as keenly as through his correspondence with Barnard, and Reed, and Wilson, with Greathed and Norman, with Chamberlain and Nicholson, he was able to follow, and, in a

sense, to influence or direct every step of the great drama which was slowly and painfully unfolding itself upon the ridge before Delhi.

When the news of the outbreak first reached Sir John, Lady Lawrence was at his side. But a few days later she was obliged, sorely against her will, to go on to Murri with her children, leaving him to face what he and she at once instinctively felt would be the greatest crisis of his life, alone. A line or two of hers giving her recollections of these few eventful days will be read with interest.

As to his private affairs, my husband's first act was to write to his brother-in-law, Dr. Bernard, and give all the necessary directions regarding his children, and the slender provision which we had, up to that time, been able to make for them. He saw and felt the possibility that neither of us would be spared to return home. But he never for a moment lost heart. He only 'put his house in order,' so as to be ready for whatever might happen. After that he gave himself up entirely to his work and left all care for his private affairs alone. What he did and how he worked is well known, and how mercifully he was kept in health and strength. All the neuralgia disappeared in the excitement, and night and day he was equal to all demands. What kept him well at this time was, I believe, above all else, his power of sleeping. When telegrams came at night he would get up, do what he could at the time, and then was able to sleep soundly till some other call aroused him. All the current work was kept going, in addition to the demands made on him by the Mutiny. I was obliged to go up to Murri with our children, while he remained for two months at Rawul Pindi, and then went down to Lahore. It was an awful time of suspense. For my own part, I could only feel how thankful I was that I had not gone home to England, for, although we were parted, we had constant communication. He managed to write a few lines to me every day, and I knew, somehow or other, if it had been necessary, that I should find my way to him.

It is true enough, as Lady Lawrence remarks here, that, in the excitement of the moment and the first rush of work, all the neuralgia did disappear. But it is equally true that after her departure, as some letters written, not to her but to his intimate friends, show, there was a terrible reaction. The neuralgia returned, and much of his very best and hardest

work was done while he was writhing under it! One person still living, Edward Thornton, the Commissioner of the Rawul Pindi Division, saw much of John Lawrence during this eventful time and I am able, from a suggestive conversation with him, to recall a characteristic touch or two respecting it. And I would remark first by anticipation, that Thornton was not, in the ordinary sense of the word, brought up in 'the school' of John Lawrence. He never 'sat at his feet.' He was his equal in age; and at Haileybury; and in his earlier life in India, was his equal also in promise and in performance. What he says therefore is spoken, not with the enthusiastic and, perhaps, over-strained zeal of a disciple, but with the cool and deliberate appreciation of a contemporary who had been distanced by him.

John Lawrence's was not (he said to me in conversation) a very *originating* mind. In the Mutiny it was not his place, except on rare occasions, to originate. It was to receive suggestions from all quarters, to ponder over them, to assimilate them, and then to decide. His, in fact, was the *mind* throughout. He had to keep some people, like Edwardes and Nicholson, back—to put the drag on; others, like Anson, or Barnard, or Wilson, to make to go faster—to keep them up to the mark. It was he who avoided mistakes and prevented other people making them. He would listen to, and, apparently, be influenced by all arguments brought to bear on him, often by shrewder or more ready men than himself, but he always brought them back at last to the test of his own admirable common sense. I was not at all prejudiced in his favour to start with, or even at the time. But, looking back now on all that happened, I can see clearly that it is he and none of his subordinates who can be said to have saved the Punjab.

There were all the ways of a brave man about him. He would sit outside of his house with James and me, discussing matters with perfect calmness, and when quite worn out with fatigue he would throw his huge burly body on his bed just inside the door, and continue the conversation from thence. At first he had no guard at all, and it was only the strong representations of the Council of War, composed of Reed, Edwardes, and Chamberlain, which had assembled at his house, that could induce him to post so much as a single sentry near it. And even then I noticed that the guard was placed in such a position on one side of the house that there would have been no sort of difficulty in an assassin entering by the other and making short work of him as he lay asleep upon his bed.

John Lawrence, I would remark here, had shown himself, from his earliest days, to be quite above any feeling of physical fear. On one occasion, during the second Sikh war, when insurrection was rife all around, he was sleeping in a lonely station, after a hard day's work, the sleep of the just and the fearless. At dead of night there was an alarm, and one of his assistants came in, pale with terror, and exclaimed in an excited tone, 'Do you know that we are in a *cul-de-sac*?' 'Hang the *cul-de-sac*,' replied the awakened and intrepid sleeper, and turned over in his bed, and had the rest of his sleep out.

I came in one day (continued Edward Thornton) when things seemed to be about as hopeless as it was possible for them to do, and found him sitting alone with his papers before him, his coat and waistcoat thrown off, his neck and arms bare, his head thrown back, looking the picture, as I thought, of firmness and resolution. 'I think there *is* a chance, Thornton,' he said to me, and, as he said it, I thought he looked the man to make it so. If he died, I felt that he would die hard; and if our lives were saved, I felt then and I feel still, that it was to him we should owe and have owed them. I saw him during the first two months of the Mutiny on every day but one. On that day I went, as usual, to his house and found him gone. He had actually slipped off to see his wife at Murri! It was a flagrant escapade. He had no excuse. But he couldn't help it. He travelled up as fast as he could go, saw his wife for a brief interval, assured himself of her well-being, and was back again at his work within twenty-four hours.

A pleasant touch of human nature; some may think it of human weakness, this! But, in any case, it is one of which I should have been sorry not to have heard, and should be still more sorry, having heard, not to have recorded. It is not merely that it is an oasis in the desert, a refreshing interlude in the din of arms, the mustering and the moving of troops, and the multitudinous cares of government, but it, surely, makes us appreciate the man not less but more, when we find that there was one weak point in the spear-proof armour even of 'Iron John.'

All other claims, such as men cast in a less heroic mould might be disposed, at times, to make much of—the claims of family or friends, of comfort or recreation, of health or wealth—John Lawrence habitually and rigorously subordinated to his

public duty. They were as nothing in his eyes compared to it. There was one being and only one in the world whose claims upon him he would have allowed to weigh for a moment against those of the public service. To her wants, even when he was at his busiest, he always found time to attend. It was a happy anomaly, a heaven-sent weakness in that heart of oak and triple brass, for which few will think him to be less and many may think him to be even a greater man. It was the sentiment, the romance, the poetry of his hard, unresting, toilful life. It was more than this. It was the undercurrent of the whole of his life, even though it is possible to catch, only at fitful intervals, the echoes of its undersong. One of the great rivers of Spain plunges at a certain point in its course into the ground and flows beneath it for nearly thirty miles. But at uncertain intervals it throws up pools to the surface which the natives with unconscious poetry call '*los ojos del Guadiana*,' the eyes of the Guadiana. They are only pools, but they are sure and certain signs that the majestic river is flowing on in uninterrupted course below. So was it with John Lawrence, and on such bubblings up to the surface of the undercurrent of his life and his domestic happiness I may be allowed to dwell from time to time, and without tearing aside the veil or revealing aught that by being revealed loses half its beauty, to point out what they imply.

One such incident, unique in its neatness and its unconscious beauty, I have related by anticipation in the first volume of this biography.[1] Another more commonplace but still characteristic anecdote may find a place here. One day John Lawrence was discussing with one of the ablest of his subordinates the question whether a settlement officer could do the work of his settlement better if he were married or unmarried. John Lawrence thought that the unmarried man could do it best. His subordinate thought the married, and endeavoured to clench his view of the matter by saying, 'You know you have often told me that no one could do the heavy work of the settlement better than I have done.' 'Ah,' replied his chief, 'but then you are such a bad husband!' He meant that his lieutenant was so absorbed in his work that he

[1] Vol. i. p. 143.

could not give the time and attention to his wife which every husband ought to give her. Here was John Lawrence's theory and practice combined. The 'flagrant escapade' to Murri which I have just described is another 'eye of the Guadiana,' and not the least characteristic of the three. The man who, in later years, looking back on his past life could say with truth that he had married his wife because 'he could not be happy for five minutes without her,' might well be excused if, during the long agony of the Mutiny, he snatched one breathing space of a few hours which would give him fresh strength for the present and fresh hope for the future. He gave in but once to the yearnings of his heart because, as Chief Commissioner of the Punjab, he was primarily responsible for its safety, and because he was working to that end as few men have ever worked. He did give in that once, because, with all his external roughness and all his absolute devotion to his public duties, he was a true and tender-hearted man.

But it is time that I should justify what I have said as to the multiplicity of Sir John Lawrence's labours, his energy, his enthusiasm, his prudence, by such evidence as a few meagre extracts from his letters written during the early weeks of the Mutiny can give. They must be taken as samples, and they are samples of the whole. And first let us notice his caution.

To Montgomery, who was practically his '*locum tenens*' at Lahore, he writes, May 15 :—

Farrington should not authorise the Raja of Kupurthulla to raise men. I telegraphed this to him some days ago, but he may not have received the message. I think there may be as much danger from his levies as from others.

I have sent a message to Macpherson to arrange with you to relieve the police horse and police battalion men as much as possible, substituting *Burkandaze* in their room, raising men for the purpose. But arrange so as to mix old and new men as far as possible, and keep at the jails a small body of military police as a rallying point. The object, of course, is to have the mounted and battalion policemen ready for rows or emergency of any kind. Entertain as many men as are *really necessary*, but no more. We must husband our resources. Money may become scarce.

He writes to Montgomery again on May 18, suggesting

another caution which was, perhaps, still more essential in this early stage of the Mutiny.

I was very ill nearly all day yesterday, but got off various messages. I do not like to raise *large* bodies of the *old* Sikhs. I recollect their strong nationality, how completely they were demoralised for some twelve years before annexation, and how much they have to gain by our ruin. I will not therefore consent to raise levies of the old Sikhs. There is a strong feeling of sympathy between Sikhs and Hindus, and though I am willing to raise Sikhs gradually and carefully, I wish to see them mixed with Mohammedans and hillmen. I would not, in any case, raise more men than are absolutely necessary; for if a blow is not soon struck, we may have all the natives against us, and nothing but our Europeans to rely on. We are raising a thousand Mooltan horse in the Derajat, besides levies in Huzara and Dera Ghazi Khan, and four companies for each of the eighteen regiments of Punjab infantry and police battalions. All these will give full 10,000 men. Cortlandt is raising also one thousand men for service at Ferozepore. Long before all these are ready, if absolutely necessary, we can raise more. But we should do our best to get either tried and loyal men, or, at any rate, young fellows not imbued with the ancient leaven.

I may add here that experience soon convinced John Lawrence that even the old Sikhs of the Malwa might be trusted, and, once convinced of this, he employed them with a right good will and with the best results.

Next let us notice his care for the well-being of all classes committed to his charge, as evidenced by the minute directions he gives concerning them.

To Monckton, Deputy Commissioner at Sealkote, May 19:

The larger portion of the troops at Sealkote have been ordered to Wuzeerabad to join the Movable Column. All the European families are to go into Lahore, or so far on the way until they meet a similar party from Lahore. If you want carriage, get aid from Gujranwalla and Lahore. The Deputy Commissioner of Lahore will be told to send you as many good carts and one-horsed '*ekkas*' as he can collect. The more ladies that can go into Lahore the better. There they will be safe and free from alarm.

To Ousely, Deputy Commissioner at Shahpore, May 20:

We hear that Coke was not to leave Bunnoo before the 19th,

yesterday; so you will have ample time to catch him at Esau Khail. Collect as many camels as may appear necessary, not less than 400 for each regiment (Coke's and Wilde's) and either have them ready at Shahpore or send them to meet the corps. Perhaps the best plan will be to send one hundred or so to meet each regiment, and keep the rest ready at Shahpore. These camels are for the men to ride upon, and so enable the regiments to push on by double marches. Pray look to this, and do not fail to have the camels. We cannot foresee how much may depend on these arrangements.

To Montgomery, May 21 :—

All well here, but I doubt if the Commander-in-Chief will do any good. All those about him are wretched pottering fellows, except Norman. It would not do to offer him Edwardes, and, to tell the truth, he is wanted where he is. If anything happened to Nicholson at Peshawur the Brigadier there would be without a guide. I have, however, offered the Commander-in-Chief any officer he may like, and of course, if he selects Edwardes, he shall go. Collect lots of camels at Lahore; Sirdar Khan of Mojang and others can procure them. We are sending on the Guides, 4th Sikhs, Coke's and Wilde's regiments, all on camels, two men on each, so as to bring them up to the scratch as fresh as possible. The Commander-in-Chief also, perhaps, may require some carriage. Whatever is entertained have regularly paid. Guides will be at Jhelum to-morrow. Lieutenant C. Nicholson, with a hundred and ninety sabres of the 2nd Punjab Cavalry, behind them one day. Rothney's corps comes in on the 22nd. Coke's and Wilde's move on Shahpore straight to Lahore. My face is terribly bad, but I work as well as I can.

And then follows the gush of praise to Montgomery and his coadjutors at Lahore which I have already quoted.

To Lord Elphinstone, Governor of Bombay, May 21 :—

We are all well in this quarter, but nothing has, as yet, been done to check the insurrection. The Commander-in-Chief has not yet moved from Umballa on Meerut or Delhi, and the troops at the former place seem paralysed. We are pouring down Irregulars from the frontier towards Lahore, to push on and assist the Commander-in-Chief in his forward movement to relieve Meerut, recover Delhi, or succour Agra and the North-West. If the Irregular troops remain staunch all will go well. The danger is that if we delay they may fall away, and the European troops, worn down by the

climate, be destroyed gradually. We shall hold Peshawur as long as possible, and then concentrate on Lahore. We are still retaining our hold throughout the country, and the people are loyal and obedient. Please, as a precautionary measure, have money ready at Kurrachi for us. Steamers on the Indus would prove very useful, and enable us to hold Mooltan.

To Major Marsden, Deputy Commissioner at Ferozepore, where John Lawrence, rightly or wrongly, thought that there had been some bungling by the military authorities, and where there, certainly, was much bungling a little later on, he wrote as follows :—

May 22.

I was glad to hear of your exertions at Ferozepore. Had the magazine been taken it would have proved a most disastrous blow to us. All I regret is that so few of the mutineers were killed, so little example made. To think that they attack our magazine, burn our church and bungalows, and then get clear off, seems to me very lamentable. I would have opened on them with grape, and done everything in my power to destroy as many as possible. It is absolutely necessary to make an example. I trust that nothing will tempt the Brigadier to trust a man of them.

To Major Hamilton, Commissioner at Mooltan, the one link of communication which remained open between the Punjab and the outer world, and a place where there were only sixty European artillerymen to keep in check 3,500 natives, many of whom were indubitably tainted, he writes as follows. It was obvious that force could do little, with such odds against us, but tact, and prudence, and precaution might do much.

May 22.

The civil and military authorities have done well at Mooltan. Pray do not relax in any of your precautions, and do not trust the Regular infantry. Make every effort to put the old fort into as defensible a state as possible. Throw up breastworks and cover so as to enable a few stout soldiers to resist many. Arrange for temporary cover there. At the first alarm get in all the ladies, women, and children. Any levies you may deem necessary, any promises you may make, any rewards you may grant, I will support. Any expenditure which Lieutenant Rose may make by your authority will be allowed. We have ordered the 1st Punjab Cavalry and 2nd Punjab Infantry over from Asni and Dera Ghazi Khan to Mooltan. If all

is quiet when they arrive we propose that the Punjab cavalry come on to Ferozepore to reinforce the Commander-in-Chief at Kurnal. A European corps of infantry has been ordered up from Kurrachi to Mooltan ; try and arrange for some kind of cover for them. We *must* hold Mooltan to the last. Five regiments of European infantry concentrating from Madras on Calcutta !

If the native infantry break out I hope you will do your best to destroy them, and, if they disperse, the country people should be urged to follow them and plunder them, and, if they resist, destroy them. Their arms should be brought in and the plunder go to the captors.

Such a letter from John Lawrence was like an electric shock. By extraordinary skill and energy on the part of the authorities the outbreak at Mooltan was warded off from day to day, till at last, when the rising at Jullundur made a similar rising at Mooltan to be a matter of certainty, John Lawrence, as we shall see hereafter, determined to run what he deemed to be the lesser risk. A positive order went forth that the disarmament should be attempted, and, with an extraordinary mixture of audacity and skill, it was not only attempted but accomplished, and that without shedding a drop of blood, by Major Crawford Chamberlain whom the Chief Commissioner had selected for the dangerous honour.

A short letter to Barnes indicates the policy towards the protected Sikh chieftains, great and small, of the Cis-Sutlej States which had already produced such good results.

May 23.

Borrow as much money as you require from Nabha and Puttiala. Urge on the Commander-in-Chief to have a military commission to try and hang the men of the 45th N.I., who have been boned. It will have a good effect. Men caught red-handed in the perpetration of murder and attempt at murder should be shot. We are all well in spite of the chiefs being against us at Peshawur. We are raising men and holding the country, coercing and overawing the Regular troops. Any reasonable promises you may make to chiefs and influential men I will support.

The following to Montgomery indicates Sir John Lawrence's opinion of the redoubtable Hodson, who was just then coming to the front again, and shows that he could be stern and thoroughgoing enough with the mutineers when severity was

needed. It is all the more desirable to lay stress on this now, as I hope to show hereafter that, unlike many of his countrymen, he was prepared to temper justice with mercy the moment that it was possible to do so. He was never reckless of human life; he struck that he might save and only that he might save; and he protested with all the energy of his nature against promiscuous bloodshed, and against that indiscriminate vengeance which was the order of the day at Delhi for so many months after it had fallen into our hands, and when all resistance was at an end.

May 23.

My dear Robert,—Pray resist all reaction, all returns of tenderness and sympathy for the mutineers. It is true that they have failed in their attempts to ruin us, but this is no cause for our making fools of ourselves, and beginning to think that they have been sinned against. I feel no confidence whatever in the native Regulars, but I see no objection to our taking a few of those who have not committed themselves with the Movable Force—guns and Europeans being told off to destroy them on the first sign of disobedience. I hope and believe that good will arise out of all the evil which has occurred. But if our officers already begin to sympathise with these scoundrels I shall despair of any reform.

Hodson is an officer of tried courage and great capacity, but a *mauvais sujet* after all. I am glad we are not to have him. Help him by all means, but too many men raised by an influential man, if for permanent service, are not good. If, only for the nonce, it does no harm. My reason for not advocating taking men for permanent service from chiefs is this; they will certainly stick in a good many rips. If these are allowed to remain, the *ressalah* (troop of horse) is inefficient; if turned out, the chief is aggrieved. I am glad you gave the telegraph-men a month's pay; they have deserved it well.

The letters I have just quoted will give some idea of the multiplicity of details and of the minute local and personal peculiarities which John Lawrence had to keep in mind throughout. I have selected them for this purpose, rather than because of their intrinsic interest or importance, and it will be observed that I have taken them all from the correspondence of the first fortnight of the Mutiny.

The following extract from a letter which was written to Lord Canning at the close of that first fortnight, and contained

a masterly review of the progress of the Mutiny and of his measures for its suppression, will show that he never allowed himself to be lost in the details of his work, but that he was able, thus early, to look forward to the measures which would render a pacification not only possible but durable.

May 23.

My Lord,—Your Lordship will, no doubt, have received all the news from this quarter. I asked Mr. Barnes, the Commissioner of the Cis-Sutlej Division, to send on all the information which might appear desirable. I believe, with God's help, we shall do well, hold our own, and be able to reinforce the Commander-in-Chief. The great point is that he should advance on Meerut, extricate the force there, and enable them to act.[1] He will then be in a position either to move on Delhi or down the Doab towards Agra, as circumstances may dictate. . . .

We must continue anxious as long as Delhi holds out and the insurrection about Meerut is not put down. So long as the Irregulars remain loyal, all must go well; but if they turn against us we shall have a difficult game, and shall then have to abandon the frontier and concentrate our European force. But even then, I think, we shall be able to hold our own until the cold weather. Some natives will always remain true to a compact body of Europeans who show a firm front. The Irregulars are behaving admirably at present; the only danger which I foresee is that which may arise from their seeing us stand on the defensive. The country also is with us, and the people behaving loyally.

Edwardes and Nicholson are raising new levies, and, on the whole, I think we shall be able to hold Peshawur, even if all the native infantry revolt. At this place (Rawul Pindi) we have 200 European infantry, mostly weak men, but able to fight, and a troop of capital European artillery. We have also one regiment of native infantry who have hitherto behaved well, and whom we can overpower if necessary. Lahore, Ferozepore, and Jullundur are all safe at present, and I have no anxiety for any of them except Jullundur, where the native troops still retain their arms, and may be reinforced from Hoshiarpore and Phillour. The magazines at Phillour and Ferozepore, as well as the forts of Lahore and Govindghur are garrisoned by Europeans, and we are putting provisions in them.

Your Lordship need not fear for us. We have some excellent officers in the Punjab, and all, both civil and military, are united

[1] The force at Meerut only needed 'extrication' from its own utter helplessness and incapacity. It never was in the least danger after May 10.

and resolved to maintain our own honour and the security of our power if it can be done. No officers could have managed better.

I earnestly hope that your Lordship will not authorise the raising of any new *Regular* native infantry of any kind. If ever we are to have a thorough and radical reform of the native army, it will be now. No half-measures will do. Nothing short of the late transactions would convince us of the folly and weakness of the old system. Pray, my Lord, don't authorise any proposition for converting Irregular regiments into Regulars. In a few years they will be little better than the old ones. The men will not like, and the native officers will dislike it, for they will become nonentities. Those Regular native infantry corps which remain faithful can be maintained. All others should be disbanded. By keeping up more Irregulars we shall obtain the means of meeting the extra cost of additional European regiments.

I would further suggest that all native regiments who have not actually fought against us, but have shown by their conduct what was in their hearts, be hereafter disbanded. We might have three classes; the really faithful, to be maintained, and even, in especial cases, to be rewarded; the discontented and mutinous who have held cantonments in which fires have constantly occurred, to be disbanded; and thirdly, the insurgent troops who have fought against us, who have broken out into open mutiny, and murdered our officers. These I would hunt down as Dacoits and Thugs have been hunted down, and when caught they should be hanged, transported for life, or imprisoned for terms of years. Where native regiments, or any part of a regiment do good service, I should issue complimentary orders to them. I have suggested to the Commander-in-Chief to do so towards the 10th Cavalry at Ferozepore, and a remnant of the 3rd at Meerut.

Nor was John Lawrence content to communicate with those only who, as his superiors or as his subordinates, had a right to look for reports or for instructions from him. The intimate knowledge of the town of Delhi, of the district, and of the inhabitants, which he had acquired during his first ten years' residence in India, he was anxious to impart to all to whom it could be of use. He had intended to issue an appeal, in his own name, to the chiefs of the Delhi district, calling on them to prove their loyalty on the approach of our army, by rallying to its support, by keeping the peace in their respective neighbourhoods, and by giving supplies and information. But

finding that Hervey Greathed had been deputed by Colvin, the Lieutenant-Governor of the North-West, in whose charge Delhi was still, by courtesy, supposed to be, to accompany the Meerut force, he determined to act through him, and opened a correspondence with him which was kept up throughout the siege, and with the best results. In his first letter he enumerated the chiefs to whom he had proposed to appeal; advised that separate letters should be written to certain of the officers of the palace who, from his personal knowledge, he thought might be true to us at heart; described the state of the ditch, the walls, the gates of the city, as he remembered them; discussed the points where an attack might best be made; and named the villages on the road between Kurnal and Delhi where the most abundant supplies or the boldest and most knowing spies could be obtained—men who would find little difficulty in procuring information from the interior of the city. To Colvin also he wrote direct, suggesting various precautions which had been found useful in the Punjab. In particular he advised that each District officer in the North-West should be empowered to raise strong bodies of police, both horse and foot, which might help to keep the peace in their respective districts till the capture of Delhi should set the troops at liberty.

With Bartle Frere, the Chief Commissioner of Scinde, and the representative, therefore, of a system which was, in many respects, opposed to that of the Punjab, Sir John Lawrence was in constant communication throughout. Frere landed at Kurrachi, on his return from furlough, just in time to hear of the outbreak of the Mutiny, and he acted with a promptitude and a fearlessness of responsibility surpassed by no one in the adjoining province. John Lawrence had written to him on the day after the news reached Rawul Pindi. But Frere without waiting to be asked, or even to get leave from Lord Elphinstone at Bombay, at once, and upon his own responsibility, sent off such reinforcements as he could spare, or could hardly spare, to what he conceived to be the chief point of danger. With only two weak European regiments and one troop of Horse Artillery to hold in check his province of two million inhabitants and four native regiments, he sent off at once two hundred

Fusiliers to Mooltan. He saw that it was on the Punjab and not on Scinde that the safety of India would, in the long run, depend, and just as John Lawrence was resolved to denude the Punjab of troops in order to push the siege of Delhi, so, on a smaller scale, but to the utmost limit of his means, was Frere resolved to strip Scinde in order to reinforce the Punjab. 'When the head and heart are threatened,' he wrote to Lord Elphinstone, in words that have a ring about them which would have gone straight to John Lawrence's heart, 'the extremities must take care of themselves.' And he was as good as his word. The 1st Bombay Fusiliers, the 1st Beluch Battalion, the 2nd Beluch Battalion, were despatched, in rapid succession, to the Punjab, and that such all-important points as Mooltan and Ferozepore were firmly held, in spite of all the danger which threatened them, was due, in part, to his unstinted aid. John Lawrence writes to him thus as early as May 28 :—

Many thanks for your notes and all your care for us. The two hundred Europeans for Mooltan will be a grand aid. With the European Artillery, one hundred strong, they will make all safe. The sooner they arrive the better ; as it will enable us to employ a corps of Punjab infantry who have come here from Dera Ghazi Khan.

And, looking back calmly at all that had happened when the crisis was over, he wrote thus in his 'Mutiny Report' :—

From first to last, from the first commencemnt of the Mutiny to the final triumph, Mr. H. B. E. Frere has rendered assistance to the Punjab Administration just as if he had been one of its own Commissioners. . . . The Chief Commissioner believes that probably there is no civil officer in India who, for eminent exertions, deserves better of his Government than Mr. H. B. E. Frere.

On many questions the two men differed widely from each other even then, and they came to differ more widely still as time went on. The one, looking at the extreme poverty of the people of India, was, as he said himself, for economy even to frugality, in dealing with the public money. The other, looking mainly to the vast field open to English enterprise in India, was lavish of it even to excess. The one was against all unnecessary extension of the empire. The other was for pushing it forward alike by our arts and by our arms.

The policy of the one tended to make the Afghans our friends, and helped to wipe out the memory of one of the greatest crimes and the greatest blunders we have ever committed in India. The policy of the other led, in my judgment, directly up to a renewal of that blunder and that crime, and involved us in a second and a third Afghan war. But there is no more reason to call in question the vigour, the ability, the unselfishness, the sincerity of purpose of the one than of the other. It is pleasant, at all events, to recollect that during one period, and that the most critical of their lives, the two men worked together with one heart and one soul for the great object, which was never long absent from the mind of either, the safety of the Empire and the welfare of all its inhabitants.

It has been remarked by the biographer of Sir Henry Lawrence that there is room in the Indian pantheon even for such fiercely conflicting spirits as Sir James Outram and Sir Charles Napier. It may surely be said, with at least equal truth, even while party spirit is still running high, and while the tremendous issues which may follow from the policy of each are still half-hidden in the womb of the future, that the Indian pantheon has room enough for the brilliant and restless and resolute representative of the 'forward,' as well as for the consistent and statesmanlike and heroic champion of the 'backward' policy—for Sir Bartle Frere as well as for Lord Lawrence.

While John Lawrence had thus been keeping his finger on the pulse of his province, a great crisis had come and gone at Peshawur. We last saw him closeted with Herbert Edwardes and with others of the wiser heads in his province at Rawul Pindi, and, on the 21st of May, Edwardes returned to Peshawur in full possession of his chief's views, and prepared, on the first alarm, to advise the disarmament of the Regulars there. It was the very nick of time. Already Nicholson, who was not a man to keep more troops than were absolutely necessary about him, finding that Peshawur was too weak for the dangers it had to face, had asked by telegraph that a wing of the 27th Regiment, which was on its way from the frontier to the interior, migh. be recalled to defend the Attock fort and ferry. Already letters had been detected passing from one of the native regiments at Peshawur to the detachments in the

frontier forts, naming the day on which they were all to flock into Peshawur, 'eating there and drinking here,' for such was the vigorous expression which indicated the speed that was required. Already vast piles of intercepted correspondence were in the hands of the authorities, which seemed to show that Peshawur was only one link in the chain of preconcerted mutiny connecting the fanatics of Sitana beyond our frontier with those of Patna or Benares. And now, at midnight, a message reached Edwardes that mutinous intentions were already passing into mutinous acts at Attock, at Noushera, and at Murdán.

There was no time to be lost. Not a man could be spared from Peshawur to coerce these mutineers, while much larger numbers, with mutiny in their hearts and arms in their hands were left behind in the cantonments there. On the other hand, in a few hours, the news which was, at present, the monopoly of the authorities would filter through to the city and the native troops, and the smouldering embers would be kindled into a flame which it might be beyond the power of the Empire to extinguish. 'Peshawur once gone,' said a trusty Sikh chief to the magistrate of Umritsur, 'the whole Punjab would roll up like this,' and as he spoke he began slowly with his finger and thumb to roll up his robe from the corner of the hem towards its centre.[1] 'You know on what a nest of devils we stand,' writes Edwardes to the Chief Commissioner. 'Once let us take our foot up, and we shall be stung to death.' And Edwardes and his companions had no intention of taking their foot up, but rather of putting it down and keeping it there.

He and Nicholson were sleeping, as they had arranged, under the same roof and in their clothes, so that they might be ready for any emergency. It was just midnight when the news of the outbreak at Noushera arrived, and it was not many minutes after midnight when they both found themselves standing by the bedside of Brigadier Cotton. Their business was soon told, and a Council of War summoned. The 'politicals' were, as usual, for instant action; the military officers, as usual, with a chivalrous blindness which it is impossible not to make allowance for, and even, in a measure, to admire, still had 'implicit confidence' in their men.

[1] Cave Brown's *Punjab and Delhi*, vol. i. p. 153.

High words passed. Cotton listened to both sides, and decided for disarmament. Four regiments, three of infantry and one of cavalry, were to be disarmed in the early morning; while the 21st Infantry, of whom better things were hoped, was for the present to be spared and trusted. It was a critical moment; almost as critical as that a fortnight earlier at Lahore; and, as at Lahore, the civil officers rode down to have a finger in the business which was to make or mar them. The four regiments might resist, as indeed some of their officers who most believed in their fidelity, with strange inconsistency, predicted that they would; they might be joined by their brethren who were to be spared for the present, but must feel that their own turn would come next; the 'legion of devils' in the city and the surrounding country would then be up, and then——

There were two Queen's regiments, two batteries of Artillery, and, strangest of all, a body of Afridi volunteers, our inveterate foes, just picked up from the Kohat Pass, to do the work of disarmament, and they did it. The four suspected regiments, isolated from each other, and given no time to think or to speak, did as they were ordered; and as the heaps of piled arms grew in size, 'here and there,' says Herbert Edwardes, 'the spurs and swords of English officers fell sympathisingly on the pile.'

The effect of the disarmament, 'a master stroke,' as John Lawrence called it, was instantaneous on the surrounding district, and was soon felt along the frontier generally. Of the 2,000 Mooltani horse which had been called for during some days previously, only 100 had as yet responded to our call. Why should the rough borderers join what was, probably, a losing and was, certainly, a doubtful cause? But now the case was altered. 'As we rode back from the cantonments,' says Edwardes again, 'friends were as thick as summer flies, and levies began from that moment to come in;' and he goes on to describe, in a graphic passage which is unfortunately too long to quote here, the process of enlistment which henceforward went on from day to day; the eager emulation, now that there was money to be freely won and blood to be freely spilt, of every idle vagrant, of every professional robber, of

every truculent student at the mosques, to join our first levies; while every unconquerably vicious brute which its owner could not ride, and every miserable screw which could hardly drag itself along to the scene of action, or even to the knacker's yard, was importunately pressed upon us, and formed the nucleus of a new Irregular—a very irregular—cavalry. And before long, even from beyond our border, villanous Afridis, Mohmunds, and Eusofzies, men who had spent their lives in robbing and killing our subjects, or belonged to tribes who were, even now, under our ban, came flocking in, with penitence in their faces and doubly-dyed rascality in their hearts, delighted to pay off old scores upon the Sepoys, whom they derisively styled the *Kala Kaum* (those niggers), to guard us against those who should have been the first to guard us, and to hunt them down like vermin when they had the chance.

The Peshawur garrison was, now at length, able to spare some men to act against the mutineers who had gathered at Murdan. On the evening of the day following the disarmament, a force of 300 European Infantry, 250 Irregular Cavalry, and 8 guns, under the command of Colonel Chute and accompanied by Nicholson as 'political officer,' set out from Peshawur, and, early on the following morning, they arrived at their destination. Seeing their approach, the 55th—with the exception of some 120 men, chiefly Punjabis, who remained with their officers—fled towards the Swat frontier. The European Infantry, tired with their march, were unable to overtake them; and the Irregular Cavalry showed by their lagging pursuit that they were not prepared to act against their brethren. It was a danger which had been long feared, but never more than half acknowledged. Now, then, was the chance for Nicholson. Putting himself at the head of a mere handful of mounted Sowars, as though he were determined to justify his chief's expression in its most literal sense, that he was 'worth the wing of a regiment,' he flung himself with 'terrible courage' on the flying foe, and, seeming to multiply himself many times over as he rode hither and thither, laid low, with his own stalwart right arm, dozens of men who, as he admitted afterwards in genuine admiration, fought desperately. Throughout that livelong day, beneath the burning heat of the

sun, the pursuit continued, till one hundred and fifty Sepoys had fallen, no small proportion of them beneath Nicholson's own hand. As many more were taken prisoners, and the rest, some five hundred in number, many of them wounded, managed to escape over the friendly Swat border. It was not until seven o'clock in the evening that this new Homeric chieftain rode back to the point from which the pursuit had begun, after having been some twenty hours in the saddle, and having ridden some seventy miles without a change of horse! It was the first of those 'Nicholsonian' deeds of daring which were to end only with his life at the capture of Delhi.

A more terrible fate awaited the five hundred Sepoys who had escaped Nicholson's avenging arm. Driven out of Swat, after a miserable sojourn of a month, by its fanatical inhabitants, they managed to cross the Indus on inflated skins and rafts, and, in sheer despair, determined to attempt to make their way through the savage defiles and the tremendous precipices of Kohistan to Kashmere. But John Becher, the Deputy Commissioner of Huzara, was on the look-out for their approach. He raised the wild mountain clans against them. With an ever-watchful enemy blocking up in front of them the goats' paths by which they moved, or pressing hard upon them in the rear, they fought or struggled on for a weary fortnight, their difficulties and dangers increasing at every step, till at last, their money spent, their strength exhausted, their weapons, many of them, thrown away in the struggle for bare life upon the slippery ledges, footsore, and haggard, and hungry, the miserable remnant, 124 in all, surrendered at discretion, and were hanged or blown away from guns in different parts of the Huzara District. Their sufferings might have touched a heart of stone, and those who knew Becher well knew that, brave as he was, his heart was of the tenderest. But he felt, and probably with good reason, that at this early and most critical stage of the Mutiny, stern severity would prove the truest mercy in the end. 'We are doing well,' writes John Lawrence, 'in every district; Becher famously.'

But though four regiments had been disarmed and one all but annihilated, all danger was not yet over in the Peshawur

District. The detachments, indeed, of the mutinous 64th which had been relegated to the frontier forts were disarmed, without difficulty, by Nicholson and Chute during the few days which followed the flight of the 55th from Murdan. But the operation was not completed a day too soon. For Ajoon Khan, a noted freebooter, who was supported by the Akhund of Swat, had already come down to our frontier, and, by pre-arrangement with the Sepoys, was on the point of being admitted into the forts. Moreover, there was the much greater danger which the pursuit at Murdan had forced us to take into account, the general disaffection of the Irregular Cavalry, or, at all events, their determination not to act against their brethren. A rising on their part would, it was feared, be supported by the four regiments which had been nominally disarmed. I say *nominally* disarmed; for in a wild country like Peshawur, where every native bore arms, and almost every one was a cut-throat from his cradle onwards, weapons were always to be had for the asking, and rumour said that large quantities of them were already, or were still, secreted in the lines. Would it be better to run the tremendous risk which an attempt to disarm the three cavalry regiments would involve, or to attempt, by extra precautions, to tide over the interval; an interval, as it was then thought, not of months but of days, till the news of the fall of Delhi should make us masters of the position? Nicholson, finding that even the camp-followers of the European regiments were talking in the bazaars of a Holy War, advised delay; and where Nicholson advised delay, everyone else might be sure that there must be grave reason for his doing so. Urgent letters were written by Nicholson himself, by Edwardes and by Cotton, to John Lawrence, begging him to send them reinforcements, even if, in order to do so, he should find it necessary to recall troops which were already on their way to Delhi.

It was a sore trial to Sir John Lawrence. But he recognised the necessity and acted without hesitation. He ordered Wilde, who, with his splendid regiment, 700 strong, was already on his march, to turn back and hold Attock. He bade Henderson send up 250 Cavalry from Kohat to Peshawur, asked Becher to send thither every man whom he could spare

from Huzara, and he himself despatched 220 of the Police from Rawul Pindi. 'We have not,' he writes to Edwardes, 'kept a native soldier who is worth anything here. We are very anxious for your safety. I cannot fail to see how precarious your position may prove.' General Reed had just left Rawul Pindi to assume the 'provincial' command before Delhi, and Sir John Lawrence had authorised his taking with him the Movable Column as far as Kurnal. 'It is a force,' he gleefully remarks, 'which is alone sufficient to take Delhi and to keep it.' It was a part of this very force which he was now driven to recall for the defence of Peshawur, and—to make matters worse—he was informed by Reed, about the same time, that General Johnstone, who was then at Jullundur, would be appointed Brigadier-General and take the command of the Peshawur Division which he had just vacated.

