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These men and women of the newer Orient reflect their changing ideas in their changing standards of living. Although this is most evident among the wealthier elements of the towns, it is perceptible in all classes of the population. Rich and poor, urban and rural, the Orientals are altering their living standards towards those of the West. And this involves social changes of the most far-reaching character, because few antitheses could be sharper than the living conditions prevailing respectively in the traditional East and in the modern Western world. This basic difference lies, not in wealth (the East, like the West, knows great riches as well as great poverty), but rather in comfort—using the word in its broad sense. The wealthy Oriental of the old school spends most of his money on Oriental luxuries, like fine raiment, jewels, women, horses, and a great retinue of attendants, and then hoards the rest. But of "comfort," in the Western sense, he knows virtually nothing, and it is safe to say that he lives under domestic conditions which a Western artisan would despise.1

To-day, however, the Oriental is discovering "comfort." And, high or low, he likes it very well. All the myriad things which make our lives easier and more agreeable—lamps, electric light, sewing-machines, clocks, whisky, umbrellas, sanitary plumbing, and a thousand others: all these things, which to us are more or less matters of course, are to the Oriental so many delightful discoveries, of irresistible appeal. He wants them, and he gets them in ever-increasing quantities. But this produces some rather serious complications. His private economy is more or less thrown out of gear. This opening of a whole vista of new wants means a portentous rise in his standard of living. And where is he going to find the money to pay for it? If he be poor, he has to skimp on his bare necessities. If he be rich.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> On this point of comfort v. luxury, see especially Sir Bampfylde Fuller, "East and West: A Study of Differences," Nineteenth Century and After, November, 1911.



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he hates to forgo his traditional luxuries. The upshot is a universal growth of extravagance. And, in this connection, it is well to bear in mind that the peoples of the Near and Middle East, taken as a whole, have never been really thrifty. Poor the masses may have been, and thus obliged to live frugally, but they have always proved themselves "good spenders" when opportunity offers. The way in which a Turkish peasant or a Hindu rvot will squander his savings and run into debt over festivals, marriages, funerals, and other social events is astounding to Western observers.1 Now add to all this the fact that in the Orient, as in the rest of the world, the cost of the basic necessaries of life-food. clothing, fuel, and shelter, has risen greatly during the past two decades, and we can realize the gravity of the problem which higher Oriental living-standards involves.2

Certain it is that the struggle for existence is growing keener and that the pressure of poverty is getting more severe. With the basic necessaries rising in price, and with many things considered necessities which were considered luxuries or entirely unheard of a generation ago, the Oriental peasant or town working-man is finding it harder and harder to make both ends meet. As one writer well phrases it: "These altered economic conditions have not as yet brought the ability to meet them. The cost of living has increased faster than the resources

of the people." 3

One of the main (though not sufficiently recognized) causes of the economic-social crisis through which the

<sup>2</sup> For higher cost of living in the East, see Chirol, *Indian Unrest*, pp. 2-3; Fisher, *India's Silent Revolution*, pp. 46-60; Jones, op. cit.; T. T. Williams, "Inquiry into the Rise of Prices in India," *Economic Journal*, December.

1915.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> L. Bertrand, op cit., 145-147; J. Chailley, Administrative Problems of British India, pp. 138-139. For increased expenditure on Western products, see A. J. Brown, "Economic Changes in Asia," The Century, March, 1904; J. P. Jones, "The Present Situation in India," Journal of Race Development, July, 1910; R. Mukerjee, The Foundations of Indian Economics, p. 5.

<sup>3</sup> Brown, op cit.

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Orient is to-day passing is over-population. The quick breeding tendencies of Oriental peoples have always been proverbial, and have been due not merely to strong sexual appetites but also to economic reasons like the harsh exploitation of women and children, and perhaps even more to religious doctrines enjoining early marriage and the begetting of numerous sons. As a result, Oriental populations have always pressed close upon the limits of subsistence. In the past, however, this pressure was automatically lightened by factors like war, misgovernment, pestilence, and famine, which swept off such multitudes of people that, despite high birth-rates, populations remained at substantially a fixed level. But here, as in every other phase of Eastern life, Western influences have radically altered the situation. The extension of European political control over Eastern lands has meant the putting down of internal strife, the diminution of governmental abuses, the decrease of disease, and the lessening of the blight of famine. In other words, those "natural" checks which previously kept down the population have been diminished or abolished, and in response to the life-saving activities of the West, the enormous death-rate which in the past has kept Oriental populations from excessive multiplication is falling to proportions comparable with the low deathrate of Western nations. But to lower the Orient's prodigious birth-rate is quite another matter. As a matter of fact, that birth-rate keeps up with undiminished vigour, and the consequence has been a portentous increase of population in nearly every portion of the Orient under Western political control. In fact, even those Oriental countries which have maintained their independence have more or less adopted Western lifeconserving methods, and have experienced in greater or less degree an accelerated increase of population.

The phenomena of over-population are best seen in India. Most of India has been under British control for the greater part of a/century. Even a century ago,

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India was densely populated, yet in the intervening hundred years the population has increased between two and three fold. Of course, factors like improved agriculture, irrigation, railways, and the introduction of modern industry enable India to support a much larger population than it could have done at the time of the British Conquest. Nevertheless, the evidence is clear that excessive multiplication has taken place. Nearly all qualified students of the problem concur on this point. Forty years ago the Duke of Argyll stated : "Where there is no store, no accumulation, no wealth; where the people live from hand to mouth from season to season on a low diet; and where, nevertheless, they breed and multiply at such a rate; there we can at least see that this power and force of multiplication is no evidence even of safety, far less of comfort." Towards the close of the last century, Sir William Hunter termed population India's "fundamental problem," and continued: "The result of civilized rule in India has been to produce a strain on the food-producing powers of the country such as it had never before to bear. It has become a truism of Indian statistics that the removal of the old cruel checks on population in an Asiatic country is by no means an unmixed blessing to an Asiatic people."2 Lord Cromer remarks of India's poverty: "Not only cannot it be remedied by mere philanthropy, but it is absolutely certain—cruel and paradoxical though it may appear to say so—that philanthropy enhances the evil. In the days of Akhbar or Shah Jehan, cholera, famine, and internal strife kept down the population. Only the fittest survived. Now internal strife is forbidden, and philanthropy steps in and says that no single life shall be sacrificed if science and Western energy or skill can save it. Hence the growth of a highly congested

<sup>2</sup> Sir W. W. Hunter, The India of the Queen and Other Essays, p. 42

(Liondon, 1903).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> At the beginning of the nineteenth century the population of India is roughly estimated to have been about 100,000,000. According to the census of 1911 the population was 315,000,000.



population, vast numbers of whom are living on a bare margin of subsistence. The fact that one of the greatest difficulties of governing the teeming masses of the East is caused by good and humane government should be recognized. It is too often ignored."1

William Archer well states the matter when, in answer to the query why improved external conditions have not brought India prosperity, he says: "The reason, in my view, is simple: namely, that the benefit of good government is, in part at any rate, nullified, when the people take advantage of it, not to save and raise their standard of living, but to breed to the very margin of subsistence. Henry George used to point out that every mouth that came into the world brought two hands along with it; but though the physiological fact is undeniable, the economic deduction suggested will not hold good except in conditions that permit of the profitable employment of the two hands. . . . If mouths increase in a greater ratio than food, the tendency must be towards greater poverty."2

It is one of the most unfortunate aspects of the situation that very few Oriental thinkers yet realize that over-population is a prime cause of Oriental poverty. Almost without exception they lay the blame to political factors, especially to Western political control. fact, the only case that I know of where an Eastern thinker has boldly faced the problem and has courageously advocated birth-control is in the book published five years ago by P. K. Wattal, a native official of the Indian Finance Department, entitled, The Population Problem of India.3 This pioneer volume is written with such ability and is of such apparent significance as an indication of the awakening of Orientals to a more rational attitude, that it merits special attention.

<sup>2</sup> Archer, India and the Future, pp. 157, 162 (London), 1918. <sup>3</sup> P. K. Wattal, of the Indian Finance Department, Assistant Accountant-General. The book was published at Bombay, 1916.

<sup>1</sup> Cromer, "Some Problems of Government in Europe and Asia," Nineteenth Century and After, May, 1913.

