The West in Asia
1850-1914

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Preface

WITH the dismantling of the major maritime empires after 1947, it has become fashionable for historians to deal with the history of those empires more and more from the point of view of the experience of the colonial peoples rather than that of their rulers. This attitude has certainly let a breath of fresh air into the closed room of what used to be called 'imperial history', in the writing of which the inhabitants of the colonial territories were seldom considered except as the beneficiaries of Western paternalism or as ungrateful and 'seditious' nationalists. The re-orientation of imperial history has undoubtedly been purposeful and, to a considerable extent, rewarding. Yet, in adding an extra dimension to our view of empire, concentration upon the effects of imperialism has somewhat obscured the causes. The present short introduction to the age of imperialism is, therefore, frankly Europe-centric. Except for the chapter on 'Nationalism and Revolt' it is concerned with the motives, events, and consequences of the West's overseas expansion in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries from the *West's* point of view. Furthermore, apart from references to the administration of colonial territories designed to demonstrate changing ideas of imperial responsibility and purpose, there is no detailed examination of Western *rule* in Asia. Essentially, this book is a study of aggression, of How the East Was Won and how it was fought over by rival imperialisms, of an episode primarily in European and American history. Of course, this does not mean that the response of Asians to the penetration of the West is neglected—this would not be possible, nor desirable if it were. The function of the historian is not only to demonstrate the nature and purpose of events as they were, or appeared to be, at the time, but also to place them in that wider context which only historical perspective can give.

The phrase 'age of imperialism' is used frequently throughout the following pages. What it means, this work should make clear. *When* it began is another matter. Most historians agree on 1870—a year after the opening of the Suez Canal. It is an arbitrary date but a convenient one. However, I have chosen in the present work to cover the period 1850–1914. The terminal date, that of the start of the First World War, also marks without doubt the end of the age of imperialism, though not of empire. The year 1850 is convenient because it allows the scene to be set with the sort of detail which gives an adequate frame of reference for the events of the succeeding years.

No view of the age of imperialism would be anything but misleading if it was confined merely to the description and explanation of political events. Ideas of empire play an important though curious role in the history of this period. For one thing, the influence of such ideas upon events was extremely small, and I have tried to explain why this was so. But they—and the civilisation from which they emerged—had a profound effect upon Asians, on both colonial subjects and those who, like the Japanese, escaped the imperial grasp. Though colonial nationalism only became a serious challenge to the Western empires after 1919, the seeds were sown in the age of imperialism.