This proposal meant, as John Lawrence knew too well, that military capacity and energy of a high kind would be superseded by incapacity and vacillation. Such qualities were dangerous enough anywhere, as the experience of a few days later was to prove at Jullundur. But at Peshawur they would be absolutely fatal. It was no time for mincing matters or for asking himself whether he had any right to interfere. He had remonstrated boldly even with Lord Dalhousie, in time of peace, on an appointment he had intended to make to the Commissionership of Peshawur and had won the day, and he was not likely, therefore, to be silent with Lord Canning now. He had taken on himself, as soon as he heard of Anson's death, to suggest to the Governor-General by telegraph that Patrick Grant, a man 'who knew and understood the Sepoys and had good common sense and knowledge of his profession,' should be summoned from Madras to take the Command-in-Chief; and now he telegraphed even more urgently, requesting that Cotton and not Johnstone should succeed to the post for which his previous services and his present position marked him out. 'I am afraid,' he wrote to Edwardes, 'that it is too heterodox an arrangement to prove acceptable.' But Lord Canning felt that it was heterodoxy and not orthodoxy which must save India, and he accepted the suggestion. 'I hope,' writes Sir John Lawrence to General Reed, 'that General

Johnstone will not be sent up here. No officer could have managed better than Brigadier S. Cotton, and if he is superseded I do not know what will happen. I beg that General Johnstone may be kept where he is, or, at all events, not sent up to Rawul Pindi to command this Division.'

A letter to Lord Canning, dated May 29, will perhaps give the best general view of the immediate crisis at Peshawur, and of the steps which Sir John Lawrence had already taken, or proposed to take, to meet it:—

My Lord,—We are all right in the Punjab. Our only danger lies at Peshawur, and this is in consequence of the sympathy shown by the Irregular Cavalry towards those concerned in the present disaffection. I have, for some time, heard that this force had expressed an intention not to act against the Regulars; and this was openly shown in the affair at Murdan on the 26th. At present there is danger of an invasion from Swat, which would be joined by the disaffected regiments in the valley. I have done all I can to reinforce the Europeans. We started off from this place every man we could muster of the Police Battalion, even to the guard of the jail. We have left Huzara to care for itself, and ordered up some cavalry from Kohat. These will be in the valley in three days, and Wilde's regiment of 800 riflemen will probably be there also in ten. We have recalled the 24th Queen's from the Movable Column. In the meantime, the European Infantry and guns, fighting in the open, will beat down all opposition. The danger arises mainly from the season of the year and the exposure which the men must undergo. They have, however, a few staunch companies of the Punjab force. Two under Major Vaughan were present in the skirmish on the 26th, and gave a party with the Europeans to shoot the seven men condemned to death on the 27th.

I hope your Lordship will accede to my proposal to give their discharge to such men of the Regular Native Army as may desire it. At present, particularly on the frontier, they are a source of difficulty and danger to us. We have to guard against them and hold the country. With arms in their hands and in organised bodies they are dangerous. Without arms, and turned adrift, they can do nothing. Some few may go to swell the insurgent body. But this is of no consequence. The greater portion will make for their homes. At present, officers cannot discern the good from the bad, the discontented from the well-disposed. The licence to depart would act as a safety-valve under such circumstances. The

measure would have the advantage of economy, which, at this time, is also a consideration. There can be no fear that we shall not be able to raise Native troops enough. We might raise 80,000 in the Punjab alone in the next three months. The Punjabis say that God has sent this disturbance to give them a fair share of the Company's employment. I am, however, by no means an advocate for raising *too many* of this class.

He enclosed this letter in one to Barnes, because he hoped that the Cis-Sutlej Commissioner might find a quicker means of transmitting it than the voyage round India. 'Send on this letter,' he said, 'to the Governor-General by a safe route. I hope you will act with vigour and firmness against all evil-doers. Now is the time to beat down disorder with an iron hand.'

It may have been observed that I have repeatedly quoted letters in which Sir John Lawrence advocates strong measures in dealing with the mutineers. And I have done so purposely, in order that I may now lay all the more stress on what implies the possession of much rarer and more admirable qualities, and marks him out as pre-eminently the man to have held the reins of power at such a crisis—I mean his rigid sense of justice, and his determination, while he was for severity so long as severity was necessary or was likely to prove mercy in the end, not to allow a drop of blood to be shed in the mere luxury or wantonness of revenge. Unlike some of his subordinates, and unlike, it may be added without injustice, too many of our countrymen, at that terrible time both in India and at home, he kept his head throughout. He never joined in the cry for indiscriminate vengeance, a cry which he thought to be as impolitic as it was un-Christian and unjust, and which was sometimes heard most loudly in quarters where it was least to be expected or excused. He knew, as his letters show, how much there was to be said in extenuation of the Sepoys' guilt; how much the blindness of the authorities had contributed towards it; how much was due to their state of blind panic, to their credulity, to their love for their religion. He knew how many, with intentions the most loyal, were hurried away by the stream, and, like many other good men and true, who happily for our fair

fame chanced, at that time, to be filling the most responsible situations in the country, he thought it alike unstatesmanlike and unjust,—when once the necessary example had been made,—not to draw distinctions of guilt, not to leave a place for repentance, not to put a strict restraint on the wild yearning for revenge. In this respect he deserves to be placed side by side with the noble-minded Governor-General, whose nick-name of 'Clemency' first given to him in England as a term of the bitterest reproach, will through all history, like that of the 'Cunctator' at Rome, form his highest title to the admiration and gratitude of Englishmen.

From the very beginning of his high official career John Lawrence had set his face against the lax notions of justice and of legal evidence, which, owing chiefly to their want of civil and legal training, prevailed among some of the ablest of his soldier-subordinates. Again and again the civil authorities at Lahore had been driven to overrule wholesale the capital sentences passed by honest but hastily judging District officers on the frontier. On one occasion a dozen such sentences for murder were sent up from Peshawur to be ratified by the central authorities at Lahore; each charge being substantiated only by the unsupported assertion of one single native, who, as he deposed, with charming simplicity, had had the good luck to come in at the exact moment and to see the deed done! 'Why, I would not hang a *chiriya* (a bird),' remarked John Lawrence, 'on such evidence,' and he straightway quashed the whole. The same rigid sense of justice governed him throughout the Mutiny, and stood him in good stead now when it was the fate, not of a bird, but of 120 mutineers of the 55th Regiment, whose fate was trembling in the balance. There was no doubt that every one of them had been guilty of mutiny and desertion, that they had been taken with arms in their hands, that in the eye of military law they deserved to die, and that, in the interests of mercy as well as of justice, a stern example must be made.

The authorities at Peshawur had already made up their minds.

The trial of the 55th prisoners (writes Edwardes, on June 1, to John Lawrence) will begin on Thursday; and, as they may be

tried in a lump for the charge of 'Mutiny,' they will be disposed of at once; and we propose to make an awful and lasting example by blowing them away from guns before the whole garrison. Five can be placed before each gun, and two troops of artillery will throw sixty of them into the air at once. A second round will finish the matter; and, awful as such a scene will be, I must say my judgment approves it. The Native army requires to be appalled. They have not shrunk from appalling us.

The next post took back the Chief Commissioner's reply, though his opinion had not been asked and he had no strict right to interfere.

In respect to the mutineers of the 55th, they were taken fighting against us, and, so far, deserve little mercy. But, on full reflection, I would not put them all to death. I do not think that we shall be justified in the eyes of the Almighty in doing so. One hundred and twenty men are a large number to put to death. Our object is to make an example to terrify others. I think this object would be effectually gained by destroying from one-fourth to one-third of their number. I would select all those against whom anything bad could be shown—such as general bad character, turbulence, prominence in the disaffection or in the fight, disrespectful demeanour to their officers during the few days before the 26th and the like. If these would not make up the required number, I would then add to them the oldest soldiers. All these should be shot or blown away, as may be deemed expedient. The rest I would divide into batches, some to be imprisoned ten years, others seven, others five, others three. I think that a sufficient example will thus be made, and that the distinctions that will have been made will do good and not harm. The Sepoys will see that we punish to deter, and not for revenge; and public sympathy will not be on the side of the sufferers. Otherwise, men will fight desperately to the last, as feeling certain they must die.

It is quite true that it is very inconvenient and even dangerous having so many rascals in our gaol, but this we cannot help. We must suffer the inconvenience. . . . What I have written regarding the mutineers is simply my own opinion. Their fate will rest with the officers comprising the court-martial.

The next day he recurs to the subject in still stronger terms:—

I think the arrangement to shoot every tenth man of the deserters of the 51st is good and reasonable. The example will prove

efficacious, and there is nothing revengeful in the measure. But the intention of blowing away all the 55th seems to me horrible; and I entreat you to use your influence and get Cotton to modify the decision. If one-third or one-fourth were blown away it would answer every purpose, excite equal terror, and not the same horror.

On the same day he wrote to Cotton direct with equal urgency:—

I trust that you will not destroy all the men of the 55th who have been seized. . . . Such a wholesale slaughter will, I think, be cruel and have a bad effect. It will be tantamount to giving no quarter, and therefore men in similar circumstances will have no inducement to yield, but rather to fight to the last. We should also recollect that these Sepoys might have committed many atrocities, whereas they perpetrated none. They did not destroy public property, and they saved the lives of their officers when in their power. These circumstances entitle them to consideration, which I beg they will receive at your hands. I have felt vexed at seeing the way in which mutineers and murderers have escaped punishment in other places. I am a staunch advocate for punishment, but in proportion to the offence.

It is hardly necessary to add that remonstrances so vigorous, so statesmanlike, and so Christian met with the response that they deserved. Forty men only instead of a hundred and twenty, and those the most guilty of the whole, were blown into fragments in the presence of the assembled garrison of Peshawur and of vast numbers of spectators from the surrounding country. It was a ghastly spectacle enough; and that it was not more ghastly still, that it did not excite loathing and repulsion as well as awe, that it was looked upon as a measure of stern retribution rather than of indiscriminate revenge, was due to the man who never lost his head; who 'never acted on mere impulse,' and, happily for the interests of mercy, as well as of justice, held the chief place in the Punjab.

The energy and promptitude which had been so abundantly displayed at Lahore and at Peshawur were brought into still stronger relief by the miserable contrast presented to them at Jullundur. At Ferozepore there had been some bungling. But at Jullundur it is not too much to say that there was a

display of incapacity and neglect on the part of the chief military authorities, to which the history of the Mutiny, happily, affords few parallels. At that important cantonment there were three native regiments, two of Infantry and one of Cavalry, all of them well known to be tainted. On the other hand, there was the 8th Queen's Regiment, supported by an adequate Artillery, and by the ever active aid of the Raja of Kupurthulla, another of those protected Sikh chieftains who seemed determined in this, the hour of our need, to pay back all that they owed us. Lake, the Commissioner of the Division, and Johnstone, who was in command of the station, had happened to be absent from Jullundur at the time of the Meerut outbreak. But their places had been ably filled by Colonel Hartley, of the 8th Queen's, and by Captain Farrington, the Deputy Commissioner. Every precaution for the protection of the cantonments in the station had been promptly taken. A detachment had been sent off to secure the fort and arsenal of Phillour, some twenty miles distant, and the civil treasure had been transferred, by express order of Sir John Lawrence, from the care of the Sepoys to that of the European soldiers. 'Its loss,' he said, 'would strengthen the enemy, and be really discreditable to us.'

Almost the first step of Brigadier Johnstone, when he came down from Simla, was to order the treasure to be restored to the care of the Sepoys, and when peremptory orders were flashed down from Sir John Lawrence and General Reed to undo what had been done, it was already too late. For even the civilians who had been most scandalised by the fatuity of the General, feared now that to reverse the step would precipitate the outbreak. Once and again in May, John Lawrence had advised disarmament, and on June 5 he telegraphed to Lake to urge the Brigadier to carry it out at once. The words of the telegram I have been unable to discover, but his letter to Lake, written on the same day, will indicate its character:—

If we have any accident at Delhi, you may depend on it that we shall have an outbreak among the Sepoys in the Jullundur Doab. The question, then, is, Shall we wait for them to begin or shall we take the initiative? It is our bounden duty to take the latter

course, and for you and me to urge it on Brigadier Johnstone. . . . Since I began this letter, yours of the 31st has come in and confirms all I have written. It is perfectly clear that the 36th Native Infantry are ready to break out at a moment's warning. You will receive my telegraphic message this day. I strongly urge on Brigadier Johnstone the expediency of disarming all the Poorbea Infantry, with the few exceptions of known loyalty which may exist. There can be no real difficulty in doing this. All that is required is a little management. . . . Please show this to General Johnstone. I will take the responsibility of disarming the Native Infantry.

There would have been little difficulty in carrying out the disarmament at once; for, as John Lawrence pointed out, Rothney's Sikhs happened to be passing at that very time through Jullundur on their way to Delhi, and would have been only too delighted to be employed in so congenial a task. But they were allowed to pass on. The disarmament was put off from hour to hour, on this plea or on that, till, at last, on the night of the 7th, the rising which had been foreseen and might have been prevented at any moment during the last three weeks, took place. The Sepoys, with that curious inconsistency which marked so many of their doings throughout the Mutiny, and which shows the strong conflicting currents by which they were swayed, cut down some of their officers, while they carefully sheltered others. And, by midnight, the main body of three whole regiments was in full march for Phillour, for Loodiana, and for Delhi.

But, even now, it was not too late to act. For directly in their line of march rolled the broad and rapid Sutlej, and while they were picking up another regiment of mutineers, the long-wavering 3rd at Phillour, and were afterwards endeavouring to cross the river, the pursuing force might fall upon their rear, and if they failed to cut them to pieces, might, at all events, prevent their going on to Delhi as an organised force. So, at least, it seemed to the more daring and adventurous spirits in the European force at Jullundur, and so it must seem to everybody now. But it was three whole hours before General Johnstone decided on a pursuit at all. It was four more before he was ready to start, and, when he did start, there was no real pursuit, but only a series of aimless and indeterminate forward movements and

of still more aimless and indeterminate halts. In fact, while the would-be pursuers were lingering at Jullundur, the mutineers had already reached Phillour, had fraternised with the malcontent 3rd Regiment there, and were off again for the Sutlej. And while the pursuing force were making inquiries and, shameful to say, bivouacking at Phillour, the mutineers, by the help of a few crazy boats, were laboriously placing the river behind them, an operation which took not less than thirty hours to accomplish.

But they were not to pass entirely unopposed; for the qualities which were so conspicuously wanting in General Johnstone, were to be found in double measure in George Ricketts, a young civilian who was then Deputy Commissioner at Loodiana. Hearing from T. H. Thornton, another young civilian, of what was going on early in the day, Ricketts first took such precautions as he could for the safety of the station, and then carrying with him, under Lieutenant Williams, three companies of Sikhs who had just arrived, a couple of guns, and a contingent from the Raja of Nabha, he sallied forth, hoping that, if he could not prevent, he might at least retard the passage of the river by the Sepoys till the Jullundur force should fall upon their rear. He never doubted for a moment—nobody could have doubted—that such a force must be following close behind them. Taken between two fires, and with a broad river to cut them in two halves, the destruction of the whole would have been a certainty. The road was difficult and the sand deep, and it was not till ten at night that he reached the ghaut and found that all but four hundred of the enemy had already crossed. The horses of one of his two guns took fright as it was being unlimbered, and galloped away with it to the enemy, and the Nabha contingent took to their heels at the first discharge. But the intrepid Ricketts worked the remaining gun himself, and with the help of the two Nabha officers, and the three companies of Sikhs, who also stood their ground, he managed, for nearly two hours, to maintain the contest against three regiments, and, at last, when his ammunition was expended, and when Williams had been shot down at his side, drew off his small remaining force in good order to the camp.

It was a fine feat of arms, and well might John Lawrence, who had sometimes been disposed to think that Ricketts was not sufficiently at home in the work of a civilian, exclaim 'I am indeed proud of him.' 'I am highly pleased,' he wrote to Ricketts himself, shortly afterwards, 'with your energy and resolution. You did your best for the public service and maintained the honour of your cloth. . . . I do not trust myself to say what I think of the manner in which the pursuit was conducted by Johnstone.' And with good reason, too, as the details of the miserable failure of General Johnstone were revealed to him day after day, might he pour forth to all his correspondents the vials of his wrath on the incapacity of the General, whom it was still proposed to send to the Peshawur Division.

General Johnstone (he writes to Cotton) has made a nice mess at Jullundur! I entreated him, fourteen days ago, to disarm his Native regiments; then not to allow them to have charge of his treasure; then to be, at least, ready to crush them if they mutinied. But it was of no use. He would have his own way, and you see the result. Had he followed the mutineers sharp they would have been cut up or drowned in the Sutlej. Now they are on their way, plundering as they go, to join the mutineers at Delhi. I trust they may be too late for the fair and catch a Tartar.

To Bartle Frere he writes in much the same strain :—

We are now pretty quiet. The people are wonderfully well behaved. Peshawur, our volcano, quiescent. . . . But our great misfortune is the escape of two Native Infantry corps and half a corps of Regular Cavalry from Jullundur. They had the Sutlej in front of them and a body of European Infantry, Irregular Cavalry, and six guns behind them. The distance was twenty miles, and yet, by the anility of Brigadier Johnstone, the mutineers escaped and have gone to Delhi to add to the number of its defenders. I do assure you that some of our commanders are worse enemies than the mutineers themselves. I could sometimes almost believe that they have been given to us for our destruction.

In writing to Lord Canning he naturally took the opportunity of clenching the question as to General Johnstone's transference to Peshawur.

General Johnstone would do nothing. He would not disarm the Sepoys, and he made no arrangements for punishing them. When they broke out, the European force was kept on the defensive; and when the mutineers bolted they were not followed for eight hours. Even then they would have been caught—for they were thirty hours getting across the Sutlej—but that the General halted half-way, at a distance of twenty-five miles! And yet this is the officer whom it is proposed to place over Brigadier S. Cotton in the Peshawur Division!

It is hardly necessary to add that it was not proposed to place him there any longer. The four mutinous regiments swept on from the Sutlej to Loodiana, raised into a short-lived disturbance its mixed and turbulent population of Cabul exiles and pensioners, of Kashmere shawl-makers and Goojur robbers, plundered or burned everything on which they could lay their hands, and then, when General Johnstone who had been actually bivouacking within earshot of Ricketts' desperate cannonade, at length showed some signs of advancing, they passed quietly on again towards Delhi.

But there remained one city in the Punjab which, commanding, as it did, the passage of the river from Lahore and the only good road whereby his province could still hold communication with the outer world, gave Sir John Lawrence the deepest anxiety. Would the authorities at Mooltan, a city infinitely more important than Jullundur, and only less important than Lahore and Peshawur themselves, follow the example set by the almost criminal incapacity of the officer in command at the one, or would they emulate the vigour and promptitude of both the civil and military authorities at the other? This was the pressing question, and the answer to it was plain, if the Chief Commissioner could have his way. He had done everything in his power to save Jullundur. But the irresolution or obstinacy of Johnstone had been too strong for him. Would he be more successful here? Would Colonel Hicks, the chief military authority at Mooltan, be willing to distrust, to disarm, or to crush the malcontent Sepoys, and would he have the power, even if he had the will?

Sir John Lawrence thought not. He was convinced that there was only one man in the station who would be able to

carry out so difficult and dangerous an operation, when the odds were so heavy against him. General Gowan had just written to the Chief Commissioner to announce his assumption of the chief military command in the Punjab which had been vacated by General Reed. Like his predecessor, General Gowan seems to have had no very marked ability, or force of will himself. But he had the next best thing to it, a willingness to appreciate those qualities in another, and Sir John Lawrence replied by a telegram urging, in the strongest terms, an immediate disarmament of the troops at Mooltan, and begging, as a personal favour, that Crawford Chamberlain, who was in command of the 1st Irregular Cavalry, might be selected for the duty.

Besides Chamberlain's own regiment, which consisted of Hindustanis, whom, to the best of his belief, he could trust, there were two Native Infantry regiments, one of which was certainly, the other probably, tainted. The other auxiliaries were Punjabis, but with many Hindustanis amongst them. The only Europeans were a handful of forty Artillerymen. But a Bombay regiment was expected to arrive in a few days from Scinde, and their presence would make the disarmament more feasible. Most men would have been disposed to wait. But Sir John Lawrence saw that time was everything, that the news of the Jullundur mutiny which had just reached him would be at Mooltan in a couple of days at the latest, and it would then be too late. His instructions were therefore peremptory. The risk was to be run at once, and on the morning of June 9, just before the news from Jullundur reached the station, the two Infantry regiments were disarmed, without a drop of blood being shed, by the consummate skill and courage of the man whom Sir John had selected, The well-disposed citizens of Mooltan were able once again to breathe freely, and the reinforcements, which Frere was already sending thither, were enabled, as they arrived, to move on, or to enable others to move on, to points where the danger was more urgent than even at Mooltan.

I have to thank you very heartily (wrote John Lawrence to Crawford Chamberlain), for the admirable manner in which you disarmed the 62nd and 69th Native Infantry. It was, I assure

you, most delightful news hearing that it had been done. It was a most ticklish thing, considering that it had to be effected entirely by native troops. I shall not fail to bring it to the special notice of Government. It would have proved a great calamity had our communications with Bombay been intercepted. I beg you will thank your own and the two Punjab corps for their good conduct.

Disarmament in fact was now, in spite of the generous scruples of some of the military authorities, to be, as far as possible, the order of the day throughout the Punjab. Sir John Lawrence placed his views on the subject before General Gowan in his first letter thus :—

If Delhi fall at once, all will go well. But should much delay occur, or, still worse, should any misfortune happen, we must be prepared for squalls. I do not myself think that a single Poorbea regiment will remain faithful, and, in that case, I consider that we should disarm every one of them, where we have the means ; that is, where European regiments are present. By doing this we shall be in a position to maintain ourselves and hold the country. At present, with the Regular Infantry in their sullen mind, we are like a strong swimmer struggling in a troublous sea with a man clinging round his neck and trying to drag him down.

If we wait until we are attacked we shackle ourselves, and enable our enemy to watch his own opportunity for attack. Such a policy must prove fatal.

I have written this minute account of the first few weeks of the Mutiny to little purpose, if I have failed to bring out the general impression of Sir John Lawrence's policy which has forced itself upon my own mind throughout. It was a policy almost Hannibalian, almost Napoleonic in its bold and vigorous advance, in its uncompromising front, in its wide sweep of view ; almost Fabian in its prudence, in its self-restraint, in its moral courage. 'Push on,' was the policy he urged on the lingerers at Umballa, and the malingerers at Meerut. 'Disarm,' was his policy for Peshawur, for Jullundur, for Mooltan, wherever in fact mutinous dispositions seemed likely to pass into mutinous acts. 'Punishment prompt and vigorous,' was his policy wherever it seemed necessary as an example. But he never ceased to urge on all within the sphere of his influence that discrimination, and precaution, and prevention could do more than any amount of vindictive measures.

When the news of the massacre perpetrated by the insurgents from Delhi at Sirsa and Hissar reached him, what was the moral he drew from it? 'These sad events,' he says, 'might, in my opinion, have been prevented by a small party moving from Meerut towards Delhi, which would have confined the mutineers to that place. The inactivity of the Meerut force for so long a period is as unaccountable as it is lamentable.' When at last an advance from Meerut did take place, and he heard of General Wilson's victory on the Hindun, what was the moral he drew again? 'This success,' he writes, 'of a small party of Europeans proves what might have been done had more energetic measures been adopted at the outset. I am hopeful that his success may induce a more rapid advance.'[1] 'Push on, push on!' was still his cry.

How complete was the success of his disarmament policy at Peshawur and Mooltan, where he was warmly supported by the military authorities, General Cotton and General Gowan, I have already shown. That it would have been equally complete at Jullundur is clear had he been able to command as well as to advise; had Government, that is to say, given him the 'full powers' for which he asked, and so enabled him to get rid of the incompetent, and bring ability and vigour, at all hazards, to the front.

Nor was he less anxious to save the innocent, to put the well-disposed beyond the reach of temptation, to ease the position of those who, trustworthy themselves, were nevertheless obliged, for the time, to suffer with the guilty. In this spirit he wrote to the Commander-in-Chief at Umballa advising him to summon all the men of the Irregular Cavalry who were on furlough at the time of the outbreak, and would therefore be liable to be carried away by it, to Meerut and enrol them there under competent officers. It was a step which if it had

[1] I owe these and some other extracts from the *official* dispatches of Sir John Lawrence to the kindness of Sir Robert Egerton, the late Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab, and to Mr. Arthur Brandreth, who will be frequently mentioned hereafter in this biography, and has taken the trouble, in the midst of his other work in India, of copying them out for me. The demi-official letters on which my narrative is mainly founded, and which are much more valuable for the purpose I have in view, as having been written on the spur of the moment, and showing the inner character of the man, are all in my possession.

been taken at once, would, peradventure, have saved many well-meaning men from their own weakness, and have prevented one of Hodson's darkest deeds.

It was in the same spirit that he wrote to Lord Canning, as I have already shown, suggesting what might well have proved a master stroke of policy, that any Sepoys who desired it should be allowed to take their discharge. The evil-disposed, he thought, would avail themselves of the permission and become powerless thereby, while the good would remain and become doubly serviceable. It was in the same spirit, once more, that he advised General Corbett at Lahore, and General Cotton at Peshawur, to give back their arms to such Sikh, or Punjabi Mohammedans, or Hill-men, as had behaved well, to separate them from their Hindustani comrades and allow them once again to do duty. 'I suggest this,' he says, 'first, because I understand that they have no sympathy with their Poorbea comrades and have already expressed their willingness to do their duty. I know also from the testimony of the officers of the 55th Native Infantry that the men of these races in that regiment, to the number of one hundred, offered to stand by their officers and fight the rest of the regiment.' This important measure was carried out throughout his province, and the nucleus of new and valuable Sikh corps was thus obtained. One hundred Sikhs who had thus been separated from their companions, by Sir John's order, the day before the disarmament at Jhelum, did stand by their officers on the day of trial and fought splendidly. It would be difficult to say how many innocent men were saved by this stroke of policy, which was all his own, from mutiny and massacre.

Finally, finding that the Commander-in-Chief neglected to issue any general proclamation which was calculated to recall the wavering to their allegiance and to remind them of our real power, he himself drew up a well-timed manifesto on June 1, which was posted and circulated at all the stations of his province.

Sepoys,—You will have heard that many Sepoys and Sowars of the Bengal army have proved faithless to their salt at Meerut, at Delhi, and Ferozepore. Many at the latter place have been already punished. An army is assembled and is now close to

Delhi, prepared to punish the mutineers and insurgents who have collected there.

Sepoys,—I warn and advise you to prove faithful to your salt; faithful to the Government who have given your forefathers and you service for the last hundred years; faithful to that Government who, both in cantonments and in the field, have been careful of your welfare and interests, and who, in your old age, have given you the means of living comfortably in your homes. Those who have studied history know well that no army has ever been more kindly treated than that of India.

Those regiments which now remain faithful will receive the rewards due to their constancy; those soldiers who fall away now will lose their service for ever! It will be too late to lament hereafter when the time has passed by. Now is the opportunity of proving your loyalty and good faith. The British Government will never want for native soldiers. In a month it might raise 50,000 in the Punjab alone. If the 'Poorbea' Sepoy neglects the present day, it will never return. There is ample force in the Punjab to crush all mutineers.

The chiefs and people are loyal and obedient, and the latter only long to take your place in the army. All will unite to crush you. Moreover, the Sepoy can have no conception of the power of England. Already, from every quarter, English soldiers are pouring into India.

You know well enough that the British Government have never interfered with your religion. Those who tell you the contrary say it for their own base purposes, The Hindu temple and the Mohammedan mosque have both been respected by the English Government. It was but the other day that the Jumma mosque at Lahore, which had cost lacs of rupees, and which the Sikhs had converted into a magazine, was restored to the Mohammedans.

Sepoys,—My advice is that you obey your officers. Seize all those who among yourselves endeavour to mislead you. Let not a few bad men be the cause of your disgrace. If you have the will, you can easily do this, and Government will consider it a test of your fidelity. Prove by your conduct that the loyalty of the Sepoy of Hindustan has not degenerated from that of his ancestors.

JOHN LAWRENCE,
Chief Commissioner.

CHAPTER III.

THE PUNJAB AND DELHI.

JUNE—JULY, 1857.

I HAVE now brought my narrative of the measures taken by Sir John Lawrence for the protection of the frontier of his province, for the strengthening of its forts and arsenals, for the disarmament and safe-keeping of its mutinous Sepoys, for the raising and the distribution of fresh troops, and for the carrying on of its ordinary administration, to the point of time which I had reached at the close of my first chapter, when such progress had been made towards the attaining of his more distant, but, certainly, not less important or less arduous object, as the appearance of the Field Force before Delhi might be considered to imply. Mutiny was now, no longer, to rear its head unmolested in the capital of the Moguls. Resistance was to be opposed to its further progress from Delhi as a centre. And if fresh bodies of mutineers were still able to flock, without let or hindrance, into the city on five-sixths of its circumference, they would, at least, see, as they looked northwards from its ramparts, the British flag flying on the adjoining Ridge, and would know that the cantonments behind that Ridge, from which our officers had been driven amidst scenes of rapine and murder a few weeks before, now contained the nucleus of a British force, who were resolved to hold them till Delhi fell, against all comers.

It may further be observed that it was on the very same day which witnessed the disarmament of the Sepoys at Mooltan, that the Delhi Field Force first received ocular demonstration, by the arrival of the Guides among them, of what Sir John Lawrence had already done, was doing, and was going

to do in furtherance of their great enterprise; and that it was on the following day again, that the great Punishment Parade took place at Peshawur, which, as I have already shown, was changed by his remonstrances from a wholesale and indiscriminate slaughter into an act of judicial retribution. It would be difficult to say which of the three operations, all completed within twenty-four hours of each other, and at the most opposite corners of the sphere of his influence, the disarmament at Mooltan, the arrival of the Guides at Delhi, or the Punishment Parade at Peshawur, was most characteristic of the man and of his work. But, taken altogether, they form a sufficiently striking picture of that combination of mind with matter, of patience with promptitude, of wide views with the minutest grasp of details, of judicial calmness with irrepressible energy, which marked him throughout, which made him a head and shoulders taller than even the ablest and most energetic of his subordinates, and enabled him to guide the ship through the storm without, as it seems to me, giving a single order, or writing a single letter, or authorising a single course of action, which need shrink from the full light of day, or which, as we look back at it calmly at this distance of time, we can say ought, under all the circumstances of the case, to have remained unspoken, unwritten, or undone.

It was on the morning of June 9 that the Guides arrived before Delhi. They had accomplished a distance of five hundred and eighty miles in twenty-two days, and that too at the very hottest season of the year. There had been but three halts during the whole march, and those only by special order. It was a march hitherto unequalled in India, and in point of speed—an average of twenty-seven miles a day—it is, I believe, unequalled still. Unfortunately, they arrived just too late for the battle of Budli-ki-Serai. An ill-timed requisition by Sir Theophilus Metcalfe, who had escaped with his bare life from Delhi, had called them aside from the nobler object which lay in front, to the less congenial work of burning some villages which lay along their line of march. But on the morning following the battle, before any siege operations had begun, they came in, travel-stained, but not travel-worn, light of heart and light of step, proud of their mission, of their

leader, and of their march, the vanguard of the long succession of reinforcements which Sir John Lawrence was to pour down on Delhi, and were welcomed, as well they might be, with ringing cheers by the small force of which they were henceforward, to form so conspicuous a part. Nor had they been in camp more than a few hours, when they crossed swords with the enemy's cavalry, and drove them back in disorder right up to the city walls. They were unfortunate in one thing only, that Quentin Battye, the second in command, a young officer of rare promise and of conspicuous courage, fell mortally wounded in the charge.

The gallant Guides—those, at least of them who were married—had felt one cause of anxiety during the early part of their march, which Sir John Lawrence himself had managed to remove. They had been obliged to leave their wives and children behind them at Murdan; and these—as many an anxious husband or father thought—might be exposed to injury or insult at the hands of the disaffected Sepoys, or the wild borderers, who were their nearest neighbours. The corps was ordered to halt at Rawul Pindi, that the Chief Commissioner might bid them God-speed, and that their leader, Henry Daly, might hold counsel with him, with Neville Chamberlain, and with Herbert Edwardes, who had, just then, gathered there. Daly—who, by a somewhat curious coincidence, at the moment when I revise this portion of my work, is engaged in the task of piloting safely among the sights and sounds of London, the officers and men of the Indian contingent, a task which must vividly remind him of the Babel of races, languages, and religions with which he was brought into contact when he was in command of the Guides—mentioned the anxieties of his men to John Lawrence, who at once promised to call their wives and families down to Rawul Pindi, and look after them there himself! And a letter of his to Daly, which must have caught up the regiment at Umballa or thereabouts, will show that he was as good as his word. 'I hope this will find you all safe, and that you will not be too late for the fight at Delhi. I send you a list of the ladies of your regiment who have arrived at this place from Murdan. They are all safe, under my protec-

tion, in my compound. I will give them the sums noted out of their husbands' pay, or until I hear from you. If the husbands propose any alteration, let me know the specific sums which each is to receive monthly.'

There are, as it seems to me, few more picturesque or characteristic incidents in Sir John Lawrence's life than this. The Chief Commissioner 'having the care,' like the Apostle of old, 'of all the churches,' overworked and ill in health, and yet playing the part of a humble deacon in the early church, and himself seeing that 'the widows,' aye, and the wives and children, were not neglected in 'the daily ministration;' the 'ladies of the regiment,' belonging to, perhaps, a dozen different tribes, and speaking half-a-dozen different dialects, but all safe under his eye, all having the run of his compound, and receiving each, from his own hand, month by month, the exact sums which their more thrifty, or their more liberally disposed, husbands before Delhi might be willing to entrust to them! There was, of course, a humorous side to the scene, which Sir John Lawrence himself would be the first to appreciate. But if genius is 'an infinite capacity for taking pains,' here, certainly, was something of genius; and if true religion consists 'in visiting the fatherless and the widows in their affliction,' here was more than something of true religion.

And it may be worth while to remark here that there is often something of tenderness, or even of a fatherly solicitude, in the way in which Sir John Lawrence writes and speaks of this wild and uncouth regiment. 'Pray tell the Guides,' he writes to Daly after their first success, 'how delighted I am with their good conduct.'

'I am much afraid,' he writes on another occasion, when they had fought and won against terrible odds, 'that the poor Guides have suffered greatly. What with the enemy and cholera, their ranks must have been fearfully thinned. *Try and get them to keep themselves clean and dry.* These are great safeguards against cholera.'

When Delhi had been taken, and the Guides had done their part towards it right well, there was no regiment, or remnant of a regiment, which he was so anxious to get back into the Punjab again. 'Let the Guides come back,' he wrote,

'if you can spare them. I shall be glad to see their old battered faces again.'

There is a ring of tenderness about these extracts which, coming from the man who wrote them, is certainly noteworthy. Something of it may have been due to the strong affection which he felt for Harry Lumsden, who had originally raised, and for Henry Daly, who now led them; something also to the wild, and adventurous, and uncanny character of the men themselves; a character with which, in his earlier days at least, he would have had much sympathy. But even more, I think, is due to the fact that the regiment of Guides owed its existence to the fertile and ever-active brain of Sir Henry Lawrence, who still showed, in his letters to his brother, a lively interest in their welfare.

When I came down with the Guides (said, in conversation with me, Sir Henry Daly, a great friend of both brothers), we halted for a day at Rawul Pindi, that I might confer with Sir John. About four or five o'clock in the afternoon, when we were about to start, I went in to bid him good-bye. He was then lying on his bed in terrible suffering from tic. 'Ah!' he said to me, as I was leaving the room, 'you will, very likely, see my brother Henry before I do. He has a terrible job down there at Lucknow.' Throughout that afternoon a succession of gloomy telegrams had been coming in to Sir John Lawrence, telling him that the Residency at Lucknow was beleaguered, and the whole country was 'up.' 'Tell him so and so,' said Sir John, and then came a string of very kindly messages. 'Ah, well!' he ended up pathetically, and I fancy that I can, even now, see his big burly body lying on the bed as he said it, 'Ah, well! Henry had a greater grip on men than I ever had!'

And so Daly passed on to Delhi, laden with fraternal messages to Sir Henry Lawrence, which were never destined to be delivered. But the drift of a few remarks of his, dropped in the course of the same conversation with reference to the Lawrence brothers and some of their surroundings, seem to me well worth reproducing here.