Mr. Wattal begins his book by a plea to his fellowcountrymen to look at the problem rationally and without prejudice. "This essay," he says, "should not be construed into an attack on the spiritual civilization of our country, or even indirectly into a glorification of the materialism of the West. The object in view is that we should take a somewhat more matter-of-fact view of the main problem of life, viz., how to live in this world. We are a poor people; the fact is indisputable. Our poverty is, perhaps, due to a great many causes. But I put it to every one of us whether he has not at some of the most momentous periods of his life been handicapped by having to support a large family, and whether this encumbrance has not seriously affected the chances of advancement warranted by early promise and exceptional endowment. This question should be viewed by itself. It is a physical fact, and has nothing to do with political environment or religious obligation. If we have suffered from the consequences of that mistake, is it not a duty that we owe to ourselves and to our progeny that its evil effects shall be mitigated as far as possible? There is no greater curse than poverty -I say this with due respect to our spiritualism. It is not in a spirit of reproach that restraint in married life is urged in these pages. It is solely from a vivid realization of the hardships caused by large families and a profound sympathy with the difficulties under which large numbers of respectable persons struggle through life in this country that I have made bold to speak in plain terms what comes to every young man, but which he does not care to give utterance to in a manner that would prevent the recurrence of the evil." 1

After this appeal to reason in his readers, Mr. Wattal develops his thesis. The first prime cause of overpopulation in India, he asserts, is early marriage. Contrary to Western lands, where population is kept down by prudential marriages and by birth-control, "for the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Wattal, pp. i-iii.

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Hindus marriage is a sacrament which must be performed, regardless of the fitness of the parties to bear the responsibilities of a mated existence. A Hindu male must marry and beget children-sons, if you please-to perform his funeral rites lest his spirit wander uneasily in the waste places of the earth. The very name of son, 'putra,' means one who saves his father's soul from the hell called Puta. A Hindu maiden unmarried at puberty is a source of social obloquy to her family and of damnation to her ancestors. Among the Mohammedans, who are not handicapped by such penalties, the married state is equally common, partly owing to Hindu example and partly to the general conditions of primitive society, where a wife is almost a necessity both as a domestic drudge and as a helpmate in field work." 1 The worst of the matter is that, despite the efforts of social reformers child-marriage seems to be increasing. The census of 1911 showed that during the decade 1901-10 the numbers of married females per 1000 of ages 0-5 years rose from 13 to 14; of ages 5-10 from 102 to 105; of 10-15 from 423 to 430, and of 15-20 from 770 to 800. In other words, in the year 1911, out of every 1000 Indian girls, over one-tenth were married before they were 10 years old, nearly one-half before they were 15, and four-fifths before they were 20.2

The result of all this is a tremendous birth-rate, but this is "no matter for congratulation. We have heard so often of our high death-rate and the means for combating it, but can it be seriously believed that with a birth-rate of 30 per 1000 it is possible to go on as we are doing with the death-rate brought down to the level of England or Scotland? Is there room enough in the country for the population to increase so fast as 20 per 1000 every year? We are paying the inevitable penalty of bringing into this world more persons than can be properly cared for, and therefore if we wish fewer deaths to occur in this country the births must be reduced to

<sup>1</sup> Wattal, p. 3.



the level of the countries where the death-rate is low. It is, therefore, our high birth-rate that is the social danger; the high death-rate, however regrettable, is

merely an incident of our high birth-rate." 1

Mr. Wattal then describes the cruel items in India's death-rate; the tremendous female mortality, due largely to too early childbirth, and the equally terrible infant mortality, nearly 50 per cent. of infant deaths being due to premature birth or debility at birth. These are the inevitable penalties of early and universal marriage. For, in India, "everybody marries, fit or unfit, and is a parent at the earliest possible age permitted by nature." This process is highly disgenic; it is plainly lowering the quality and sapping the vigour of the race. It is the lower elements of the population, the negroid aboriginal tribes and the Pariahs or Outcastes, who are gaining the fastest. Also the vitality of the whole population seems to be lowering. The census figures show that the number of elderly persons is decreasing, and that the average statistical expectation of life is falling. "The coming generation is severely handicapped at start in life. And the chances of living to a good old age are considerably smaller than they were, say thirty or forty years ago. Have we ever paused to consider what it means to us in the life of the nation as a whole? It means that the people who alone by weight of experience and wisdom are fitted for the posts of command in the various public activities of the country are snatched away by death; and that the guidance and leadership which belongs to age and mature judgment in the countries of the West fall in India to younger and consequently to less trust-worthy persons." 2

After warning his fellow-countrymen that neither improved methods of agriculture, the growth of industry, nor emigration can afford any real relief to the growing pressure of population on means of subsistence, he notes a few hopeful signs that, despite the hold of religion

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Wattal, p. 14.

and custom, the people are beginning to realize the situation and that in certain parts of India there are foreshadowings of birth-control. For example, he quotes from the census report for 1901 this official explanation of a slight drop in the birth-rate of Bengal: "The post-ponement of the age of marriage cannot wholly account for the diminished rate of reproduction. The deliberate avoidance of child-bearing must also be partly responsible. . . It is a matter of common belief that among the tea-garden coolies of Assam means are frequently taken to prevent conception, or to procure abortion." And the report of the Sanitary Commissioner of Assam for 1913 states: "An important factor in producing the defective birth-rate appears to be due to voluntary limitation of births." 1

However, these beginnings of birth-control are too local and partial to afford any immediate relief to India's growing over-population. Wider appreciation of the situation and prompt action are needed. "The conclusion is irresistible. We can no longer afford to shut our eyes to the social canker in our midst. In the land of the bullock-cart, the motor has come to stay. The competition is now with the more advanced races of the West, and we cannot tell them what Diogenes said to Alexander: 'Stand out of my sunshine.' After the close of this gigantic World War theories of population will perhaps be revised and a reversion in favour of early marriage and larger families may be counted upon. But, (1) that will be no solution to our own population problem, and (2) this reaction will be only for a time. . . . The law of population may be arrested in its operation, but there is no way of escaping it." 2

So concludes this striking little book. Furthermore, we must remember that, although India may be the acutest sufferer from over-population, conditions in the entire Orient are basically the same, prudential checks and rational birth-control being everywhere virtually



absent.¹ Remembering also that, besides over-population, there are other economic and social evils previously discussed, we cannot be surprised to find in all Eastern lands much acute poverty and social degradation.

Both the rural and urban masses usually live on the bare margin of subsistence. The English economist Brailsford thus describes the condition of the Egyptian peasantry: "The villages exhibited a poverty such as I have never seen even in the mountains of anarchical Macedonia or among the bogs of Donegal. . . . The villages are crowded slums of mud hovels, without a tree, a flower, or a garden. The huts, often without a window or a levelled floor, are minute dungeons of baked mud, usually of two small rooms neither whitewashed nor carpeted. Those which I entered were bare of any visible property, save a few cooking utensils, a mat to serve as a bed, and a jar which held the staple food of maize." 2 As for the poorer Indian peasants, a British sanitary official thus depicts their mode of life: "One has actually to see the interior of the houses, in which each family is often compelled to live in a single small cell, made of mud walls and with a mud floor; containing small yards littered with rubbish, often crowded with cattle; possessing wells permeated by rain soaking through this filthy surface; and frequently jumbled together in inchoate masses called towns and cities." 3

In the cities, indeed, conditions are even worse than in the country, the slums of the Orient surpassing the slums of the West. The French publicist Louis Bertrand paints positively nauseating pictures of the poorer quarters of the great Levantine towns like Cairo, Constantinople, and Jerusalem. Omitting his more poignant

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> For conditions in the Near East, see Bertrand, pp. 110, 124, 125-128.