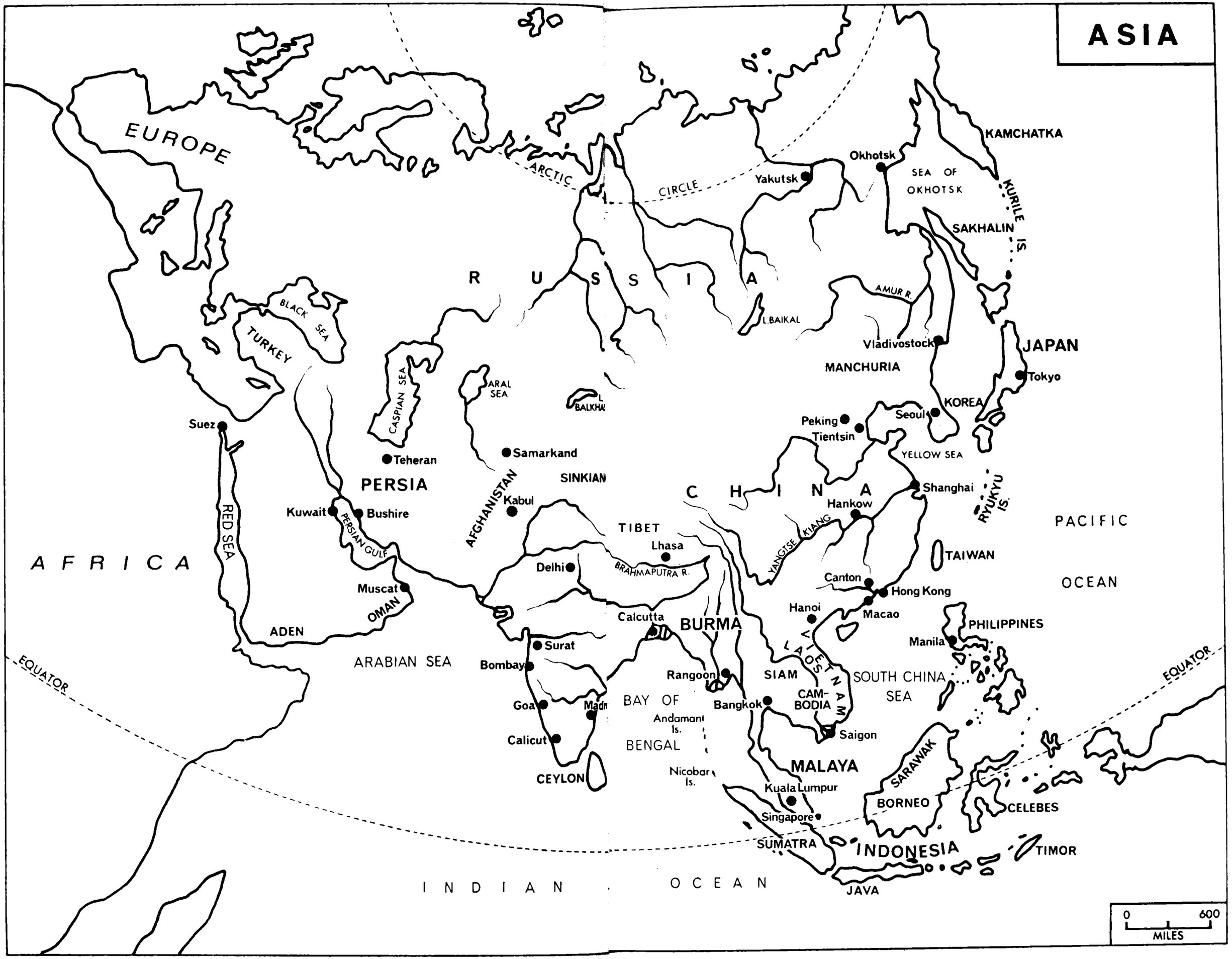
Another important aspect of the period covered by this book is the economics of empire. Critiques of imperialism in the early twentieth century were almost entirely concerned with attacking it as—to use Lenin's words—the natural extension of capitalism. Today, the mono-causal interpretation of imperialism is no longer accepted—and rightly so—except by some Marxist historians. Nevertheless, the imperialists themselves frankly admitted that they were looking for economic profit from overseas expansion, and, generally speaking, nationalists in the colonial territories were anti-capitalist as well as anti-Western, because they believed that economic exploitation was not only the aim of imperialism but an achieved object. A detailed analysis of the exploitation of colonial possessions—if indeed there was such exploitation—is far beyond the scope of this work, but I have tried to answer, at least in general terms, the question 'Was Imperialism Profitable?'.

This work is intended as no more than an introduction to the history of the period. It contains the essential facts and the relevant explanation of them. For more detailed works on specific aspects of the age of imperialism, the reader is referred to the notes on books for further reading (page 209).