When I saw my chief, seven years afterwards, as Viceroy at Simla, I found him the same simple John Lawrence as of old. 'Do you remember,' I asked him, 'what you said to me about your brother Henry at Rawul Pindi, as I was going down with the Guides? 'Oh, yes,' he replied, 'it was quite true. Henry had a

greater grip on men than I have.' The Lawrences were not like other men, nor were they like each other. Their powers were very different. 'If I were dealing with a new country,' said Edwardes to me once, 'I would take Henry through it first, and he should say what was to be done; and then I would leave John to carry it out and to modify it.' I had seen Henry at Lucknow in the April previous. He had asked me to pay him a visit; though, as he warned me, he had only one knife and fork to his name! The Mutiny was then brewing apace, and he was busy, taking every possible precaution, fortifying the Muchi Bawn, &c. He was much altered from what I remembered him in the Punjab. Knowing that I was going on to Lahore, he gave me many messages to his brother John, all of them kind ones. But he laid most stress of all on a reminder which I was to give him to be very gentle and considerate in dealing with the Sirdars. 'Ah, yes,' said John, when I gave him the message, 'that was always Henry's way.' Nicholson's boundless devotion to Henry always made him rather stiff and unfriendly to John. He was unable to appreciate even the magnanimity evidenced in those letters partly of gentle rebuke, partly of admiration, which came to him when he was moving down towards Delhi. 'I don't want long yarns from you; but just write me a line or two, that I may know what you are doing.' 'If I could knight you, I would do so on the spot.' John never deserted any friend of Henry's if he could possibly keep him, and hence his wonderful forbearance with Nicholson. He knew perfectly well that Nicholson did not like him and spoke against him. But such things never made the slightest difference in his behaviour to him or to anyone else. He had nothing mean or small in his nature; no spite or malice. He was the *biggest* man I have ever known. We used to call him 'King John' on the frontier, and it is as such that I still love to think of him.

The Movable Column, the command of which had been given, as I have related, to Neville Chamberlain, had, by this time, passed on from Rawul Pindi to Jhelum and Wuzeerabad, and was nearing Lahore. Chamberlain had been invested by General Anson, for the purposes of his command, with the rank of Brigadier-General. Otherwise, all his movements would have been hampered, and the object for which the column had been formed would have been defeated. He would have been unable to enter any military station without the leave of the Brigadier commanding it, and when he had

done so, he would have been subject to his authority. The Column reached Lahore on June 4, and its presence was taken advantage of to put the finishing touch to the bold measure of disarmament which had been carried out on May 13. The Eighth Light Cavalry Regiment had been disarmed, but had not, as yet, been dismounted. They might, therefore, still be formidable, and there were some indications that they were disposed to be so. By skilful arrangement they were now deprived of their horses, without bloodshed, though not without disorder. A few days afterwards the Jullundur rising took place, and Chamberlain hurried off with his Column to Umritsur, which he reached in two forced marches; in time, that is, to anticipate any rising on the part of its excitable inhabitants, and to make Govindghur secure against attack.

But now the news of the death of Colonel Chester, Adjutant-General of the army before Delhi, reached Sir John Lawrence. He knew well how valuable Chamberlain's services were to him in the Punjab. But he felt that they would be more valuable still at Delhi. And, with his usual self-abnegation, he telegraphed to Reed, offering to allow either Chamberlain or Nicholson to fill the vacant place, and stipulating only that, if Chamberlain were taken, Nicholson, despi e all considerations of seniority and age—for he was only a regimental captain—should succeed, *per saltum*, to the command of the Column, with the rank of Brigadier-General. It was no time for considerations of military etiquette or precedency. Tools must go, as in times of revolution and great emergency they seldom fail to go, to him who can best handle them. And thus, though it is not strictly accurate to say, as has been said in so many books on the Mutiny, and in so many obituary notices of Lord Lawrence, that he himself, by his own authority, promoted Captain Nicholson to the rank of Brigadier-General, 'an appointment which he had no more legal right to make, than to make him Archbishop of Canterbury;' yet it is strictly true to say that the bold idea originated with him; that it was registered by General Reed, as indeed were nearly all Sir John Lawrence's wishes and ideas by the military authorities; and that the appointment was, with few exceptions, cordially acquiesced in by the officers who found themselves

superseded. Few more striking proofs of the commanding personal qualities, and of the confidence which Sir John Lawrence inspired, can be found than this. 'John Nicholson is worthy, and Sir John Lawrence has ordered it,' and there the matter ended. And it has been remarked in one of the ablest and most appreciative obituary notices of John Lawrence, from which the sentence I have just quoted comes,[1] that to such an extent did soldiers believe in him, that 'it was often said that he was the single civilian in the empire who could have taken command of an army without the resignation of any officer in it!'

Thus it happened that the two men whom, by his unvarying tact and temper, the Chief Commissioner had managed to retain in his province till this hour, now stepped at a bound, by his suggestion or his fiat, the one from his command of the Frontier Force, the other from his regimental captaincy, into posts of the highest responsibility and importance. The first became a leading spirit, till he was incapacitated by a wound, in the operations of the siege of Delhi. The second, after performing with his Column what we may well call prodigies of speed, of skill, and of valour in the Punjab, was to move down, at last, at its head to Delhi and to bear a large part in the final operations before its walls, as well as in its assault and capture.

Neville Chamberlain reached Delhi on June 24. His arrival had been anxiously looked for, and was warmly welcomed by everyone in the camp from Sir Henry Barnard to the private soldier. 'Everything will go right' men said, 'when Chamberlain comes;' while cooler heads, men who did not think that the walls of Delhi would fall down, like the walls of Jericho, even at the arrival of Neville Chamberlain, said that his presence there would be worth a thousand men. Nor did he come alone. With him was Alexander Taylor of the Bengal Engineers, who had been in charge, under Robert Napier, for many years past, of one of the greatest works of the English in India, the prolongation of the Grand Trunk Road, and had succeeded in carrying it almost from Lahore to Peshawur, a distance of 256 miles. Taylor had served through both Sikh wars; had been with Robert Napier at the siege of Mooltan; and had joined Gilbert in his wild ride after the Afghans from

[1] *Spectator*, July 5, 1879.

Gujerat to the mouth of the Khyber. On the annexation of the Punjab, he had settled down to the more monotonous but not less important work of road-making, and had, ever since then, been working away at it under the high pressure which was characteristic of the Punjab Administration. It was a work encompassed by difficulties of every kind. There was not a road in the country, nor a map. 'When I was told,' he said, 'that I had to make a road to Wuzeerabad or Jhelum, the first question that occurred to me was, where are they, and how can I best find them?' The work was to be done single-handed. He had to be his own draughtsman and his own clerk, his own surveyor and leveller. He had to raise by a 'process of gentle compulsion' the labourers from the surrounding districts, to organise them and pay them with his own hands; he had to keep the accounts, which were sufficiently complicated, and—a practice which was much more honoured in the breach than the observance—to send them in punctually to his superior. He thus came in for his share of the economical pressure and the economical displeasure which fell to the lot of Napier and all those about him. And from some suggestive conversations which I have had with him, I may recall the substance of a few remarks which give at once a vivid and a pathetic picture of the Punjab and of its chiefs.

John Lawrence was no doubt a hard task-master. He lived under the highest pressure of work himself, and expected everyone under him to do the same. Nor was he often disappointed. He came up, once a year, to inspect the progress of the Grand Trunk Road, and woe be to you if an unlucky heap of stones happened to be left where it ought not, and his buggy came into contact with it! It was his business, he thought, not so much to praise you for what had been done, as to find out what may have been left undone. Still, if he was pleased with you, he took care to let you know it. He would listen to your defence, give you a good rap if you deserved it, and take back plain speaking from you too. He and Napier resembled one another in this, that they left ample scope for individuality and independence in their subordinates. We could not help catching the spirit of work and duty from them both. Henry Lawrence first won our affections, and then John gave us the spirit of order, and method, and work. The two brothers managed to gather and to keep a fine set of men around them. Montgomery,

Edwardes, Nicholson, Chamberlain, Becher, Reynell Taylor, Harry Lumsden, and others, were all good men, and all worked with a will. There was very little jealousy in the mean sense of the word amongst us. But it was only natural that two such masterful spirits as John Lawrence and Robert Napier, and still more as John Lawrence and Nicholson, who was turbulent and imperious to a degree, should not get on in the same sphere. As for Henry and John Lawrence, they were both earnest spirits, each meaning right from the bottom of his heart, and neither of them could or would yield to the other. There was a glow of work and duty round us all in the Punjab in those days, such as I have never felt before or since. I well remember the reaction of feeling when I went on furlough to England, the want of pressure of any kind, the self-seeking, the want of high aims which seemed to dull and dwarf you. You went back again lowered several pegs, saddened altogether. The atmosphere was different.

One incident connected with the 'turbulent and imperious' Nicholson, and told me by Taylor himself, may, in view of the way in which the two men were henceforward to be thrown together in a common cause, find a place here; the more so, as the very existence of the sect of worshippers to whom it relates, has sometimes been called in question. 'One day,' said Sir Alexander Taylor, 'while I was sitting in my small bungalow at Hussan Abdul, half-way between Rawul Pindi and Attock, some twenty helmeted men, very quaintly dressed, filed in one after another, and after a courteous salute, squatted down in a row opposite to me without speaking a word. I was much taken aback at this strange apparition. I looked at them and they at me, till, at last, one of them gave utterance to their thoughts and objects. 'We are Nikkul Seyn's Fakirs; you are a white Sahib; and we are come to pay our respects to you as one of Nikkul Seyn's race.' Taylor had never even heard of the existence of this strange sect before. After a little conversation, he dismissed them; and they passed on southward in the direction of Dera Ismael Khan, where the object of their adoration was then to be found. He gave them, as he always did, a good flogging for their pains. But, as in the case of Paul and Barnabas at Lystra, the more he protested and the more he punished them, the more, a great deal, they worshipped him!

Another highly characteristic story, told me, for obvious reasons, not by the hero of it, but by an equally unexceptionable authority, Edward Thornton, of the way in which Alexander Taylor came to be sent to Delhi, must not be omitted. He had been working away throughout the first month of the Mutiny as though pickaxes and spades and theodolites, not swords and bayonets and heavy guns, were the order of the day. His work was on the Grand Trunk Road, but his heart was far away at Delhi, and, from day to day, he picked up such small driblets of news as to what was going on there as the Chief Commissioner, who was receiving telegrams from all parts of the country and sending them off, thought it safe to divulge. One day, Edward Thornton, who was the Commissioner of the District, seeing Taylor at his usual task-work, said to him: 'Why, Taylor, you ought to be at Delhi working in the trenches instead of on this road!' 'I would give my eyes,' replied Taylor, 'to be there. But my work is here, and I do not think it right to volunteer.' Thornton adjourned to the Chief Commissioner, and told him what had passed. 'Send him,' said John Lawrence, laconically, and Thornton returned with the pregnant message. Looking round to some one who was near, Taylor said, quite simply, 'Have you got a sword?' The sword was not long forthcoming, and Taylor was off with it to Delhi.

It only remains to be added that he became the life and soul of every movement in the trenches and the batteries there, 'always cheery, always active, never sparing himself, inspiring, aiding, animating all;' that he was the idol of the younger officers; that, as I have been told by eye-witnesses, Nicholson himself, the bravest of the brave and the rashest of the rash, used, in his devotion to him, to be nervously, nay amusingly anxious, lest he should expose himself to unnecessary danger, and that when the batteries, run up by his energy under the able direction of Baird Smith, had done their work, on the night before the final assault, his friend exclaimed,—and it is almost the last of his recorded utterances,—'If I survive to-morrow, I will let all the world know that it was Alec Taylor who took Delhi.' [1]

On passing through Rawul Pindi to take command of the

[1] Kaye's *Sepoy War*, vol. iii. p. 575.

Column, Nicholson had had much conversation with his chief upon a matter which, as I shall show hereafter, was the subject of considerable difference of opinion between the ruler of the Punjab and the most restive of his subordinate officers. He left it on the 17th, and on the following day he wrote from Jhelum as follows :—

I forgot before starting to say one or two things I had omitted saying. One was to thank you for my appointment. I know you recommended it on *public* grounds, but I do not feel the less obliged to you. Another was to tell you that I have dismissed old grievances (whether real or only imaginary) from my mind, and as far as I am concerned, byegones are byegones. In return, I would ask you not to judge me over hastily or hardly.

Strange things were doubtless to be expected in the way of deeds of daring as well as of contempt of all authority and rule, when John Nicholson found himself a Brigadier General at the head of a small army. And expectation was not destined to be disappointed. But of this I will speak hereafter.

Meanwhile it was clear that John Lawrence was stripping his province, little by little, of his most dependable troops and of the officers whom he knew best, men who would be a tower of strength to him, could they be near at hand, if an uprising should occur in the Punjab. Rothney and Coke, Chamberlain and Taylor, had already gone to Delhi, and Nicholson, at the head of his Column, was shifting about with all the speed and erratic movements of a meteor, anywhere between Peshawur, his former field of duty, and Umballa.

And now the question arose, who was to fill the gap which Nicholson had left at Peshawur ? No one, indeed, could hope to become what he had been, alike ' the terror and the idol ' of the wild tribes of the frontier, and there was only one man in the whole of the Punjab who had had any considerable experience of the Peshawur work and people. This was Hugh James, who, since Temple had gone on furlough had been ' acting ' as John Lawrence's Secretary, had been at his elbow ever since the Mutiny broke out, and so had become familiar with all his ways and plans. He, of course, could not be spared. But, in spite of the advice of Herbert Edwardes, who would gain most

by his presence, he was spared. 'You are to go back to Peshawur,' said his chief, 'and I will get on with anybody.'

The 'anybody' soon appeared in the person of Arthur Brandreth, a man of much vigour and ability, who has since filled, for many years, the post in which John Lawrence first rose to eminence, the Commissionership of the Trans-Sutlej States, and who became, from that day forward, one of his most intimate friends. Still he was not endowed by nature with some of the gifts which would seem to be most essential for a Private Secretary at a time of such overwhelming work and anxiety. 'He is an excellent Secretary,' said his chief, with a sardonic smile, 'and I would gladly have him as a son-in-law, but I can neither hear a word that he speaks, nor read a line that he writes!' And Arthur Brandreth, in his turn, has given, partly in a letter to the 'Times,' written soon after Lord Lawrence's death, and partly in conversations with myself, a vigorous and appreciative description of his chief's work and character.

My first introduction to Lord Lawrence was in March 1853. I was sent for by him. I found him in a room with four or five *munshis* hard at work. Just then a box with official papers came in. The key was not to be found. A very slight search was made, when John Lawrence said abruptly, 'Break it open, break it open.' This was done, a glance taken at the contents, and then, and not till then, he turned to me and had a friendly talk. When I came to Rawul Pindi in June 1857, to take the post of 'acting' Secretary in place of James, he said to me, 'Well, Brandreth, you are come to be my Secretary, are you? you must be reticent, remember, all Secretaries must be. But you need not be so reticent as James, for he won't tell even me!'

And in the letter to the 'Times,' to which I have already referred, Arthur Brandreth speaks of his Chief in words which I think that the facts already recorded in this biography will do more than justify.

Few men of such greatness and such strength have been so singularly forgetful of self, so peculiarly quiet and retiring. I recollect well when I came home with him after the Mutiny causing him real displeasure by a threat (uttered of course in jest) that I would let the Mayor of Dover know he was coming, and it

is owing to this dislike of his to any praise or even any mention of himself, coupled with the non-publication of his dispatches in the Indian papers, that we really know so little of the grandeur and completeness of his arrangements during the great Indian crisis. As I worked at the same table with him during the greater part of the Mutiny, I had special opportunities of thoroughly observing his work, and wish I could give an idea of his extraordinary foresight, which seemed to see the most distant results of any course taken, his earnest devotion to his work, the clearness and vigour of his orders, his wonderful knowledge of men, and his care in selecting them for the various duties. As soon as he heard the first news of the Meerut risings, he wrote both to Lord Canning and the Court, giving such a remarkably clear view of the probable course of the Mutiny, that it must ever remain a monument of his foresight and sagacity.

Brandreth then goes on to speak, from his personal knowledge, of a stroke of policy, which neither the letters of Sir John Lawrence to his friends, nor my conversations with them, would have brought out so clearly. I have, therefore, forborne to refer to it till I should be able to quote his own words:—

Sir John Lawrence then took a step which has been little understood, but which really saved Upper India. He sent for old Nihal Sing Chachi, Sir F. Currie's and his own Sikh aide-de-camp, and with him made out lists of all the Sikh chiefs who had suffered for the rebellion of 1848, and wrote at once to each, before they understood the news, urging them to retrieve their character and come down at once with their retainers, naming the number to be brought by each. As they came in, he organised and sent them off to Delhi. I well recollect the pains he took personally to inspect each retainer or recruit, and see how far he was fit for service, and how glad he was to secure any specimen of the old Sikh cavalry. He then took great pains, after long discussions with Macpherson, to select an officer for them, who would have an influence over them, and sent them on to Delhi. It was fortunate that his foresight led him to take such a step. We soon found that enquiries were being made in most of the dangerous parts of the country for leaders to take advantage of this opportunity. But none could be found. They were at Delhi, and several intercepted letters from there showed that many of the chiefs felt the mistake they had made, although they wrote that, now they were at Delhi, nothing remained but to fight for the English.

Nihal Sing Chachi was a remarkable man from every point of view. Sir John Lawrence thought him one of the most remarkable natives with whom he had ever come in contact; and, as such, he deserves more than a mere passing mention here. He was brave as a lion, very intelligent, and—a much rarer quality among the natives of India, men accustomed for ages to foreign conquest and foreign oppression—honest as the day. He was, moreover, warmly attached to the English rule, and he showed his affection,—not as do too many of our friends among the natives, and as they are too often encouraged to do,—by echoing all that their rulers say and by a servile compliance with their wishes, but rather by speaking his mind freely, whether his views were likely to be palatable or not. Such a man was sure to win the confidence of Sir John Lawrence, and in a crisis like that of the Mutiny, his advice on many subjects would be worth more than that of the ablest English officers. For, being a native, he would be able to penetrate behind that impenetrable veil which, unfortunately, still separates the vast majority of our countrymen from those whom they rule. He had been one of the 'illustrious garrison' at Jellalabad, and it had been remarked of him that he had got to know the character of each of its defenders as well as they could know it themselves! He had long been a friend of Edward Thornton, in whose Division he lived, and John Lawrence, who was always ready to listen to what anyone who had special sources of information, had to say, and was always able, by his strong good sense, to separate the grain from the chaff, was glad to avail himself of his unique acquaintance with the under-currents of native feeling in the Punjab.

In the earlier days of the Mutiny, Sir John Lawrence, as I have shown, had been disposed, with that prudence which never forsook him, to think twice before he committed himself to the dangerous and two-edged measure of arming the old Sikhs who had fought against us so few years previously. 'You had better employ them,' said Nihal Sing, 'or they may go against you.' The advice was not altogether reassuring. It showed that the weapon was two-edged still. But John Lawrence chose what appeared to him, on reflection, to be the lesser danger, and so committed the old Sikhs to our side

before the greater came. 'Why does not the Chief Commissioner employ Hodson?' said the same shrewd observer of human nature, on one occasion to Thornton. He ought to employ Hodson. Hodson would do good work at Delhi.' 'No doubt he would,' said Thornton. 'But he is one of the only three Englishmen in India that I have known who cannot be trusted.' Nihal Sing was silent for a moment, as though the idea was new to him, and then said, 'I have known only three natives who *could* be trusted.'

John Lawrence knew Hodson, much better than even Nihal Sing, and knowing the man, his weakness and his strength, and feeling that if there was much of the born leader, there was also much of the freebooter in his composition, was, as we have seen, not willing to employ him in the Punjab again. But when he heard that General Anson had already given him work in which he had few peers, he allowed Montgomery to raise some men for him at Lahore and to send them down to Delhi, where they formed the nucleus of the renowned 'Hodson's horse.'

And how were things going on at Delhi meanwhile? Some people, and those not usually of the most sanguine temperament, had believed that to see Delhi would be to walk into it; that the mutineers would take to flight when we appeared, or if not, that they would offer only a feeble resistance, and that the population would at once declare itself in our favour. It is likely enough that such would have been the result had General Hewitt possessed ordinary sagacity or vigour, and, following up the flying troopers on the night of May 10, appeared at Delhi before the palace walls were stained with innocent blood, and before the feeble descendant of the Moguls had been mobbed or muddled into the belief that he might yet restore the Mogul empire. It is possible, again, that such might have been the result had the move upon Delhi taken place—as John Lawrence had endeavoured to ensure—a fortnight sooner than it did. Possible, but hardly probable. And as there were many people in England who complained because the battle of the Alma had not been followed up by a rush upon Sebastopol, even so there were many in India who regarded the battle of Budli-ki-Serai as half a

defeat, because it was not crowned by the immediate capture of Delhi. Indeed, so general was the belief that Delhi must fall as soon as our troops appeared before it, that, about the middle of June, it was believed, far and wide, that it had actually fallen. Even Lord and Lady Canning believed it for some twenty-four hours. But once established upon the Ridge, General Barnard saw at a glance that the operations of a regular siege were out of the question. Was, then, an assault or a surprise possible? The younger and more adventurous spirits in the camp thought that it was. By permission of the General, though hardly with his approval, the details of such an assault were arranged by four young officers—Hodson, Wilberforce Greathed, Chesney, and Maunsell. The powder-bags for blowing in the gates had already been provided; the assaulting columns were drawn up, ready and eager for the start, when a few words spoken by Brigadier Graves to General Barnard, words such as the Greeks or Romans would have put down to a direct interposition of heaven, a φήμη, or a *vox opportune emissa*, caused the whole project to be abandoned for the present. A few days later it was mooted again at a Council-of-War. The political arguments advanced by Hervey Greathed and the young Engineers in favour of an immediate attempt, seemed to be as unanswerable as the military arguments advanced by Archdale Wilson, and Reed, and Barnard were unanswerable against it. This being the case, the more prudent, or, as some thought them, the more timid, counsels carried the day. And, judging by the event and by the deliberate opinion of men who, like Sir Neville Chamberlain or Sir Henry Norman, went through the whole siege, it was well that they did so.

Meanwhile there was fighting enough for the most ardent spirits in the English camp. Hardly a day passed in which our small force was not compelled to face desperate attacks delivered at one point or another, in the front or in the rear of our position, by vastly superior bodies of the foe, whose religious and national fanaticism had been stimulated to the utmost by copious draughts of bhang. The deeds of personal and collective prowess displayed in repelling these attacks by men like Reid with his Ghoorkas, and Daly with his Guides;

by Tombs and Brind, Olpherts, Renny, and Fagan of the Artillery; by Hope Grant, Watson and Probyn of the Cavalry; by Showers, Seaton, and Coke of the Infantry; by Hodson everywhen and everywhere, afford a tempting field for minute description and glowing eulogy. But they imply such a vast amount of detail, and they have been described already in so many histories of the Mutiny, that I am compelled to regard them as beyond my limits. Suffice it to say that the attacks of the enemy were always beaten off with heavy loss.

But the question could not but recur again and again, whether we were gaining aught by these daily victories; whether we were not losing, proportionately, far more by our few than the enemy by their many casualties. Everything, in fact, was against us. Disguise it from ourselves as we might, we were the besieged, not the besiegers. The enemy's guns were of heavier calibre, were much more numerous, and, to our surprise, were better worked than ours. 'They are in the ratio of four to one,' says Barnard, in one of his letters. 'I saw no better Artillery practice in the Crimea,' he says in another. The enemy had our range exactly, while we failed to find theirs. Our shot fell, many of them, harmlessly, short of the city walls, in the wooded gardens of the suburbs. Theirs fell fast and thick where our men were at the thickest, on every point of vantage, round the Flag Staff Tower, round the old Observatory, round Hindu Rao's house, where one single round shot that came crashing in killed nine and wounded four of our men. Our heavy ordnance ammunition soon began to run short. We were obliged to economise it to the utmost, and were fain to pick up the balls that dropped around us, and fire them back towards the city. The arsenals of Delhi supplied our enemies with inexhaustible quantities of shot and shell, which they fired away almost at haphazard, and in reckless profusion, knowing that they could not lose, and must needs gain something in the process. Ague and fever and cholera were at work in our ranks, sapping the strength of our men and filling the hospitals. Sunstroke, too, called for its quota of victims, and our wily enemies took care to select the time when the June sun was at its fiercest for the delivery of their most desperate attacks.

Day after day, news reached the camp that fresh bands of mutineers, stained with blood,—the blood of their officers, and, sometimes also, of their wives and children,—were arriving to swell the garrison of the city, and were more than filling the gaps which we had made in their ranks. One day, early in the siege, it was the 60th Native Infantry, who ought to have been disarmed by Anson at Umballa and were now flocking into Delhi from Rohtuck, four hundred strong, leaving their officers to take refuge, as an equivalent, with us. Another day, June 18, it was the Nusserabad Brigade, consisting of two regiments and six guns. A third day, it was four whole regiments from Jullundur and Phillour, few of whom, if the General in command had done his duty when the rising took place, would have lived to tell the tale. Then again it was the Bareilly or Rohilcund Brigade, consisting of some four thousand men of all arms, which was believed to be approaching, or the still more formidable Gwalior Contingent, which, while it concentrated its main body for the siege of Agra, would, it was feared, be able also to send a detachment down to Delhi. The arrival of each fresh batch of mutineers was signalised by an attack delivered next day with ever greater zest on our ever dwindling numbers; and if our casualties each day were few, each one of them was severely felt. One day, it was Quentin Battye at the head of the Guides who fell, while every officer but one in the corps was wounded. Another day, the lot fell on Colonel Yule, of the 9th Lancers, a member of an illustrious brotherhood; while Arthur Becher, the Quartermaster-General of the force, and Daly, the dashing head of the Guides, were severely wounded. A third day, it was Neville Chamberlain who was laid low by a wound which was to incapacitate him from active service during the remainder of the siege. Now it was the forty-second anniversary of Waterloo (June 18), which was to put to the test the mettle of those whose fathers had been conquerors there; and now, again, it was the centenary of Plassy (June 23), which, as priests and prophets, omens and dreams had agreed in foretelling, was to witness our final overthrow. Why should not the Empire which had been founded in a day perish also in a day?

Unfortunately, such few precautions as might have been

taken to minimise the demoralising influence of this desultory and protracted warfare were, for some cause or other, not adopted by the military authorities. There was no regular system of reliefs, and, consequently, when the alarm sounded, which it sometimes did two or three times over in a single night, every man in the force had to be on the alert. The alarm was often a false one. But this did not make it less demoralising or less destructive. There was no stint, no stay. No one in camp could count on even a few hours of unbroken rest. Barnard, it must be remembered in justice to him, was new to the country and found himself suddenly thrust into a position which might have puzzled and perplexed the most experienced and energetic of the Company's officers. Assuredly it was from no want of will or effort on his part that everything which might have been done to lessen the discomforts and the miseries of the men was not done. He was ever unsparing of himself. He was to be seen at all hours of the night and day, in all parts of the camp, encouraging, sympathising, commending.[1] His great fault, and it was, perhaps, inevitable that it should be brought into prominence under the unprecedented circumstances in which he was placed, was a want of self-reliance. He was swayed this way and that by his advisers. Now he was for an assault, now for a siege, then for an assault again, and then, as he hinted in some of his last letters to John Lawrence, for a possible withdrawal. He agreed, in fact, with the last comer. Perhaps, too, he felt himself hampered, as he also hinted to Lawrence, by the presence in the same field of General Reed, the 'Provincial' Commander-in-Chief.

He had long shown signs of breaking down under his extreme anxiety, and now it was whispered that sleep was beginning to fail him.[2] It was the beginning of the end. The greatest military commanders, Hannibal, Alexander, Cæsar, Wellington, Napoleon, have all been famous for their power of sleeping whenever they wished to do so. Without that power, humiliating as it may seem to confess it, they could not have been such great commanders. I have already

[1] See *Narrative of Campaign of the Delhi Army*, by Major H. Norman, p. 22.

[2] *Kaye*, vol. ii p. 558.

remarked that Sir John Lawrence himself was probably saved from breaking down altogether in the early days of the Mutiny by the way in which he could drop asleep directly his work was over, could be aroused to send forth an all-important telegram, and then drop off again in sweet forgetfulness. But 'nature's kind nurse' came not now to Barnard. He had hoped, indeed, for great relief from the presence of Neville Chamberlain, and then again from that of Baird Smith, the new Chief Engineer, a man of the highest ability and energy, who reached the camp on July 3, anxious at once to begin regular siege operations. But Baird Smith found that nothing was ready. There was a scarcity of tools, and a scarcity of workmen. There were no sand-bags and few heavy guns. Worse than all, there was not shot and shell enough for a single day's bombardment. So he was obliged to fall back on what Chamberlain and Reed, Barnard, and he himself all called 'a gamester's throw,' or 'the hazard of a die,' the project of an assault. But the 'throw' was not to be thrown, nor the first sod of the regular siege works to be upturned by order of the General in command. The hand of death was already upon Barnard, and thus two Commanders of the Delhi field force passed from the scene before a single step had been taken towards the capture of the place.

Such was the general course of events at Delhi during the month of June and such the general outlook of the siege. Why was it not given up as hopeless, and how was it that the constant drain upon our numbers and our resources did not cause even the bolder spirits in our camp to advocate a withdrawal from so bootless an enterprise?

There was one reason and only one. Sir John Lawrence had been the prime instigator of the advance on Delhi; and everybody in the camp knew well that he was not the man to let the enterprise fall through for want of any help that he could give. Force of circumstances and force of character combined had placed him in a position as regards the whole North-West of India which was absolutely unique. What mattered it that Lord Canning and that Mr. Colvin were cut off from all communication with Delhi by a broad belt of mutiny? What mattered it to the army that one Commander-in-Chief after

another was carried off by death, or went away, apparently death-stricken, to the hills, if John Lawrence, who was more to them than the Commander-in-Chief, more even than the Governor-General, still remained? There he was at Rawul Pindi, hearing everything, weighing everything, deciding everything, directing everything; it might almost be said,—so admirable were his means of information, his Intelligence Department throughout his province,—seeing everything. His was a mind which was able to look before as well as after, after as well as before. He it was who held in his hand the tangled threads of every military movement and every political combination, from Delhi to Peshawur, and from Peshawur again to Mooltan, or,—thanks to the warm co-operation of Bartle Frere,—even to Kurrachi. His was the name that was on everybody's lips; his the figure that filled the background, at least, of everybody's thoughts. In the camp before Delhi, such was his permeating influence that many of the native troops would not be persuaded that he was not there in person. Within the city itself such was the terror of his name, and so firm was the belief that it was he and no one else who made their success impossible, that when the spirits of the mutineers were flagging, no more potent method of rousing them to enthusiasm could be found than to parade through the streets of Delhi a more than usually stalwart and fair-skinned Kashmeri whom they had captured in one of their raids, and declare to the credulous masses that their prisoner was the redoubtable Jan Larens himself![1] The leaders of the Mutiny showed, by so doing, their keen insight into the conditions of the struggle. Had anything happened to John Lawrence, who, we may well ask, would have been able to take the reins which fell from his hands? Who would have been statesman as well as soldier enough for the crisis, and how and when is it likely that Delhi would have fallen?

I have said that Sir John Lawrence knew everything that went on at Delhi as well, perhaps better, than if he had been on the Ridge himself. He was able, as I have pointed out in the case of his own province, to take a bird's-eye view of the whole. If he was not able to use the apparently decisive, but often

[1] Cave Browne's *Punjab and Delhi*, vol. ii. p. 140.

curiously misleading formula, 'I was there and therefore I know it was so,' he could say, 'I was not there, but by comparing all the reports I have received at this distance of time and place, I can, perhaps, form a truer judgment of the bearing of the whole operation on the prospects of the siege, than many of those who were.' He knew, in fact, the strength and the weakness of each of his correspondents, and weighing them one against the other, was able to assign to each statement its proper value. On every projected movement, if there was time for it, he was consulted beforehand, not so much because he himself, as because those who were before Delhi wished that it should be so. The particulars of each day's engagement were telegraphed to him first, and afterwards detailed in writing, by a cloud of witnesses. Each General in succession, Anson, Barnard, Reed, Archdale Wilson, corresponded with him precisely as if he were, what he never was, their official superior, often deferred to his judgment, or humbly excused themselves if they were obliged to differ from it. It is to be noted also that his communications with Delhi increased in number and in interest as the siege dragged its slow length along. It was not only the Commander-in-Chief who sent him an almost daily journal with comments or anticipations on the past, the present, and the future operations of the siege; but Greathed and Daly, Norman, Chamberlain, and Nicholson poured out their troubles or their hopes to him, often 'in thoughts that breathe and words that burn,' in letters which lie before me and which, if they were reproduced *in extenso*, would give, I think, a picture of the siege as a whole such as has hardly yet been given to the world.

But, interesting as these letters are, it is my business, in my limited space, to illustrate what I have said about Sir John Lawrence by quotations from the letters which were written by, rather than from those which were written to him; to show how, ruling as he did a province which was full of inflammatory elements, he managed, with prudent audacity, to turn what might have been the sources of danger into fresh evidence of his strength; how, by a self-emptying process not often found in rulers, he drained it of everything which it could supply, and so met each successive want of the besiegers of Delhi;

how, with his eyes always fixed on that distant goal, he yet used no unworthy means towards it, and never overlooked anything that lay beneath his feet. It will be remembered throughout that I am often obliged to dismiss in a couple of lines plans and operations which required, first, much anxious thought and enquiry in his responsible solitude at Rawul Pindi, and then scores of letters and explanations and cautions to his subordinates, before anyone of them could be safely carried into practice.

There was, for example, a want of gunners at Delhi. Sir John Lawrence, having first convinced himself that it was safe to do so, called boldly on the old Sikh artillerymen who had dealt death into our ranks in the two Sikh wars, to leave their ploughs and go and deal death in our defence, on the rebellious city. Sappers and miners and pioneers were wanted. On the suggestion of Edwardes, who was always fertile in expedients,—some of them rash enough,—Sir John, with a full sense of his responsibility, and after a laborious investigation, picked out a large body of Muzbi Sikhs of the despised 'Sweeper' caste, who had been employed on the Bari Doab canal, and were now waiting with 'idle hands' for that 'something to do' which was not unlikely to mean 'mischief,' and sent them down to Delhi. They did excellent service there, overcame the prejudice against their employment, and were afterwards enrolled in the 27th Bengal Pioneers; while another regiment of Muzbis, formed after the same model, have served with credit both in China and in Abyssinia. When dependable native troops were wanted at Meerut, to set the Europeans free for service before Delhi, it was not some of his veterans—for he had no more to spare—but some of his newly raised Punjabis whom Sir John sent thither to fill the gap. When there was a rising among the Hurriana Light Infantry, and the flames of mutiny and murder had already overspread the whole of Sirsa, Hansi, and Hissar, instead of treating these districts,—as many lesser men might have been disposed to do,—as mere outliers to the Punjab, he ordered Van Cortlandt, a man marked out by all his previous history for the purpose, to cross the Sutlej with 500 Sikhs whom he had just raised, to reconquer the country, and then to occupy the districts in the

Delhi neighbourhood which lay to the rear of our besieging army. These important duties, helped by the levies of Raja Jowahir Sing and others which were sent down from time to time, Van Cortlandt performed with marked success. Even the Nawab of Bawahulpore, who, as Sir John Lawrence knew, was little to be trusted, was forced by his strong will to contribute a small contingent to the expedition and so, in a measure, to commit himself to our side.

How Sir John Lawrence stripped himself of his best officers and his most dependable troops, I have already shown, and must continue to show, till the Mutiny is at an end. But men, without arms, and money, and baggage animals, would have been of little use, and each and all of these came also from the Punjab. It was from the Punjab arsenals of Phillour and Ferozepore that two Siege Trains were fitted out, the first in May to enable the siege of Delhi to begin, the second in August to bring it to an end. It was from the Punjab and Scinde that the troops came which escorted the two Trains in safety. It was from the Punjab that vast quantities of elephants, camels, bullocks and country carts were gathered together, under the direction of Barnes and Briggs, and with admirable skill, were organised into a Transport Train, of which thirty waggons were to start each day for Delhi, from each of the three great stations of Umballa, Loodiana, and Kurnal. It was from the Punjab treasuries, which were scattered over the country and had been saved from plunder by the instant precautions of Lawrence and Montgomery, that the sinews of war,—the money for paying the troops and for doing everything that was done at Delhi,—were unstintingly supplied. If sandbags were wanted for the Engineers, or saddles for the Horse Artillery, or tents for the European troops, it was from the Punjab that they all came. The manufacturing classes of Loodiana, disaffected as they were, sent off under the energetic pressure applied to them by George Ricketts, three hundred thousand yards of tent-cloth manufactured by themselves!

Thus in every way, under John Lawrence's administration, the Punjab was paying back to India all and much more than all that it owed; and a few letters selected from the hundreds

in my possession, written by him during the months of June and July, will take up the personal aspect of the story where I last dropped it, and illustrate the part borne by himself in everything that was going on.

To General Reed, who, as 'Provincial' Commander-in-Chief, was on his way down from Rawul Pindi to Delhi, he was fertile in suggestions prompted by his minute knowledge of the city and district.

Rawul Pindi: June 1, 1857.

My dear General,—All well since you left this. Peshawur quite quiet as yet. In the meantime, we are getting reliable native troops up there. I hope you have not suffered by the trip. It must be very trying in such weather. . . . I recommend that, on your approach to Delhi, you issue proclamations, calling on respectable men to leave the mutineers and rally round us. I would also promise their lives to such men as have not committed murder, who surrender. Thus the Sepoys of the 74th Native Infantry are said to have behaved well to the last, and to have saved their officers. If this be true, their lives might well be spared. In fact, short of restoring them to the service, everything else might be promised them. By a judicious exercise of clemency and severity, you will produce a considerable effect. The very issue of your proclamations will sow dissension among the insurgents, and they will begin to distrust each other. I do not think that Delhi will hold out. But if it does, and you take it by storm, I suggest that you have a strong Reserve at hand in good order, or your men may be cut up when in disorder plundering in the town. The *citizens* will not fight if they can possibly help it. I doubt their fighting at all. If the town is surrendered, take possession of the fort (the palace). It commands everything, and 500 or 1000 men in it, are safe from an insurrection of 100,000. The victory on the Hindun will do great things for us.