<sup>2</sup> H. N. Brailsford, *The War of Steel and Gold*, pp. 112-113. See also T. Rothstein, *Egypt's Ruin*, pp. 298-300 (London, 1910), Sir W. W. Ramsay, "The Turkish Peasantry of Anatolia," *Quarterly Review*, January, 1918.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Dr. D. Ross, "Wretchedness a Cause of Political Unrest," The Survey, February 18, 1911.

details, here is his description of a Cairo tenement: "In Cairo, as elsewhere in Egypt, the wretchedness and grossness of the poorer-class dwellings are perhaps even more shocking than in the other Eastern lands. Two or three dark, airless rooms usually open on a hall-way not less obscure. The plaster, peeling off from the ceilings and the worm-eaten laths of the walls, falls constantly to the filthy floors. The straw mats and bedding are infested by innumerable vermin." 1

In India it is the same story. Says Fisher: "Even before the growth of her industries had begun, the cities of India presented a baffling housing problem. Into the welter of crooked streets and unsanitary habits of an Oriental city these great industrial plants are wedging their thousands of employees. Working from before dawn until after dark, men and women are too exhausted to go far from the plant to sleep, if they can help it. When near-by houses are jammed to suffocation, they live and sleep in the streets. In Calcutta, twenty years ago,2 land had reached \$200,000 an acre in the over-crowded tenement districts." 3 Of Calcutta, a Western writer remarks: "Calcutta is a shame even in the East. In its slums, mill hands and dock coolies do not live; they pig. Houses choke with unwholesome breath; drains and compounds fester in filth. Wheels compress decaying refuse in the roads; cows drink from wells soaked with sewage, and the floors of bakeries are washed in the same pollution." 4 In the other industrial centres of India, conditions are practically the same. A Bombay native sanitary official stated in a report on the state of the tenement district, drawn up in 1904: "In such houses-the breeders of germs and bacilli, the centres of disease and poverty, vice, and crime-have people of all kinds, the diseased, the dissolute, the drunken, the improvident, been indiscriminately

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Bertrand, op. cit., pp. 111-112. <sup>2</sup> I. e., in 1900. <sup>3</sup> Fisher, India's Silent Revolution, p. 51, <sup>4</sup> G. W. Stevens, In India. Quoted by Fisher, p. 51.

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herded and tightly packed in vast hordes to dwell in

close association with each other." 1

Furthermore, urban conditions seem to be getting worse rather than better. The problem of congestion, in particular, is assuming ever graver proportions. Already in the opening years of the present century the congestion in the great industrial centres of India like Calcutta, Bombay, and Lucknow averaged three or four times the congestion of London. And the late war has rendered the housing crisis even more acute. In the East, as in the West, the war caused a rapid drift of population to the cities and at the same time stopped building owing to the prohibitive cost of construction. Hence, a prodigious rise in rents and a plague of landlord profiteering. Says Fisher: "Rents were raised as much as 300 per cent., enforced by eviction. Massmeetings of protest in Bombay resulted in government action, fixing maximum rents for some of the tenements occupied by artisans and labourers. Setting maximum rental does not, however, make more room." 2

And, of course, it must not be forgotten that higher rents are only one phase in a general rise in the cost of living that has been going on in the East for a generation and which has been particularly pronounced since 1914. More than a decade ago Bertrand wrote of the Near East: "From one end of the Levant to the other, at Constantinople as at Smyrna, Damascus, Beyrout, and Cairo, I heard the same complaints about the increasing cost of living; and these complaints were uttered by Europeans as well as by the natives." To-day the situation is even more difficult. Says Sir Valentine Chirol of conditions in Egypt since the war: "The rise in wages, considerable as it has been, has ceased to keep pace with the inordinate rise in prices for the very necessities of life. This is particularly the case

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Dr. Bhalchandra Krishna. Quoted by A. Yusuf Ali, Life and Labour in India, p. 35 (London, 1907).

<sup>2</sup> Fisher, pp. 51–52.

<sup>3</sup> Bertrand, p. 141.

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in the urban centres, where the lower classes—workmen, carters, cab-drivers, shopkeepers, and a host of minor employees—are hard put to it nowadays to make both ends meet." As a result of all these hard conditions various phenomena of social degradation such as alcoholism, vice, and crime, are becoming increasingly common. Last—but not least—there are growing symptoms of social unrest and revolutionary agitation, which we will examine in the next chapter.

<sup>1</sup> Sir V. Chirol, "England's Peril in Egypt," from the London Times,

<sup>2</sup> See Bertrand and Fisher, supra.

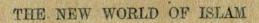


#### CHAPTER IX

#### SOCIAL UNREST AND BOLSHEVISM

UNREST is the natural concomitant of change-particularly of sudden change. Every break with past, however normal and inevitable, implies a necessity for readjustment to altered conditions which causes a temporary sense of restless disharmony until the required adjustment has been made. Unrest is not an exceptional phenomenon; it is always latent in every human society which has not fallen into complete stagnation, and a slight amount of unrest should be considered a sign of healthy growth rather than a symptom of disease. In fact, the minimum degrees of unrest are usually not called by that name, but are considered mere incidents of normal development. Under normal circumstances, indeed, the social organism functions like the human organism: it is being incessantly destroyed and as incessantly renewed in conformity with the changing conditions of life. These changes are sometimes very considerable, but they are so gradual that they are effected almost without being perceived. A healthy organism well attuned to its environment is always plastic. It instinctively senses environmental changes and adapts itself so rapidly that it escapes the injurious consequences of disharmony.

Far different is the character of unrest's acuter mani-These are infallible symptoms of sweeping changes, sudden breaks with the past, and profound maladjustments which are not being rapidly rectified. In other words, acute unrest denotes social ill-health and portends the possibility of one of those violent crises known as "revolutions."





The history of the Moslem East well exemplifies the above generalizations. The formative period of Saracenic civilization was characterized by rapid change and an intense idealistic ferment. The great." Motazelite" movement embraced many shades of thought, its radical wing professing religious, political, and social doctrines of a violent revolutionary nature. But this changeful period was superficial and brief. Arab vigour and the Islamic spirit proved unable permanently to leaven the vast inertia of the ancient East. Soon the old traditions reasserted themselves-somewhat modified, to be sure, vet basically the same. Saracenic civilization became stereotyped, ossified, and with this ossification changeful unrest died away. Here and there the radical tradition was preserved and secretly handed down by a few obscure sects like the Kharidjites of Inner Arabia and the Bettashi dervishes; but these were mere cryptic episodes, of no general significance.

With the Mohammedan Revival at the beginning of the nineteenth century, however, symptoms of social unrest appeared once more. Wahabism aimed not merely at a reform of religious abuses but was also a general protest against the contemporary decadence of Moslem society. In many cases it took the form of a popular revolt against established governments. The same was true of the correlative Babbist movement in

Persia, which took place about the same time.1

And of course these nascent stirrings were greatly stimulated by the flood of Western ideas and methods which, as the nineteenth century wore on, increasingly permeated the East. What, indeed, could be more provocative of unrest of every description than the resulting transformation of the Orient—a transformation so sudden, so intense, and necessitating so concentrated a process of adaptation that it was basically revolutionary rather than evolutionary in its nature? The details of

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> For these early forms of unrest, see A. Le Chatelier, L'Islam au dixneuvième Siècle, pp. 22-44 (Paris, 1888).

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these profound changes—political, religious, economic, social—we have already studied, together with the equally profound disturbance, bewilderment, and suffering afflicting all classes in this eminently transition

period.

The essentially revolutionary nature of this transition period, as exemplified by India, is well described by a British economist.1 What, he asks, could be more anachronistic than the contrast between rural and urban India? "Rural India is primitive or mediæval; city India is modern." In city India you will find every symbol of Western life, from banks and factories down to the very "sandwichmen that you left in the London gutters." Now all this co-exists beside rural India. And it is surely a fact unique in economic history that they should thus exist side by side. The present condition of India does not correspond with any period of European economic history." Imagine the effect in Europe of setting down modern and mediæval men together, with utterly disparate ideas. That has not happened in Europe because "European progress in the economic world has been evolutionary"; a process spread over centuries. In India, on the other hand, this economic transformation has been "revolutionary" in character.

How unevolutionary is India's economic transforma-

tion is seen by the condition of rural India.