Contents

The Maps

ASIA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ARCTIC CIRCLE
KAMCHATKA
Okhotsk
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Yakutsk
KURILE IS.
SAKHALIN
R U S S I A
AMUR R.
L.BAIKAL
Vladivostock
JAPAN
MANCHURIA
Tokyo
BLACK SEA
TURKEY
CASPIAN SEA
ARAL SEA
L. BALKHASH
KOREA
Seoul
Peking
Tientsin
YELLOW SEA
Suez
Teheran
Samarkand
SINKIANG
PERSIA
AFGHANISTAN
Kabul
C H I N A
Shanghai
Hankow
RYUKYU IS.
PACIFIC
Kuwait
Bushire
PERSIAN GULF
TIBET
Lhasa
YANGTSE KIANG
TAIWAN
RED SEA
AFRICA
Delhi
BRAHMAPUTRA R.
Canton
Hong Kong
OCEAN
Muscat
OMAN
Hanoi
Macao
PHILIPPINES
Calcutta
BURMA
ADEN
Surat
Manila
LAOS
VIETNAM
ARABIAN SEA
Bombay
Rangoon
SIAM
SOUTH CHINA SEA
EQUATOR
CAM-BODIA
Goa
Madras
BAY OF BENGAL
Bangkok
Andaman Is.
Saigon
Calicut
MALAYA
SARAWAK
Nicobar Is.
Kuala Lumpur
BORNEO
CELEBES
CEYLON
Singapore
SUMATRA
INDONESIA
TIMOR
INDIAN OCEAN
JAVA
0
600
MILES

PART ONE

The Imperial Way

CHAPTER I

The Colonial Presence 1850

Introduction

THROUGHOUT the whole period of what has been called 'Asia's European age', the motives that inspired Europe's penetration of Asia—and the nature of her ability to succeed—remained virtually constant. It was only in range and intensity that the colonial period differed from the imperial. Trade, evangelism, and national rivalries were as much the driving forces of expansion in the fifteenth century as they were to be in the nineteenth. Vasco da Gama's voyage round Africa to India in 1498 resulted from a desire to wrest the commerce of the Indies from the hands of Muslim middlemen, but it was a desire reinforced by ideological purpose. The lands of Asia were to be brought into a Christian world order, at the apex of which stood the Pope, Christ's vice-gerent on earth. Da Gama could not, however, have reached India without Portuguese maritime technology, without their expertise in shipbuilding, in navigational aids, and in weaponry. This primary superiority over Asians was not to be lost until the Second World War, though it was to be merged in the larger superiority of scientific and industrial technology.

The establishment of Portugal's 'empire'—a series of trading stations rather than colonies—was soon followed by the tentative probings of other maritime powers, of Holland, Britain, and France. All were driven outwards by a mixture of avarice, curiosity, missionary zeal, and patriotic rivalry, and the subsequent competition for trade led to active conflict and to the establishment of more trading centres in Asia. At the beginning, there was little desire for actual

territory; the Europeans felt themselves at too great a disadvantage in relation to the vast land powers of India and China. But they did not remain inferior for long. Though the Chinese empire managed to exclude them for a considerable time, elsewhere the Europeans were drawn into the vortices of Asian politics. They were gripped by the logic of expansion. They discovered, sometimes with great reluctance, that it was always necessary to occupy a little more territory than they actually needed in order to defend the parts they already held. Acceptance of this logic permitted adventurous men—and the early period of colonial expansion was a period of rugged individualism—to increase territorial possessions in Asia, often against the will of the home government. Slow communications often prevented governments from exercising power over their citizens, whether official or private.

By the beginning of the nineteenth century, however, the 'romantic' period of European expansion was giving way to a more considered colonialism—though the engine of expansion was still powered to a large extent by private ambition and megalomania. The change in Europe's attitude towards her possessions in Asia was a product of the Industrial Revolution, which not only produced new patterns of trade and brought a need for wider markets but also created a new psychological urge, the desire to civilise less fortunate peoples. This was first manifested by the British, who initiated and profited most from the Industrial Revolution. Britain became the evangelist of technical and material superiority. Other nations, envious of her example, were unable to emulate her success until they had gone through their own industrial revolutions. Until 1850, in fact, old-style colonialism—in which economic motives were predominant—persisted. Because of Britain's overwhelming superiority, any attempt to challenge her colonial position was bound to fail. But towards the end of the period, new factors were being inserted into the imperial equation.