To Edwardes, a few days later, he gives a minute account of the fortifications as he had known them, which is not without interest.

As regards Delhi, it will, no doubt, be ruinous if any delay take place before the walls. On the other hand, it will be necessary to make the attack with prudent audacity. We were thirty years fortifying the place, or rather improving the Mohammedan fortifications, and spent many lacs of rupees. The walls are high, of cut stone, set

in mortar, some seven or eight feet thick, and we built many bastions to flank the walls. But the main defence is the ditch, which is deep, very wide, and in good order. My own idea is, that if no unguarded spot for a surprise is found, the plan would be to advance under the protection of the mosque outside the Ajmere gate, and effect a lodgment. Then, batter down the crenelated top of the wall or parapet, which is not more than three feet thick, and thus prevent the enemy from defending the approach to the gateway, &c. But I sent off a scheme to Sir Henry Barnard last night, copy of which I enclose. I think that if the passage be not guarded,—and nothing is more likely than that it is not,—two hundred picked infantry would get in and carry the Cashmere gate, before the Poorbeas were wide-awake. The Guides would be just the boys for such an enterprise, and would steal up unnoticed. The wall on this side is so placed that, unless you jump up on the parapet and peep over, you can see nothing which is going on down below. Brigadier Cotton may depend on my supporting him in every way possible. In regard to the particular matters you mention, I am ready to go 'the whole animal' to his heart's content.

One of the greatest dangers against which Sir John Lawrence had to guard throughout the crisis in the Punjab was the overflowing zeal of his lieutenants. It was a fault on virtue's side; one with which he had every sympathy, which he had himself done his best to stimulate, and of which, in quiet times, he could hardly have had too much. But, in times like these, he felt that unless held in check by a strong hand, and by full knowledge of all that was going on, it might prove hardly less dangerous than its opposite. From first to last, it was his policy to enlist no more men than might be absolutely necessary to preserve the peace and supply the drain for Hindustan. He felt, as he expressed it, the expediency of, as far as possible, preventing the Punjabis from seeing that the physical force of the country was on their side, or from feeling that they were the right arm of the British power. But when leave had once been given to raise levies, every officer was naturally anxious to find vent for his energies and to show his zeal by raising as many as possible, and that, sometimes, without consulting his chief. Each District officer knew of course what little he could, under the best of circumstances, do himself, but he could not possibly realise the sum-total of danger to the province as a whole,

which so many littles would make up. The Chief Commissioner knew it well. He had his eye on every part, and was compelled sometimes to put the drag on. Here are one or two letters, samples of many others, which bear upon the subject, and illustrate his unique knowledge of all the races of the Punjab.

Rawul Pindi: June 10, 1857.

My dear Brigadier (Sydney Cotton),—I think it is worthy of consideration what number of Pathans you enlist in a regiment. One officer is mad after Pathans, another after Sikhs, another after Poorbeas, and so on. In spite of some care, some of our Punjab corps were, not long ago, nearly all Poorbea! They were such in spirit. But this has been checked and remedied. Sensible officers will tell you that Pathans are first-rate fellows on a hillside. But they are fickle, faithless, and fanatical. The man who will give you his head to-day will cut your throat to-morrow. The Sikh, though not a braver man than the Pathan, has perhaps more sustained courage. He will not do such desperate deeds, perhaps, but he is sure and certain. They have a strong military feeling and do not mind discipline, which the Pathan hates. Further, the Pathan only serves to collect a little money, and then cuts the service. The Sikh sticks to it. I think, therefore, that we should be careful not to have too many Pathans. My proposition for a regiment of ten companies is, four of Sikhs, two of Hill Rajputs, two of Punjabi Mohammedans, two of Pathans. In Peshawur, if you like, you might have a third of Pathans. The Punjabi Mohammedan is a brave soldier, with perhaps less dash than the Pathan, but more steady and less fanatical and ferocious. I myself look on the latter as a very dangerous character.

To Montgomery he writes in a similar strain:—

June 21, 1857.

My dear Montgomery,—We must not go too fast; we must not raise too many men in the Punjab, be they Mohammedan or be they Sikh. Too many Punjabis may breed grief. I have now arranged for 40,000 Punjab troops; that is 20,000 old corps, and 20,000 new. This is ample. More will be dangerous. These, moreover, do not include levies and new mounted police, who must aggregate five or six thousand more. Recollect we have but seven and a half corps of European Infantry to keep all these in order. People go too fast. I see Barnes is raising levies and now wants to put European officers to them. I know nothing about this. Please God, by October next, if the Punjabis remain staunch, we shall be

able to send 20,000 disciplined troops to Hindustan to aid our Europeans in reconquering it. But, in the meantime, these very Punjabis will be a source of danger, if too numerous. Please show this to Macpherson, your Adjutant-General.

It may be interesting to note here the extent to which, in spite of all impediments, he was able to carry out the prudent principles he had laid down. Of the aggregate of fifty-eight thousand men of which the Punjab army (including the Military Police) was found to consist towards the close of the Mutiny, not less than thirty-four thousand had been called into existence by John Lawrence during it! It is obvious at a glance what a formidable danger this new and vast army might have proved, had it been drawn chiefly from the Sikhs, or from only one or two of the more prominent races in the country. But such was not the case. It was composed, owing to the Chief Commissioner's ever-watchful care, of men drawn from the greatest possible variety of races, and differing from each other in religion, birthplace, habits, and dialect. There were two thousand hillmen, eight thousand mixed Hindus or Hindustanis, thirteen thousand Sikhs, and twenty-four thousand Mohammedans. These last, it will be observed, formed about a half of the whole, but they were drawn from many different tribes who had nothing in common except their religion, and were, many of them, as alien to the Sikhs as were the Hindustanis themselves. Seldom has the somewhat sinister maxim, *divide et impera*, been acted upon by a ruler with less selfish motives or with more beneficent or more triumphant results.

To Daly of the Guides John Lawrence writes with characteristic heartiness:—

Rawul Pindi: June 15, 1857.

My dear Daly,—I was glad to get your letter of the 10th, and rejoiced to hear how admirably the Guides had behaved. Poor Battye! we all grieve for him greatly. We are sending you every man we can muster, Rothney's Sikhs, Coke's regiment, and some Punjab Cavalry, also a regiment and a half of Europeans and some two hundred Artillerymen. We are getting Hughes' Cavalry also up, and will push it on too, I hope. I have seen from the first that native troops will be greatly wanted at Delhi, and but for General Johnstone's folly, Rothney's Sikhs and Nicholson's Cavalry would have been with you by this time. I have offered to send

either Chamberlain or Nicholson to Headquarters, whichever General Reed likes; the one who remains to command the Movable Column. Both are first-rate soldiers, good in council and strong in fight. I wish we had a few others like them. I expect Nicholson here on his way down to-morrow, as I want to get him *en route* by the time the Chief's reply is received. Pray tell the Guides how delighted I am with their good conduct. If I can do anything for you in any way, pray command me.

From Sir John Lawrence's letters to Lord Canning, all of which are masterly, I select here three or four.

Rawul Pindi: June 14, 1857.

My Lord,—We are all well in this quarter, and exerting ourselves to reinforce the army at Delhi, without compromising ourselves in the Punjab. Our great anxiety was Peshawur, which now, owing to the energetic measures adopted, seems pretty secure. It was a great misfortune that half the men of the Punjab corps were at their homes on furlough. They are all flocking back and display an excellent spirit.

No doubt, what we most urgently require is plenty of European soldiers. But just now at Delhi, every faithful native soldier is almost as valuable as his European comrade. Without native troops in a season like this, a body of Europeans must become disorganised. The mismanagement at Meerut and the delay at headquarters, have changed what was a mere *émeute* into a struggle for supremacy. At this moment I do not think that a corps of Native Infantry in the Bengal Presidency is staunch, and most of the Regular Cavalry, and many of the Irregular Cavalry from Hindustan, are in the same state. The Mohammedans of the Regular Cavalry, where they have broken out, have displayed a more active, vindictive, and fanatical spirit than the Hindus. But these traits are characteristic of the race.

Some years ago when General Hewitt was appointed to the Peshawur Division, I pointed out that he was utterly unfit for such a charge. We were mercifully preserved during his incumbency for about three years, when he was transferred to Meerut; and your Lordship will have seen the mess he has made of his charge. I hear that the ammunition of the Meerut Artillery, was in the Delhi magazines; their cattle grazing beyond Delhi. But even if the General had scoured the country for five miles round his cantonment, he would have kept it quiet, and obtained carriage. The European Infantry, when they came down from the hills, had but

ten rounds of ammunition, while the native troops had forty! It is almost a miracle that the Siege Train got safe down from Phillour. Its main escort was the Nabha Chief's contingent. Our great calamity, hitherto, has been the disaffection of the Jullundur native troops. . . .

General Reed is already calling for reinforcements. We are sending off H.M.'s 8th from Jullundur, a wing of the 61st from Ferozepore, Coke's regiment of Rifles, the 4th Sikhs and some Punjab Cavalry, besides some European Artillery. A detachment of the Bombay Fusiliers is expected at Mooltan about the 28th, and I hope that the rest of the corps will not be long behind. As we get rid of our Regular native regiments, we are able to employ our European and Punjab corps from all parts but Peshawur. The First Punjab Cavalry is now on its way from Mooltan to Ferozepore. We have despatched a large body of levies and some contingents to endeavour to recover Sirsa, and push their way towards Hansi and Delhi.

I do not think that there is any man of much ability at Head-quarters. The best officer on the staff is Captain Norman, who saw a good deal of service at Peshawur. But he is young, and not a pushing character. General Reed himself is feeble and much worn, and seems very unfit for hard service. I have offered him either Brigadier Chamberlain, or Lieutenant-Colonel Nicholson, both first-rate officers. He wants to take Chamberlain, but, in that case, Nicholson should be made a Brigadier-General, and be placed in command of the Movable Column. To give it to an ordinary man is to make no use of it. If ever we are to break through the old system, and place competent men in difficult positions, it is now, when our very rule in India is endangered. But I do hope that your Lordship will have this done.

Maharaja Golab Sing is profuse in his offers of service, and I have told him that, possibly, I may borrow some money of him. Many in this quarter anticipate that he will take part against us, but I can see no immediate prospect of his doing so. At his age, and with his health, he cannot desire to enter into new struggles, and, moreover, he has much to apprehend from the bad example to his own army of an insurgent soldiery. His son is said to dislike us, and to have some ambition. But I think I could raise such a disturbance in his own country as would keep him quiet. At any rate I anticipate no danger from that quarter.

The Sikh chiefs of the Cis-Sutlej States have behaved admirably. In fact, I cannot praise the Maharaja of Puttiala and the Raja of Jheend's exertions too much. But for their aid, we should

never have got the army and Siege Train to Delhi. I am not fond of native chiefs. I have seen great evil done by them. But I am bound to say that these two deserve almost any reward your Lordship could bestow. I think a letter to them at once would do good. We cannot tell what we may require of them.

Sir John Lawrence wrote regularly to Lord Canning, but, owing to the press of work and the disturbed state of the country, few letters were written by Lord Canning to him, and fewer still reached him. All communications between the Punjab and the Capital, it will be remembered, had to go round by Kurrachi and Bombay.

Rawul Pindi: June 29, 1857.

My Lord,—I have not heard from your Lordship since the 26th of last month. We get no news whatever from below Allahabad and Cawnpore, and very seldom so far down. I gather that Lucknow still holds out, and that all the European regiments which were expected have arrived. We have given, or are giving, every man we can spare for Delhi, and the force before the city must be seven or eight thousand men. But the insurgents must now have become very numerous, and are evidently very enterprising. They continually attempt to turn our flanks and cut off our communications with Kurnal.

Our position is a very strong one along a low ridge of rock. Its defects are its extent, and the low suburbs of the town which extend along its right flank. If we had troops enough to hold the whole ground in strength, from the Jumna to the canal, it would be very strong indeed. I doubt much if we shall be able to take the place until the cold weather, and before reinforcements arrive from England.

Our soldiers fight admirably, but I do not think that our leaders are as able and active as is desirable. The old paralysing system of seniority is still in full force. Neville Chamberlain has joined, but has been ill ever since his arrival, probably consequent on the exposure attending a rapid journey. If his health admits of active exertion, he will prove a host in himself. I urged General Reed to supersede General Hewitt at Meerut, but he demurred, and affects to think that Hewitt can do no harm now. Your Lordship may depend on it that such an officer must be a fatal incubus on all around him. So long as he is in command, the troops at Meerut will do nothing. There is but one opinion throughout the army. An active officer with half his means might do great things. He might, for instance, prevent the Rohilkund Brigade from crossing

the Ganges. He might have the country scoured all along the right bank of the Jumna, and the Goojurs kept in order.

We are doing well in the Punjab. Nothing can exceed the good conduct of the people, the enthusiasm of the Punjab troops, and the zeal of our officers. The old Sikhs are coming forward in every quarter for service. The Punjab force and Military Police will amount, in another month or six weeks, to nearly forty thousand men. I could raise any number of soldiers. But I do not like to collect more. I think it sound policy not to have too many, until I see more European troops in the arena. Directly I heard that regiments were arriving, I should like to add to our force, so as to be able to send down a good body early in the cold weather.

Next to European soldiers we require money. The North-West Provinces, for the time, are lost. The country is overrun by banditti. Trade is paralysed. The ground is not sown, and the crops of last harvest even are wasted. I think that England must come forward in this crisis and supply the sinews of war. We shall also require all kinds of warlike stores—rifles, muskets, ammunition. In a short time there will scarcely be ammunition for the Enfield rifles in use. Four thousand now in the Ferozepore magazine are not distributed to the European regiments on this account. I do not think that more than a million of the proper kind of cartridges are available. It appears that they are made with a particular kind of powder. I have asked Lord Elphinstone to endeavour to supply a quantity of it. I have offered General Reed to send him down a couple of thousand of Golab Sing's troops to maintain his communications with Kurnal. There is some risk, no doubt, in this measure; but much less than now occurs from the want of men for this duty. The loss of our convoys would prove very calamitous. I think it will be politic to go on subsidising Ameer Dost Mohammed. It will not do to stop payment just now.

Again, he writes to Lord Canning on July 5:—

I enclose copy of a letter from Sir H. Barnard before Delhi which will show you what he considered were our prospects on the 1st instant. Since then the sortie of the 3rd has taken place, of which we have heard nothing except that the insurgents had been repulsed. From the letters which I have seen from the army, it would appear that the mutineers show great enterprise, but do not fight well, except their Artillery, which, strange to say, is considered to be served well and to be admirably directed. This, however, I do not believe. Our casualties show that such cannot be the case. But all natives are clever at taking up positions which our officers as a rule

go straight at. The continued reinforcements which the mutineers receive is the most unfortunate part of the business. Not only are their numbers thus recruited, but their courage also is sustained. It is very sad to think of the several excellent opportunities our officers have had of inflicting severe punishment which they have neglected. When I pointed out to General Reed that General Hewitt ought to be removed from his command, he seemed to think that the latter had done rather well than otherwise! I feel convinced that such is not the opinion of the army, and that, if we are to weather the present storm, we must have very different commanders from General Hewitt. Such a soldier as Lumsden, Nicholson, Daly, and many others whom I could mention, would have prevented the Rohilkund Brigade from crossing, and, had they found it already crossed, would have inflicted great loss on it before it could have reached Delhi. Officers affirm, but I cannot credit it, that the insurgents moved with eight hundred carts, with elephants, and with treasure. A good officer with two or three hundred men will succeed where an incapable one will fail with many hundreds—nay, where such a man will not make an effort.

As regards the Punjab, we can do very well with our own means, but we shall not be able to give any more effective assistance, I fear, to the Commander-in-Chief, at least in European troops—especially if we continue to hold Peshawur. He has three of our Punjab corps of Infantry, the Guides, the 1st Punjab Infantry, and the 4th Sikhs. The two former are the best we have. The Punjab Cavalry was never very good, and half of it is composed of Hindustanis. We have raised a considerable body of Sikh and Pathan Cavalry, some of which have gone to Delhi; some form escorts for convoys, and the greater part are holding, or helping to hold, the frontier. But we could manage to send down a considerable number still, and have offered to do so.

I trust that your Lordship has written home urgently for plenty of European troops. Too many cannot come out. The more soldiers and money England can send, the cheaper it will be in the end. I should not myself be in the least surprised if disaffection spread to the Bombay army, which has many Hindustanis in its ranks. I can raise any number of good Infantry in the Punjab in the space of three months. The arrangements already made will give us 14,490 Infantry, and, if necessary, the four companies of each of the seventeen corps (that is without including the Guides) could form the nucleus of the seventeen new regiments, thus adding some 7,850 men to the force. Thus we should have twenty regiments of Punjab Infantry and fourteen police battalions, equal to 31,280 soldiers.

Should your Lordship approve of this proposal and will let me have due notice, I could commence carrying out the scheme, so as to have the additional regiments ready by the time the troops were arrived from England or a little afterwards.

After the fall of Delhi, or a little after that period, I would suggest that as many of the Hindustan Sepoys as desired it should be allowed to take their discharge. As they now are, they are worse than useless, being both dangerous and expensive. We are obliged, not only to pay them, but our loyal soldiers are hampered by having to watch them.

I would strongly urge on your Lordship the propriety of coming up the country as early as possible after the arrival of the European troops, and getting by your side three or four of the best officers in the country. You could, with their aid, elaborate a scheme for reforming the army and placing it on a proper basis in a very short time. But, unless this be done, months may elapse without any real results. If we take Delhi I am inclined to think that disaffection will cease to spread. At any rate, it will lose its power. Without guns and material or any strong fortress to fall back on, the insurgents must dwindle away. But if Delhi do not fall, we shall have a hard task to preserve our supremacy until October and November, before which time I apprehend that no large reinforcements can arrive. However, even then, we should recover our hold in the country, provided able officers be selected to command. The country will be reconquered as rapidly as it has been lost. I see that there are eleven regiments at the Cape and nine at Malta. Could not your Lordship send for two or three from the former place?

2 P.M.—A message has just come in from Delhi, copy of which I have added to my official letter, stating that Major Coke had recovered Alipore and repulsed the insurgents, and refers to an offer which was said to have come from the King to put the place into our hands.

On the following day he writes again:—

July 6.

Yesterday evening I received a message from the Commander-in-Chief. Copy of it and of my reply is herewith enclosed. As I said to General Reed, I am not aware of your Lordship's views; but I am myself fully convinced in my own mind that the policy which I have indicated is that which circumstances dictate.

Did we possess the means, there can be no question that it would be desirable to storm Delhi and destroy or expel the mutineers.

But it is clear that we cannot take the town by a regular siege, and that there is much danger that an assault will fail. In the latter case we should have to wait for reinforcements from England with a crippled and dispirited army. There is no knowing, no foreseeing to what extent disaffection and mutiny may not extend. The most important political consequences may be anticipated from depriving the mutineers of Delhi. The minds of all native chiefs will be assured, and the insurgents will be left without a stronghold and rallying point. The desertion of the King will cripple the whole of the Mohammedan party. Without heavy guns, without strong fortifications, they must disperse and dwindle away. I doubt very much if the King will be able to give us Delhi, or, what is the same thing, enable us to take it without loss. But if he can manage to admit a single regiment into the palace, Delhi would become untenable to the enemy.

General Barnard's letter of the 1st does not give me the impression that he is satisfied with our position. I gather that, if left to his own judgment, he would rather not risk an assault. But he is unable to see the difficulties and complications which delay must involve. He cannot grasp the whole political bearings of his situation. Delay, no doubt, is an evil of the first magnitude, but failure would prove infinitely more calamitous.

I do not believe that there is a single regiment of the line in the Bengal Presidency, with the exception of the 66th (Ghoorkhas), who will not desert us. I know no regiment in the Punjab composed of Hindustanis which I would trust. Exclusive of the Punjabi troops, the Kumaon battalion and the 1st Irregular Cavalry are the only corps likely to remain staunch. The army before Delhi is in a very critical state. Though well able to fight a pitched battle in the field, it has much difficulty in maintaining its position, owing to the smallness of its numbers, the peculiarities of the ground, and the absence of a sufficient body of reliable Cavalry. The flank of the army is continually turned when the insurgents get into its rear; and, though the troops drive them away, the movements are repeated. If the enemy had only the skill to detach a force higher up, I do not see what is to prevent their interrupting our communications and cutting off our supplies.

From Delhi to Umballa, a distance of upwards of one hundred and ten miles, the whole line is open to attack. General Barnard's account of the state of our troops after the battle of the 23rd ultimo was most dispiriting. And, even now, though he quotes our success in so many conflicts, we have never yet inflicted such a loss as to deter the enemy from renewing the struggle in the open field. We

can get no news from below of any authenticity. One day Sir H. Wheeler is said to be surrounded at Cawnpore, with difficulty maintaining himself. Another day it is reported that he is marching on Agra. But from whatever quarter certain information is received, we hear of disaffection and mutiny.

I had written so far when I received a message from Delhi that Sir H. Barnard died yesterday of cholera. This fearful scourge attacked the army at Kurnal going down, and again appeared at Delhi, where the Guides lost some men; but a timely fall of rain drove it away. In this season of the year, and still more probably a couple of months later, much sickness may be anticipated.

I take this opportunity of enclosing a note, which I have had by me for some days, from Brigadier-General S. Cotton. In it is a valuable suggestion for the employment of officers of the Indian army with regiments when they first land. Few Englishmen on their arrival in India will believe in the fatal effects of the Bengal sun. The men are out all day and get into mischief, and the medical officers are not aware of the necessity for dealing promptly with disease. I have often heard that regiments lose more men in the first year of their service than in the next three or four. Now I think that General Cotton's precautions would save many lives. We are all quiet in the Punjab. Recruiting going on famously.

P.S.—If you will take the best officer available, I suggest that you appoint Brigadier-General Chamberlain to the command of the army before Delhi.

While John Lawrence was doing all that these letters imply to sustain the army before Delhi, dangers were thickening at his own doors. At each of the three military stations of Sealkote, Jhelum, and Rawul Pindi, mutiny was smouldering, and might, at any time, burst into a flame. At each of them there was a regiment or more of Hindustanis, many of whom were wavering even then, and all of them would, beyond doubt, turn against us in the event of a reverse before Delhi, or even of any prolonged inaction there. At Sealkote and Jhelum there was not a single European soldier of the line. At Rawul Pindi there were only 500, together with six guns and a few Artillerymen, and what were they amongst so many?

Sealkote had been originally selected as the site of a cantonment by Sir Charles Napier, that it might act as a check on Golab Sing. That danger had never hitherto been a

real one. But it might become real now, when the sword of even the weak and wily Dogra Rajpoot, if it were thrown into the evenly balanced scale, might weigh it down against us. Jhelum and Rawul Pindi were both situated on the Grand Trunk Road between Lahore and Peshawur, and it was obvious that a successful rising at either of them would cut the Punjab into two halves, and would leave Huzara and Peshawur, as John Lawrence was fond of expressing it, 'in the air.' Would it be possible to put off the evil day till Delhi should fall, when the danger, it might be hoped, would disappear of itself? Or would it be better to attempt to disarm the troops at one or other of the three places, at the risk of causing a general rising all along the line?

Such was the question which pressed for decision. Sir John Lawrence determined first to try delay, and advised the military authorities at each of the three stations to weed out their worst characters, to promise the 'Order of Merit' to anyone who should do us conspicuous service, and to encourage their men to 'volunteer' for active service against the mutineers. This last process would not, of course, induce our officers to relax a single precaution against treachery. But it might serve to employ and amuse the men, to confirm the wavering and to discourage the malcontents. Finding that the regiment at Rawul Pindi had thus 'volunteered,' he made them a speech which seems to have roused real enthusiasm among them, and as he went away he 'could hear them cheering for a long distance as they returned to their lines.'

But Delhi did not fall, and gave no sign of doing so. 'Symptoms of uneasiness,' to adopt the euphemism common at the time, began to show themselves among the Sepoys at these unprotected stations, and were soon followed by those of active disaffection. The danger was at its greatest at Jhelum, and Sir John Lawrence determined to lessen it there, in the only way in which he could do so, by increasing that at his own doors. He brought two of the disaffected companies to Rawul Pindi from Jhelum, and supplied their place by a strong body of Military Police, and of horse and foot levies which were above suspicion. The danger being thus equalised, it was time, he thought, to attempt a simultaneous disarmament at both

places. Half of his small number of guns and more than half of his small body of Europeans he sent off to Jhelum, and, with the small remainder, he prepared to disarm the regiment at Rawul Pindi.

It was the 7th of July. The plan was carefully matured with the military authorities, but just as he was about to address the men, they became alarmed, broke away, got into their lines, and armed themselves. 'But by good management and the influence of the officers of the 58th, who behaved admirably, nearly all the men gave up their arms. Some forty ran off, but were pursued and killed or taken.' Such was the plain, unvarnished account given by Sir John Lawrence to Lord Canning. It was never his way to speak boastfully of what he had done himself, and I cannot find in any of his letters to his friends describing the events of the day, aught which implies that it was very nearly being his last day, that he had been in any exceptional danger, or had put forth any exceptional effort.

Fortunately his 'acting' Secretary, Arthur Brandreth, has not been so reticent, and now that Lord Lawrence is beyond the reach of human praise or blame, he has told us something of the personal courage and personal influence of his chief on this eventful day, which we should probably never have heard from his own lips.

I well recollect (he says) Lord Lawrence's anxiety about the arrangements for the disarmament, so as to avoid, if possible, any bloodshed. He knew the native soldiers well, and recognised how few of them were really ill-disposed—how entirely the majority were led away by their ignorance and stupidity, which left them an easy prey to the designing emissaries of the Oude nobles. That disarmament very nearly ended Lord Lawrence's career. The Artillery had orders to fire the moment the mutineers broke, to prevent their obtaining the cover of their lines, where they could have defended themselves. Owing to the accidental discharge of a cavalry carbine, the mutineers were alarmed and broke, before Lawrence, who, with his usual disregard of himself was standing in front of them, had time to address them. And the guns would at once have swept Lawrence and his party from the field, but for the promptitude of the Brigadier Colonel Campbell, luckily an old artilleryman. The mutineers consequently got to their lines, but

Lawrence at once galloped after them, and, regardless of the eagerness with which they were all loading around them, called to them to listen and not to cause their own destruction. He thought nothing of his own peril in his anxiety to save them; and, with Colonel Barstow's aid, he was successful. It was curious as we rode up and down the line to see the frightened excitement of the men. All had, by this time, loaded, and a single mistake or false step would have led to the first shot, and then we could not have restrained them. But under the eye of such a chief everyone did his best to restore confidence by reason and argument, and, as above mentioned, successfully. It was this eager personal work which led to so much of Lord Lawrence's success.

How much Sir John Lawrence himself rejoiced at the saving of human life, which was the result of his efforts, may be gathered from a letter he wrote a few days afterwards to General Sydney Cotton, who was likely to have many similar opportunities.

I must say that I was very glad we did not fire on the 58th. Our forbearance had a good effect. If anything can convince the Sepoys that we are sincerely desirous to save them, it would be by such conduct. In talking to them that day I asked them why they had bolted. They replied, 'Because you were going to fire the guns on us.' I replied, 'If such were our intention, why did we not fire? The fact that we did not do so, when you ran, ought to convince you of this.' They remarked, 'But why take away our arms? We had committed no fault.' I added, 'True, you had not; but your relations and friends and countrymen had. We only do it to protect ourselves. The arms are not yours, they belong to Government, to give or to take away.' The officers behaved exceedingly well, and the corps, so far as I can judge, is a good one. But just now we can trust none of them. Even our own Punjabis in some cases get contaminated.

It would be well if the spirit of this and other letters of Sir John Lawrence had pervaded all that was said and written and done during the crisis of the Mutiny, and still more after all danger was over. We can hardly be surprised that it was not so, but it is impossible to deny that Englishmen would, in that case, have been able to look back upon the records of the heroic struggle with an unalloyed satisfaction which they can hardly feel now. The literature of the time, English as

well as Indian, contains records of word and deed which it is impossible to justify or even to excuse. It is easy, no doubt, for those who have never known what it is to carry their lives in their hands, for a period of many months together, amidst a vast alien population, and can look back calmly, at a respectful distance of time and place, on all that happened then, to be too harsh in their condemnation of those who lost something of their heads and of their hearts in the agony of the struggle. But it is certainly not easy to admire too much those few who managed to retain the command of both, men who struck their hardest when it was necessary to strike, but who sheathed the sword as soon as it was possible to do so; men, who in dealing out stern justice, never forgot to temper it with mercy, and refused to condemn a whole race for the crimes, or the ignorance, or, it may be, the blind panic, of a very small part of it, and among such men Sir John Lawrence must, in my judgment, always hold one of the most conspicuous places.

The Jhelum business did not end so fortunately, but the Chief Commissioner was not to blame for it. The arrangements for the disarmament had been made with at least equal care. A much larger force than that which remained at Rawul Pindi, some 800 men in all, had been detached for the duty, and John Lawrence himself had strongly advised—he could not do more—the officer in command, that in case the Sepoys should take refuge in their lines, our attack should be delivered, not in the front, where the lines were fortified, but in the rear, where they were quite unprotected. The 14th Native Regiment at Jhelum had long borne a bad name, and seeing, early on the morning of the 7th, the Rawul Pindi force approaching, they loaded and rushed for their lines. Our attack was delivered in front, and was repulsed with heavy loss. A running and a desperate fight was maintained throughout the day, and, when night fell, the rebels had with difficulty been driven to an adjoining village, and we had lost a gun, a 100 horses, and 150 men. The fighting seemed likely to be renewed on the following day. But during the night the Sepoys lost heart and fled, and in one way or another, within a week or two, almost all of them fell into our hands.

The telegraph had carried, hour by hour, to Sir John Lawrence who was at Rawul Pindi, full details of the progress of the fight. He had been, as we have seen, in sufficient peril himself on the morning of that day. But he called a council of officers at his house, and with a confidence in himself and in the future which must have been contagious, proposed to send off to Jhelum nearly half of all the force that remained to him! They were off in a few hours under orders to do a forced march of thirty miles on that, and of forty on the following night; so that in thirty-six hours at latest the disaster would be retrieved. 'I well remember,' says Brandreth, 'our finding the supply of powder-cases insufficient, and Sir John at once decided to send off *all* with the reinforcements, leaving us dependent on what Colonel Cox could make up during the night.'

It was a short-lived success for the mutineers. But, unfortunately, it had lasted long enough to cause the rising at Sealkote, which had been so long feared, and under circumstances of unusual difficulty, had been so long postponed.

There were at Sealkote, under Brigadier Brind, about 700 armed Sepoys and 250 mounted troopers. The European force which had been stationed in that large cantonment at the outbreak of the Mutiny had, after full deliberation, and with a full sense of his responsibility, been withdrawn from it by Sir John Lawrence to form a part of the Movable Column. Few more difficult questions had come before him. The local authorities, naturally enough, took a local view, and were for standing fast where they were. But the Chief Commissioner, seeing that there were not enough Europeans to hold all the Stations, and, at the same time, to give the maximum of efficiency to the Movable Column, determined to run the lesser risk, and to withdraw the Europeans from a position which no one but Sir Charles Napier had ever thought to be a place of prime importance, and which he himself was convinced was safe, even now, from all attack by Golab Sing. At the same time he advised Brigadier Brind, if he doubted the fidelity of his native troops, to disarm them before the Europeans left. Afterwards it would be too late. They had, hitherto, shown no open sign of dis-

content, and Brind, generously declining to secure his own safety and that of his officers at the expense of his men, for six weeks from that time, by dint of extraordinary tact and courage, managed to keep them straight. He knew that he was sitting on a powder magazine, but was bound to do so with a smiling face.

At last the spark was applied by the momentary success of the mutineers at Jhelum. The infantry connived at the escape of their officers. But the troopers, who were more blood-thirstily inclined, murdered every European on whom they could lay hands, Brind himself, a missionary with his family, and two much respected doctors among the number. The work of plunder followed. All the houses in the Station were sacked, the cutcherries destroyed, the jail broken open, the prisoners set free, and worse than all, some of the officers of the Punjab Military Police—the one instance in the whole of the Mutiny in which they did so—played us false. Even the domestic servants, whose devotion and fidelity were generally proverbial, turned upon their masters.

But even here there were many redeeming points in the conduct of the mutineers. They appear to have regarded their officers, especially Colonel Farquharson and Captain Caulfield of the 46th, with genuine affection. They kept them safely under guard the whole day and then allowed them to escape. On parting with them several of the men shed tears, touched their feet—the most respectful mode of native salutation—and deplored the separation. On being urged not to join in the Mutiny, they said that they could not avoid it, they must needs fight for the general cause. So confident did they feel of success, that they offered to secure Colonel Farquharson 2,000 rupees a month and a residence in the Hills if he would consent to make common cause with them, and retain his command! This was an incident which touched Sir John Lawrence greatly, and to which he was fond of recurring when he heard wholesale denunciations of the Sepoys, and demands for more and more wholesale executions.

The work of plunder over, the mutineers, with one old gun which belonged to the Station, marched off in good order for Delhi. And Delhi they would probably have reached, had not

will send them down. They are most anxious to emulate the good conduct of the Ghoorka corps now with the army.

What wonder that the force before Delhi felt that, in the person of the man who could write thus and promise thus and perform thus, they had a base of operations, an arsenal, a commissariat, a very tower of strength, which, come what might, would not fail them? And he did not fail them. No sooner was this large body of reinforcements on their way to Delhi than a demand came from General Reed for the Movable Column itself. This demand John Lawrence could not grant as yet. He entirely agreed with Edwardes that he must retain his hold on the Punjab, even in preference to taking Delhi. The difference between them was chiefly as to the frontier—whether, if matters came to extremities, the 3,000 Europeans and the large body of native troops at Peshawur would be more useful locked up there, or in preserving the peace throughout the Punjab and pushing the siege of Delhi. On the presence of the Movable Column in the Punjab at that moment depended, he knew well, not only the general protection of the country, but the overawing of some six or seven Poorbea regiments which he had not yet found it advisable or possible to deprive of their arms. When once they had been disarmed he would send the Movable Column, with Nicholson at its head, down to Delhi also.

Sir John Lawrence had conversed much with Nicholson on the Peshawur question as he passed through Rawul Pindi to take the command of the Column. But the vehement expostulations of his famous 'Warden of the Marches' had proved as powerless to turn him from his purpose, as were the more rhetorical letters of the Commissioner of Peshawur.

I had a long talk (he says on June 18) with Nicholson, and twice heard all that he had to say as to the policy of maintaining ourselves at Peshawur. I have weighed well what he and you have said, but I cannot concur in it. I am persuaded that, *in the event of a great disaster*, it would be our best policy to abandon Peshawur and Kohat. I am convinced that we should concentrate under those circumstances. With Peshawur in our hands and all the rest of the country in a flame, the force at Peshawur would be 'in the air,' as it were. There, that force is locked up. On this side of the

Indus, a third of it would hold the country and give the remainder for employment down below.

I believe that the Sikhs did hold other places besides Lahore and Peshawur. They held, for instance, Mooltan and the Kohistan of Kangra and Huzara in strength. But I can see no analogy in what they did or should have done and in what should be our policy. We know that this Doab in nowise depends on the right bank of the Indus. The races are different; their political and social condition has long been dissimilar. The Sikhs held these tracts for sixty years before they crossed the Indus. Peshawur was always a source of weakness and danger to them. But for his vanity, Runjeet Singh would have given it up. Burnes in 1838 points this out.

Peshawur and Kohat, between them, cost us half a million of money annually. Should we weather this storm the main difficulty to solve will be how to meet the cost of the new system which will be necessary. We have already from one to two millions annually on the wrong side in finance. I do not deny the value of Peshawur, but I think it too expensive and too dangerous an appendage to maintain with advantage. Our system will not allow us to hold such tracts as Peshawur and Kohat with thorough security. The biggest ass, the greatest fool in the Bengal army may any day be in command. However, I will not bother you more. I pray God it may not come to this. As the enemy are so strong, the more sallies they make the better for us.

But Edwardes was as resolute and unchanging as his Chief, and on the 22nd John Lawrence wrote again developing his views on the situation.

I do not think that you give due weight to my arguments regarding the frontier, nor sufficiently consider all the difficulties of our occupation of the Trans-Indus lands. I will, however, after this say no more on the subject. I see several advantages in the possession of the Trans-Indus districts, and, at one time, felt convinced that we were right in taking them. It was the advice I gave Lord Dalhousie previous to annexation when he consulted me on the subject. But time and experience have led me to alter my views. I consider the expense very great. It costs annually sums which we can ill spare. The expense is yearly increasing. The occupation is difficult and precarious. Any disaster there is a calamity difficult to remedy. The climate is insalubrious, the warfare unsuited to our genius and habits. I would guarantee to

The explanation came in time, and his chief at once replied, July 7:—'I am perfectly satisfied with your note of the 5th. Pray don't think I want to bother you. I cannot and do not expect that, after knocking about all day in the sun, you should write long yarns. On such occasions, a couple of lines demi-officially will satisfy me, until I get a copy of your formal report. All I want is to know what is done, and the reason.'

Nicholson now returned from Phillour to Umritsur, and, hearing of the half-successful rising at Jhelum, he at once disarmed the regiment which was stationed there. Two days later, the still worse news of the complete success of the mutineers at Sealkote reached him, and, judging of the feelings of the wing of cavalry which belonged to his column, by what its other wing had just done at Sealkote, he disarmed that also, and then gathered himself up for his famous spring upon the mutineers, who, flushed with their success, and never dreaming that he was within striking distance, had set out from Sealkote with their faces turned towards Delhi. Their line lay, so Nicholson thought most probable, through Goordaspore, near the Ravi. Thence they would move on Nurpore and Hoshiarpore, and picking up disaffected detachments of horse or foot, Regulars or Irregulars, at each of these places, would bear down, with ever-gathering momentum, on the rear of our hard-pressed forces before Delhi. Could he reach Goordaspore in time to prevent this? It was over forty miles away. The mutineers had two full days' start of him; and the July sun, which must be fatal to not a few of his European soldiers, would be little or no impediment to the Sepoys. It seemed a wild-goose chase. But those who knew Nicholson well, knew that, more than once before now, he had made the impossible to seem possible enough.