"Rural India, though chiefly characterized by primitive usage, has been invaded by ideas that are intensely hostile to the old state of things. It is primitive, but not consistently primitive. Competitive wages are paid side by side with customary wages. Prices are sometimes fixed by custom, but sometimes, too, by free economic causes. From the midst of a population deeply rooted in the soil, men are being carried away by the desire of better wages. In short, economic

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> D. H. Dodwell, "Economic Transition in India," *Economic Journal*, December, 1910.



motives have suddenly and partially intruded themselves in the realm of primitive morality. And, if we turn to city India, we see a similar, though inverted, state of things. . . . In neither case has the mixture been harmonious or the fusion complete. Indeed, the two orders are too unrelated, too far apart, to coalesce with

"India, then, is in a state of economic revolution throughout all the classes of an enormous and complex society. The only period in which Europe offered even faint analogies to modern India was the Industrial Revolution, from which even now we have not settled down into comparative stability. We may reckon it as a fortunate circumstance for-Europe that the intellectual movement which culminated in the French Revolution did not coincide with the Industrial Revolution. If it had, it is possible that European society might have been hopelessly wrecked. But, as it was, even when the French Revolution had spent its force in the conquests of Napoleon, the Industrial Revolution stirred up enough social and political discontent. When whole classes of people are obliged by economic revolution to change their mode of life, it is inevitable that many should suffer. Discontent is roused. Political and destructive movements are certain to ensue. Not only the Revolutions of '48, but also the birth of the Socialist Party sprang from the Industrial Revolution.

"But that revolution was not nearly so sweeping as that which is now in operation in India. The invention of machinery and steam-power was, in Europe, but the crowning event of a long series of years in which commerce and industry had been constantly expanding, in which capital had been largely accumulated, in which economic principles had been gradually spreading.

No, the Indian economic revolution is vastly greater and more fundamental than our Industrial Revolution, great as that was. Railways have been built through districts where travel was almost impossible, and even



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roads are unknown. Factories have been built, and filled by men unused to industrial labour. Capital has been poured into the country, which was unprepared for any such development. And what are the consequences? India's social organization is being dissolved. The Brahmins are no longer priests. The ryot is no longer bound to the soil. The banya is no longer the sole purveyor of capital. The hand-weaver is threatened with extinction, and the brass-worker can no longer ply his craft. Think of the dislocation which this sudden change has brought about, of the many who can no longer follow their ancestral vocations, of the commotion which a less profound change produced in Europe, and you will understand what is the chief motive-power of the political unrest. It is small wonder. The wonder is that the unrest has been no greater than it is. Had India not been an Asiatic country, she would have been in fierce revolution long ago."

The above lines were of course written in the opening years of the twentieth century, before the world had been shattered by Armageddon and aggressive social revolution had established itself in semi-Asiatic Russia. But even during those pre-war years, other students of the Orient were predicting social disturbances of increasing gravity. Said the Hindu nationalist leader, Bipin Chandra Pal: "This so-called unrest is not really political. It is essentially an intellectual and spiritual upheaval, the forerunner of a mighty social revolution, with a new organon and a new philosophy of life behind it." And the French publicist Chailley wrote of India: "There will be a series of economic revolutions, which

must necessarily produce suffering and struggle." 2

During this pre-war period the increased difficulty of living conditions, together with the adoption of

<sup>2</sup> J. Chailley, Administrative Problems of British India, p. 339 (London,

1910-English translation).

Bipin Chandra Pal, "The Forces Behind the Unrest in India," Contemporary Review, February, 1910.

Western ideas of comfort and kindred higher standards, seem to have been engendering friction between the different strata of the Oriental population. In 1911 a British sanitary expert assigned "wretchedness" as the root-cause of India's political unrest. After describing the deplorable living conditions of the Indian masses, he wrote: "It will of course be said at once that these conditions have existed in India from time immemorial. and are no more likely to cause unrest now than previously; but in my opinion unnest has always existed there in a subterranean form. Moreover, in the old days, the populace could make scarcely any comparison between their own condition and that of more fortunate people; now they can compare their own slums and terrible 'native quarters' with the much better ordered cantonments, stations, and houses of the British officials and even of their own wealthier brethren. So far as I can see, such misery is always the fundamental cause of all popular unrest. . . . Seditious meetings, political chatter, and 'aspirations' of babus and demagogues are only the superficial manifestations of the deeper disturbance." 1

This growing social friction was indubitably heightened by the lack of interest of Orientals in the sufferings of all persons not bound to them by family, caste, or customary ties. Throughout the East, " social service," in the Western sense, is practically unknown. This fact is noted by a few Orientals themselves. Says an Indian writer, speaking of Indian town life: "There is no common measure of social conduct. . . . Hitherto, social reform in India has taken account only of individual or family life. As applied to mankind in the mass, and especially to those soulless agglomerations of seething humanity which we call cities, it is a gospel vet to be preached." 2 As an American sociologist

Survey, 18 February, 1911.

<sup>2</sup> A. Yusuf Ali, Life and Labour in India, pp. 3, 32 (London, 1907).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Dr. Ronald Ross, "Wretchedness a Cause of Political Unrest," The

remarked of the growing slum evil throughout the industrialized Orient: "The greatest danger is due to the fact that Orientals do not have the high Western sense of the value of the life of the individual, and are, comparatively speaking, without any restraining influence similar to our own enlightened public opinion, which has been roused by the struggles of a century of industrial strife. Unless these elements can be supplied, there is danger of suffering and of abuses worse than any the West has known." 1

All this diffused social unrest was centring about two recently emerged elements: the Western-educated intelligentsia and the industrial proletariat of the factory towns. The revolutionary tendencies of the intelligentsia, particularly of its half-educated failures, have been already noted, and these latter have undoubtedly played a leading part in all the revolutionary disturbances of the modern Orient, from North Africa to China.2 Regarding the industrial proletariat, some writers think that there is little immediate likelihood of their becoming a major revolutionary factor, because of their traditionalism, ignorance, and apathy, and also because there is no real connection between them and the intelligentsia, the other centre of social discontent.

The French economist Métin states this view-point very well. Speaking primarily of India, he writes: "The Nationalist movement rises from the middle classes and manifests no systematic hostility toward the capitalists and great proprietors; in economic matters it is on their side." 3 As for the proletariat: "The coolies do not imagine that their lot can be bettered. Like the ryots and the agricultural labourers, they do not show

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> E. W. Capen, "A Sociological Appraisal of Western Influence on the Orient," American Journal of Sociology, May, 1911.

<sup>2</sup> P. Khorat, "Psychologic de la Révolution chinoise," Revue des Deux Mondes, 15 March, 1912; L. Bertrand, Le Mirage orientale, pp. 164-166; J. D. Rees, The Real India, pp. 162-163.

<sup>3</sup> Albert Métin, L'And Processe May, Elude seriale, p. 278 (Paris, 1918).

<sup>3</sup> Albert Métin, L'Inde d'aujourd'hui : Étude sociale, p. 276 (Paris, 1918).

the least sign of revolt. To whom should they turn? The ranks of traditional society are closed to them. People without caste, the coolies are despised even by the old-style artisan, proud of his caste-status, humble though that be. To fall to the job of a coolie is, for the Hindu, the worst declassment. The factory workers are not yet numerous enough to form a compact and powerful proletariat, able to exert pressure on the old society. Even if they do occasionally strike, they are as far from the modern Trade-Union as they are from the traditional working-caste. Neither can they look for leadership to the 'intellectual proletariat'; for the Nationalist movement has not emerged from the 'bourgeois' phase, and always leans on the capitalists. . . .

'Thus Indian industry is still in its embryonic stages. In truth, the material evolution which translates itself by the construction of factories, and the social evolution which creates a proletariat, have only begun to emerge; while the intellectual evolution from which arise the programmes of social demands has not even begun." 1

Other observers of Indian industrial conditions, however, do not share M. Métin's opinion. Says the British Labour leader, J. Ramsay Macdonald: "To imagine the backward Indian labourers becoming a conscious regiment in the class war, seems to be one of the vainest dreams in which a Western mind can indulge. But I sometimes wonder if it be so very vain after all. In the first place, the development of factory industry in India has created a landless and homeless proletariat unmatched by the same economic class in any other capitalist community; and to imagine that this class is to be kept out, or can be kept out, of Indian politics is far more vain than to dream of its developing a politics on Western lines. Further than that, the wage-earners have shown a willingness to respond to Trades-Union

<sup>1</sup> Albert Métin, L'Inde d'aujourd'hui : Étude sociale, pp. 339-345.