1 *Portugal*

The Portuguese were the first Europeans to control territory in Asia. In the early sixteenth century, with the assistance of capital from Italy and south Germany and experts from many countries, they dominated contacts and trade with the East. After da Gama

reached western India in 1498, the Portuguese had seized Ormuz in the Persian Gulf as a naval base from which to control the trade routes of the Red Sea. In 1510, they made the island of Goa—on the west coast of India—the headquarters for their Asian activities. From Goa, an expedition seized Malacca on the west coast of Malaya (1511) for use as an advance post in the spice trade of the Moluccas. The Portuguese reached China in 1514 and Japan about 1543. But the expansion of Portugal's empire beyond a series of bases designed for trading and piracy was inhibited by lack of men—the population of Portugal in 1500 was probably no more than 1,500,000—and by the implications of her ideological purpose, which was to Christianise Asia. By 1580, when Portugal was united with Spain, her expansion was at an end, and when she became independent again (in 1640) the Dutch and the British—interested only in trade, and pursuing it with vigour and single-mindedness—stood in the way of any Portuguese revival.

Portugal's presence in Asia had consisted, in effect, of small enclaves used as trading centres. When the Dutch and British took over, they occupied only those which dominated the trade of a particular region. Where this was not the case, they established new centres and traded from there. The result was that, in 1850, the Portuguese still retained some of their old trading ports, their original purpose gone, and their present situation one of decay. In India, Goa and Diu remained to them; in the Indonesian archipelago, part of the island of Timor; and off the coast of China, the peninsula of Macao.

2 *Spain*

The Spanish presence in Asia came about when Ferdinand Magellan, after sailing round South America, crossed the Pacific in an endeavour to find a westward route to the Spice Islands. Magellan's journey was a result of the 1494 agreement between Spain and Portugal which divided the world into two parts, one on either side of a fixed, north–south line drawn 370 miles west of the Cape Verde islands in the Atlantic. Portugal was allocated everything to the east, Spain everything to the west. By sailing westward across the Pacific, Spain insisted that she was keeping to the terms of the agreement. As the Portuguese were, however, already established in the Spice

Islands (the Moluccas), Magellan turned aside and claimed the Philippines for Spain in 1521. Manila was founded in 1571 and became, like Macao, an entrepôt for the China trade, maintaining this position until the nineteenth century. Until 1821, the Philippines were governed from Mexico. In 1850, they were more like a Latin American country than an Asian one. Though the Spaniards traded with and sent missionaries to Cambodia, Siam, and Vietnam, the Philippines did not become a base for Spanish aggression in Asia, and except when Manila and some of the islands were occupied by the British (October 1762–June 1764), they played no part in inter-European rivalries until the end of the nineteenth century.

3 *Holland*

The Dutch—and the English, who arrived in Asia at the same time—were motivated by a desire to break the Portuguese monopoly of trade with the East. Their progress against the Portuguese in Asia was fitful and irregular, but they acquired Amboyna in Indonesia in 1605, and Jakarta in 1619. Malacca fell to them in 1641, and Ceylon became a Dutch possession in 1654. Having displaced the Portuguese from the islands of the Indonesian archipelago, Holland established a halfway station at the Cape of Good Hope on the southern tip of Africa (1652), and between 1661 and 1664 captured all the Portuguese settlements on the pepper-producing coast of Malabar in southern India. By 1664, too, they had established trading posts at Hugli, Kasimbazar, Patna, and Dacca in Bengal, and at Surat, Ahmedabad, and Agra in northern India.

Between 1652 and 1674, however, three naval wars with England seriously weakened Dutch resources, as did almost continuous fighting (between 1672 and 1713) with the French, who were also seeking territory in India. An alliance after 1674 with the growing power of England restricted Holland's activities, and England was the only power to profit from subsequent Dutch battles with the French. Dutch influence in India came to an end when they were defeated by Robert Clive, at the battle of Biderra in Bengal in 1759. Thereafter they concentrated their attention on the islands of the Indonesian archipelago.