The rest of the day (the 10th) was spent in sweeping off into his camp every gig and cart, every horse and pony which could be found plying on the road between Lahore and Umritsur. Many a soldier who had never crossed a horse before found himself suddenly mounted, to the imminent risk of his neck, on a charger taken from the dismounted troopers; while *ekkas* (light carts), warranted to carry two passengers only,

were forced to accommodate four. Even so, not a few men had to go on foot.

At dusk the march began, and, during the comparative cool of the night, gun-carriages and over-crowded carts and walkers managed to traverse in company some twenty-six miles of road. But eighteen more miles still lay before them, and these beneath the full fury of the July sun. Awnings made of the branches of trees were extemporised by the men who rode on the *ekkas* and gun-carriages, and the rough jokes of the soldiers as they started afresh, and the variety of the equipages and breakdowns, recalled to more than one eye-witness the road to Epsom on the Derby day. But this could not last long. Men began to fall exhausted or dead by the roadside; and one incident of the march, which has, I think, never found its way into print, is too characteristic of Nicholson to be omitted here.

When the sun was at its fiercest, the Column neared a grove of trees which seemed to promise a refreshing shade; and some of the officers, seeing the exhausted state of their men, suggested that a halt of an hour or two might well be called to enable them to throw themselves on the ground and snatch an interval of repose. 'No,' sternly replied Nicholson; 'we must press on.' But he yielded to more urgent expostulations, and the worn-out men were soon asleep beneath the trees. After an interval, it occurred to one of their number, as he woke from his sleep, to ask where the general was. Not seeing him amongst the sleepers on the ground, he looked back to the road which they had left, and there, in the very middle of it, in the full glare of the sun, sitting bolt upright upon his horse, and perfectly motionless, he saw John Nicholson waiting, as, unknown to them all, he had been waiting from the beginning, with impatient patience till his men should have had their rest out. The silent protest did its work. The exhausted men started up with a strength which was not altogether their own, and, in the course of the afternoon, the whole column reached Goordaspore.

Next morning news came that the mutineers were in the act of crossing the Ravi at the Trimmu Ghaut, or ferry, about nine miles off. There was no time to be lost, and a second

march, under the same burning sun, brought the avenger of blood face to face with his foes. The mutinous troopers, who had done most of the work at Sealkote, inflamed by *bhang*, charged gallantly on Nicholson's mounted police, and put them to a headlong flight, which was not stopped till they reached Goordaspore. But the Black Bess of the mutineers was no match for the Enfield rifle, nor was the single broken down station gun which they had carried off from Sealkote able to hold its own against Nicholson's nine. They were soon driven back towards the river, whose rising waters had made the ford, by which they had so lately crossed, to be unfordable, and they straightway found themselves cooped up in an island in the middle of the stream, while Nicholson was threatening them from one bank, and, as they believed, a pursuing force from Jhelum on the other. Had Nicholson's mounted police stood firm, they could have ridden down the mutineers and cut them to pieces in their flight towards the river. But his infantry, worn out by their long march, could do nothing now in the way of pursuit.

But Nicholson could afford to wait; for the mutineers were without boats and could not escape from the island. Three days sufficed to rest his troops and to collect boats, and on the morning of the 16th, while his nine guns engrossed the attention of the mutineers, he crossed unobserved to the lower part of the island, and, putting himself, as though he were a simple subaltern, at the head of his men, led them against the foe. The single gun was now turned full on his column. It was worked by a fine old havildar, who was evidently prepared to die at his post. Nicholson, famous of old for his feats of swordmanship, went at him, sword in hand, and, dealing him a blow slantwise on his shoulder, with that one stroke cut him clean in two, one half of his body falling on one, the other on the other side of his sword. 'Not a bad sliver that!' he said quietly to his aide-de-camp, Randall, who was at his side, and then pursued the flying Sepoys, driving them into the river and destroying them to the last man. Thus, in one short week from its outbreak, the Sealkote Brigade had ceased to exist.

Sir John Lawrence's satisfaction at this exploit of his new

Brigadier-General was great, for he estimated rightly its bearing on the general issue of the struggle. Through the medium of his Secretary he expressed himself on the subject thus:—

As an evidence to Government of what can be done by a really able officer who desires to overtake his enemy, I am to record that the troops made a march of upwards of forty miles on the night of the 11th, and advanced and defeated the insurgents immediately after their arrival. . . . Thus at an aggregate loss of forty-six soldiers, only twelve of whom lost their lives, Brigadier-General Nicholson disposed of a regiment of Native Infantry and a wing of Regular Cavalry, thus giving practical evidence of what can be accomplished by a really efficient commander. . . . The importance of this affair is very considerable. The effect on the country at large will be beneficial. But its main result consists in the loss which has been, directly or indirectly, inflicted on the general cause of the mutineers in Hindustan as well as in the Punjab. The Sealkote mutineers, encouraged by the success of those at Jullundur, evidently intended to sweep across the country, picking up on their route the 2nd Irregular Cavalry at Goordaspore, with whom they had an understanding, the 4th Native Infantry at Nurpore and Kangra, and probably many of the disarmed Sepoys of the 33rd, 35th, and 54th at Jullundur and Umritsur, and would, probably, have reached Delhi with three or four thousand good native soldiers, to the infinite encouragement of the insurgents in that city. Whereas, as the matter now stands, fully a thousand mutineers have been destroyed, and all disarmed soldiers will be awed by their fate.

It was always Sir John Lawrence's way to look on each event in its remote as well as its immediate consequences; as part, that is, of a whole; and, in that spirit, he went on now to comment on the contrast which the doings at Sealkote presented to those at Jullundur, Rohilkund, and Meerut.

The injury which the junction of the Jullundur and Rohilkund mutineers with the insurgents at Delhi has caused to British interests, it will be difficult to over-estimate. The Chief Commissioner believes that, but for their arrival, the city would long ago have been in our possession. It was not merely the addition which the insurgents gained that was of such importance, though, even in that light, it was of great value. But the almost triumphal

advance of these bodies of troops showed to the insurgents that the British Government was nearly powerless over wide and important parts of the country. The moral influence of such a circumstance must have been very great, and that such was the effect of our mistakes must be evident when it is remembered that the most resolute and powerful attacks on our troops invariably followed the accession of each reinforcement to the enemy.

Sir John Lawrence now made up his mind that no Poorbea regiment in the Punjab should be allowed to retain its arms longer than was absolutely necessary. The 4th Native Infantry at Kangra and Nurpore had already been disarmed by Reynell Taylor; and the 10th Light Cavalry at Ferozepore gave up their arms and horses at the command of Brigadier Innes. There had been no definite reason to suspect either of them; but the outbreak at Sealkote made it necessary, in these troublous times, to take away the means to do ill deeds, even from those who might not seem disposed to use them. And now John Lawrence, who had at length left his solitary station at Rawul Pindi, where he had planned and done so much, sent for Nicholson to Lahore, and, to his infinite delight, gave him the long-looked-for order to march for Delhi.

CHAPTER IV.

ABANDONMENT OF PESHAWUR.

JUNE—AUGUST 1857.

THE letters of Sir John Lawrence which I have hitherto quoted, and the actions which I have recorded, are all of them based, more or less, upon the supposition that Delhi would soon fall. And that it might fall the sooner and with more overwhelming effect upon the prospects of the Mutiny generally, he was doing, as we have seen, all that man could do. But what if it should not fall? John Lawrence would not have been the statesman that he was; he would not have governed the Punjab as he did govern it, had he shut his eyes to the other and only too possible alternative that our attack, when at last it was delivered, might fail, and that our small and hardpressed army upon the Ridge might have to retreat, if indeed it could still do so, towards the Punjab. In that case, he knew well that the country between the Jumna and the Sutlej would rise against us; that the Regular troops who had hitherto remained passive would throw off the disguise; that their example would be followed by the Irregular Cavalry, and that again, only too probably, by the inhabitants of the Punjab generally. There was a point, he knew well, beyond which the loyalty even of the Sikhs could not be strained. He knew the natives of India far too intimately to imagine that, govern them as we may, we can ever look for more from them than a passive contentment or acquiescence in our rule, the rule of a people who differ from themselves in habits, character, language, colour, and religion. And he took his measures accordingly. In public he always held cheerful and inspiriting language, but he never disguised from himself nor from his more trusted subordinates

that he contemplated also the possibility of failure. If he always hoped for the best, he was always, also, preparing for the worst. And what he was prepared to do, if the worst came to the worst, he communicated, confidentially, with a full sense of his responsibility and with perfect coolness—the coolness of a brave man,—almost at the beginning of the struggle, to those whom it most concerned to know it.

He was prepared, if matters came to that extremity, to ask Dost Mohammed to occupy Peshawur, with the understanding that, if he remained true to us, it should revert to him when the struggle was over. We were to retire to Attock and hold the line of the Indus in force, thus setting free some 3,000 European troops from a place which, during three months at least of the year, is the white man's hospital, and, so long as we hold it, must always, it is to be feared, continue to be the white man's grave. A large portion of the troops thus disengaged from Peshawur would be sent at once to Delhi, and would make the early termination of the siege a certainty; while the gift of Peshawur to the Afghans, to whom it had recently belonged, and who were always ardently longing for its recovery, would do more, he thought, than anything else to secure their permanent friendship and their active alliance in case of an invasion from beyond.

This, then, is what he was prepared to do, if the safety of the Empire or, what in his judgment, at this juncture, was the same thing, the prosecution of the siege of Delhi, demanded it. That he was prepared calmly to face the outcry which such a proposal would create, at the time, among his lieutenants at Peshawur, and, afterwards, among the shortsighted and uninstructed throughout India and at home, is not the least striking proof of his moral courage. It shows that he regarded the struggle with the eye of a statesman as well as of a soldier, that he embraced its imperial as well as its local aspects.

The proposal therefore, in itself, seems to call for little in the way of defence or explanation; and, if I treat of it in more detail than may appear necessary, I do so for three reasons. First, because, as Sir John Lawrence's biographer, I cannot fail to see, in the correspondence before me, how large a part of his most anxious thoughts the question occupied. Secondly,

because, as I have said, his treatment of it seems to me to indicate his statesmanlike insight no less than his moral courage; and thirdly and principally, because owing to the heat of party spirit which has, unfortunately, of late years been imported into Indian questions, there have not been wanting men in high station who, in ignorance or otherwise, have endeavoured to make capital out of it for purposes of their own, and so to discredit the just and wise frontier policy with which Lord Lawrence's name will always be honourably identified. In a debate in the House of Lords on December 9, 1878, on the Afghan war, into which the policy of the Government had just then precipitated us, Lord Cranbrook, who was at that time Secretary of State for India, used the following words: 'Would you have asked the Ameer to let you send a friendly mission to explain what the relations between him and you ought to be, or would you, with *the retiring modesty* which a noble lord exhibited on a former occasion, have wished England to retire behind the Indus?' In the course of a weighty speech delivered on the same evening, a speech every word of which might have been written to-day as a description of what has happened, rather than—as what it was—a solemn and prophetic forecast of what would happen, and which, if it had been listened to, might, even then, have saved thousands of lives and millions of money, as well as something which ought to be more valuable to England than either, Lord Lawrence, with a dignity which must have made one man at least among his hearers feel somewhat small, remarked that he was quite prepared to defend the policy proposed by him in 1857, at a proper time and place, if challenged to do so.

The challenge, of course, was not forthcoming, and Lord Lawrence considered that the attempt made by Lord Cranbrook to cast a slur on his reputation had been prompted by party motives only—as indeed it had—and that it was altogether unworthy of the speaker. He did, however, desire that the attack should be answered calmly by some one who had access to the whole of his papers, and this, not so much with any view of re-establishing his own reputation—which neither he himself nor any person whose opinion was of value could consider to be impaired—as of ensuring that a full and

truthful account should be given to the world of the circumstances which influenced him in his proposal, under certain eventualities, to retire from Peshawur. This wish he expressed to a near relative and friend in the following June. But before the task had been begun, in the very next week, all England and all India heard with a thrill of sorrow, which the events of succeeding years have certainly not tended to diminish, that Lord Lawrence was no more.

It now rests with me to decide what answer, if any, shall be given to Lord Cranbrook's taunt, a taunt echoed since then, in the heat of party conflict, by many lesser men. The wish expressed by Lord Lawrence to Colonel Randall a few days before his death seems to me to settle the question, and to make it a sacred duty to set forth fully—and as far as possible in his own words—what he did or did not propose with respect to Peshawur.

The difficulty is chiefly one of selection. If I had room to quote the whole correspondence there would be little to explain and less to defend, as, assuredly, there is nothing to conceal. Any explanations or connecting links which may seem necessary I shall make as short as possible, and, for the rest, shall leave Sir John Lawrence to give his own views in his own words.

We have seen at how early a period in the history of the Mutiny the danger of Peshawur and the urgent remonstrances of his friends there had obliged Sir John Lawrence to recall two regiments which he had already despatched towards Delhi, to the defence of the famous valley. He did what he was bound to do and did it ungrudgingly. But looking forward to the future, and observing how the mutineers at Delhi were being daily reinforced, he took occasion, on June 9, to inform his Peshawur friends that, if it came to be a question of starving the siege of Delhi in order that more troops might be massed upon the frontier, he would be prepared to draw in that frontier.

Rawul Pindi: June 9, 1857.

My dear Edwardes, . . . I have done all I could to urge vigorous and prompt action at Delhi, and only stopped when I perceived that I might do more harm than good. Delay is only a less misfortune than a repulse. I have no confidence in the Headquarter folks, and

unless we are specially aided from the Almighty, any disaster may occur. . . .

If Delhi does not fall at once, or if any disaster occur there, all the Regular Army, and probably all the Irregular Cavalry, will fall away. Last night (at Jullundur) the two native corps of Infantry, with the exception of one hundred and twenty men, and nearly all the 6th Cavalry mutinied. They were joined at Phillour by the 3rd Native Infantry. The dawk this morning brought the rumour that the 15th and 30th had mutinied at Nusserabad, and the Brigade at Bareilly, and so the game goes on. Day after day, more and more regiments fall away.

I think we must look ahead and consider what should be done, in the event of disaster at Delhi. My decided opinion is that, in that case, we must concentrate. All our safety depends on this. If we attempt to hold the whole country, we shall be cut up in detail. The important points in the Punjab are Peshawur, Mooltan, and Lahore, including Umritsur. But I do not think that we can hold Peshawur and the other places also, in the event of disaster. We could easily retire from Peshawur early in the day. But at the eleventh hour it would be difficult, perhaps impossible. Depend on it, that if this disaffection goes on it will spread to the Irregulars even of the Punjab force. They will see that our European force is small and scattered over the country. The Ameer will also come down and endeavour to gain Peshawur.

I would make a merit of our necessities. I would invite him down, ask him to take care of Peshawur, and promise that Government should give it to him if he remained true to us. If anything would make him true, this would. He would surely sooner hold Peshawur as our friend than as our enemy. Peshawur would accomplish his heart's desire, and would do more to make the Afghans friendly to us than anything else which we could do. We could then hold Attock in strength, and have the Indus for our barrier. It is a formidable one if rightly used. We would bring the greater part of our European regiments down here and organise our arrangements.

Peshawur is only useful to us in the event of an invasion. In every other respect it is a source of weakness and expense. By giving it up we free ourselves from many complications, and, in the event of an invasion, we might still, if necessary, cross the river for a time. It will be said, if we give up Peshawur, we must give up Kohat and the Derajat. I would certainly give up Kohat with Peshawur. The Derajat I would keep, at any rate for the present. But I confess I am prepared to give it all up if necessary. It seems

to me madness to endeavour to keep the outskirts of our dominions, when it will be a desperate struggle to retain the latter at all. If things go on as they are now doing, it must come to a life and death struggle. With six or seven thousand Europeans in good health and spirits, and plenty of ammunition and guns, the probability is that we can hold our own and save our magazines. Only reflect what will be the condition of our Europeans at Peshawur in August and September, worn down by the climate and dispirited by our constant misfortunes. They may even fall a prey to the Irregular force we are now raising. But at Rawul Pindi with a good climate and a friendly population we should be prepared to advance, in any direction, directly the cold weather sets in, and, by that time, twenty thousand Europeans will have arrived from England.

It will be urged that a retrograde move will injure our prestige. This seems to me a weak argument. There is much in prestige up to a certain point. Beyond that it is a feeble reed on which to lean. European troops advancing in good order to an attack, well handled and well in hand, are greatly aided by the prestige which attends them. But let them be mismanaged and receive a check, where is then their prestige? The 24th Queen's at Chillianwalla marched to the attack 1,150 strong with the assurance of victory. When they fell back after their repulse a few Sikh horsemen followed them and cut up many of them.

I do not think we could hold Peshawur if we lose the country cis-Indus and are cooped up in the fort at Lahore. But even if we did, to what purpose? We could not hope to maintain ourselves there until India was reconquered.

Pray think of what I have said, and consult Brigadiers S. Cotton and Nicholson, but nobody else. No man will retrace his steps more unwillingly than myself. But there is a point when to hold on savours more of obstinacy than of wisdom.

On the following day he sent a copy of this letter to Lord Canning, and commented on it as follows :—

My Lord, . . . I trust that your Lordship has written urgently to England for reinforcements; 20,000 infantry will not be a man too many, perhaps not enough. We are doing our best to maintain our position. As the Regulars mutiny and fall away we raise Irregular corps. I shall do my best in the confidence of your support.

The three great points in the Punjab to hold are, Peshawur, Lahore (including Umritsur), and Mooltan. If we can hold these firmly we retain our occupation of the Punjab. But if any disaster occur at Delhi, or even if much delay occurs, and should the

Hindustani cavalry desert us, I myself do not think that, under these circumstances, we can do so.

It appears to me that by holding on too long on all, we may lose all. Like mariners at sea in a tempest, I would sacrifice a portion to save the rest. I enclose copy of a letter which I sent to Colonel Edwardes yesterday regarding Peshawur. I rather think he will be for maintaining ourselves there. I should be glad if your lordship could send me a telegraphic message through Lord Elphinstone expressive of your wishes. A line will suffice. 'Hold on to Peshawur to the last,' or, 'You may act as may appear expedient in regard to Peshawur,' will explain your views.

I would not give up Peshawur so long as I saw a prospect of success. But I cannot help foreseeing that in August and September the larger portion of the Europeans will be prostrated by sickness. They might then be destroyed without much difficulty. But, even should this not happen, they will be of little use for months. There are some 3,500 Europeans there, including Artillery, a body who, if in good health and well commanded, would beat 20,000 native troops. But these same soldiers worn down by sickness, and dispirited by successive combats with large bodies of insurgents who will not close, but will buzz around them, might be so weakened that even if the major part crossed the Indus, they would prove of little value in an impending struggle.

I myself see no value in Peshawur or Kohat except as furnishing a good base of operations in the event of a general invasion from the west, and as a good practical school for our officers. But many good soldiers affirm that the Indus would prove a better boundary. One great argument in favour of surrendering Peshawur is that it would do more to reconcile the Afghans to us, to unite their interests with ours, than anything else which we could do. So long as we hold Peshawur, it is vain to expect that the Afghans, in the event of a great invasion, will be true to us. Officers will urge that a retirement from Peshawur must prove disastrous. I cannot see this. An army unbeaten can retire with success, just as it may advance with success. Much will depend on the commander, and, fortunately, there is a good one there.

It is difficult to conceive the calamities which may follow a disaster at Delhi. Native accounts, even now, describe the upper portion of the Gangetic Doab as perfectly disorganised, bands of freebooters roaming about without fear. From Delhi due west to the frontier of Bahawulpore and Bickaneer, the condition of the country is even worse. Even if troops were sent out from England the week after the news of the Delhi massacre arrived, they cannot be in

Calcutta, Bombay, and Kurrachi before October, and up the country before December. What may not be our condition by that time?

Your Lordship may depend on my doing all in my power to stem the tide and maintain our supremacy. I think it would be useful if you could delegate to me your authority to act on your behalf in the Punjab during this crisis.

The Peshawur authorities were not likely to acquiesce in their chief's view of the comparative importance of Peshawur and of Delhi. They would hardly have been mortal if they had done so. They immediately held a council at which Edwardes, Nicholson and Cotton were present; and Edwardes, acting as their mouthpiece, wrote in forcible terms protesting against the bare supposition.

June 11.

My dear John,—We are unanimously of opinion that with God's help we *can* and *will* hold Peshawur, let the worst come to the worst, and that it would be a fatal policy to abandon it and to retire across the Indus. It is the anchor of the Punjab, and if you take it up the whole ship will drift to sea. For keeping the mastery of the Punjab there are only two obligatory points—the Peshawur Valley and the Manjha. All the rest are mere dependencies. . . . We think then that all the European force should be concentrated at Peshawur and in the Manjha. . . . Holding these two points you will hold the whole Punjab. . . . Europeans cannot retreat. Without rum, without beef, without success, they would soon be without hope, without organisation. Cabul would come again. . . . As a general remark I believe when it comes to our ceding territory we abandon our position in India and shall soon be in the sea. We hope earnestly that you will stand or fall at Peshawur. It must be done somewhere. Let us do it in the front, giving up nothing.

Unanswerable, no doubt, and vigorous and manly all of this was; but I observe that Sir John Lawrence has written across the letter from which I have given a few extracts, the pregnant remark—'the plan here sketched out would have required us to retain all the European troops in the Punjab.' And was it not equally unanswerable, did it not show equal manliness and vigour, and did it not show a much wider grasp of all the conditions of the problem to say, as John Lawrence did, there is one thing which I consider would be even more fatal than the abandonment of Peshawur, and that is the abandonment of the siege of Delhi? We can doubtless, as you say,

ride out the storm in the Punjab, if we determine to keep every European and every native soldier who is now within it around us, but what of India? Peshawur is not India, though it is natural that you should now write as if it were. The Punjab is not India, though it would be even more natural if I, as its chief ruler, were to act as if it were. India lies beyond and above them *both*, and I will send the last available European and the last available native levies to the front, and get on without them as I best can, rather than allow the historic capital of India, the heart of India, to remain in the hands of our enemies, or to drive our army in disaster from before its walls.

Such was the gist of all Sir John Lawrence's letters on this subject, and such the policy on which he was prepared to act so long as the danger which he contemplated was either probable or possible. But meanwhile he replied with characteristic modesty and frankness to some of Edwardes' arguments.

You may all be right about Kohat and Peshawur, and I do not feel that I am likely to be a good judge. But I confess that I do not think with you that we could hold these places *if the disaffection spreads*. We must hold Mooltan. It is our only means of communication with the seaboard and with Bombay. There is no one who could hold it for us. Bahawulpore is already wavering in its fidelity, and will not continue true if we are pressed. . . . If we give up all the country but Peshawur and the Manjha we shall starve. We shall get no revenue from the country, or supplies of cash from Bombay. The two bodies of troops, one at Peshawur and one at Lahore, will be isolated. With the trans-Indus force transferred to this side of the river we could hold the country, collect the revenue, keep open our communications, and give the Europeans all they require. I do not think that the Ameer would follow us across the Indus. Even had he the will he would not have the power. The difference between the trans-Indus Mohammedan and his co-religionist on this side is the difference between a demon and a human being who believes in a bad religion. The one race are the descendants of the conquering hordes, the other of the converted Hindus. You will more easily hold a thousand square miles on this side of the Indus than a hundred on that. . . . But enough of this. I hope that no necessity will arise.

Meanwhile as the plot thickened, as Delhi did not fall or

give any sign of falling, and as the Chief Commissioner went on draining his province of its men and of its materials for war, the line of argument taken up by Edwardes, and those for whom he spoke, became more urgent and alarmist, as, assuredly, it was also more shortsighted and provincial.

We are all of opinion (he says on the 26th of June) that you must not go on throwing away your resources in detail by meeting General Reed's demands for reinforcements. Delhi is not India, and if General Reed cannot take it with eight thousand men, he will not take it with nine thousand or ten thousand. However important a point, it is only a point, and enough has been done for it. . . . Make a stand! Anchor, Hardy, anchor! Tell General Reed he can have no more men from here, and must either get into Delhi with the men he has got, or get reinforcements from below,[1] or abandon the siege and fall back on the Sutlej. Don't try too much. We are outnumbered. Stick to what we can do. Let us hold the Punjab *coûte que coûte*, and not give up one European necessary for that duty. . . . Don't yield an inch of frontier; gather up your forces and restrict yourself to the defence of the Punjab. You cannot spare more Europeans from the Punjab. Make sure of one practicable policy. If General Reed with all the men you have sent him cannot take Delhi, let Delhi go. Decide on it at once and make the Punjab snug before the rains. Don't let yourself be sucked to death by inches in the way Reed is doing. He has his difficulties. We have ours. You have made vast efforts for him, and no one, hereafter, considering these movements, can blame you for now securing your own province. Not that I would say secure your own province if the Empire required its sacrifice. We could sacrifice any other province without a pang or a doubt, but the Empire's reconquest depends on the Punjab. . . . My own belief is that, on the reinforcements now being sent reaching General Reed, Delhi will be stormed successfully. If not, another thousand Europeans will not turn the scale—while their removal will endanger the Punjab. Pray take your own line. It is not selfish. It is the good of the Empire. Don't get engulfed in Delhi.

And a few days later, June 30, he writes again:—

You have indeed denuded the Punjab to an anxious extent to help General Reed, and my earnest advice to you is to send not a man more. Nor should this force, the Peshawur garrison, be any

[1] There were *no* reinforcements to be had 'from below'—i.e. from the North-West Provinces. They had too much to do to hold their own.

further drawn on. It is true we are strong now, and it may look selfish to keep the troops. But you need to be strong somewhere when all is generally so weak. And the frontier must be strong.

What must have been the result, the inevitable result, had Sir John Lawrence yielded to these reiterated, these egregiously shortsighted, appeals to him not to send a man more to Delhi? What but the certain destruction of our force before that place? An assault had been given up by the military authorities as hopeless unless or until large reinforcements should arrive from the Punjab. A regular siege was obviously impossible. The enemy were receiving weekly or daily reinforcements, and had at their disposal an unlimited amount of all the material of war. The direct and practical answer which John Lawrence gave to this and every other appeal of the kind may perhaps best be shown by an extract from an earlier letter of June 17 to Hervey Greathed, who had written from before Delhi to tell him of the unexpected numbers of the enemy, and of the excellence of their artillery practice.

We are sending you down every soldier we can spare. I calculate that by July 1 you ought to have 3250 men from us. Thus—

7 companies of Her Majesty's 8th, full . .	600
5 ,, ,, ,, 61st, ,, . .	450
European Artillerymen	200
1st Punjab Rifles (Coke's)	800
4th Sikhs ,, (Rothney's)	800
Punjab Cavalry	400
	3250

In fifteen days afterwards, we could send the 1st Punjab Cavalry, now on its way from Mooltan—say 500 sabres—and, probably twenty days after this, the 2nd Punjab Rifles, now at Mooltan. The latter cannot move until the Beluch Battalion arrives from Sukkur, for it has to watch the native corps whom we have just disarmed. Even to do thus much we have had to weaken ourselves a good deal. We have still thirteen regiments of armed native infantry to watch, and a frontier of eight hundred miles to guard. By the bye, we have the Kumaon Battalion also available, and I purpose sending them down. They do not muster above four hundred and fifty men. I had cause to suspect them in the first instance, and put them in a corner where they could not well do harm. But, since then, I have reason to believe them staunch, and

John Nicholson with his Column lain just so far off from their route as to make it seem quite impossible that he could intercept them. By his famous flank march, involving as it did miracles of speed and endurance, he managed to throw himself across their route, and, by the curious irony of destiny, with the very European force which, if it had been detained at Sealkote, might have overawed them there.

But of this more presently. And meanwhile we must try to follow the first acts of the newly-fledged Brigadier-General with especial reference to the relations which, true to his erratic and masterful self, he still bore to the subject of this biography. I have said that strange things might be expected when Nicholson found himself, for the first time, at the head of an army in the field, and not many days passed before he showed that, in spite of his good resolutions, he would be true to himself, alike in his impetuous gallantry and in his sublime disregard of all authority. He had told Sir John Lawrence in a letter which I have already quoted that, so far as he was concerned, 'bygones should be bygones;' and it was well that he had done so, for there were enough grounds of complaint and misunderstanding ahead, to satisfy the most insatiable appetite for that species of excitement.

'I was glad,' writes John Lawrence, 'to receive your last note, and to find that you had given up all old matters. I assure you that I endeavour in all public affairs to be guided by a sense of my duty. Where I can conciliate those working with me, it is my object to do so. When I can not, I try to offend them as little as possible.'

Already, on leaving Rawul Pindi, Nicholson had taken a step which might have involved a breach with any man who was less considerate than his chief. He had pressed Sir John Lawrence in conversation to increase the size of his Column by transferring to it the one European regiment which kept the Sepoys of that place and of Jhelum in check, and were ultimately to be used in disarming them both. Sir John had pointed out in reply that the Column was amply large enough for what it had to do in the Punjab, and that to abandon Rawul Pindi would be to sever the line of communication between Lahore and Peshawur, and to ensure disorganisation

in the surrounding districts. Nothing should induce him to take so desperate a step till a still more desperate state of things at Delhi should compel him to send his last man thither.

Nicholson left Rawul Pindi, and straightway wrote to General Gowan, advising him to withdraw the European troops whether Sir John Lawrence consented or not! With characteristic frankness he told his chief what he had done, and added, what it was hardly necessary to add, that he had done it only from a sense of duty. With equally characteristic magnanimity and forbearance, Sir John replied, 'I am sorry that I cannot agree with you in your views about Rawul Pindi. So long as you have a European regiment with the Movable Force, I do not think that the 500 European Infantry of H.M.'s 24th can well be better disposed of than at this spot. But I quite understand and admit the grounds on which you wrote to the General.'

Nicholson joined the Column at Jullundur on June 21, and his first ac gave sufficient proof that a master spirit was in the field. To the mixed amazement and delight of those who composed the Column, he started with it two days later as if he was going straight to Delhi. But he had other purposes in view. And by a series of admirable arrangements, every one of which was carried out exactly as it ought to be, he succeeded, with 800 Europeans, in disarming two whole regiments, the 33rd and 35th, one of which formed part of his Column already, and which, had he taken it to Delhi, would have joined the mutineers at once; the other, an equally suspicious regiment, which had been ordered to join him from Hoshiarpore on his line of march. Not a shot was fired, nor a drop of blood shed. Sir John Lawrence was delighted with the act itself, and with the manner in which it had been carried out. But hearing from Nicholson none of the particulars, he ventured in the letter which I have already quoted to ask that he should be kept informed of what was done and the grounds for doing it. 'I have no doubt that it is all right, and that it is on the safe side, but I wish to hear of what is done, and the grounds of it. A few words will suffice. It looks foolish, my being in charge of the Punjab, and telling Government that this and that has been done, and not being able to add a line as to the reason.

hold the line of the Indus with one-half of the troops which the outer range requires.

And then to come to our present position. Here we are with three European regiments, a large Artillery, and some of our best native troops locked up across the Indus; troops which if at Delhi would decide the contest in a week. What have we got for all the rest of the Punjab? We have barely 2,000 Europeans—I doubt if we have so many—holding the forts of Phillour, Govindghur, Ferozepore, and Mooltan. We have not a man more with a white face whom we can spare. We cannot concentrate more than we have now done, except by giving up Rawul Pindi and, eventually, Peshawur. Should the Sikhs rise, our position, on this side the Indus, will be well-nigh desperate. With the Peshawur force on this side, we should be irresistibly strong. There was no one thing which tended so much to the ruin of Napoleon in 1814 as the tenacity with which, after the disaster at Leipsic, he clung to the line of the Elbe instead of falling back at once to that of the Rhine. He thus compromised all his garrisons beyond the Elbe, and when he was beaten in the field these gradually had to surrender. But these troops would have given him the victory had they been at his side at Bautzen and the other conflicts which followed Leipsic. But enough of this.

It was towards the close of June and at the beginning of July that the prospects in the Punjab were at their worst. There were louder and ever louder calls from Delhi for reinforcements. The difficulty of meeting them was growing greater, and the protests of Edwardes and the Peshawur chiefs against the policy of draining the Punjab were becoming more urgent and imperative. It had been hoped by the authorities of Delhi, no less than by Edwardes and by Lawrence, that when the last of the 3,200 fresh troops should have arrived upon the Ridge by the beginning of July, the long-postponed attack would at last be made. But this hope was already vanishing into air. 'I estimate,' says John Lawrence to Edwardes on June 29, 'that when all our reinforcements arrive we shall have between seven and eight thousand men before Delhi. But I am sorry to say they appear quite unequal to taking the place. They cannot indeed secure their communications in the rear.'

No message had as yet arrived from Lord Canning as to

what should be done if matters came to an extremity, and yet everything seemed to show that the time was drawing near when the question would be one, not of contingent or hypothetical, but of immediate and practical politics; when the fateful choice would have to be made whether the Chief Commissioner should order our forces to withdraw from Peshawur or should declare that he had not another man to send to Delhi. His own mind was quite made up. 'Delhi is the critical point, and I feel I am bound to send every one that I can muster down.' The Peshawur authorities were equally clear in their view, for it was at this time that they sent the joint remonstrance from which I have quoted such copious extracts. The European Infantry now in the Punjab amounted only to 5,600 men. Of these nearly half were in the Peshawur valley. The small remainder had, in conjunction with the Irregulars, to garrison the Capital, to hold the forts of Mooltan and Govindghur, the arsenals of Phillour and Ferozepore, the cantonments of Rawul Pindi and Jullundur, and the passage of the Indus at Attock. They had to contribute eight hundred of their number to the Movable Column, to keep some six or seven Poorbea regiments which still retained their arms from rising, and to prevent those which had already been disarmed from taking themselves off to Delhi. An insurrection, therefore, might, at any time, take place, and Sir John Lawrence made all the preparations by which he might utilise his small force to the utmost, might secure all the most important points, might disarm the Poorbea regiments, and now, even now, send off one more European regiment to Delhi!

But his letters show his extreme anxiety.

If the China reinforcements (he says on June 26), arrive soon, we may still do well, but otherwise I do not myself anticipate we shall weather the storm, more especially if you all remain across the Indus.

To abandon Peshawur (he says to George Barnes, to whom, as well as to Bartle Frere and Neville Chamberlain, he communicated his thoughts on the subject), would set free 3,000 Europeans, 24 guns, and four beautiful corps of Punjab troops. This would be a desperate measure. But anything is better than not taking Delhi. If

we cannot take the place, we cannot retreat. . . . Of course it (the abandonment of Peshawur) would be a sign of weakness. But are we not weak? It is mere temerity to say we are not so. On this side the Indus we would defy all the hill tribes, Afghans, and the like, and consolidate our power, and reorganise our army. By clinging to our Trans-Indus possessions we may ruin ourselves past redemption.

And again he writes to Edwardes on June 30 :—

What I have said on this subject is founded on much thought and full conviction. I am neither fond of Indian politics, nor desire to dogmatise on them. It is possible that I may be wrong, but for the life of me I cannot see it. I admit the goodness of the present boundary, but I affirm we pay too dearly for it. And even could we afford it financially, which I do not think we can, the present question is, can we maintain it in the present crisis? I know myself that I would give it up joyfully, to have the European troops and Punjab force which is now trans-Indus, before Delhi. We should then see an instantaneous change in affairs. The enemy would be driven within the walls, and another week would see us masters of the place. Surely you cannot fail to see the ruinous consequences of delay. Gwalior has gone ; a day or so hence we shall hear of the Nerbudda being up ; then Nagpore ; and, by the time our European troops are out, we shall have, literally, to recover all India. Only think of the miseries which in the meantime are being endured by our countrymen and countrywomen in various parts of India. The evils which will have been caused by General Hewitt's incompetency, on May 10, and the subsequent delay in not marching on Delhi, will probably be felt for the next fifty years.

I add here an extract from an official despatch to Lord Canning, dated June 25, in which Sir John Lawrence sums up his own and his opponents' views thus :—

If we maintained Peshawur, and the Punjab troops remained loyal, we could still hold our own ; but if they turn against us we must shut ourselves up in our forts, until an army from England can work its way up to the Punjab. On the other hand, if we retire from Peshawur and Kohat, we could probably hold all the country cis-Indus, and at any rate have all our European troops in hand, ready to act together. We should be among a peaceable, and not, as in Peshawur, among a hostile population. We should, in every view that the Chief Commissioner can take of the case, be in an infinitely stronger position than if we retained Peshawur. Brigadier Cotton, Colonel Edwardes, and Nicholson are against this plan,

and consider that Peshawur must be held to the last, even though we have to give up all the intervening country between it and Lahore. They answer that we cannot retire from Peshawur with safety, and that such a movement will be the signal for a general insurrection. This would probably be the case trans-Indus, but our troops would have no more than forty miles to move, and though they have a river to cross, the passage can be commanded by our guns. On this side the Indus, there would be no insurrection till the eleventh hour, for the people are not only well-disposed, but what is still more important, unarmed. It is, doubtless, a choice of two evils, neither of which I would adopt until the last moment, but it is a choice which we may have to make, and if it prove a wrong one, may prove fatal.