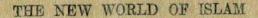
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methods; they are forming industrial associations and have engaged in strikes; some of the social reform movements conducted by Indian intellectuals definitely try to establish Trades-Unions and preach ideas familiar to us in connection with Trades-Union propaganda. A capitalist fiscal policy will not only give this movement a great impetus as it did in Japan, but in India will not be able to suppress the movement, as was done in Japan, by legislation. As yet, the true proletarian wage-earner, uprooted from his native village and broken away from the organization of Indian society, is but insignificant. It is growing, however, and I believe that it will organize itself rapidly on the general lines of the proletarian classes of other capitalist countries. So soon as it becomes politically conscious, there are no other lines

upon which it can organize itself." 1

Turning to the Near East-more than a decade ago a French Socialist writer, observing the hard living conditions of the Egyptian masses, noted signs of social unrest and predicted grave disturbances. "A genuine proletariat," he wrote, "has been created by the multiplication of industries and the sudden, almost abrupt, progress which has followed. The cost of living has risen to a scale hitherto unknown in Egypt, while wages have risen but slightly. Poverty and want abound. Some day suffering will provoke the people to complaints, perhaps to angry outbursts, throughout this apparently prosperous Delta. It is true that the influx of foreigners and of money may put off the hour when the city or country labourer of Egyptian race comes clearly to perceive the wrongs that are being done to him. He may miss the educational influence of Socialism. Yet such an awakening may come sooner than people expect. It is not only among the successful and prosperous Egyptians that intelligence is to be found. Those whose wages are growing gradually

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> J. Ramsay Macdonald, The Government of India, pp. 133-134 (London, 1920).





smaller and smaller have intelligence of equal keenness, and it has become a real question as to the hour when for the first time in the land of Islam the flame of Mohammedan Socialism shall burst forth." 1 In Algeria, likewise, a Belgian traveller noted the dawning of a proletarian consciousness among the town working-men just before the Great War. Speaking of the rapid spread of Western ideas, he wrote: "Islam tears asunder like rotten cloth on the quays of Algiers: the dockers, coal-passers, and engine-tenders, to whatever race they belong, leave their Islam and acquire a genuine proletarian morality, that of the proletarians of Europe, and they make common cause with their European colleagues on the basis of a strictly economic struggle. If there were many big factories in Algeria, orthodox Islam would soon disappear there, as old-fashioned Catholicism has disappeared with us under the shock of great industry." 2

Whatever may be the prospects as to the rapid emergence of organized labour movements in the Orient, one thing seems certain: the unrest which afflicted so many parts of the East in the years preceding the Great War, though mainly political, had also its social side. Toward the end of 1913, a leading Anglo-Indian journal remarked pessimistically: "We have already gone so far on the downward path that leads to destruction that there are districts in what were once regarded as the most settled parts of India which are being abandoned by the rich because their property is not safe. So great is the contempt for the law that it is employed by the unscrupulous as a means of offence against the innocent. Frontier Pathans commit outrages almost unbelievable in their daring. Mass-meetings are held and agitation spreads in regard to topics quite outside the business of orderly people. There is no matter of domestic or foreign politics in which crowds of irresponsible people

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Georges Foucart. Quoted in *The Literary Digest*, 17 August, 1907, pp. 225-226.

<sup>2</sup> A. Van Gennep, En Algérie, p. 182 (Paris, 1914).

do not want to have their passionate way. Great grievances are made of little, far-off things. What ought to be the ordered, spacious life of the District Officer is intruded upon and disturbed by a hundred distracting influences due to the want of discipline of the people. In the subordinate ranks of the great services themselves, trades-unions have been formed. Military and police officers have to regret that the new class of recruits is less subordinate than the old, harder to

discipline, more full of complaints." 1

The Great War of course enormously aggravated Oriental unrest. In many parts of the Near East, especially, acute suffering, balked ambitions, and furious hates combined to reduce society to the verge of chaos. Into this ominous turmoil there now came the sinister influence of Russian Bolshevism, marshalling all this diffused unrest by systematic methods for definite ends. Bolshevism was frankly out for a world-revolution and the destruction of Western civilization. To attain this objective the Bolshevist leaders not only launched direct assaults on the West, but also planned flank attacks in Asia and Africa. They believed that if the East could be set on fire, not only would Russian Bolshevism gain vast additional strength but also the economic repercussion on the West, already shaken by the war, would be so terrific that industrial collapse would ensue, thereby throwing Europe open to revolution.

Bolshevism's propagandist efforts were nothing short of universal, both in area and in scope. No part of the world was free from the plottings of its agents; no possible source of discontent was overlooked. Strictly "Red" doctrines like the dictatorship of the proletariat were very far from being the only weapons in Bolshevism's armoury. Since what was first wanted was the overthrow of the existing world-order, any kind of

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> The Englishman (Calcutta). Quoted in The Literary Digest, 21 February, 1914, p. 369.

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opposition to that order, no matter how remote doctrinally from Bolshevism, was grist to the Bolshevist mill. Accordingly, in every quarter of the globe, in Asia, Africa, Australia, and the Americas, as in Europe, Bolshevik agitators whispered in the ears of the discontented their gospel of hatred and revenge. Every nationalist aspiration, every political grievance, every social injustice, every racial discrimination, was fuel for

Bolshevism's incitement to violence and war.1

Particularly promising fields for Bolshevist activity were the Near and Middle East. Besides being a prey to profound disturbances of every description, those regions as traditional objectives of the old Czarist imperialism, had long been carefully studied by Russian agents who had evolved a technique of "pacific penetration" that might be easily adjusted to Bolshevist ends. To stir up political, religious, and racial passions in Turkey, Persia, Afghanistan, and India, especially against England, required no original planning by Trotzky or Lenin. Czarism had already done these things for generations, and full information lay both in the Petrograd archives and in the brains of surviving Czarist agents ready to turn their hands as easily to the new work as the old.

In all the elaborate network of Bolshevist propaganda which to-day enmeshes the East we must discriminate between Bolshevism's two objectives: one immediate—the destruction of Western political and economic supremacy; the other ultimate—the bolshevizing of the Oriental masses and the consequent extirpation of the native upper and middle classes, precisely as has been done in Russia and as is planned for the countries of the West. In the first stage, Bolshevism is quite ready to respect Oriental faiths and customs and to back

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> For these larger world-aspects of Bolshevik propaganda, see Paul Miliukov, Bolshevism: An International Danger (London, 1920); also, my Rising Tide of Colour against White World-Supremacy, pp. 218-221, and my article, "Bolshevism: The Heresy of the Under-Man," The Century, June, 1919.



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Oriental nationalist movements. In the second stage, religions like Islam and nationalists like Mustapha Kemal are to be branded as "bourgeois" and relentlessly destroyed. How Bolshevik diplomacy endeavours to work these two schemes in double harness, we shall

presently see.

Russian Bolshevism's Oriental policy was formulated soon after its accession to power at the close of 1917. The year 1918 was a time of busy preparation. An elaborate propaganda organization was built up from various sources. A number of old Czarist agents and diplomats versed in Eastern affairs were cajoled or conscripted into the service. The Russian Mohammedan populations such as the Tartars of South Russia and the Turkomans of Central Asia furnished many recruits. Even more valuable were the exiles who flocked to Russia from Turkey, Persia, India, and elsewhere at the close of the Great War. Practically all the leaders of the Turkish war-government-Enver, Djemal, Talaat, and many more, fled to Russia for refuge from the vengeance of the victorious Entente Powers. The same was true of the Hindu terrorist leaders who had been in German pay during the war and who now sought service under Lenin. By the end of 1918 Bolshevism's Oriental propaganda department was well organized, divided into three bureaux, for the Islamic countries, India, and the Far East respectively. With Bolshevism's Far Eastern activities this book is not concerned, though the reader should bear them in mind and should remember the important part played by the Chinese in recent Russian history. As for the Islamic and Indian bureaux, they displayed great zeal, translating tons of Bolshevik literature into the various Oriental languages, training numerous secret agents and propagandists for "field-work," and getting in touch with all disaffected or revolutionary elements.