The Dutch East India Company, with the full support of its home government, was able to drive its English competitor—a private

company, without government aid—out of Indonesia. But by the end of the seventeenth century the Dutch Company, which had made great profit out of its control of the inter-Asian carrying trade, no longer dominated the eastern seas. This role had been taken over by the British. The Dutch, however, fortunately discovered that certain agricultural products could be grown on the island of Java and exported at considerable profit. The first of these export crops was sugar, and coffee was added in 1725.

The Dutch in Java found themselves forced, in defence of their position, to involve themselves in local wars. As a result, Java was completely under Dutch control by 1770. But the Company was stagnating, and it was taken over by the home government in 1799. After the Napoleonic occupation of Holland, Britain seized the administration of Java and held it between 1811 and 1816. When the islands were restored to the Dutch, they made no attempt to expand their rule in the Outer Islands of the archipelago. They concentrated their activities on the island of Java where, by 1850, they were firmly established. Elsewhere in Indonesia, their position was weak and areas of continuing instability were to force them to expand the extent of their effective rule. Piracy, which was endemic in the seas around Indonesia, led to some conflict with the British, and the need to impose peace—not only at sea, but also in the islands of the archipelago—was to occupy the Dutch for the next half century.

4 *Great Britain*

After withdrawing from South-east Asia under pressure from the Dutch, the British established bases in India at Madras (1639), Bombay (1661), Calcutta (1690), and a number of smaller places. As the Mughal empire declined after the death in 1707 of the last strong emperor, Aurangzeb, the British began to establish territorial administrations and soon—after they had defeated the French in 1763—exercised direct rule over the large province of Bengal, which they used as a base for their further expansion. The instrument of this expansion was the private enterprise of the East India Company, and the extension of British dominion was viewed less in political than in entrepreneurial terms—even though, from 1784 until the end of the Company's rule in 1858, the right of political decision was exercised by the British Crown. Britain's progressive occupation

of India resulted partly from a need to occupy the vacuum left by the collapse of native power, and partly from the necessity of protecting British commercial interests.

From their base in India, the British moved outwards against peripheral states. A Burmese threat to Bengal led to Britain's annexation of the territories of Arakan and Tenasserim in 1826. Growing interest in the China trade resulted in the establishment of Singapore, in 1819. This, in turn, involved the British in the affairs of the Malay States. The Opium war of 1839–42—brought about by the economic importance of the China trade, and by China's unwillingness to permit the unrestricted import of opium from India—was responsible for the forcible opening of China, and Britain gained the island of Hong Kong off the mouth of the river leading to the port of Canton.

By 1850, Britain was not only the largest colonial power in Asia, but also the one backed by the most powerful economic resources. Yet even Britain had barely penetrated east Asia.

5 *France*

The French arrived in India in 1673 and established a settlement at Pondicherry, near Madras. Seven years later, they also had a settlement at Chandernagore, near Calcutta. Hostilities between the French and the English were not infrequent, but until the collapse of the Mughal empire they were of little consequence. As the eighteenth century progressed, however, the struggle for power in India resolved itself into a struggle between France and Britain. The French Compagnie des Indes was not, like the English Company, merely a trading organisation. It was a direct instrument of French foreign policy. Because of this, the French and British in India found themselves in conflict for reasons originating with the balance of power *in Europe*. Thus the War of the Austrian Succession (1740–48) was fought in India, too, and in the Seven Years War (1756–63) France and England were literally fighting for supremacy in India. Finally, the French lost the struggle, and their possessions in India were reduced to a number of harmless enclaves.