Early in July a letter came from Hervey Greathed, which not only announced that the notion of an assault had been given up, but—in spite of the reinforcements which were arriving day by day from the Punjab—hinted, in no obscure terms, that some even of the bolder and more adventurous spirits in the camp, of whom he himself was certainly one, were beginning to utter the ominous word, retreat.

July 4, 1857.

. The determination to take Delhi by assault has been twice on the eve of execution, and I no longer feel confident that it will be again so far matured. And, supposing I am right, the question will arise whether we should maintain our position, or raise the siege, and dispose of our forces as may best secure the public interests until a second campaign be opened.

A fortnight later came a more alarming letter still from General Archdale Wilson himself, a man on whose accession to power, in place of Reed, Sir John Lawrence and others had been disposed, and not without reason, to place the highest hopes.

July 18.

I have consulted with Colonel Baird Smith, the Chief Engineer with the Force, and we have both come to the conclusion that any attempt now to assault Delhi must end in defeat and disaster. The Force consists at present of 2,200 Europeans and 1,500 natives, or a total of 3,700 bayonets. . . To enable me, however, to hold this position, I must be strongly reinforced, and that speedily. I hear there is no chance of relief from the forces collecting below, as their attention has been directed towards Oude. I therefore earnestly call upon you to send me, as quickly as possible, such support as you can from the Punjab. . . . I candidly tell you that

unless speedily reinforced, this force will soon be so reduced by casualties and sickness, that nothing will be left but a retreat to Kurnal. The disasters attending such an unfortunate proceeding I cannot calculate. May I request an immediate reply by telegraph, stating what aid in reinforcements you can afford me, and when I may expect them to join my camp?

What was to be done now? Edwardes and Cotton and Nicholson had again and again warned John Lawrence that he was denuding the Punjab to a dangerous extent, and that he ought not, under any circumstances, to send another European to Delhi. They had told him also, and told him truly, that after the Herculean exertions which he had made to reinforce the army before Delhi, no one could blame him if he now made his own province secure and refused to see dangers which it was convenient for him not to see. No one indeed! But it never occurred to John Lawrence, if he saw his way clear to do a thing, to ask whether he would be praised or blamed for doing it. 'I look'—he wrote to Barnes in words which might have been the motto of his whole life and, not least, of the last few months of it—'I look for neither fame nor abuse. All I wish is to do my duty, and save our rule and those connected with it.' Noble words, which those who have taunted him, during the recent paroxysm of aggressive war, with his 'retiring modesty,' that is to say with his moral courage, would do well to try to understand!

And how did he answer General Archdale Wilson's urgent appeal? Quick as thought—quick, at all events, as the electric wire could take it—back went the inspiriting message.

July 21.

I have received yours of the 18th. We can send you off at once 1,700 men, thus—

Her Majesty's 52nd	600
Military Police.	400
Kumaon Battery	400
Mooltani Horse	200
Nine-pounder Battery	100

These to be followed up by some 2,000 more. Why not get a portion of the Meerut Force?

It was a message which might well breathe fresh heart and hope into the small force upon the Ridge, who had sunk down

under the influence of the reiterated attacks of the enemy, of exposure to the sun, of fatigue, and of disease to the number of 3,700 effectives. But John Lawrence was determined to do more, and, if possible, to make the word 'retreat' to be a word that should not be so much as whispered at Delhi. And he wrote as follows to Norman, Assistant Adjutant-General of the Force, and to Daly of the Guides, two kindred spirits to whom he knew that he would not write in vain.

Lahore: July 24.

My dear Norman,—You will have found that I have done all I can in the way of reinforcements. Within the next fifteen days you ought to get the Kumaon Battalion, the 52nd Queen's, and the wing of the 61st, besides a new corps of Punjab Infantry formed out of the Police Battalions of Kangra and Umritsur. There are no Poorbeas in any of them. Green's corps, minus its Poorbeas, ought to be down very soon. In short, I hope that these reinforcements will make you all quite comfortable. I do not think that after this we can send you any more Europeans. Exclusive of the Peshawur force, we are retaining barely 2,400 Infantry to hold the country and keep all the armed and disarmed regiments quiet. . . . If you cannot take Delhi with the aid now sent, at least hold your own, and let Pandy break his head against your entrenchments. You will by this policy wear him out. But retreat is out of the question. It will be followed by ruin and disgrace. My idea is that General Wilson should send the new corps, the 7th Punjab Infantry, under Stafford to Saharunpore, and bring the Ghoorkas to the army. I would also send a wing of Green's corps to Meerut, and bring a large part of the 60th Rifles to Delhi. Again, when the Beluchis get to Delhi, they might go to Meerut, and the wing of Green's come over. Thus you would have your best soldiers at Delhi, the second-best at Meerut, and the young ones at Saharunpore, quite good enough to settle the Goojurs and other rascals. . . . The Punjab is very quiet, and, so far as I can judge, loyal also. Please God, I will keep it so. But recollect, if you fall back from Delhi, our cause is gone. Neither the Punjab nor anywhere else can stand. Show this to General Wilson.

To Daly he writes:—

If we are beaten at Delhi and have to retreat, our army will be destroyed. Neither Peshawur nor even the Punjab will then be of much good. Both will go. Whereas the Peshawur and Kohat force would give 9,000, besides some 30 guns. Now, in my mind,

such a force brought into the field in time will turn the tide, or, at any rate, stem it, until the cold weather. But such a force when the army before Delhi is gone, and the Punjab in insurrection, will be swallowed up in the general whirlwind. I hope and expect that there will be no occasion for the sacrifice. But no man can say what is in store for us, and *it is necessary that we take a statesmanlike view of the subject*, and decide on the line of policy to be followed. Otherwise, when the time comes, we shall be unable to act. Read this to Chamberlain, and let me know his views. I am for holding Lahore and Mooltan to extremity, and no more, sending the women and children down to Kurrachi, if things go wrong at Delhi.

To Edwardes of course he told what he had done, and announced once more what he calls his 'unalterable resolution.'

July 24.

. . . If matters do not prosper, if more aid be required and Government leave the matter to me, I will recall all the troops from Kohat and Peshawur, and send every man we can spare, which would be the greater part of the Europeans and all the Punjabis, to Delhi. The battle, in my judgment, is to be won or lost at Delhi, and nowhere else. If our army retreat from Delhi, it is lost. Nothing but disgrace and ruin will follow. If it stand fast, I will not see it perish for want of aid. This would be ungrateful and impolitic. If it succumb to numbers our fate will be sealed. We have about 2,400 Europeans, including 300 men now on their way from Kurrachi. We could not hold Mooltan and Lahore long. The former is the sole line of retreat, or for aid. It must be held as long as we can manage it. The fort at Lahore is now crammed with women and children. What could we do when those of all the out-stations come in? By attempting to hold Peshawur, we simply throw away our chance—such a chance as 6,000 good soldiers added to the force at Delhi, or the remnant of it, would give. This is my unalterable resolution if the matter be left in my hands.

Having placed once more before Lord Canning, from whom he had as yet received no message of any kind, the alternatives proposed, he adds :—

It is for your Lordship to decide which course we are to pursue. In the event of misfortune at Delhi, are we to leave that army to its fate, and endeavour to hold our own, or shall we, by a timely retirement from across the Indus, consolidate our resources on the Punjab, and maintain the struggle under the walls of Delhi? I pray

that your Lordship will decide one way or the other. If we are left to decide the matter ourselves, time will be lost in vain discussions, and by the time we decide upon the proper course to follow, it will prove too late to act effectually.

I asked for 'full powers' from your Lordship, with a view of acting on my own judgment in this and other important matters. Power would give strength and unity of action. I would try and save Government from dangers by the selection of the best men available for commands, and by the prompt removal from authority of incapable men, but I have no desire to press your lordship on this or any other point. I will do all I can for the public good and leave the rest to a higher power. We have some good men in the Punjab, and the unanimity which has prevailed has hitherto been remarkable. I have let Nicholson go off to Delhi with the reinforcements, for he is the ablest soldier we have on this side of India.

To General Cotton a few days later (July 30), he says:—

What think you? We have not 4,500 effective Europeans and Native Cavalry and Infantry before Delhi. There are 1,100 laid up sick or with wounds. God grant that our reinforcements may arrive in time! I anticipate that 1,100 Europeans and 1,300 Native Infantry will be down by the 15th proximo. My policy is to support the army as far as possible. If it fail all will fail. This is the crisis of our fate.

The crisis indeed it was. Chamberlain and Norman, Daly and Wilson were all writing to John Lawrence to say that what they wanted was not raw levies of any kind, but seasoned troops, European and Native, and of these he, even he, felt at last that he had no more to spare. 'I have sent all I can, perhaps more than I ought to have sent.' The Neemuch mutineers had just poured into Delhi. The ghastly massacre at Cawnpore had taken place and the tales of foul treachery, of women and children slaughtered in cold blood and subjected, as was then believed—though wrongly believed—to indignities which were worse than death, had stirred to fever heat the pulses of even the more self-restrained of our soldiers upon the Ridge, and had excited wild yearnings for revenge, which, so long as the guilty city frowned in its unbroken strength before them, could not be gratified. At Lahore itself the 26th Regiment, which had long been disarmed, had broken out, almost under the eyes of the Chief Commissioner, directly after his arrival there, into mutiny and murder, and had managed to

move off as an organised force. Alarming letters were coming in, some from Cashmere, saying that Golab Sing, who—whatever his crimes towards his subjects—had been true to those who had placed him on his throne, was on his deathbed, and suggesting that a change of rulers might, very probably, involve a change of policy; others from Lumsden at Candahar, warning Sir John Lawrence that the delay before Delhi was exciting great attention there, and that the Afghans were 'longing to have a slap at us.'

But here, as elsewhere, the darkest hour was that before the dawn. On August 1, the small army on the Ridge won a decisive victory over the mutineers. News arrived that the force intended for China had been intercepted, had landed at Calcutta, and was being pushed up the country; that the English Government had decided, directly they heard of the outbreak, to send out reinforcements to India; that Havelock after winning victory over victory in his brilliant march, had reached, though he had not yet cleansed, the human shambles at Cawnpore, that he was about to relieve Lucknow, and then press on for Agra and Delhi; that though Golab Sing was dead, his son Runbeer continued to tread in his safe and easy footsteps, and was prepared to send down a Cashmere contingent, 3,250 strong, under the control of Richard Lawrence, to Delhi; that the mutineers of the 26th Regiment had been overtaken and killed almost to the last man, and that the Afghans, seeing which way the wind was blowing, instead of invading India were anxious, as Edwardes wrote, to aid us in reconquering it. And thus before the message, sent *viâ* Madras and Bombay from Lord Canning to Sir John Lawrence, 'Hold on to Peshawur to the last,' reached him on the 7th of the month, the tide had turned decisively in our favour; and he was able in mentioning the matter to Edwardes to speak thus about it: 'The Governor-General bids me hold on to the last at Peshawur. I do not, however, now think that we shall be driven to any extremity. The tide is turning very decidedly against the mutineers at Delhi, and, before long, I hope to see them all destroyed. Not a man of the 26th appears to have escaped; and we have all the other corps pitched in cantonments, under the range of the guns.'

Thus ended the Peshawur episode. The question had ceased to be a burning question before Lord Canning's decision arrived, and simply because John Lawrence's arduous exertions had made it possible that it should do so. I have treated the subject at considerable length for the reasons which I have already given. Nor do I think that anyone who has given even a cursory glance at the extracts I have made —whether he is disposed to agree with Edwardes or with Lawrence; to think that Peshawur or Delhi was of the most vital importance—will ever venture to reproduce Lord Cranbrook's sneer, or to regard it otherwise than Sir John Lawrence himself regarded it. For it is, beyond question, clear from the letters I have quoted that Sir John Lawrence proposed to abandon Peshawur, only under certain conditions, which though they did not occur, might have occurred at any time, and would, most certainly, have done so had it not been for his moral courage and his unflagging exertions. It is also clear from them that he was convinced that on the capture of Delhi within a reasonable time, not only the continuance of our rule, but the life of every Englishman in Upper India depended, and that no sacrifice would be too great to make if that object could not be attained without it. When therefore—and I sometimes use here the words of the friend who, at Lord Lawrence's request, has made a special study of all the Peshawur documents, and with whose conclusions I find myself, after an independent study of them, in thorough agreement—the siege of Delhi had been protracted to the utmost limits consistent with the safety of the Empire; when every soldier who could be spared from the Punjab had been hurried down to the scene of danger; if the general in command had then still declared that the number of his troops was unequal to the task before them, or if he had been unsuccessful in the assault, which would have been the wiser course to pursue? Retain Peshawur and leave the troops at Delhi either to maintain their position as best they might, or fall back to Kurnal, pursued by the triumphant soldiery from behind and surrounded by a hostile population in front and on either flank? Or abandon Peshawur, hold Attock in strength, and reinforce the army at Delhi with the bulk of the troops thus made avail-

able? I incline to think that most calmly judging people would say that the wiser course was that suggested by the man who was responsible for the whole of the province, and who had shown throughout that he took not the provincial or the local, but the imperial view of the situation. He knew, and he was the only man in the Punjab who did know, the whole of the facts of the case. It was to John Lawrence and not to Edwardes, or to Nicholson, or to Cotton, that reports came in from every part of the province, detailing the exact needs and dangers of each. It was he who knew, through natives like Nihal Sing, and a host of others, exactly where the shoe pinched, and what was the amount of strain upon their loyalty which the Punjab population were likely to bear. He knew exactly—what Edwardes and Nicholson and Cotton could only guess—the extent to which, in compliance with their requisitions, as well as those of others of his lieutenants, he had denuded the heart of his province that he might maintain its extremities. In particular, his frequent communications with Barnes, Van Cortlandt, and others, showed him the exact condition of the Cis-Sutlej States, and the inflammable nature of the materials through which our army, if it were defeated, would have to cut its way.

He proposed, it will be observed, not to abandon Peshawur to its fate, to 'leave it in the air,' but formally to cede it to the Afghans. It was a step sufficiently opposed to the views which have, of late, been prevalent in official circles in England and in India. But it was not a step which John Lawrence, with all his immense knowledge of the frontier and of the Hindu, Punjabi, and Pathan races, with his keen appreciation also of the danger to India which the approach of Russia might involve, thought, either then or later, would be to our disadvantage. Of course nothing but imperious and imperial necessity, nothing but the *salus populi suprema lex* would have induced him to retire from Peshawur while there were still disturbances within our frontier. But none the less he thought that what might then have seemed a measure of desperation, would afterwards prove a source of strength and stability to the whole of our empire in the East.

Lord Canning, writing at the other end of India, and

knowing nothing of what was passing in the Punjab, except such fragments of news as those few letters of Sir John Lawrence which ever reached their destination gave him, thought, it is said, that the proposal might be the result of failing health, of over-tension on the nerves, such as may well fall during a great crisis on a very Hercules. But that such was not the case is clear from the whole series of extracts I have given; from the positive, though incidental statement of John Lawrence himself, which I find in a letter to Edwardes of June 18: 'My face, thank you, is quite well. The aches and pains all went away in a most extraordinary manner after you left;' and from the fact that when the mutiny in the Punjab was over and the reconstruction of the empire was under discussion, he deliberately proposed, in an elaborate *memorandum*, extracts from which I now proceed to give, to retire from the Peshawur valley, and that from these views, to the end of his life, he never swerved.

After discussing at length the rival plans of Neville Chamberlain and Herbert Edwardes for holding the Peshawur valley, he proceeds to indicate his own views as follows:—

. . . But the Chief Commissioner is strongly inclined to the opinion that the best policy would be to make the whole valley and Kohat over to the Afghans, and confine ourselves to the line of the Indus in that quarter.

The Chief Commissioner has arrived at this conclusion after careful consideration and much reluctance. His views were all the other way. It has only been by slow degrees and long consideration that he has formed this opinion.

The line of the Indus possesses the following advantages over that of the mountain range. It is considerably shorter, and therefore requires fewer troops for its defence.

The river is in itself a mighty bulwark, broad, deep, and rapid. It has no fords. Maharaja Runjeet Sing once indeed crossed his cavalry near Jorbella into Eusufzaie, but he lost five hundred horsemen in so doing. An able engineer, at a moderate cost, would make the left bank of the Indus impregnable against an invader. The boats would be all on our side, secure under our batteries. On the right bank of the Indus there is no timber procurable from which to make rafts, even if an enemy dared to essay the passage.

The Chief Commissioner does not affirm that the passage of the

Indus would be impracticable to a military body under any circumstances, but that in the presence of an enemy of any ordinary activity, it ought to prove ruinous to all those who effected a landing on the left bank.

Again, in a strong position cis-Indus we should be among a comparatively civilised and obedient people. We should be in a healthy country close to our resources. All along the Indus down to Kalabagh the bank is steep, high and rugged, and up to this point we might have steamers plying all the year round, a great addition to our strength. And for what objects do we hold Peshawur and Kohat which could not be attained by the occupation of the left bank of the Indus in strength? These districts cost us, under the best arrangements, at least fourfold their income. This money, otherwise expended, would add to our material resources greatly. We really neither conciliate the people nor the Afghan nation. If the friendship of the Afghans is to be gained, if it is indeed worth having, this object is more likely to be accomplished by surrendering these important possessions, which to them would prove invaluable, but to us would ever continue a fruitful source of danger, expense, and loss of life. So long as we hold Peshawur, the Afghans must have a strong inducement to side against us in any invasion of India. By confining ourselves to the line of the Indus, as far down as the confines of Bunnoo, we should avoid the necessity of maintaining a large body of native troops, in round numbers probably ten thousand men.

It may be urged that if we surrender Peshawur and Kohat, we shall eventually be compelled to give up the Derajat also, and perhaps Scinde. The Chief Commissioner does not think this will be necessary. The Derajat indeed, but for the advantage of holding both banks of the Indus, is not worth having. It never has paid, nor can pay the cost of its occupation. The people, however, are of a very different character from those of Kohat and Peshawur; the inhabitants of the adjacent mountains are more manageable than those of the range further north. The navigability of the Indus up to Kalabagh by properly constructed steamers would prove a great advantage. However, in the event of formidable invasion from the westward, it would be a question whether we should not, for a time, abandon the Derajat, and confine ourselves to the line of the Indus.

Neither the Punjab nor India generally are one whit more secure by our holding the line of the Suleiman ranges than that of the Indus. So long as we are strong in the country, we have really nothing to fear. It may be safely predicted that there is but one

invasion from the west which can ever prove formidable. There is but one which will ever occur, so long as we are strong at home. Our danger in India has been proved—as some had foreseen—to come much more from within than from without.

Few will deny, whatever may be said—and, of course, there is much to be said—on the other side, that this is a weighty state paper. Few will deny that it is quite possible, as Sir John Lawrence believed, that the restoration of Peshawur, 'their heart's desire,' the 'jewel of their empire,' to the Afghans, would have bound them to us by the best of securities, the feeling that they have much to gain by our friendship and much to lose by our hostility. It would, in any case, have put it out of the power of Russia to dangle before their eyes the possession of Peshawur as the reward of an alliance with her. It would have tended to prevent the dalliance between General Kaufman and Shere Ali, and, assuming that the Government of India had been conducted with ordinary prudence and morality, would have rendered doubly unlikely the dangers of the second and third Afghan wars.

In any case, the course recommended in John Lawrence's *memorandum* received the support of two soldiers unsurpassed for courage and for chivalry in the recent history of India—of Sir James Outram[1] and Sir Neville Chamberlain.

I have not (says Chamberlain in writing to Lawrence on June 11, 1859), lost sight of the question during my tour of inspection along the frontier, and I may indeed say that I have courted the society of all ranks and classes for the double object of becoming acquainted with the present state of public affairs, both within and beyond our border, and studying, to the best of my ability, all the bearings of the Peshawur question. When we discussed the matter in July last (1858), I daresay you will recollect that, although I saw much to make withdrawal advisable, I could not bring myself to overcome what I considered the loss of prestige attendant on a retrograde movement, and was in favour of a sort of medium course, by which we might still hold the districts, but at a less outlay of money and European life. Now, however, I am in favour of making it over to the Afghans, and to start with, to the Barukzais, for I feel assured that such a course would go farther to preserve the peace of

[1] For Outram's views of the subject see his *Life*, by Sir Frederick Goldsmid, Preface, p. 13, and vol. ii., Appendix K, p. 424.

this frontier against Russia or other European influence than anything else it is in our power to do, and that nothing short of this will bind the ruler of the Afghans to us, or cause him to break off entirely from the Russians.

If we had the men (Europeans) and the money to meet all enemies, at all times, and from whatever countries, well and good. But no man can really know our position in India, and believe this to be the case. There is too much makeshift for our weakness and vulnerability not to be apparent to anyone who chooses to see things as they are. And on this account, I, for one, should be glad to see the Afghans made our friends, by making it their interest to remain so. So much do I believe in this that if I were dying to-morrow, I should feel more at rest did I know that we were going to confer the two districts on the Afghans; whilst if I were a traitor to my country, I feel that ten thousand Russian troops, and the promise of the country up to the Indus, would bring down upon us a storm which it would be most difficult for us to meet, unless we were able to devote a large portion of our thoughts to it.

I may add here, not because it is a matter of great importance in itself, but because, in view of recent events, it is not without interest to record, that shortly after his return to England, at the close of the Mutiny, Sir John Lawrence was summoned to Windsor, and had a long conversation with Prince Albert upon Indian topics. He was much impressed by the minuteness of the Prince's knowledge, and his keen and appreciative interest even in the more abstruse of Indian questions, affording, as it did, a marked contrast to many English statesmen with whom he was just then brought into contact. As he was leaving the Prince said to him, 'By the way, I have read your paper on the abandonment of Peshawur, and entirely agree with you.' 'It struck me as odd then,' said Sir John Lawrence, in telling the incident shortly before his death to Sir George Young, who has handed it on to me, 'that Prince Albert should have seen and have cared to study a paper which I did not even know had been presented to the Home Government for their consideration, and it strikes me as being even more odd now, looking at the quarter in which my views are understood to meet with the most strenuous opposition, that *he* should have expressed such an unqualified adhesion to them.'

The extracts which I have given from Sir John Lawrence's papers relating to Peshawur appear to me—and I use, here again, some of the language of Colonel Randall—to bring into high relief many marked features of his character.

First, they display the breadth and acuteness of vision which enabled him at once to understand that the speedy capture of Delhi was the pivot on which everything else turned.

Secondly, they exhibit the vitality of action which he himself immediately brought to bear on the salient point, the efforts which he made to inspire a like desire in others, and the constancy and determination with which he strove to bring about a successful issue, undeterred by any minor difficulties and complications elsewhere.

Thirdly, they show the unusual combination of a courage to accept responsibility and to strike out a line of his own when circumstances demanded it, with a readiness to submit to superior authority, when—as in the case of Lord Dalhousie's wish to conclude a treaty with Afghanistan, and of Lord Canning's order to hold on to Peshawur to the last—it was brought to bear upon him.

Fourthly, we may observe the eager quest after knowledge which could be obtained from persons acting on the spot. Such enquiries are dictated by the most obvious considerations of prudence, of justice, of necessity, but bitter experience has shown that these considerations are not quite invariably recognised by Indian rulers. 'Local experience, I'll have none of it,' is a maxim, practical and theoretical, which may land us at any time in disasters as bad as those of an Afghan war. But the very fact that the value of local experience is not always recognised even by rulers who are quite new to the country which they are called on to rule, makes it all the more remarkable that a man whose own local experience and knowledge were so great, should never have been unwilling to hear what even the youngest and most subordinate officer had to say on any question which affected the locality in which he happened to be serving. John Lawrence's invariable practice, as we have seen throughout this biography, was before he took any step of importance to court the counsel, the straightforward counsel of those who were on the spot, and were,

therefore, best able to form a correct judgment on its local bearings.

Fifth and, perhaps, most important of all, the Peshawur episode brings out his moral courage into the strongest relief. For to whichever view we incline—that of John Lawrence, or that of Herbert Edwardes—it is hardly to be doubted that it was Sir John Lawrence's policy which required the higher and the rarer kind of courage. His policy, as far as the Punjab was concerned, was, at this crisis of his life at least, not a 'backward' but a 'forward' policy. If he was for drawing in his frontier under certain circumstances, in one direction, it was that he might launch out much farther in another. Whatever other great qualities this particular part of the correspondence of Herbert Edwardes may be considered to indicate, it can hardly be maintained that it required any conspicuous moral courage on his part to say, as he and his supporters repeatedly did, 'Anchor, Hardy, anchor!' 'Keep every man you have got,' 'Save your own province now, and leave Delhi to look after itself.' '*Sat patriæ Priamoque datum.*' For it was obvious that if the ruler of the Punjab was minded to wrap around himself all the forces, European or Native, which were still to be found in his province at the end of June, he would have been able, without any extraordinary effort on his part, to have ensured its safety till all the rest of India had gone. But Sir John Lawrence refused to contemplate the bare possibility of such comfortable isolation. His courage seems to me to differ, not so much in degree, as in kind, from that of many of his subordinates.

There are two kinds of courage. There is the buoyant courage of the man who is blessed by heaven with a sanguine temperament; the man who *will* not see danger; who is able to walk about with a smiling countenance and with a cheerful heart amidst mines and powder magazines; who is able to write bulletins, such as those which were issued almost daily from Lahore during the first two months of the Mutiny: 'all well in the Punjab; no cause for anxiety,' and, undoubtedly, helped to bring about their own fulfilment. Such a courage, it is needless to say, tends to propagate itself, and is simply invaluable in the case of all those who are not bound by their

position to take the farthest possible outlook into the future. Such, happily for us, was the disposition of many of the chief officers in the Punjab at the time of need; and such, pre-eminently, I am inclined to think, was the courage of Sir Robert Montgomery.

But there is another, and if I am not mistaken, a higher courage still. There is the cool deliberate courage of the responsible ruler, who is determined to shut his eyes to nothing, to explore all the ramifications of the danger, to realise to himself, and to take care that others should realise also, so far as it is necessary for them to do so, the full magnitude of the stake at issue, and then, having counted the cost beforehand, and having recognised the possibility, or even the probability of failure, sits down, determined, by every means in his power, to make the probable, improbable, and the possible, impossible. It is the prerogative of such a man, and only of such a man, to 'look ahead,' to 'take a statesmanlike view,' and, careless of what others may say or think of him, 'looking for neither praise nor blame,' with dogged determination to do the right whatever comes of it, and to fall, if need be, at his post. Such, it appears to me, was the courage of Sir John Lawrence—

> Such as moved
> To height of noblest temper heroes old,
> Arming to battle, and instead of rage
> Deliberate valour breathed, firm and unmoved
> With dread of death, to flight or foul retreat.

Some years afterwards, when Sir John Lawrence had risen to be Viceroy of the Empire which he had done so much to save, and happened to be talking at Simla to Sir Charles and Lady Trevelyan about the exertions and perils of the Mutiny, he remarked that, for a month together, he had been inclined to doubt in his inmost heart whether we could weather the storm. And then, with an admirably timed reminiscence, turning to Lady Trevelyan, who, as is well known, was the favourite sister of Lord Macaulay, he told her that when he had, from time to time, felt disposed to be downhearted, he had often found himself, half unconsciously, repeating to himself her brother's lines:—

How can man die better
Than facing fearful odds,
For the ashes of his fathers
And the temples of his gods?

and had always taken therefrom fresh heart of grace.

And, if it be true, as Aristotle says, in his searching analysis of the chief moral virtues, that the nobleness of courage depends mainly on the consciousness of the sacrifice which it involves, then, assuredly, Sir John Lawrence's was the noblest kind of courage. He was the 'Happy Warrior'

—— who, if he be called upon to face
Some awful moment to which heaven has joined
Great issues, good or bad, for human kind,
Is happy as a lover, and attired
With sudden brightness, like a man inspired,
And through the heat of conflict keeps the law
In calmness made, and sees what he foresaw;
Or, if an unexpected call succeed
Come when it will, is equal to the need.
He who, though thus endued as with a sense
And faculty for storm and turbulence,
Is yet a soul whose master-bias leans
To home-felt pleasures and to gentle scenes.
Sweet images! which whereso'er he be
Are at his heart, and such fidelity
It is his darling passion to approve,
More brave for this that he hath much to love.

CHAPTER V.

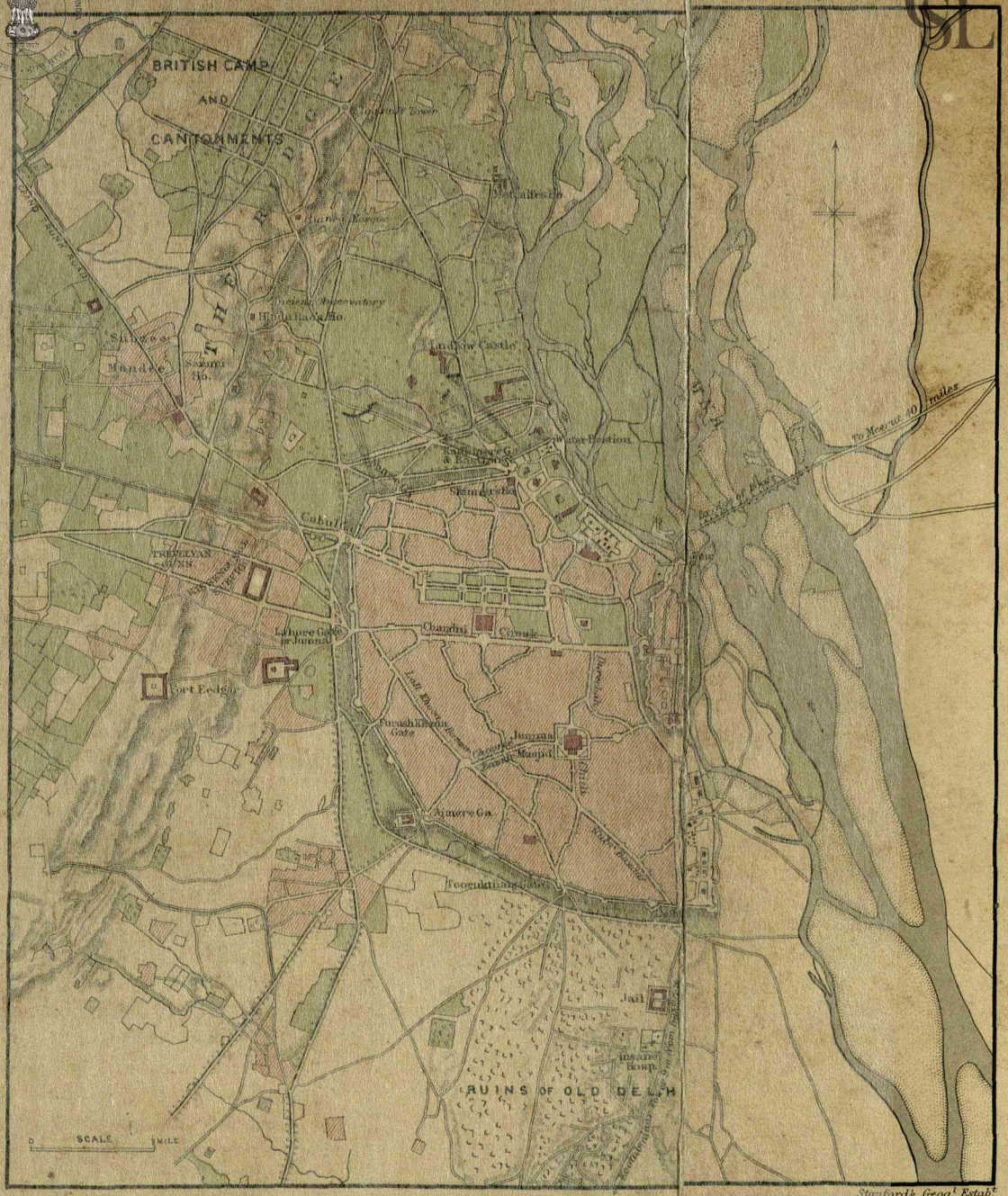
SIEGE AND CAPTURE OF DELHI.

JULY—SEPTEMBER, 1857.

I HAVE been compelled, in order that I may treat the question of the abandonment of Peshawur in the manner in which I conceive it ought to be treated, as an episode and as a whole, to look forward as well as backward from the point which I had reached at the close of the third chapter, and to that point I now return. We last saw Sir John Lawrence at Rawul Pindi, when the outbreak, which took place there on July 8, had turned out—thanks, chiefly, to his disregard of his personal safety—to be an almost bloodless outbreak. The time had now come when his presence was more needed at the centre of his government than at the more upland station, where he had happened to be when the news of the Meerut mutiny first reached him. What a lifetime, or seeming lifetime, had passed in those two months! How events had crowded on each other! How, as one danger appeared to be laid, another and another had sprung up, like the Hydra's heads, to take its place; and how each and all of them had been met, in turn, with the same imperturbable resolution and the same unflagging energy!

On June 23, in his rapid run to Murri and back, Sir John Lawrence had snatched, as I have already shown, the one interval of toilsome rest which he had allowed himself during the whole period. But the redoubled energy, the refreshing of the soul, the *vis viva* breathed into him by the sight of the calm courage of his wife, was not to be measured by the flying nature of his visit to her. And now, on July 15, in spite of the Jhelum and Sealkote mutinies, which had not yet spent their force, and which might well have made many a dry

DELHI 1857



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nullah and many a saint's tomb that he passed on his way to be the lurking place of an assassin, he started for Lahore on the ordinary mail cart, accompanied by Arthur Brandreth only, and without even a mounted policeman as escort! Had the mutineers only known, and been able to grasp their opportunity; had some well-aimed bullet, or the dagger of some paradise-seeking Ghazi, found its way to John Lawrence's heart, what would not have been the difference to the prospects of the besiegers on the distant Ridge? The answer to the question will give, in some measure, the value of the man, then and throughout the crisis, to India.

By the 19th he had reached Lahore, unscathed and in good heart; and now, in rapid succession, arrived from day to day those urgent letters from Wilson and from others before Delhi, which, in spite of the equally urgent remonstrances from Peshawur, he answered by sending forth from his almost exhausted province another batch of reinforcements, four thousand strong, with Nicholson at their head. 'We must support,' he said, 'the army before Delhi at the sacrifice of every other consideration.'

That Nicholson was at the head of the Column was a sufficient security that there would be no unnecessary delay in its advance. His first act was characteristic enough, and it was one which, in later times, his chief was very fond of relating. The Punjab was badly supplied with guns, but as Delhi, possibly, wanted them even more, the Chief Commissioner and the General in Command agreed to allow Bourchier's battery to join the Column, explicit orders being given that Dawes' battery, on which Nicholson had also cast an envious eye, should be left behind, unless General Wilson wrote to say that its presence was absolutely necessary for the siege. Nicholson, more anxious, as it appeared afterwards, to secure the presence of Dawes, who might succeed to the command of the Column if anything happened to himself, than of his battery, pounced down upon both at once, and moved off with them, bodily, towards Delhi!

You have carried off (wrote his long-suffering chief on July 28) both batteries, and this too without saying a word, or asking leave of a soul, General or anyone else! The consequence of this is that

the General (Gowan) is annoyed, and much time is lost in writing explanations. No man likes to be quietly placed on the shelf, and I am sure you would not like it. I say not this on my own account, but on that of the General. For my own part, I would be right glad to have nothing to do with the troops or their movements, unless officers will act according to rule and system. One's life is taken up in oiling the machine, and trying to keep things straight. . . . Please return my official *memo.*, and write and explain to the General. What would you say if an officer under your authority walked off with your troops without a word?

Nicholson gave such explanation as he could, but the ink of his apology can scarcely have been dry before he discounted its effect, and capped his previous doings by carrying off, on his own responsibility, a body of gunners from Phillour. 'I fear you are incorrigible,' says John Lawrence on August 4, half, doubtless, in anger, but half also in amusement and in admiration, 'so I must leave you to your fate. But, depend on it, you would get on equally well and much more smoothly if you worked *with* men rather than by ignoring them.' But John Lawrence was still willing, if possible, to meet the wishes of his new Brigadier-General and give him Dawes. 'By the time Wilde arrives, if the battery can be spared, it shall go down, if I can manage it. However, we are very weak, and these guns do assuredly give us a certain strength.'

Such were some of the drawbacks incidental to Nicholson's appointment. But John Lawrence never doubted that he had done right in appointing him. It was as necessary in this time of need to put arms into the hands of those who could best wield them, as to wrench them, at all hazards, from the hands of those who could not wield them at all. His urgent remonstrances had at length succeeded in inducing the Governor-General and General Reed to supersede Hewitt and Johnstone, just as his urgent recommendations had induced General Reed, in defiance of all considerations of military etiquette, to turn plain Major Nicholson at a bound into a Brigadier-General. Was he not right in both?

The return of Sir John Lawrence to Lahore, after so long an absence, must have made a marked difference in all the conditions of his daily life. At Rawul Pindi he had been almost

alone. He had been, of course, in frequent communication by letter with men in every part of his province. But he had not enjoyed that daily friction of mind with mind which most people would find necessary, if they are to put forth all their strength. To John Lawrence such friction, as the extraordinary energy and ability displayed in all his letters and orders prove, was quite unnecessary. Like many other young civilians he had inured himself to solitude—solitude at all events as far as white faces were concerned—in those early years at Paniput and Gorgaon, and he was quite able and willing, if need be, to return to it in this his later life. But none the less it must have been refreshing to find himself again in the midst of those 'pucca trumps' who had been doing such excellent service, and had relieved him of all anxiety, as regarded the centre of his province: Montgomery with his never-ruffled countenance and his ever-ready promptitude and courage; Macpherson, his Military Secretary, on whose sturdy shoulders had fallen the whole burden of the multitudinous arrangements for the raising of new troops which was going on all over the country; Arthur Roberts, the Commissioner, John Lawrence's old associate at Delhi, who had come to Lahore just at the time when his energetic service was most needed there.