With the opening months of 1919 Bolshevist activity throughout the Near and Middle East became increas-

ingly apparent. The wave of rage and despair caused by the Entente's denial of Near Eastern nationalist aspirations 1 played splendidly into the Bolshevists' hands, and we have already seen how Moscow supported Mustapha Kemal and other nationalist leaders in Turkey, Persia, Egypt, and elsewhere. In the Middle East, also, Bolshevism gained important successes. Not merely was Moscow's hand visible in the epidemic of rioting and seditious violence which swept northern India in the spring of 1919,2 but an even shrewder blow was struck at Britain in Afghanistan. This land of turbulent mountaineers, which lay like a perpetual thundercloud on India's north-west frontier, had kept quiet during the Great War, mainly owing to the Anglophile attitude of its ruler, the Ameer Habibullah Khan. But early in 1919 Habibullah was murdered. Whether the Bolsheviki had a hand in the matter is not known, but they certainly reaped the benefit, for power passed to one of Habibullah's sons. Amanullah Khan, who was an avowed enemy of England and who had had dealings with Turco-German agents during the late war. Amanullah at once got in touch with Moscow, and a little later, just when the Punjab was seething with unrest, he declared war on England, and his wild tribesmen, pouring across the border, set the North-West Frontier on fire. After some hard fighting the British succeeded in repelling the Afghan invasion, and Amanullah was constrained to make peace. But Britain obviously dared not press Amanullah too hard, for in the peace treaty the Ameer was released from his previous obligation not to maintain diplomatic relations with other nations than British India. Amanullah promptly aired his independence by maintaining ostentatious relations with Moscow. As a matter of fact, the Bolsheviki had by this time established an important propagandist subcentre in Russian Turkestan, not far from the Afghan border, and this bureau's

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> See Chapter V.



activities of course envisaged not merely Afghanistan but the wider field of India as well.1

During 1920 Bolshevik activities became still more pronounced throughout the Near and Middle East. We have already seen how powerfully Bolshevik Russia supported the Turkish and Persian nationalist movements. In fact, the reckless short-sightedness of Entente policy was driving into Lenin's arms multitudes of nationalists to whom the internationalist theories of Moscow were personally abhorrent. For example, the head of the Afghan, mission to Moscow thus frankly expressed his reasons for friendship with Soviet Russia, in an interview printed by the official Soviet organ, Izvestia: "I am neither Communist nor Socialist, but my political programme so far is the expulsion of the English from Asia. I am an irreconcilable enemy of European capitalism in Asia, the chief representatives of which are the English. On this point I coincide with the Communists, and in this respect we are your natural allies. . . . Afghanistan, like India, does not represent a capitalist state, and it is very unlikely that even a parliamentary regime will take deep root in these

<sup>1</sup> For events in Afghanistan and Central Asia, see Sir T. H. Holdich, "The Influence of Bolshevism in Afghanistan," New Europe, December 2, 1919; IRbal Ali Shah, "The Fall of Bokhara," The Near East, October 2, 1920, and his "The Central Asian Tangle," Asiatic Review, October, 1920. For Bolshevist activity in the Near and Middle East generally, see Miliukov, op. cit., pp. 243-260; 295-297; Major-General Sir George Aston, "Bolshevik Propaganda in the East," Fortnightly Review, August, 1920; W. E. D. Allen, "Transcaucasia, Past and Present," Quarterly Review, October, 1920; Sir Valentine Chirol, "Conflicting Policies in the Near East," New Europe, July 1, 1920; L. Dumont-Wilden, "Awakening Asia," The Living Age, August 7, 1920 (translated from the French); Major-General Lord Edward Gleichen, "Moslems and the Tangle in the Middle East," National Review, December, 1919; Paxton Hibben, "Russias at Peace," The Nation (New York), January 26, 1921; H. von Hoff, "Die nationale Erhebung in der Türkei," Deutsche Revue, December, 1919; R. G. Hunter, "Entente—Oil—Islam," New Europe, August 26, 1920; "Taira," "The Story of the Arab Revolt," Balkun Review, August, 1920; "Voyageur," Lenin's Attempt to Capture Islam," New Europe, June 10, 1920; Hans Wendt, "Ex Oriente Lux," Nord und Süd, May, 1920; George Young, "Russian Foreign Policy," New Europe, July 1, 1920.

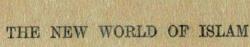
countries. It is so far difficult to say how subsequent events will develop. I only know that the renowned address of the Soviet Government to all nations, with its appeal to them to combat capitalists (and for us a capitalist is synonymous with the word foreigner, or, to be more exact, an Englishman), had an enormous effect on us. A still greater effect was produced by Russia's annulment of all the secret treaties enforced by the imperialistic governments, and by the proclaiming of the right of all nations, no matter how small, to determine their own destiny. This act rallied around Soviet Russia all the exploited nationalities of Asia, and all parties, even those very remote from Socialism." Of course, knowing what we do of Bolshevik propagandist tactics, we cannot be sure that the Afghan diplomat ever said the things which the Izvestia relates. But, even if the interview be a fake, the words put into his mouth express the feelings of vast numbers of Orientals and explain a prime cause of Bolshevik propagandist successes in Eastern lands.

So successful, indeed, had been the progress of Bolshevik propaganda that the Soviet leaders now began to work openly for their ultimate ends. At first Moscow had posed as the champion of Oriental "peoples" against Western "imperialism"; its appeals had been to "peoples," irrespective of class; and it had promised "seif-determination," with full respect for native ideas and institutions. For instance: a Bolshevist manifesto to the Turks signed by Lenin and issued toward the close of 1919 read: "Mussulmans of the world, victims of the capitalists, awake! Russia has abandoned the Czar's pernicious policy toward you and offers to help you overthrow English tyranny. She will allow you freedom of religion and self-government. The frontiers existing before the war will be respected, no Turkish territory will be given Armenia, the Dardanelles Straits will remain yours, and Constantinople will remain the capital of the Mussulman world. The Mussulmans in



Russia will be given self-government. All we ask in exchange is that you fight the reckless capitalists, who would exploit your country and make it a colony." Even when addressing its own people, the Soviet Government maintained the same general tone. An "Order of the Day" to the Russian troops stationed on the borders of India stated: "Comrades of the Pamir division, you have been given a responsible task. The Soviet Republic sends you to garrison the posts on the Pamir, on the frontiers of the friendly countries of Afghanistan and India. The Pamir tableland divides revolutionary Russia from India, which, with its 300,000,000 inhabitants, is enslaved by a handful of Englishmen. On this tableland the signallers of revolution must hoist the red flag of the army of liberation. May the peoples of India, who fight against their English oppressors, soon know that friendly help is not far off. Make yourselves at home with the liberty-loving tribes of northern India, promote by word and deed their revolutionary progress, refute the mass of calumnies spread about Soviet Russia by agents of the British princes, lords, and bankers. Long live the alliance of the revolutionary peoples of Europe and Asia!"

Such was the nature of first-stage Bolshevik propaganda. Presently, however, propaganda of quite a different character began to appear. This second-stage propaganda of course continued to assail Western "capitalist imperialism." But alongside, or rather intermingled with, these anti-Western fulminations, there now appeared special appeals to the Oriental masses, inciting them against all "capitalists" and "bourgeois," native as well as foreign, and promising the "proletarians" remedies for all their ills. Here is a Bolshevist manifesto to the Turkish masses, published in the summer of 1920. It is very different from the manifestoes of a year before. "The men of toil," says this interesting document, "are now struggling everywhere against the rich people. These people, with the



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assistance of the aristocracy and their hirelings, are now trying to hold Turkish toilers in their chains. It is the rich people of Europe who have brought suffering to Turkey. Comrades, let us make common cause with the world's toilers. If we do not do so we shall never rise again. Let the heroes of Turkey's revolution join Bolshevism. Long live the Third International! Praise be to Allah!"

And in these new efforts Moscow was not content with words; it was passing to deeds as well. The first application of Bolshevism to an Eastern people was in Russian Turkestan. When the Bolsheviki first came to power at the end of 1917 they had granted Turkestan full "self-determination," and the inhabitants had acclaimed their native princes and re-established their old state-units, subject to a loose federative tie with Russia. Early in 1920, however, the Soviet Government considered Turkestan ripe for the "Social Revolution." Accordingly, the native princes were deposed, all political power was transferred to local Soviets (controlled by Russians), the native upper and middle classes were despoiled of their property, and sporadic resistance was crushed by mass-executions, torture, and other familiar forms of Bolshevist terrorism.1 In the Caucasus, also, the social revolution had begun with the Sovietization of Azerbaidjan. The Tartar republic of Azerbaidjan was one of the fragments of the former Russian province of Transcaucasia which had declared its independence on the collapse of the Czarist Empire in 1917. Located in eastern Transcaucasia, about the Caspian Sea, Azerbaidjan's capital was the city of Baku, famous for its oilfields. Oil had transformed Baku into an industrial centre on Western lines, with a large working population of mixed Asiatic and Russian origin. Playing upon the nascent class-consciousness of this urban proletariat, the Bolshevik agents made a coup d'état in the spring of 1920, overthrew the nationalist government, and, with

prompt Russian backing, made Azerbaidjan a Soviet republic. The usual accompaniments of the social revolution followed: despoiling and massacring of the upper and middle classes, confiscation of property in favour of the town proletarians and agricultural labourers, and ruthless terrorism. With the opening months of 1920, Bolshevism was thus in actual operation in both the Near and Middle East.<sup>1</sup>

Having acquired strong footbolds in the Orient, Bolshevism now felt strong enough to throw eff the mask. In the autumn of 1920, the Soviet Government of Russia held a "Congress of Eastern Peoples" at Baku, the aim of which was not merely the liberation of the Orient from Western control but its Bolshevizing as well. No attempt at concealment of this larger objective was made, and so striking was the language employed that it may well merit our close attention.

In the first place, the call to the congress, issued by the Third (Moscow) International, was addressed to the "peasants and workers" of the East. The summons

read:

"Peasants and workers of Persia! The Teheran Government of the Khadjars and its retinue of provincial Khans have plundered and exploited you through many centuries. The land, which, according to the laws of the Sheriat, was your common property, has been taken possession of more and more by the lackeys of the Teheran Government; they trade it away at their pleasure; they lay what taxes please them upon you; and when, through their mismanagement, they got the country into such a condition that they were unable to squeeze enough juice out of it themselves, they sold Persia last year to English capitalists for 2,000,000

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> For events in the Caucasus, see W. E. D. Allen, "Transcaucasia, Past and Present," Quarterly Review, October, 1920; C. E. Bechhofer, "The Situation in the Transcaucasus," New Europe, September 2, 1920; "D. Z. T., "L'Azerbaidjan: La Première République musulmane," Revue du Monde musulman, 1919; Paxton Hibben, "Exit Georgia," The Nation (New York), March 30, 1921.



pounds, so that the latter will organize an army in Persia that will oppress you still more than formerly, and so the latter can collect taxes for the Khans and the Teheran Government. They have sold the oil-wells in South Persia and thus helped plunder the country.

"Peasants of Mesopotamia! The English have declared your country to be independent; but 80,000 English soldiers are stationed in your country, are robbing and plundering, are killing you and are violating

your women.

"Peasants of Anatolia! The English, French, and Italian Governments hold Constantinople under the mouths of their cannon. They have made the Sultan their prisoner, they are obliging him to consent to the dismemberment of what is purely Turkish territory, they are forcing him to turn the country's finances over to foreign capitalists in order to make it possible for them better to exploit the Turkish people, already reduced to a state of beggary by the six-year war. They have occupied the coal-mines of Heraclea, they are holding your ports, they are sending their troops into your country and are trampling down your fields.

"Peasants and workers of Armenia! Decades ago you became the victims of the intrigues of foreign capital, which launched heavy verbal attacks against the massacres of the Armenians by the Kurds and incited you to fight against the Sultan in order to obtain through your blood new concessions and fresh profits daily from the bloody Sultan. During the war they not only promised you independence, but they incited your merchants, your teachers, and your priests to demand the land of the Turkish peasants in order to keep up an eternal conflict between the Armenian and Turkish peoples, so that they could eternally derive profits out of this conflict, for as long as strife prevails between you and the Turks, just so long will the English, French, and American capitalists be able to hold Turkey in check through the menace of an Armenian uprising and to use

#### SOCIAL UNREST



the Armenians as cannon-fodder through the menace

of a pogrom by Kurds.

"Peasants of Syria and Arabia! Independence was promised to you by the English and the French, and now they hold your country occupied by their armies, now the English and the French dictate your laws, and you, who have freed yourselves from the Turkish Sultan, from the Constantinople Government, are now slaves of the Paris and London Governments, which merely differ from the Sultan's Government in being

stronger and better able to exploit you.

"You all understand this yourselves. The Persian peasants and workers have risen against their traitorous Teheran Government. The peasants in Mesopotamia are in revolt against the English troops. You peasants in Anatolia have rushed to the banner of Kemal Pasha in order to fight against the foreign invasion, but at the same time we hear that you are trying to organize your own party, a genuine peasants' party that will be willing to fight even if the Pashas are to make their peace with the Entente exploiters. Syria has no peace, and you, Armenian peasants, whom the Entente, despite its promises, allows to die from hunger in order to keep you under better control, you are understanding more and more that it is silly to hope for salvation by the Entente capitalists. Even your bourgeois Government of the Dashnakists, the lackeys of the Entente, is compelled to turn to the Workers' and Peasants' Government of Russia with an appeal for peace and help.

"Peasants and workers of the Near East! If you organize yourselves, if you form your own Workers' and Peasants' Government, if you arm yourselves, if you unite with the Red Russian Workers' and Peasants' Army, then you will be able to defy the English, French, and American capitalists, then you will settle accounts with your own native exploiters, then you will find it possible, in a free alliance with the workers' republics



of the world, to look after your own interests; then you will know how to exploit the resources of your country in your own interest and in the interest of the working people of the whole world, that will honestly exchange the products of their labour and mutually help each other.

"We want to talk over all these questions with you at the Congress in Baku. Spare no effort to appear in Baku on September 1 in as large numbers as possible. You march, year in and year out, through the deserts to the holy places where you show your respect for your past and for your God—now march through deserts, over mountains, and across rivers in order to come together to discuss how you can escape from the bonds of slavery, how you can unite as brothers so as to live

as men, free and equal."

From this summons the nature of the Baku congress can be imagined. It was, in fact, a social revolutionist far more than a nationalist assembly. Of its 1900 delegates, nearly 1300 were professed communists. Turkey, Persia, Armenia, and the Caucasus countries sent the largest delegations, though there were also delegations from Arabia, India, and even the Far East. The Russian Soviet Government was of course in control and kept a tight hand on the proceedings. The character of these proceedings were well summarized by the address of the noted Bolshevik leader Zinoviev, president of the Executive Committee of the Third (Moscow) International, who presided.

Zinoviev said:

"We believe this Congress to be one of the greatest events in history, for it proves not only that the progressive workers and working peasants of Europe and America are awakened, but that we have at last seen the day of the awakening, not of a few, but of tens of thousands, of hundreds of thousands, of millions of the labouring class of the peoples of the East. These peoples form the majority of the world's whole population, and

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they alone, therefore, are able to bring the war between

capital and labour to a conclusive decision. . . .

"The Communist International said from the very first day of its existence : 'There are four times as many people living in Asia as live in Europe. We will free all peoples, all who labour.' . . . We know that the labouring masses of the East are in part retrograde, though not by their own fault; they cannot read or write, are ignorant, are bound in superstition, believe in the evil spirit, are unable to read any newspapers, do not know what is happening in the world, have not the slightest idea of the most elementary laws of hygiene. Comrades, our Moscow International discussed the question whether a socialist revolution could take place in the countries of the East before those countries had passed through the capitalist stage. You know that the view which long prevailed was that every country must first go through the period of capitalism . . . before socialism could become a live question. We now believe that this is no longer true. Russia has done this, and from that moment we are able to say that China, India, Turkey, Persia, Armenia also can, and must. make a direct fight to get the Soviet System. These countries can, and must, prepare themselves to be Soviet republics.

"I say that we give patient aid to groups of persons who do not believe in our ideas, who are even opposed to us on some points. In this way, the Soviet Government supports Kemal in Turkey. Never for one moment do we forget that the movement headed by Kemal is not a communist movement. We know it. I have here extracts from the verbatim reports of the first session of the Turkish people's Government at Angora. Kemal himself says that 'the Caliph's person is sacred and inviolable.' The movement headed by Kemal wants to rescue the Caliph's 'sacred' person from the hands of the foe. That is the Turkish Nationalist's point of view. But is it a communist point of view?

296 No. We respect the religious convictions of the masses we know how to re-educate the masses. It will be the work of years.