Nor had the services of the Lahore chiefs been confined to the neighbourhood of the capital or even to their own Division. Roberts had accompanied Nicholson on his flank march to the Trimmu Ghaut while Richard Lawrence had led a force to Sealkote after the outbreak there, and had visited with condign punishment some of his own military police who, here and only here, in the whole history of the Mutiny in the Punjab, proved untrue to their salt; and he was now marching down at the head of an army of 'Rosebuds,' as John Lawrence was fond of calling them, three thousand strong, from Jummoo for Delhi.

But meanwhile the Lahore authorities were to receive a stern reminder that, with four regiments disarmed in their immediate neighbourhood and with only a part of a single European regiment to keep them in check, they were sitting on a powder magazine which might, at any time, hurl them into the air. During a period of two and a half months the dis-

armed regiments had kept the peace, brooding, doubtless, over their grievances, conscious that, at any moment, the act of a single individual amongst them might involve the whole body in ruin, and therefore naturally ready to break out and escape if they saw a favourable opportunity. It is as unnecessary as it would be unjust, to refrain from pointing out how much there was to call for compassion and allowance in the condition of these poor men, who, sincerely believing, to begin with, that their religion was in danger, had been disarmed and dishonoured, and were now swayed hither and thither by panic fears, conscious that they carried, or could hardly even be said to carry, their lives in their hands. Whatever may have been the tone of too many Englishmen, at the time, in speaking or in writing of the Sepoys, John Lawrence, again and again in his letters, shows that he felt keenly how much there was to be said in extenuation of their guilt, and that he knew full well how many of them, while cherishing the best intentions towards us, had been simply hurried away by the stream. It was nothing, in fact, but the knowledge that the lives of every European depended upon the promptitude and vigour of the measures taken, which justified to his mind the stern severity with which all risings in the Punjab were put down.

At last, on July 30, the long-expected opportunity came, and one of the regiments, the 26th, took advantage of it. They rose, cut down, and hacked to pieces their commanding officer, Major Spencer, a man who had lived with and for them during many years, and whom, beyond doubt, the majority of their number regarded with affection and respect. After other deeds of successful, and more of attempted murder, they took themselves off in a body. But, partly owing to a violent dust-cloud which concealed the direction they had taken, and partly to the presence of the three other disarmed regiments, which, it was feared, might follow their example, they were not pursued and cut to pieces on the instant by the Sikhs and Europeans who were close at hand.

We had (says Sir John Lawrence) a sad and scandalous affair here two days ago. It appears that the 26th had, for two days, been selling off their property, preparatory to a start. At eleven A.M. on the 30th, they were all ready, and had cooked their farewell

meal. Some little excitement attracted attention, and then Major Spencer walked down in his *paijammas* (loose drawers) from his house close by, into the lines. There he was joined by the quartermaster-sergeant. He had apparently quieted the men, when he got to the 2nd Company, who crowded round him, and a man from behind laid him dead by a blow from an axe. The quartermaster-sergeant, the havildar-major, and two others were killed with him. The pundit also was nearly killed. The men then started right through the cantonments, and though seen by many, with the Sikh Regiment close by, panting to be at them, nothing was done! At last a party with guns, Europeans and Sikhs, were sent out, galloped two or three miles, are said to have killed a few men, and then came back. Montgomery, I, and Roberts, the Commissioner, got the news about half-past two o'clock P.M., and were there at three. We went out after them, and, not seeing the trail, at a venture sent the pursuers towards Umritsur, Hariki, and Hussur, the roads for the different ghauts on the Sutlej. We now hear that the men, about six hundred in number, after going a little way due east turned north, and went forty miles right up the doab, and were seen, yesterday morning, at a ghaut on the Ravi, and are evidently trying to get across, and so on to the Jummoo territory.

On the evening of the day on which he wrote this account he was able to report to Lord Canning that the Umritsur police had 'disposed of' at least five out of the six hundred mutineers. Many had been killed and drowned in the attempt to cross the Ravi, and upwards of two hundred and forty who had been captured had been shot on the following morning.

Thus the great danger had passed by. The Punjab Government—it must be borne in mind, if we are to weigh the whole circumstances of the case fairly—was, at this moment literally in extremity. The last and greatest of its succours had been sent off, and Nicholson, who, under somewhat similar circumstances, had given a short shrift to the Sealkote mutineers, was now, as every malcontent knew well, far away at Umballa, with his face set steadfastly for Delhi. The escape of so large a body of mutineers might, under such circumstances, well have caused a general rising among the numerous disarmed regiments in the Punjab, and would certainly have induced the three regiments at Mean Meer to follow their example. Terrible therefore as was the retribution and de-

plorable as was the sacrifice of human life, I do not think that we can fairly condemn the act itself. And that such was Sir John Lawrence's own feeling who, as I have shown repeatedly, was never for unnecessary severity, is evident from the hasty note which he wrote off on the first receipt of the telegram to the chief actor in the tragedy, and which was afterwards quoted by that actor for a widely different purpose. Its date, it should be observed, is August 2, when no details were known to him over and above the bare facts which he had reported to Lord Canning.

My dear Cooper,—I congratulate you on your success against the 26th Native Infantry. You and your police acted with much energy and spirit, and deserve well of the State. I trust the fate of these Sepoys will operate as a warning to others. Every effort should be exerted to glean up those who are yet at large.

The fact that Lord Canning as well as Sir John Lawrence considered that, under the circumstances, the execution was necessary, and that their opinion was endorsed, many months afterwards, by so cool-headed a man as Lord Stanley, when the matter came before Parliament, and was sharply criticised there, will probably carry a sad conviction to most minds. But it is otherwise with the details of the execution as they began slowly to ooze out and as they were reported in terms of glowing exultation by the executioner himself. An officer who steels his heart in order to perform a painful but absolutely necessary public duty is entitled to the compassion, the sympathy, and the support of all right-thinking men. But when the deed is done with evident satisfaction and when its most repulsive details are recorded, at a later period and in cold blood, with ribald flippancy, then our feelings of sympathy and compassion are turned into those of loathing and disgust. It is an unsavoury subject over which I would gladly draw a veil. But England in her world-wide rule is brought into contact with so many weaker races; her officers may be so often tempted in the hateful pride of blood, of colour, or of empire to forget that the obligations of humanity are thereby not weakened but intensified; proceedings similar in kind to those of Cooper have taken place, at so much later a date, in Jamaica, and

have been recorded by the actors in strains of levity so similar, that I think it well to let the chief actor in the scene tell the story, in great part, for himself, and so, perchance, to make such conduct less possible for the future.

The main body of the mutineers had on the arrival of Cooper at the scene of action, after their forty miles' flight and a struggle of many hours with the villagers on the river, swum or floated on pieces of wood to an island in the Ravi about a mile from the shore, where they 'might be descried crouching like a brood of wild fowl.'

It remained (says Cooper in a book which was not published till the following year, and is entitled 'The Crisis in the Punjab') to capture this body, and, having done so, to execute condign punishment at once. . . . There were but two boats, both rickety, and the boatmen unskilled. . . . They put off with about thirty sowars in each, in high spirits. The boats straggled a little, but managed to reach the island in about twenty minutes. It was a long inhospitable patch, with tall grass; a most undesirable place to bivouac on for the night with a rising tide, especially if wet, dispirited, hungry, without food, fire, or dry clothing. The sun was setting in golden splendour, and as the doomed men with joined palms crowded down to the shore on the approach of the boats, one side of which bristled with about sixty muskets, besides sundry revolvers and pistols, their long shadows were flung far athwart the gleaming waters. In utter despair forty or fifty dashed into the stream and disappeared, rose at a distance, and were borne away into the increasing gloom.

An order given not to fire at the heads of the drowning men seems to have given the rest of the Sepoys what Cooper calls the 'insane idea that they were going to be tried by Court Martial after some luxurious refreshment,' and accordingly they allowed themselves to be bound and ferried across in detachments. On reaching the shore they were more tightly bound, their decorations and necklaces ignominiously cut off, and they were ordered to proceed, in their exhausted condition, by a road knee deep in water, to the police station six miles off, at Ujnalla. Each successive 'invoice,' as Cooper calls it, was safely landed, under precautions which suggested to his mind the fable of the fox, the geese, and the peck of oats, and called forth peals of laughter among the Sikh sowars, as he explained to them the parallel.

It was near midnight before all were safely lodged in the police station. A drizzling rain coming on, prevented the commencement of the execution, so a rest until daybreak was announced. Before dawn another batch of sixty-six was brought in, and as the police station was then nearly full, they were ushered into a large round tower or bastion.

Previously to his departure with the pursuing party from Umritsur, the Deputy Commissioner (Cooper himself) had ordered out a large supply of rope, in case the numbers captured were few enough for hanging—trees being scarce—and also a reserve of fifty Sikh levies for a firing party, in case of the numbers demanding wholesale execution; as also to be of use as a reserve in case of a fight on the island. So eager were the Sikhs that they marched straight on end, and he met them half-way, twenty-three miles between the river and the police station, on his journey back in charge of the prisoners, the total number of which, when the execution commenced, amounted to 282 of all ranks, besides numbers of camp-followers, who were left to be taken care of by the villagers.

As fortune would have it, again favouring audacity, a deep dry well was discovered within one hundred yards of the police station, and its presence furnished a convenient solution as to the one remaining difficulty, which was of sanitary consideration, the disposal of the corpses of the dishonoured soldiers.

The climax of fortunate coincidences seemed to have arrived when it was remembered that August 1 was the anniversary of the great Mohammedan sacrificial festival of the Bukra Eed. A capital excuse was thus afforded to permit the Hindustani Mussulman horsemen to return to celebrate it at Umritsur; while the single Christian, unembarrassed by their presence, and aided by the faithful Sikhs, might perform a ceremonial sacrifice of a different nature—and the nature of which they had not been made aware—on the same morrow. When that morrow dawned, sentries were placed round the town to prevent the egress of sight-seers. The officials were called; and they were made aware of the character of the spectacle they were about to witness.

Ten by ten the Sepoys were called forth. Their names having been taken down in succession, they were pinioned, linked together, and marched to execution, a firing party being in readiness. Every phase of deportment was manifested by the doomed men, after the sullen firing of volleys of distant musketry forced the conviction of inevitable death; astonishment, rage, frantic despair, the most stoic calmness. . . .

About a hundred and fifty having been executed, one of the executioners swooned away—he was the oldest of the firing party—and a little respite was allowed. Then proceeding, the number had arrived at two hundred and thirty-seven, when the District officer was informed that the remainder refused to come out of the bastion, where they had been imprisoned temporarily a few hours before. Expecting a rush and resistance, preparations were made against escape. But little expectation was entertained of the real and awful fate which had fallen on the remainder of the mutineers; they had anticipated by a few short hours their doom. The doors were opened, and behold! they were nearly all dead! Unconsciously the tragedy of Holwell's Black Hole had been re-enacted. No cries had been heard during the night, in consequence of the hubbub, tumult, and shouting of the crowds of horsemen, police, tehsil guards, and excited villagers. Forty-five bodies, dead from fright, exhaustion, fatigue, heat, and partial suffocation, were dragged into light, and consigned, in common with all the other bodies, into one common pit by the hands of the village sweepers. . . .

There is a well at Cawnpore (so the writer triumphantly winds up his sickening narrative), but there is also one at Ujnalla.

In other words, Cooper plumes himself on having managed to combine into one time and place some of the worst horrors of the two most horrible tragedies which have ever befallen our countrymen in the East—the Black Hole at Calcutta and the Well at Cawnpore. It is hardly necessary to point out that he did not slaughter women and children, and that he only left the harmless multitude of camp-followers, as he euphemistically expresses it, 'to the care of the Sikh villagers,' but I am not so sure, when we bear in mind the enormous differences of education, of civilisation, and of religion, between Suraja Dowla and Frederick Cooper that the advantage is altogether on the side of the Englishman and the Christian. Whatever difference of opinion there may be as to the necessity of the summary and sweeping punishment, there can be no question at all as to the way in which it was recorded. 'I hope,' says Lord Canning in his Minute on the services of the civil officers, 'that Mr. Cooper will be judged by his acts done under stern necessity rather than by his own narrative of them.' 'That *nauseous* dispatch,' were the emphatic words with which Lord Lawrence always, to the end of his life, referred to the first

and simpler account in which Cooper had himself blazoned his own proceedings, and it would be difficult to find a better epithet.

The rising at Lahore was followed by similar risings of disarmed regiments at two other important stations in the Punjab, the whole clearly showing, if proof was needed, in how perilous a condition the denuded province lay, and how absolutely necessary it was, if the Punjab and India were to stand, that Delhi must soon fall. At Ferozepore it had been thought necessary after the outbreaks at Jhelum and Sealkote to dismount and disarm the 10th Cavalry, a regiment which, up to that time, had been conspicuous for its fidelity, and which still continued to hope, in its humbled condition, that the day would come when it would be trusted again. The horses of the men had been already drawn off in detachments to supply the needs of the Artillery and of the Jummoo troops who were starting for Delhi; and when, on August 14, the order came to withdraw all that were left, the whole regiment rose, and, carrying off all the animals on which they could lay their hands, left for Delhi. No effectual pursuit was organised, and the greater part of the regiment got off through Hansi to their destination.

The indignation of the Chief Commissioner at what he thought to be gross mismanagement on the part of the Brigadier in command was extreme.

You will have heard (he says to Edwardes) of the outbreak of the 10th Cavalry. They attempted to seize the guns, when the men were at dinner. One gunner and Dr. Nelson, the veterinary surgeon, were killed, and several men wounded. The Brigadier 'cleared the cantonment' of the mutineers, according to military parlance, which means, in plain English, that he allowed them all to escape! I hear that one young lady got a slash from a sword over her leg as she tried to get into the fort. The men, I suspect, had concealed *tulwars* in their lines. Marsden and the police have gone after the rascals. Show this to General Cotton. Too great precautions cannot be adopted. These fellows watch every movement, every act, and are ready to take advantage of the slightest neglect. I should not be in the least surprised if it turns out that no officer was present with the guns.

Again, on August 28, he writes to Edwardes :—

What think you? Brigadier Innes, failing to seize or kill the mutineers of the 10th Light Cavalry, let fly among the Government horses picketed under the guns of the fort at Ferozepore, and killed nearly one hundred. He will probably be knighted for this exploit!

The unfortunate Brigadier was not knighted but was superseded. It is not, however, unpleasant to record that the hasty verdict passed on him in a time of peril was reversed by the deliberate judgment arrived at in the calm which followed, and a brave officer was restored to his duties.

The other outbreak took place at Peshawur, and with a very different result. If Cotton or Edwardes or James had gone to sleep for a moment at their posts the awakening would have indeed been a rough one. They worked and watched together as one man, and the civilians were as ready for any deed of military daring as the military themselves. In the month of July, for instance, Fort Mackeson, near the entrance of the Kohat Pass, had been saved from the combined attack of traitorous Sepoys from within, and of Afridis from without, by the skill and courage of Edwardes; while Norinji, a village beyond our frontier in the Eusofzye country, where the Ghazis were mustering in great force and proclaiming a holy war, was cleared of the enemy by similar energy on the part of James. In August there were fewer troubles, for the simple reason that many of the most villainous of the borderers had been enlisted in our service. But there was the far greater danger to which Lawrence had looked forward with apprehension from the beginning, the autumnal fever. If the Poorbeas suffered much by it, the Europeans were sure to suffer more, and disease had already begun to do its deadly work, when the rumour spread that large quantities of arms were being purchased and were, even then, lying hid within the lines of the three disarmed regiments. The whole, therefore, might start up, at any moment, ready armed, and be joined by the two cavalry regiments which had not been compelled to go through the form of disarmament.

It was no time for parleying with mutiny. A search was ordered in the lines of the 51st on the morning of August 25,

and while the young Sikh and Afghan levies were engaged in the congenial task of searching the huts of their hereditary foes, the whole regiment 'rose as one man,' and, after fighting bravely with such weapons as came to hand, were overpowered and put to flight. The long pursuit from Peshawur to Jumrood was one grand battue, in which no quarter was either asked or granted; and when, forty-eight hours afterwards, the guns on the parade-ground had done their grim work with such stragglers as had been picked up when the pursuit was over, the whole regiment, eight hundred and seventy strong—a regiment with the proud names of Punniar, Punjab, Mooltan, and Gujerat inscribed upon its colours—had ceased to exist.

Edwardes' hurried letters to John Lawrence on the subject are terribly graphic and describe, I am thankful to say, the last horrible scene of the kind which it will be my duty to record. They differ not only in degree but in kind from the letters of Cooper to which I have just referred, but they make it painfully evident how, amidst the passions and the panic of the fierce struggle for life some even of the kindest-hearted Englishmen were brought to look with indifference on scenes of wholesale bloodshed, which, at any earlier or later period of their lives, would have filled them with horror and disgust.

Peshawur: August 28, 1857.

My dear John,—I sent you a telegraph just now about the 51st Native Infantry, but may as well tell you more about it. For some days there has been uneasiness in the lines, and rumours of concealed arms and ammunition, and the General was making up 2,000 leg-irons on speculation. To-day he searched the lines, and found a good deal of ammunition but no arms, which were probably concealed. He ordered the Pandies into camp on the European Parades. The 51st Native Infantry, not liking this separation from their lines, made a rush on the arms of the new Sikh Corps while Khalsa was at dinner. Khalsa dropped his curry, and went in for victory, and killed fifty, it was thought, on the spot. The 51st then bolted to the country, and pursuit was instant in every direction. The cantonment arrangements were capital, and no confusion. The Chiefs, &c., and new levies, all promptly ready, and all very satisfactory as to feeling. The other corps stood fast, and all went off in a couple of hours. James is still out in pursuit with a troop of Mooltanis.

I hope I shall be none the worse for a small tour I made, but the sun is terribly hot in middle day now. There was no one wounded, I believe, on our side. Bartlett and another officer were driven into a pond by the Pandies, who tried to drown them but did not succeed. Drumhead courts-martial going on now. This simplifies matters greatly. One corps is got rid of, and we shall probably put another in irons. Good-bye,

Yours affectionately,

HERBERT B. EDWARDES.

P.S.—James just come back, nearly melted; followed the Pandies fifteen miles, killed every man, no prisoners taken by his party. Colonel Kyle with another pursuit has killed about one hundred, and prisonered sixty—great clearance.

And again on the 31st he writes:—

Almost all the 51st Native Infantry have been picked up and shot. More than seven hundred have been already killed. Four or five got to Khuddum in the Khyber, where the Hukikheyl said they would let them go to Cabul as Mussulmans, but not as Hindus; so they were converted on the spot.

While these ghastly scenes were being witnessed in the outlying districts of his province, the Chief Commissioner's work at the capital never slackened for a moment. His correspondence, indeed, seems to grow in interest and importance, as he finds himself better able, now that his last reinforcements have been sent to the front, to look forward to the more congenial work of pacification and reconstruction which was to follow the fall of Delhi.

On August 5, he wrote to William Muir—a man who was then a stranger to him, but was, afterwards, to become one of his intimate friends, and to fill one of the most responsible posts in his Viceregal Government—the first of a series of important letters, which after discussing Havelock's movements winds up in words which acquire a melancholy interest when we cast our eyes onwards to the letters of the following day. 'If you can hear any authentic news from Lucknow, kindly send me word. Send my brother also a copy of this letter.' 'Authentic news' from Lucknow did come on the morrow, and told him that his noble-hearted brother was no more. He had died a soldier's death—the death which,

perhaps, of all others he would have most coveted—while defending against desperate odds the Residency of his Capital.

In time of war it often happens that the best and ablest of soldiers, the man whose name has been on everybody's lips, and who has managed to wind himself round everybody's heart, is taken away, leaving little more than a mere passing impression behind him. A few prayers at the grave, a few shovelsful of earth, a few tears from the faithful few—and, out of sight is out of mind! The dead are forgotten in the fierce struggle for life among the living. No man had been more beloved in the camp before Delhi than Sir Henry Barnard, and his death by cholera called forth an outburst of lamentation and appreciative eulogy which has been duly recorded by Sir John Kaye. But, I find in a letter of Neville Chamberlain, written to Sir John Lawrence only two days after the grave had closed over him, the bitter words, 'The troops appear to have already forgotten poor Barnard almost entirely. So much for the bubble reputation!'

Nor is it only in time of war that a great and good man dies and is soon forgotten. For the few days indeed which follow his death the newspapers are full of him, and his name is on everybody's lips; more, much more, perhaps, than it had ever been in his life-time. But in the feverish activity, the hurry and the flurry, the breathless race for wealth, the constant straining after that which we have not, the life at high pressure, which are the chief characteristics of our days, he, too, is soon as though he had never been. The gap which he has left is filled up or bridged over, somehow, by lesser men; and it is only the faithful few who feel that, really, it has not been filled up or bridged over at all.

But not in this wise—though in the midst of a struggle for empire and for life, the like to which has rarely taxed the energies of Englishmen—was the passing away of Sir Henry Lawrence, and not such the nature of the impression which he had made on those who knew him well. At Delhi and at Lahore, in Rajpootana and in Huzara, at Peshawur and at Mooltan were to be found men, the foremost in council and in the field, the men on whom all India was then hanging, whom he had inspired by his noble example, and had bound

to himself by ties of affection and respect which death could only rivet more indissolubly. They worked on indeed, without stint or stay, for the common safety, as he would have wished them to have done, even when the chilling news first came. But they did so, henceforward, with leaden hearts. For they felt—and I am told that the feeling often found expression in words—as if India could only be half-saved, now that Sir Henry Lawrence was no more! 'The fall of Delhi,' says Herbert Edwardes in writing to John Lawrence some six weeks later when another great name had been added to the dead, 'has happened at the critical moment for the Punjab. Alas, what has it cost us! I feel as if, at Lucknow and Delhi, I had lost the father and the brother of my public life. Never again can India be the home to me that it has been for the last ten years.'

'It has indeed been a grievous calamity to us all,' says John Lawrence in his reply. 'There is no man in India who, perhaps, at this time, could not have been better spared. The blow came like a clap of thunder upon us. . . . I believe he has not left an abler or a better soldier behind him. His loss, just now, will be a national calamity.'

To the Punjab indeed Henry Lawrence—all of him that could ever die—had been dead for five years past. It had been his lot to witness, as it were, his own death and his own funeral procession on that gloomy day in February, 1853, when, followed by a long train of faithful mourners, native and European, he passed from the country of his choice into the chill outer world. With that day the bitterness of death for him was past. But all of him that could live was living on, even after the bursting shell had done its work at Lucknow, and much of it is living, to this day, in India, in the hearts of those whom he had inspired with his spirit, and who were and who are still carrying on his work. For the noble fabric of government which it had been the lot of Henry and John Lawrence together to found and foster in much tribulation of spirit; and then of John, single-handed, to bring to maturity, to build up and to consolidate, was, in truth, the resultant of the great and often antagonistic qualities of both. I have already pointed out how, even in matters wherein they most

differed, John had gravitated slowly towards the policy of Henry, when once the spirit of mutual antagonism was removed. And in the province which was now weathering the storm and was to prove the sheet-anchor of the whole of India, the fidelity of the great Sirdars, who raised troops of cavalry in our defence or volunteered for service before Delhi, may be regarded as a special tribute rendered to the memory of Henry Lawrence; just as the contentment and well-being of the masses may be put down to John.

The simple tombstone erected over the grave of Henry Lawrence, in front of the Residency which he had held till death, bears the inscription suggested by himself, 'Here lies Henry Lawrence, who tried to do his duty.' It is the epitome of his life. Some years afterwards, when his younger brother returned as Governor-General to India, he visited the sacred spot; and I have been told that the expression on his weather-beaten countenance, as he stood beside the grave in silence, was a sight never to be forgotten by those who witnessed it.

> There did a thousand memories crowd upon him,
> Unspeakable for sadness.

But with his regret for the misunderstandings which had never been quite cleared up, and the heart-burnings which had never been quite healed over on this side the grave, there must have been a glow of noble pride in the work which they had yet managed to do together, as well as in the life which had been lived, and in the death which had been died, by him who slept below.

Now he, too, has passed away

> To where beyond these voices there is peace,

to the region wherein, if we can feel sure of anything concerning it, we may feel sure of this, that the discords of such noble souls will be found to be but parts of higher harmonies. His body rests in the vast Abbey, separated from his brother's by the breadth of a quarter of the world. And it was suggested, not inappropriately, by one whose thoughts leapt back to the hurried funeral of Sir Henry Lawrence beneath storms of shot and shell, and to the simple gravestone at Lucknow, that the inscription upon Lord Lawrence's tomb should be the coun-

terpart of that of his brother, except that being written for him instead of by him, it might tell the truth more freely, 'Here lies John Lawrence, who did his duty to the last.'

The characters and careers of the two brothers are widely different. But there is still a likeness in the difference. For they had the same high and noble aims, the same disinterestedness, the same love to the people of India, the same absolute devotion to duty. Which of the two rendered the nobler service to the State it would be difficult to say. But it is not difficult to say—and that, too, without throwing a veil over the faults of either—that, taking them both together, the chivalry, the generosity, the sympathy of the one, the strength, the judgment, the magnanimity of the other, the name of Lawrence may, now and for ever, present to the people of India the noblest impersonation of English rule, a rule unselfish and unaggressive, benevolent and energetic, wise and just.

Sir John Lawrence had sent off the last man from the Punjab. But he was not yet content to rest, Nicholson's column was nearing Delhi, and Dawes' battery was following hard behind. But the ball might still be kept rolling from Kashmere. Runbeer had succeeded Golab; and, if the Chief Commissioner could manage it, he was to succeed also to all his father's obligations. Lieutenant Urmston, who had been Assistant Commissioner at Peshawur, happened, during the Mutiny, to be in Kashmere, on a kind of sick leave, as the redoubtable Nicholson had been before him. On him, therefore, naturally fell the preliminary negotiations with Golab and his son; and the result was that he strongly advised Lawrence, for the omen's sake, to accept the proffered aid. Golab was much too astute, he thought, not to be true to us. Early in the Mutiny the Kashmere ruler had had an interview with Urmston, on a raft moored in the middle of a river, when, pointing to a cloud which just then happened to be passing over the sun, 'the Mutiny,' he exclaimed, 'will be just like that fleeting cloud.' But the whole burden of the arrangements for sending down the Contingent to Delhi, and the full responsibility for doing so was to fall on Sir John Lawrence. He had first to convince himself that the troops were fairly trustworthy, and that they would be able to do respectable work.

And then he had the still harder task of persuading General Wilson not to render them useless by putting them to duties which they could not perform, or positively harmful by showing his suspicions of them.

General Wilson's letter (he says to Edwardes) does not give me a favourable idea of his capacity or fitness for the post. First it was said, 'Send the Jummoo troops;' then, 'We will not have them;' then, 'Send them, by all means; let them come quickly;' and now they begin to hedge. I feel rather sick of such vacillation.

To Wilson himself he says:—

So far as I have the means of judging, I consider that the Jummoo troops are trustworthy. I myself would trust them were I in your place, so long as I had no reason to do otherwise. I think that unless the officers with them are wilfully blind, or place a stupid confidence in them, they will be able to form a fair and, indeed, a just judgment as to their merits by the time the force gets to Umballa. If, by that time, my brother has no reason for distrusting them, I would say, by all means, have them sent on to Delhi, and let them aid in the attack. If, on the other hand, he finds grounds for doubt, I would send them over to Meerut to put down rebellion and sedition. My own impression is that they will behave well. They are all Hillmen, who have no sympathy with the Poorbeas.

And then, thinking that he might be able to form a more accurate judgment of their capabilities, and confirm them in their fidelity by a personal interview, he set out for the purpose, in the middle of all his other work, caught them up at Jullundur, inspected them, promised them gratuities if they should be wounded, and pensions to their heirs if they should fall in battle, distributed a bounty of five thousand rupees, and gave all the native officers robes of honour. What wonder, after this, that they went off, as he said, very *kush* (happy)? 'They are a fine body of men,' he says to Edwardes, 'young, active, and well-made, just the lads for a hillside, but not showing the bone and muscle of the Sings.' The whole incident shows again that 'infinite capacity for taking pains,' on which I have already remarked.

Meanwhile, there was a lull in the operations before Delhi. News of the tragedies at Cawnpore and Lucknow had reached the camp; and it was clear that Havelock, whatever might be his wishes, and whatever the brilliancy of his victories, would be unable to move northwards for many a day. Reinforcements from England, it was also clear, could not now be looked for till the crisis was past; for the English Government, evidently in profound ignorance of its urgency, instead of hurrying out regiments by the quickest possible route overland, were allowing them to waste two precious months in the voyage round the Cape. Hope, therefore, of help from without—otherwise than from John Lawrence—there was none at all. To keep his troops as much as possible under shelter of his camp, to husband his ammunition, to wait till the last man and the last heavy gun had arrived from the Punjab—such seemed to be General Wilson's wisest policy, while Nicholson was on his way, and while the Siege Train of heavy guns from Phillour and Ferozepore was dragging its slow length along.

Happily such news as was brought us from the interior of the city by the Intelligence Department, which was under the able direction of Hodson, went to show that passive resistance would do almost as much for us as more active measures. There were jealousies and open feuds, so Hodson's spies brought back word, among the population of the city generally, among the military leaders, and even in the palace itself. The old king, they said, was being insulted by swashbucklers in open Durbar, the generals often quarrelled in his presence, his sons were busy intriguing against him and against one another, the treasury was empty, and the forced loan, which had now been levied, for the third time, on the unhappy merchants, had left little to be looked for either in the way of loyalty or money from them. Did the Great Mogul order the troopers who had pitched their camp in the middle of his garden to leave it? They flatly refused to go. Did he taunt his army with their numerous defeats, and with their failure to capture a single gun from an enemy who was so much their inferior in numbers? He found that his taunts were as powerless as his threats. He had already opened

communications with the English, offering to admit them into the Palace, and so into the city, if his pension were guaranteed to him; communications which, it should be added, Sir John Lawrence, who had always thought him more sinned against than sinning, had been disposed to entertain, if he could first prove himself to be guiltless of English blood. But the negotiations had fallen through, and the poor old dotard was now talking of abdication and of a pilgrimage to Mecca, a town which, in his second childhood, he seems—like the Children-Crusaders of the Middle Ages—to have thought lay in some adjoining district, not many days' march from his home! Meanwhile the bazaars were being rifled afresh by each new batch of mutineers as they entered the city. Some regiments, when they arrived, found the city gates closed against them; for those who were already inside wished to keep all the plunder to themselves. Others turned away in disgust because they could not get a share of the spoils which had been already divided. The whole city was at the mercy of a rude soldiery. The sanctity of the harem was invaded, and honour and life were as unsafe as property. Thus, all the news which reached us went to show that if the besieged were given time to cut their own throats they might, very possibly, save us the trouble of doing so. One spirited body of mutineers, indeed, stung by the taunts of the old king, engaged to fight us continuously for a week. We met them, for several days, with defensive tactics, but at last, on the 12th of August, we suddenly took the offensive, drove them pell-mell into the city, and captured their guns, though at the cost, for the rest of the siege, of the services of two of the best officers in camp, Brigadier Showers and Major Coke, both of whom fell severely wounded.

About this time (to quote the words of an eye-witness, the author of one of the best books upon the siege of Delhi)[1] a stranger of very striking appearance was remarked visiting all our picquets, examining everything, and making most searching inquiries about their strength and history. His attire gave no clue to his rank; it evidently never gave the owner a thought. Moreover, in those anxious times, everyone went as he pleased; perhaps no two

[1] *History of the Siege of Delhi*, by an Officer who served there, p. 223.

officers were dressed alike. . . . He was a man cast in a giant mould, with massive chest and powerful limbs, and an expression ardent and commanding, with a dash of roughness; features of stern beauty, a long black beard, and deep sonorous voice. There was something of immense strength, talent, and resolution in his whole gait and manner, and a power of ruling men on high occasions that no one could escape noticing at once. His imperial air, which never left him, and which would have been thought arrogant in one of less imposing mien, sometimes gave offence to the more unbending among his countrymen, but made him almost worshipped by the pliant Asiatics. He seemed to disdain any other than a ruling part, speaking rarely in ordinary society. Such a man would have risen rapidly from the ranks of the legions to the throne of the Cæsars; but, in the service of the British, it was thought wonderful that he became a Brigadier-General, when, by seniority, he could only have been a captain.

It is hardly necessary to say that the stranger thus graphically described was Nicholson. The quick march of his Column had been still more quickened by an express from General Wilson, which reached him on August 2, and was written in the most urgent terms.

The enemy have re-established the bridge over the Nujuffgurh cut —which we had destroyed—and have established themselves in force there, with the intention of moving on Alipore, and our communications to the rear. I therefore earnestly beg you to push forward, with the utmost expedition in your power, both to drive these fellows from my rear, and to aid me in holding my position. I fear you will also have had rain, and may be stopped by the Markunda Nulla, but pray push on.

Obedient to this summons, Nicholson had 'pushed on' with all speed, and when within three or four marches of Delhi had, on a second request of General Wilson, ridden ahead of his force to consult with him, and all unknown, except to the old Punjabis, had appeared, on August 7, in the middle of the camp of which he was so soon to become a ruling spirit. His cold reserved bearing, his apparent haughtiness, and the circumstances attending his appointment, caused many of the older officers, at first, to look askance at him. The 'Autocrat of All the Russias,' as he used to be called by his Punjabi friends, generally, either took men by storm, at first

sight, by his noble bearing, or he alienated them seriously. On the following day he returned to his force, having taken the measure, as he thought, of the military position and of the chief military authorities. And on the 14th he again rode into the English camp at the head of his Column; at the head, that is, of the grandest contribution sent by the Chief Commissioner of the Punjab to the enterprise which still lay unfinished—it might almost be said not yet begun—in front of him.

The small force upon the Ridge, raised now to 8,000 men of all arms, could breathe more freely, and not many days elapsed before the post of danger and of honour fell to the new comer. The Siege Train was still on its way, as the mutineers knew well, and the Neemuch Brigade, supported by that of Bareilly, had been sent out from Delhi to intercept it. But Nicholson determined instead to intercept them.

He set out with his Column of 2,000 men on August 25. The country was much flooded. Rain was falling in torrents, and the Horse Artillery guns were soon almost buried in the bog. Most generals would have given up the project in despair, but hearing about mid-day that the enemy were some twelve miles ahead, at Nujuffgurh, by sheer force of will, he induced his drenched and tired-out men to push on. They came in sight of the enemy an hour before sunset, and, then and there, Nicholson attacked them in position, and, by a series of masterly movements, put them to flight, capturing the whole of their thirteen guns! The Bareilly Brigade, which was in earshot of the battle, hearing of what had befallen their Neemuch brothers, returned to Delhi without so much as striking a blow.

It is hardly necessary to add that no one in camp looked askance at Nicholson after this, for it was the greatest blow which the mutineers had yet received. The delight of Sir John Lawrence at this first achievement of his new Brigadier-General before Delhi was unfeigned.

> Though sorely pressed with work, I write a line to congratulate you on your success. I wish I had the power of knighting you on the spot. . . . Don't assault until you have given the mutineers all the powder and shot which the Siege Train can spare, and then go in, and may God be with you all!

Nicholson would not have cared much for being 'knighted on the spot,' but he did care very much for the service he had done, and for the good opinion of his chief.

Many thanks (he wrote back) for your kind letter of the 27th. I would much rather win the good opinion of my friends, than any kind of honorary distinction. . . . I feel very thankful for my success, for had these two Brigades succeeded in getting to our rear, they would, undoubtedly, have done much mischief.

Edwardes, writing to John Lawrence, was equally enthusiastic over the successes of his friend. The expressions which he had used when he found that he must do without Nicholson's services at Peshawur, seemed now hardly overstrained.

He is a great loss to us, but will be a greater gain down below, and I think you have done quite right in moving him. May he be useful and successful, and come back crowned with honour. . . . You have been very vigorous in pushing down reinforcements, and these appointments of Chamberlain and Nicholson are worth armies. . . . I am so proud to see these two noble men called to their right place in front, and from our frontier! Amid the ruins of the Regular army these two Irregular pillars stand boldly up against the sky—and I hope the Tom Noddies may study their architecture.

But some time must still elapse before the Siege Train, the Jummoo Contingent, and the last of the Punjab reinforcements can reach the camp and enable Nicholson to 'go in and win.' And while the force before Delhi—who are now, for the first time, to become besiegers rather than besieged—are, as it were, taking breath for their final effort, I may quote from the mass of correspondence before me a few samples of the letters written by Sir John Lawrence to 'the outer circle' of his correspondents, to such men as Lord Canning, Lord Elphinstone, Sir Bartle Frere, Mr. Colvin, the Lieutenant-Governor of the North-West Provinces, and Mr. Mangles, the Chairman of the Court of Directors at home. I may quote also a few of the letters which he wrote to his 'inner circle,' to men like Edwardes at Peshawur, or Nicholson, Chamberlain, Norman, Greathed, and Wilson, before Delhi. The first group will best illustrate his comprehensive views for the future when Delhi should

have fallen, views never obscured by the multiplicity of details or the press of current business connected with his own province. The other will indicate his extraordinary grasp of detail as well as his determination, now that he had done his best for the fall of Delhi, that those before the place should do theirs, and that, so far as he could prevent it, there should be no turning back, no more halting between two opinions, when once the hour should have struck.

The first letter I select is to Lord Canning, and contains amongst other matters of interest his answer to the message to 'hold on to Peshawur to the last.'

Lahore: August 14, 1857.