"We use great caution in approaching the religious convictions of the labouring masses in the East and elsewhere. But at this Congress we are bound to tell you that you must not do what the Kemal Government is doing in Turkey; you must not support the power of the Sultan, not even if religious considerations urge you to do so. You must press on, and must not allow yourselves to be pulled back. We believe the Sultan's hour has struck. You must not allow any form of autocratic power to continue; you must destroy, you must annihilate, faith in the Sultan; you must struggle to obtain real Soviet organizations. The Russian peasants also were strong believers in the Czar; but when a true people's revolution broke out there was practically nothing left of this faith in the Czar. The same thing will happen in Turkey and all over the East as soon as a true peasants' revolution shall burst forth over the surface of the black earth. The people will very soon lose faith in their Sultan and in their masters. We say once more, the policy pursued by the present people's Government in Turkey is not the policy of the Communist International, it is not our policy; nevertheless, we declare that we are prepared to support any revolutionary fight against the English Government.

"Yes, we array ourselves against the English bourgeoisie; we seize the English imperialist by the throat and tread him underfoot. It is against English capitalism that the worst, the most fatal blow must be dealt. That is so. But at the same time we must educate the labouring masses of the East to hatred, to the will to fight the whole of the rich classes indifferently, whoever they be. The great significance of the revolution now starting in the East does not consist in begging the English imperialist to take his feet off the table, for the purpose of then permitting the wealthy Turk to place his feet on it all the more comfortably; no, we will very politely ask all the rich to remove their dirty feet from the table, so that there may be no luxuriousness among us, no boasting, no contempt of the people, no idleness, but that the world may be ruled by the worker's horny hand."

The Baku congress was the opening gun in Bolshevism's avowed campaign for the immediate Bolshevizing of the East. It was followed by increased Soviet activity and by substantial Soviet successes, especially in the Caucasus, where both Georgia and Armenia were

Bolshevized in the spring of 1921.

These very successes, however, awakened growing uneasiness among Soviet Russia's nationalist protégés. The various Oriental nationalist parties, which had at first welcomed Moscow's aid so enthusiastically against the Entente Powers, now began to realize that Russian Bolshevism might prove as great a peril as Western imperialism to their patriotic aspirations. Of course the nationalist leaders had always realized Moscow's ultimate goal, but hitherto they had felt themselves strong enough to control the situation and to take Russian aid without paying Moscow's price. Now they no longer felt so sure. The numbers of class-conscious "proletarians" in the East might be very small. The communist philosophy might be virtually unintelligible to the Oriental masses. Nevertheless, the very existence of Soviet Russia was a warning not to be disregarded. In Russia an infinitesimal communist minority, numbering, by its own admission, not much over 600,000, was maintaining an unlimited despotism over 170,000,000 people. Western countries might rely on their popular education and their staunch traditions of ordered liberty; the East possessed no such bulwarks against Bolshevism. The East was, in fact, much like Russia. There was the same dense ignorance of the masses; the same absence of a large and powerful middle class; the same tradition of despotism; the same popular

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acquiescence in the rule of ruthless minorities. Finally, there were the ominous examples of Sovietized Turkestan and Azerbaidjan. In fine, Oriental nationalists bethought them of the old adage that he who sups with the

devil needs a long spoon. Everywhere it has been the same story. In Asia Minor, Mustapha Kemal has arrested Bolshevist propaganda agents, while Turkish and Russian troops have more than once clashed on the disputed Caucasus frontiers. In Egypt we have already seen how an amicable arrangement between Lord Milner and the Egyptian nationalist leaders was facilitated by the latter's fear of the social revolutionary agitators who were inflaming the fellaheen. In India, Sir Valentine Chirol noted as far back as the spring of 1918 how Russia's collapse into Bolshevism had had a "sobering effect" on Indian public opinion. "The more thoughtful Indians," he wrote, "now see how helpless even the Russian intelligentsia (relatively far more numerous and matured than the Indian intelligentsia) has proved to control the great ignorant masses as soon as the whole fabric of government has been hastily shattered." In Afghanistan, likewise, the Ameer was losing his love for his Bolshevist allies. The streams of refugees from Sovietized Turkestan that flowed across his borders for protection, headed by his kinsman the Ameer of Bokhara, made Amanullah Khan do some hard thinking, intensified by a serious mutiny of Afghan troops on the Russian border, the mutineers demanding the right to form Soldiers' Councils quite on the Russian pattern. Bolshevist agents might tempt him by the loot of India, but the Ameer could also see that that would do him little good if he himself were to be looted and killed by his own rebellious subjects.2 Thus, as time went on, Oriental nationalists and conservatives generally tended to close ranks in dislike and apprehension of Bolshevism.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Sir V. Chirol, "India in Travail," Edinburgh Review, July, 1918. Also see H. H. The Aga Khan, India in Transition, p. 17 (London, 1918).
<sup>2</sup> Ikbai Ali Shah, op. cit.

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there been no other issue involved, there can be little doubt that Moscow's advances would have been repelled

and Bolshevist agents given short shrift.

Unfortunately, the Eastern nationalists feel themselves between the Bolshevist devil and the Western imperialist deep sea. The upshot has been that they have been trying to play off the one against the otherdriven toward Moscow by every Entente aggression; driven toward the West by every Soviet coup of Lenin. Western statesmen should realize this, and should remember that Bolshevism's best propagandist agent is, not Zinoviev orating at Baku, but General Gouraud, with his Senegalese battalions and "strong-arm"

methods in Syria and the Arab hinterland.

Certainly, any extensive spread of Bolshevism in the East would be a terrible misfortune both for the Orient and for the world at large. If the triumph of Bolshevism would mean barbarism in the West, in the East it would spell downright savagery. The sudden release of the ignorant, brutal Oriental masses from their traditional restraints of religion and custom, and the submergence of the relatively small upper and middle classes by the flood of social revolution would mean the destruction of all Oriental civilization and culture, and a plunge into an abyss of anarchy from which the East could emerge only after generations, perhaps centuries.

GL



### CONCLUSION

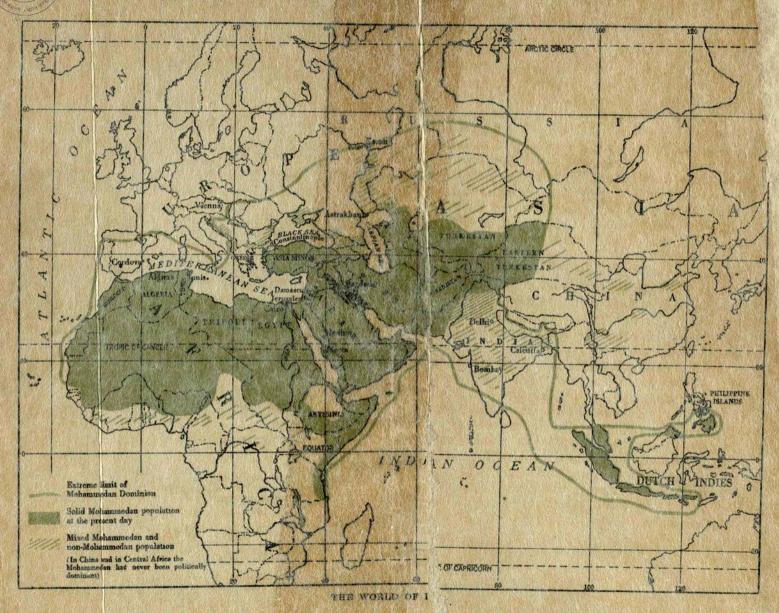
Our survey of the Near and Middle East is at an end. What is the outstanding feature of that survey? It is: Change. The "Immovable East" has been moved at last—moved to its very depths. The Orient is to-day in full transition, flux, ferment, more sudden and profound than any it has hitherto known. The world of Islam, mentally and spiritually quiescent for almost a thousand years, is once more astir, once more on the march.

Whither? We do not know. Who would be bold enough to prophesy the outcome of this vast ferment—political, economical, social, religious, and much more besides? All that we may wisely venture is to observe, describe, and analyse the various elements in the great transition.

Yet surely this is much. To view, however empirically, the mighty transformation at work; to group its multitudinous aspects in some sort of relativity; to follow the red threads of tendency running through the tangled skein, is to gain at least provisional knowledge and acquire capacity to grasp the significance of future developments as they shall successively arise.

"To know is to understand"—and to hope: to hope that this present travail, vast and ill-understood, may be but the birth-pangs of a truly renascent East taking

its place in a renascent world.





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