My Lord,—I beg to acknowledge your Lordship's letter of the 15th ultimo, which I received yesterday. Our western boundary is a very difficult and complicated question, on which a great deal may be said both for the mountain and the river barrier. I used to be very strongly in favour of the former. But time and experience have led me to modify my views. We will, of course, hold on to the last as you desire, and if Delhi only falls within a reasonable period, all will go well. But until this takes place, we must stand on the verge of a precipice.

General Havelock has had great success. We heard this morning that he had gained another victory on his way to Lucknow. God grant that it may be true, and, above all, that he may arrive in time to save our country folks in Lucknow. I hope it has been arranged that, after doing this, he will return to Cawnpore with them. I think we should abandon Oude for the present. We can easily reconquer it. If we try to do this at present, we shall not succeed effectually, while we shall compromise ourselves elsewhere.

When all the Punjab reinforcements arrive at Delhi, there will be some fifteen thousand men present, a force amply sufficient, I believe, to take the place. But should they fail in their attempt, or should they not try to take it by assault, every effort should be made to reinforce the army before that place. If we hope to stem the tide we must take Delhi. Its strength, its political importance, render its capture essential to our political existence. Deprived of it, the insurgents will speedily degenerate into a rabble. They may endeavour to retire on Gwalior, but the probability is that they will disperse and return to their own homes.

As regards new troops, I strongly recommend that your Lordship order regiments of Ghoorkas, Bundelas, Menatties, Jats, Rajpoots,

Bheels and Sonthals to be raised. The Bheels and Sonthals had better be unmixed. All the others should be mixed. I shall have twenty Punjab corps besides seven Police battalions complete by October 1, and can easily raise, or rather make up four or five more from the levies which have been raised for temporary service. I am chary of doing too much in this way, lest they should feel their strength. But from the moment that European troops commence pouring into the country, I can, if your Lordship desire it, go on raising more corps. Our regiments are well mixed and not too strong, ten companies of eighty men each, viz. four Mohammedan, four Sikh, two Hillmen.

I do not advocate our enlisting many Afridis, nor indeed many Pathans from beyond our border. We have not the same hold on them as on our own subjects. They are more difficult to manage, more fanatical, more restless than the Mohammedans of our lands on this side the Indus. The Afridis are brave and hardy fellows, but very restless and impatient of discipline. They like service close to their homes. Officers like Major Lumsden and Major Coke can, doubtless, manage them, but few others succeed. Even Captain Wilde of the 4th Punjab Rifles has just lost nine from desertion since he crossed the Indus, because they heard they were going to Delhi.

Doubtless, we must have an army of natives, and the sooner this is formed the better. But I would suggest that it be no larger than is absolutely necessary. I have long believed that we had too many native troops, compared with the European, and, after what has occurred, it is clear that we must add largely to the latter. This we cannot afford unless we place the native army on an economical footing. I would advocate not only that which all men will now unite in recommending, a great mixture of races, but also that we have three different classes of native troops. That is, Corps of the Line, Irregular Corps, and Police Corps. If care be taken in raising them, little sympathy will exist between each class. The whole cost will be less than that of the old army, and a large surplus therefore will be available to meet the extra expense of the European troops.

We are all doing well here. Yesterday we heard that our troops before Delhi had captured four guns, with some loss, however, to themselves. The soldiers are in good spirits, and I have much hope that an effort will be made to take the place before long. Chamberlain getting wounded was a great loss. Nicholson, however, will supply his place. Your Lordship is quite right to hold Allahabad strongly. If we lost that place we should lose the gate into the Upper Provinces.

Lahore: August 14, 1857.

My dear Lord Elphinstone,—We are much obliged to you for the cash. We shall require it all. The whole army at Delhi, and the Hill stations, as far as Mussoorie, depend on us. What you say about the difficulty of removing incompetent Generals is undeniable. Still, unless they be removed, ruin and disgrace in time of difficulty must ensue. Sombody must 'bell the cat,' as they used to say in Scotland, and it is better to encounter obloquy than see everything we hold dear and prize go to destruction. I only wish I had the power to put one or two gentlemen on the shelf! . . . I do not think that our army should, perhaps could, leave Delhi. If we did, it would probably ruin us. Our cavalry are few and inferior; our communications would be cut off, we should obtain supplies with difficulty, for our prestige would be gone. No, there is nothing for it, in my mind, but to take Delhi or perish in the struggle.

It may be remembered that Sir John Lawrence had, within the first few days of the outbreak of the Mutiny, written to Mangles a stirring letter, which I have quoted in full. Here is a worthy sequel to it, written in the hope of arousing a strong feeling among the authorities at home as to the necessary changes in the army, when once the Mutiny should have been quelled.

Lahore: August 28, 1857.

My dear Sir,—I was much obliged for your kind letter of July 10. Long ere this you will have heard and been convinced that my anticipations have fallen far short of the reality. The greater part of the Bengal army, Regular and Irregular, have mutinied, and the horrors and atrocities which they have perpetrated are scarcely to be paralleled in those of any time or country. It has only been by the aid of the Almighty that we have maintained the struggle. Had not the Persian war come to an end when it did, had we not got the aid of the British troops bound for China, and lastly, had not the Punjab troops and people stood firm, God only knows what would have been the result. Even now our state is most precarious. I do trust that regiments are coming out overland, for I really do not see how otherwise we shall maintain the struggle. In the Punjab we are better off than in any other part of this Presidency. But, even here, I cannot reflect that we shall be for three or four more months without troops from England, except with great anxiety. Out of three regiments of European Infantry and a large force of Artillery, only 1,000 men at Peshawur are now fit for duty! In all

the rest of the Punjab, the sound men cannot exceed 2,000. We have nothing in the interior of the country but Police Corps and new Punjab regiments. It has been a sad misfortune that while our native Hindustani Corps were kept up to 1,150 bayonets, the Europeans, the sinews of our strength, were two or three hundred men below their complement. The corps now fighting at Delhi scarcely musters six or seven hundred men. We are also badly off for Artillerymen.

It would be mere folly to conceal this state of things. We shall, of course, all do our best and fight it out to the last, but we are certainly in great straits and in the utmost need of all the aid which England can send.

You will have heard of the sad fate of my dear brother Sir Henry, and of the still more terrible catastrophe which has befallen Sir Hugh Wheeler and our countrymen and countrywomen at Cawnpore. The shock which our prestige and power in India have received has been very great, and the reorganisation of the Native Army and system of administration in the North-West Provinces will tax the abilities and energies of our best officers. Indeed, I do not know where men equal to the task are to be found. All our old military men are unequal to the crisis. We have some excellent soldiers, no doubt, in the army, but they are brought to the front very tardily.

Delhi still holds out, and had we but a soldier equal to the crisis in command, it ought to fall within the next fortnight. General Wilson is a vast improvement over his predecessors, but is too undecided for such a task. In Chamberlain and John Nicholson I rest my main hope. The latter is an officer of great force of character and resolution. He has just struck the only real blow which the mutineers have received since the first day after the arrival of our army at Delhi. He has beaten them well, taken all their guns, and destroyed their camp at Nujufghur. This was the force which had evidently gone out to attempt to intercept the new Siege Train, now near Kurnal, on its way to Delhi.

You will be glad to hear that Persia has evacuated Herat, and that the Afghans still adhere to the treaty. We cannot, however, reckon much on the latter, unless Delhi falls soon. Pray don't forget to urge on the Government the necessity for sending out plenty of artillerymen. Not less than three to four thousand men should be sent out during the winter. There is not a troop or company near its full complement, and we must no longer, as a rule, use native artillerymen.

I am afraid you will think that I am unnecessarily alarmed.

But such is not the case. From the first, I anticipated calamitous results from our unprepared state, and the inability of our leaders to see the precipice which was yawning at our feet. It seems to me mere folly to shut our eyes to the dangers which beset us. We will, nevertheless, do our best to maintain our position, and I have every hope that, with the aid of the Almighty, we shall succeed. But the struggle is a grievous one, and the individual suffering involved is terrible to contemplate. An entire change of policy as regards the army with which we shall hold India is necessary. A native army we must have, but it should not exceed the number absolutely necessary, and the proportion of Europeans should be largely increased, and carefully maintained. The Regular system should be abolished, and that of the Irregulars substituted. Above all, the system of putting old and incompetent men into high command should be done away with. The incompetency of General Hewitt was patent and notorious to the whole army years ago. I pointed it out when he was first sent to Peshawur.

Had we had a competent officer in command, the result of the battle at Agra would have been very different. That cantonment would not have been burnt, and our folks would not have been immured in the Fort. The whole feeling in India is in favour of the old system. Men trust to the chapter of accidents in the hope that the evil day may not come in their time, and so do not like to see its old incapables passed over. However, I will not inflict on you any more of my opinions.

To Colvin, who had done excellent work in time of peace in the North-West, but whose health was now rapidly failing under the strain of the Mutiny, he writes a letter which gives a vivid picture of the denudation of the Punjab and of the general situation.

Lahore: August 29, 1857.

My dear Colvin,—I have received your notes. . . . I think the Meerut folks in shouting out for more troops and complaining of the withdrawal of the Rifles were clearly in the wrong. Of course, it would be very useful having a good force at Meerut, but this sinks into insignificance compared with the efficiency of the army before Delhi. Take Delhi, and all will go well. So long as it holds out, nothing can permanently improve.

Next to Delhi, the clearing of the Gangetic Doab and opening up our communications downwards are the most important measures. Each officer, however, is too apt to look to his own charge, and neglect general considerations. All the troops I can spare, I send down

to General Wilson, simply indicating the way in which I suggest they may be employed, but leaving him quite unfettered. This plan works much the best. We have now sent down for Meerut a Sikh Corps mustering some seven hundred bayonets, Colonel Dawes' troop of Horse Artillery (Europeans), and two hundred and fifty Pathan horse under Major Stokes of the 59th. Another hundred horse have since been sent down, who will, probably, also be sent off to Meerut. I have also collected a hundred old Sikh sowars, and shall collect a second hundred for Williams, for police purposes. He is to mount and equip them, and they to receive only seven rupees per mensem until they arrive, and are gradually to repay the sums advanced for their equipment out of their pay. The first batch went off yesterday, and another goes to-day. All will be off within the next ten days, and get down quickly in the parcel dawk carriages.

There will doubtless be much difficulty in reconstructing and renovating the administration in the North-West. But it may be done by energy and perseverance. Once destroy the insurgent army and disarm the country, and the rest will be only a matter of time. But nothing will do without a careful selection of the machinery, European and Native, more particularly of the former. We can assist you a good deal with Punjabis for police. But these men, though hardy and resolute, are not very intelligent, and you will require a good mixture of picked Hindustanis. I would employ no Mohammedan Hindustanis for some years, and very few Brahmins and Rajpoots. Jats, Mewatis, Bundelas, Bheels, and the like are good material for police. But you must pay them better than formerly. Our policemen get five rupees per mensem. Yours should get six. The first reform up here began by my giving five rupees in the Trans-Sutlej Division.

In the Delhi territory we can help you a good deal, and of course will do so whenever you may desire it. But in the first instance you must get picked men into every district. Such officers as ——, ——, and the like can do no good. I write this in confidence.

I should be, in the first instance, for proclaiming martial law, and making a severe example of the insurgents. The mutineers and deserters should be carefully followed up and brought to justice. So long as these men are loose, there will be no security. A couple of small Movable Columns would put down all opposition during the cold weather from the Jumna westwards. The Punjab Force now in Sirsa and in Hansi under Van Cortlandt, will suffice for these districts and Rohtuck. Paniput—with the exception of the Narduck country and its Ranghur population—is an easy district to manage.

Delhi will subside of itself after a few examples have been made. Gorgaon ought not to prove difficult.

From the accounts which we receive, Rohilkund will not prove a difficult task. All the Hindu population desire our return.

As regards money, we are doing pretty well. We have sent large sums to the army, and still have some in hand. The Sikh chiefs, and the Jummoo Maharaja have helped us. Twenty-five lacs of rupees have come, or are coming from Bombay, and our six per cent. loan has given us something. I have also put everybody in arrears of pay for three months. We have got in all our *rubbee* (spring) revenue, and the cash plundered in our treasures did not exceed one lac of rupees, and indeed ought not to have been that. Directly the road is open, we can send you four or five lacs without difficulty, perhaps more. We have sent Mussoorie a lac, and promised two more between this and December.

If Delhi soon falls—and it ought to fall within the next fortnight—all will go well. But if it should hold out until December, before which time troops, in any numbers, can scarcely come out and be brought to bear, it is difficult to say what may be our state.

The Persians have evacuated Herat; and so the Afghans are safe on that side. They may now, perhaps, turn their eyes towards Peshawur. We have three European regiments there, but they can scarcely muster one thousand men fit to take the field. All the rest are prostrated by sickness. We have four regiments of Sikh Infantry, but three are new corps. These and about twelve hundred Pathan horse are all we have to hold the border, to keep down rebellion, and overawe eight thousand Hindustani soldiers in the Peshawur valley. It was only last night that we heard that the 51st had made a desperate attempt to seize the arms of a Sikh regiment. They will, I trust, be all destroyed. In the interior of the country we are still weaker.

I have raised eleven regiments of Sikh Infantry already, and several thousand horsemen of various kinds. I fear to raise more until I see the European troops beginning to arrive from England. Nothing can be better than the spirit of the Sikhs just now, but we may have to fight them also. The error we made—an error which was pointed out, but to which no one would listen—was adding to our native troops, while the strength of the European Force actually fell off. The insane confidence which continued vociferation on the part of our officers had generated in the fidelity of our Native army, had produced a belief in England that we could really hold India by means of these troops. *Hinc illæ lachrymæ.*

I will try and draw up a few notes connected with the adminis-

tration of the North-West, which I will send you. But I am sorely pressed with work, and am not at all well. . . .

I now turn to the letters written to his 'inner circle,' and in particular to those men on whom he placed most dependence for the coming operations before Delhi. It will be seen how he influenced everything that was done there, and was, in fact, the ruling spirit.

Lahore: August 11, 1857.

My dear Chamberlain,—The Siege Train starts to-morrow, escorted by the wing of the Belooch battalion and four companies of a new Punjab corps. I want the latter to be sent back, if you can manage it, to Umballa. These to be put together with the other wing which it has never yet seen. In taking away four hundred of the 66th Rifles from Meerut, I would send in its place either the Nusseri Battalion or a Punjab corps of six or seven hundred men. For it is just possible that the corps at Meerut may have something to do.

If the mutineers detach a couple of regiments towards Hansi, would it not be worth while to send a force after them and cut them up? Unless you intend attacking Delhi in their absence, I should consider it a good move.

Maharaja Runbeer Sing's troops, weather permitting, will be at Jullundur on the 15th. I have much hope that they will prove very useful. I hope that so long as they deserve confidence they will receive it. Nothing will do more harm than for them to fancy they are suspected. It would be far better to send them to a distance.

I see that some of our friends at Delhi buoy themselves up with the hope that my brother Henry is still alive. But I feel a conviction that such is not the case. Havelock knew him well, and would have said so if the news was doubtful. Besides, I see that Banks commands in Lucknow. Poor Henry! I never thought that he would have fallen. I had imagined that aid would have been long ago pushed up to him.

What a sad tragedy has this been at Cawnpore! It is quite horrible to think of it. Had not that ass —— been at Allahabad, matters would not have been so complicated there, and a couple of steamers might have got up to Cawnpore with sufficient troops to save the place. It was also the loss of Cawnpore that caused the pressure on Lucknow.

We are longing for news from down below, but we get none. The last letter from Bombay said that the 'Himalaya' had reached Calcutta on July 20, with 1,500 European soldiers.

Lahore: August 15, 1857.

My dear Nicholson,—Thanks for your letter of the 11th, which goes on to Edwardes. I am sorry to hear what you say about matters at Delhi. But we must make the best of them. Two days ago I sent Chamberlain an extract of a letter from the Governor-General of the 15th ultimo, from which it appears to me clear that no reinforcements can be expected from below for many a day. I should say not before troops arrive in numbers from England. He will no doubt show you the extract, when you can judge for yourself. There appears to me but one way by which Havelock could march on Delhi; viz., by defeating the Lucknow insurgents, bringing away our people, leaving a small force safely posted at Cawnpore, and marching with the rest straight on Delhi.

Yesterday I also heard from General Wilson. He seems somewhat disquieted, and says he wants European, and not Native troops. If we could give him more of the former we would do so, but, not having them to send, we supply him with what material we have at hand. It seems to me that we are playing at cross purposes about Stafford's corps. We proposed that it should go to Saharunpore, the Ghoorkas from thence to Meerut, and the 60th Rifles from Meerut to Delhi. This has been put out by carrying off half the corps to Delhi. I have told Wilson that all the troops sent from here are at his disposal to send wherever he likes. We can do no more than this. It is for him to distribute them to the best advantage, and to see that his distribution is carried out.

He also appears to be doubtful about the Jummoo troops, and asks me if they are 'thoroughly trustworthy,' and so forth. How can I say this? I believe that they may be trusted, and, were I in his place, I would trust them. If he cannot make up his mind on the subject, why employ them at all? Or, why not send them elsewhere than to Delhi?

In a letter, written a few days later, Sir John Lawrence brought to bear his great local knowledge of Delhi, in the hope that it might be of service in the assault, and might, possibly, do something to save the life of so recklessly brave and so invaluable an officer as Nicholson. 'Old Nick,' he used to say, 'is a forward fellow, and is only too likely to get knocked over.'

Lahore: August 19, 1857.

My dear Nicholson,—Wilde leaves this to-morrow morning with the whole corps, and takes Dawes' troop from Jullundur. He expects to be at Delhi by the 4th, which is quite as soon

as you folks can be ready to assault. Should your Brigade go in at the Kashmere gate, recollect that when you once pass the Octagon inside, you come to an open space in which the church stands. In advance of this open ground are two streets which lead onwards into the town. If you secure two houses, viz., Hamid Ali Khan's and Skinner's, you command both streets and are quite safe from a sudden attack, and in this open space I would counsel that you re-form your men and get in your guns and advance with deliberation. After passing the old Residency, lately the College, you come to the old Magazine and then over a bridge in the canal to the Palace. From the ground in front of the College and Magazine, which is higher than Selimghur, you could shell the Palace with great advantage, while, to the best of my recollection, guns from neither Selimghur nor the Palace could touch you. . . .

Behind the church is a pucca house with a large *taikhana* leading outside the walls of the town on the river-side. It might be well to try it at the same time that the Kashmere gate is assaulted. But a guide will be necessary. At any rate, it will be well to know of this passage. I do not think that much resistance will be made in the town. I anticipate that a portion of the mutineers will endeavour to hold the Palace and that the rest will bolt. Guns cannot be mounted on the walls of the Palace, and a day's shelling will ensure its surrender. But if the town holds out, and the mutineers occupy the houses, we should seize the Jumma Musjid and the other mosque in the Chandni Chouk, which will serve as a fortress for our troops.

The Lahore gate of the city leads down the Chandni Chouk to the Palace. It is some eighty feet wide. Secure this street and the Jumma Musjid, and the mutineers cannot maintain themselves.

No news for some days from below. . . . The Pandies will bolt by the Nigambode gate across the Doab for Rohilkund. We should have cavalry on that side to cut them up. Two hundred and forty Peshawur horse start to-night under Major Stokes. They are rather a good lot.

But, even now, though it seemed that the end could not long be deferred, matters were not going on satisfactorily at Delhi. The sickly season had begun in good earnest. The cantonments, never healthy, were this year likely to be more than usually deadly, for the banks of the canal had been broken and the country much flooded. In the pressure of work and worry nearly all sanitary precautions had been

neglected. The carcases of men and animals were lying about in every direction unburied, and as the floods subsided and the sun poured down in its fury on the putrid mass, diseases of every kind, ague, and fever, and cholera—which last had never been quite absent—began to work redoubled havoc in the camp, and rendered a large portion of the men unfit for duty. One regiment, which had come in six hundred strong, had, from these and other causes, in the course of three weeks, sunk to two hundred and forty-two effectives! Nicholson, who was in daily communication with Sir John Lawrence during this period, is loud in his complaints of almost everything that was done or not done; and as his complaints are, to a great extent, borne out by letters of Neville Chamberlain and others before me, we may conclude that they were, on the whole, well-grounded, and are not to be put down, as otherwise we might be inclined to do, either to his impatience of restraint or his restless energy. The 'politicals' on whose knowledge of the country he thought he had a right to depend for information which would enable him to move and to strike with effect, were, he repeatedly complains, not up to the mark, and he expected Sir John Lawrence, who had no power at all in the matter, to supersede them at once.

I don't exaggerate when I say, that had I had a decent Political officer with me to get me a little ordinary information, I should have smashed the Bareilly Brigade the next day to the affair at Nujuffghur. As it was, I had no information, not even a guide that I did not pick up for myself on the road, and had I obeyed my instructions and gone to Bahadurghur, the expedition would have been a fruitless one. . . . It is impossible to conceive two men in their position with less local knowledge and influence, and less idea of the service expected of them, than Greathed and Metcalfe.

Should I escape the storm, and have to go out with a Column afterwards, I must—unless you can supply a competent man—be my own Political Agent. I would rather have 2,000 men and be so, than 4,000 and be hampered with an incapable. If you agree with me, you must authorise it, however; for Wilson will take no responsibility on himself, and it appears to me that he is becoming jealous of me, lest I should earn more than my share of κύδος. He will not even show me the plan of assault now, though I feel pretty sure his nervousness will make him do so before the time comes.

These strictures upon the General do not seem to have been without foundation. The concurrent testimony before me is too strong to allow of doubt respecting them. General Wilson had been a vast improvement on former generals, but his health seems to have failed him under the long strain, and he had not the nerve or the moral courage necessary for the tremendous crisis which had arrived. Just now, he was irascible and inaccessible, moody and capricious. One day, he was all in favour of instant action; the next, and the next, and the next, he was for postponing it indefinitely or even abandoning the siege altogether.

Wilson (writes Nicholson on August 22), says that he will assume the offensive on the arrival of the heavy guns, but he says it in an indecisive kind of way which makes me doubt if he will do so, if not kept up to the mark. Do you, therefore, keep him up to it. He is not at all equal to the crisis, and I believe he feels it himself.

Currentem quoque instigavit might be said of such advice when given to such a man. Sir John Lawrence did not need to be reminded to keep other people 'up to the mark.' From the first outbreak at Meerut to that very day he had never ceased to urge on each successive general—Anson, Barnard, Reed, Wilson—the supreme necessity for bold forward action. *Auctor ego audendi* might well have been his motto, and the letter to General Wilson, which I am about to quote, written when the days of Delhi seemed to be already numbered, will, I think, in its force and its grasp of the situation in all its aspects, vividly recall the masterly series of letters written by him to General Anson, when it appeared to be an open question whether there should be any advance at all upon the revolted city.

Lahore: August 29, 1857.

My dear General,—Wilde's regiment will be at Umballa as soon as you can receive this letter; the Jummoo troops a day later. All will be at Delhi by the 7th or 8th of September, if you resolve to have them. I hope you will then be strong enough to attack the city. I wish to urge you to do nothing which sound policy does not dictate, but I cannot but add that if the military means be sufficient, it is of the highest importance to make your attack. I

believe, myself, that if you once establish yourself in force inside the town, the resistance will not be formidable. I believe that the mutineers will break up and disperse, many throwing away their arms. The most desperate may keep together and make for Gwalior.

But even if they attempt to defend the town, they will fail to do so with any effect. The people have suffered too much to side with them, and it is not a place so easily defended as people suppose. The whole eastern side from the Kashmere to the Delhi gate is wide and open. The Palace is the only strong building in this quarter, and this, in the first instance, after getting in might be masked. Two or three days' consecutive shelling will make it too hot for its inmates. All the main streets in Delhi are wide and straight, leading to the chief gates. In the event of resistance, the troops could hold the strong points, such as the Jumma Musjid, the ground between the Kashmere gate the Magazine and College; the Begum Sombres garden, the King's garden close to it, and the mosque in the middle of the Chandni Chouk with perfect safety. If the whole plan be well arranged before the assault and explained to the officers, and they only keep the troops within control, I am persuaded that no formidable opposition will ensue when they are once inside.

These seem to me very strong reasons for assaulting as soon as practicable. Every day's delay is fraught with danger. Every day disaffection and mutiny spread. Every day adds to the danger of the Native princes taking part against us. In the Punjab we are by no means strong. Peshawur is a political volcano which may explode any day. Out of three regiments of European infantry and a large force of Artillery, we have barely 1,000 men fit for service. All the rest are prostrated by fever. We have 8,000 Hindustani troops to guard. One regiment, the 51st, mutinied only yesterday. It is possible that we may have the Afghans on our heads one of these days. If anything happened to the Ameer, I think we certainly should have them down. The sickly season is only now commencing. Throughout the country we are standing at bay, watching and overawing the Hindustanis, by a handful of Europeans and a few Sikh corps mostly composed of recruits. Day after day we hear of fresh corps mutinying. In Central India our power is a mere shadow. In the Bombay Presidency affairs are in a most critical state. In Oude, General Havelock can barely maintain the struggle.

I see little prospect of your being reinforced for a very long time from below. The autumn is notoriously unhealthy at Delhi. There is even danger in keeping so large a body of troops together

for a considerable period under present circumstances. The Gwalior troops will be over the Chumbul before long, and bring large reinforcements to the mutineers. For all these reasons I would strike as early as possible. Every consideration points to prompt action.

I would further recommend that you should arrange with the Political officers as to your future course after Delhi falls. A force will, of course, at once follow the main bodies of the insurgents. A Movable Column will, doubtless, cross into the Gangetic Doab and sweep the country. Small Columns will be required to move about the Delhi territory, to punish insurgents and disarm the country. I would suggest that the force left at Delhi should occupy the Palace.

We shall not require any portion of our Punjab regiments nor of the Artillery which has gone down from the Punjab. But, if possible, I should like to see one European regiment sent back. With its aid we shall do well until more European troops are available.

The arrival of such a letter must have done as much as the arrival of the Siege Train itself, which took place about the same time, to ensure the adoption of decisive measures. But Sir John Lawrence was not willing to rest upon his oars even now. He endeavoured to 'keep the General up to the mark' by working on him through the most energetic spirits around him, Chamberlain and Nicholson, Daly and Norman.

I trust (he says to Norman) that General Wilson will commence work in earnest, directly the Siege Train arrives, and assault the place as soon as practicable. Every consideration dictates this course. I have written and pointed out all this to General Wilson. I can do no more. It is you fellows about him who have the means of influencing him. If we delay for reinforcements from below, God only knows what may happen. Half the force may be prostrated by sickness. I am sure that Chamberlain and Nicholson will be in favour of action. Indeed I cannot well believe that any man of experience and knowledge of India could hold any other opinion. Every day's delay only complicates matters and adds to our difficulties. Every day more regiments are breaking out, and, before long, we shall have no Native army left.

To Hervey Greathed he writes in like manner :—

I hope you are in favour of vigorous and offensive measures as soon as the Siege Train reaches Delhi. To my mind more danger

will arise from delay than from assaulting. It is also good policy striking while the enemy are depressed. Have you any orders from Mr. Colvin or the Supreme Government as to the course to be pursued after the fall of Delhi? It will be a great point to follow up the blow with vigour, so as not to let the fugitive brigades rally and make a stand. . . . We are well here. But sickness is very great at Peshawur. Should the Afghans come down, we should be awkwardly placed. Delhi cannot fall too soon. There are still 7,000 Hindustani troops at Peshawur, 4,000 of whom are armed.

But however anxious Lawrence might be for the assault, he was not anxious, as were some of his advisers, that as much blood as possible should be shed during and after it. He was eager to save the Sikhs, who were in Delhi, from sharing the fate of the Sepoys, and also to draw a distinction between those Sepoys who had murdered their officers and committed other atrocities, and those who had been drawn into the current half against their will. Many letters passed between him, Wilson, and Nicholson on these subjects. Wilson was anxious to receive the overtures of such half-innocent corps, but seemed disinclined to take upon himself the responsibility of doing so. He turned to Sir John Lawrence for advice, and here is the answer he received :—

As you are aware, I have no authority whatever at Delhi or in Delhi matters. But I consider every officer ought to aid the State to the best of his ability and to assume responsibility where that course is advisable. If, therefore, you deem it expedient to receive the overtures of corps, or portions of corps, which have not murdered Europeans, and find it necessary to give distinct pledges for pardon, I am quite prepared to share the responsibility. . . . The combination has been so extensive, the mutiny so general, that it is impossible for us to carry on a war of vengeance against all. We cannot destroy all the mutineers who have fought against us. The sooner we open the door for escape to the least guilty, the better for all parties.

Nicholson quite agreed with his chief in these matters. He was ever panting for action; straining like a hound within the leashes when he sees his quarry slipped close before him. But it is interesting to note in his letters to Sir John Lawrence, amidst his expressions of impatience at what he considered to be the incompetency of those who held the chief command,

his tender regard for the interests of men in whom, even if he had only recently come to know them, he discerned real merit or promise for the future. I have already spoken of his care for Alexander Taylor. Here is another sample:—

I offered Randall of the 59th the Adjutancy of Stafford's corps, but he wishes to serve here, though on his bare subaltern's pay. Bear this in mind, if anything happens to me; for it is not every man who declines Staff employ that he may serve in the trenches on his regimental allowances and without increase of rank. Randall is, moreover, a very steady, intelligent, conscientious fellow.

Nor is it without interest to remark that the officer whom Nicholson, on the strength of what he had seen of him at the Trimmu Ghaut and in the trenches before Delhi, thus warmly recommended, with almost his latest breath, to his Chief, became aide-de-camp to that Chief when he had risen to be Governor-General, was married to his eldest daughter, and received from him, only a few days before the end of his life, the sacred commission—which he has now handed on to me and I have, in my last chapter, attempted to discharge—of putting before the world exactly what Lord Lawrence had or had not proposed with regard to the abandonment of Peshawur.

The Siege Train arrived on September 4, and, close behind it, came the Jummoo troops and Wilde's regiment. And now John Lawrence had done all that he could do, and everything was ready for the last act of the great drama: everything, I would rather say, except the General in command.

The Siege Train arrived at Delhi yesterday (says John Lawrence, gleefully, to Bartle Frere). We ought to have Delhi in our possession within the next ten days. We should have it did Nicholson command. . . . I hope to hear of our beginning the attack tomorrow with a salvo of thirty heavy guns at least. I feel sanguine of success, and that shortly. We cannot afford to delay.

And writing once more to Lord Canning on September 6, he says, in no boastful spirit, but with a just appreciation of what he and his province had done towards making what each successive General had called the 'gambler's throw' to be no gambler's throw at all, but a matter of at least tolerable certainty:—

I trust that the bombardment will commence to-night or to-morrow, and that, by God's help, Delhi will fall upon the 11th. On that day, fifty-four years ago, we first took it. Everything that we could do has been done to aid the army before Delhi. We have sent every man we could spare—perhaps more. We have raised for them Pioneers, Infantry, Cavalry. Nothing that we could think of has been wanting. Even the sand-bags for their batteries have been made up and sent down.

A letter of Nicholson's, written on September 7, takes us behind the scenes for a moment.

The Engineers have consulted me about the plan of attack, though Wilson has not. They tell me they proposed to him that I should be consulted, and that he maintained a chilling silence. I imagine it is, as I supposed, that he is afraid of being thought to be influenced by me. I care little, however, whether he receives my suggestions direct or through the Engineers. Like Barnard, he talks about the 'gambler's throw.' I think, however, we have a right to hope for success, and I trust that, ere another week passes, our flag will be flying from the Palace minarets. Wilson has told me that he intends to nominate me for Governor, for which I am obliged; though I had rather he had told me that he intended to give me command of the Column of pursuit.

Before Delhi: August (September) 7, 1857.

It is significant that, in his excitement, Nicholson dates this and other letters written during the final bombardment 'August' instead of 'September.' The month of August must have passed slowly enough with a man of his impetuous temperament. But he had forgotten all about it now in the rapture of the approaching conflict.

I just write a line to confirm what you will have heard from Wilson. We break ground with No. 1, heavy battery, at six hundred and fifty yards to-night. Nos. 2 and 3 to-morrow night at five hundred and fifty and three hundred and fifty. Batter the 9th and go in on the 10th. I can't give you the plan of attack lest the letter should fall into other hands. Wilson's head is going. He *says* so himself, and it is quite evident that he speaks the truth. . . . Pandy is in very low spirits, and evidently thinks he has made a mistake.

But the eager excitement which caused Nicholson to be out by a month in his recollection of the past, made him also

rather too sanguine, as the next letters show, in his calculations for the future.

Before Delhi: August (September) 9, 1857.

The batteries could not be got ready in time this morning, so we are only silencing the Moree to-day. To-morrow we breach and bombard, and assault on the 11th, which, by a strange coincidence, is the anniversary of our former capture. Many thanks for the Leia Commissionership. What did poor old Ross (the late Commissioner) die of? Your letter to Greathed has had the effect of brightening up both him and Metcalfe.

But, even now, Nicholson was too sanguine in his expectations. There was more delay, and on September 11 he wrote another letter to which a melancholy interest attaches—for it was the last that he wrote to his chief, and nearly the last that he wrote to anyone.

Before Delhi: September 11, 1857.

My dear Lawrence,—There has yet been another day's delay with the Batteries, but I do not see how there can possibly be another. The game is completely in our hands. We only want a player to move the pieces. Fortunately, after making all kinds of objections and obstructions, and even threatening more than once to withdraw the guns and abandon the attempt, Wilson has made everything over to the Engineers, and they, and they alone, will deserve the credit of taking Delhi. Had Wilson carried out his threat of withdrawing the guns, I was quite prepared to appeal to the army to set him aside and elect a successor! I have seen lots of useless generals in my day, but such an ignorant, croaking obstructive as he is, I have never, hitherto, met with, and nothing will induce me to serve a day under his personal command after the fall of this place. The purport of his last message in reply to the Engineers ran thus: 'I disagree with the Engineers entirely. I foresee great, if not insuperable, difficulties in the plan they propose. But, as I have no other plan myself, I yield to the urgent remonstrances of the Chief Engineer.' The above are almost the very words used by him, and yet he has, actually, never even examined the ground on which the Engineers proposed to erect the breaching batteries! I believe the Meerut catastrophe was more his fault than Hewitt's. And, by all accounts, he was driven into fighting at the Hindun, and could not help himself. The same may be said now. He is allowing the Engineers to undertake

active operations simply because he knows the army will no longer put up with inactivity.

Yours very sincerely,
J. NICHOLSON.

With this characteristically violent utterance Nicholson's 'pen and ink work,' the work which he so much disliked, ended. The work of his trusty sword remained. The news that he had been nominated, on Sir John Lawrence's recommendation, to the command of the city after it should be taken; that he had then been recommended by him for a post which he preferred even to the command of the city, the command of the Column of pursuit, and finally, when peaceful times should have returned, to the Commissionership of Leia, reached him in rapid succession, shortly before the assault, and must have convinced him, if he had ever really doubted it, of his Chief's enthusiastic appreciation of his services. 'I trust,' said Sir John Lawrence in the last letter which he was ever to write to him (September 9), 'that you will be in Delhi when this reaches, and that you will escape the dangers of the assault and gain increased honour.' Nicholson was to gain 'increased honour,' but not by holding the Commissionership of Leia, or by governing the city which he had done so much to capture, or by leading the Column of pursuit.

The minuter details of the bombardment, the assault, and the capture of Delhi lie beyond my scope, and it must suffice to give a mere sketch of the crowning operations of a siege, which, from first to last, in all its attendant circumstances, is almost unique in the history of modern war. The part of the wall selected for our attack was that which faced the Ridge, and which, extending from the river Jumna to the Lahore gate formed a third part of the whole circumference. It included the Moree, the Kashmere and the Water Bastions, each of which contained from ten to fourteen heavy guns; each was, in great part, our own handiwork, and each, during the last two months, had poured forth a storm of shot and shell upon their original constructors, without the intermission of a single day. The connecting wall between the bastions had not been constructed to carry heavy guns, but it was twenty-four feet high and twelve thick, and the labour of ten or twenty thousand hands

which could have been had, at any time, for the asking, might, in the space of a few days, have thrown up a rampart behind it, which, armed with a mere fraction of the guns the place contained, would have made the whole impregnable. Why had not the besieged done this long before, or why did they not attempt it even now? Had the Mutiny brought to the front a single military genius at Delhi, as it did when it was too late in other parts of India; had there been a General of even second-rate powers, who could have made the most of his appliances and inspired the troops with implicit confidence in him, the fall of the place must have been indefinitely postponed —postponed, at all events, till a regular investment and a regular siege were possible.

Outside the wall ran a ditch twenty-five feet wide and sixteen feet deep, which might well form the common grave of any force attempting to cross it before the parapets and bastions above should have been swept clear of its defenders. The besiegers of a strongly fortified place ought, it has been laid down on high authority, to outnumber the besieged in the proportion of three to one. At Delhi this proportion was reversed or more than reversed. The besieged army numbered at least 40,000 men; the besiegers, now that the last man had come from the Punjab, only 11,000. And of these not more than 3,300 were Europeans, while the Jummoo contingent, 2,000 strong, had only just arrived in camp, and was regarded with suspicion and dislike by some of the authorities. Our heavy guns were only 54 in number, while those in Delhi amounted to 300. Of Artillery-men we had only 580, and many even of these belonged to the Horse Artillery, and had to be called off from their proper duties to work in the batteries; while, to eke out their scanty numbers, it was found necessary to call for volunteers from the Lancers and the Carabineers, men who had never handled a gun before, and had to take their first lessons in artillery practice exposed to constant fire from the enemy. A hard apprenticeship, but eagerly embraced and nobly discharged!

Such was the general outlook of the siege when the last man and the last gun from the Punjab arrived upon the ground. What wonder if the General on whom the responsibility really rested had misgivings, even to the last moment,