Elsewhere in Asia, French activity had a special missionary flavour which was to persist in the nineteenth century. Louis XIV gave considerable support to Catholic missions abroad, and it was partly to assist their work that the French East India Company was estab-

lished. By the 1680s, the French were deeply involved in an attempt to take over the kingdom of Siam, and French influence grew in China as Portuguese missionary influence declined. The activities of the French missionary bishop, Pigneau de Behaine (1741–99), who with the aid of volunteers from home placed his own candidate on the throne of Annam, represent the continuing pattern of French colonialism, in which religious, cultural, and political motives were more important than commerce. In 1850, France's territorial possessions in Asia were confined to a few virtually useless trading stations in India, but her interest in missionary endeavour elsewhere was soon to become militant again as she took up the activity which had been, in effect, halted by the French Revolution and its aftermath.

6 Russia

The first direction of Russian expansion was into the empty wastes of Siberia, with the aim of reaching the Pacific. By 1649, they were at the Sea of Okhotsk. Conflict with China in the Amur area led to demarcation of the frontier between the two countries in 1689. In 1707, the Kamchatka peninsula was declared Russian territory, and further areas of Siberia were occupied. The question of the Amur, however, remained unsolved, and it was not until after 1850 that a forward movement in that area was begun.

The precise date of Russia's first contacts with the independent rulers of Central Asia is not known. In the eighteenth century, Tsar Peter the Great began to take an interest in expansion to the south. An expedition was massacred at Khiva in 1717, however, and after that Russian penetration was extremely slow. An attempt in 1740 to bring Khiva into tributary relationship with Russia was unsuccessful. It was not until 1834 that the Russians, having constructed a base at Kultuk Bay on the Caspian Sea, once more considered the possibility of an advance upon Khiva; five years later, an attempt—which proved unsuccessful—was made to cross the desert lying between Orenburg and Khiva. A second expedition, in 1841, halted before reaching Khiva, but this time it was because a declaration of submission was received from the ruler.

In northern Turkestan, Russian forts spread along the Jaxartes river until, in 1843, they reached the Aral Sea. The next move south was to come in 1853.

7 *The United States of America*

American expansion in Asia was slow to start, mainly because the Americans were more concerned with occupying the North American mainland. But American merchant ships had begun trading in eastern seas in the late eighteenth century, and had been doing business with China since 1785. American sea captains had explored the Pacific Ocean. An expedition commanded by Charles Wilkes set out in 1838 and visited Samoa, New South Wales, Wilkesland in the Antarctic, the Fiji and Hawaiian islands, the Philippines, Borneo, and other parts of Polynesia. Wilkes' tasks included surveying, commercial negotiations, and the establishment of consular representation. Except in the case of extra-territorial trading arrangements in China (1844), however, the United States had no territorial foothold in Asia in 1850.

CHAPTER 2

The Course of Empire 1850–1914

Introduction

WESTERN expansion in Asia during the second half of the nineteenth century was centred mainly in two areas, the East and the South-east. The old colonial powers expanded their rule in those parts of Asia where they had already established a foothold and, in competition with the new imperialist nations, penetrated the Indo-Chinese peninsula and struggled for spheres of influence in China. The cycle progressed from special trading privileges, through 'unequal treaties', to full colonialism (except in the case of China).

In 1850, most of continental South-east Asia and a considerable part of the Indonesian archipelago was still ruled by traditionalist native regimes. Over the next thirty years, a semi-colonial system based upon the exercise of extra-territorial rights was established on the mainland; by 1880, it regulated Western relations with Upper Burma, Siam, Vietnam, China, Korea, and Japan. Britain held Lower Burma, the Straits Settlements, and Hong Kong. France held Cochin China. But from the early 1880s on, Britain annexed Upper Burma, and France most of Indo-China. Japan took Formosa (Taiwan) and Korea. The United States acquired the Philippines from Spain. The Dutch expanded their occupation of the Indonesian archipelago. Germany joined the scramble for concessions in China. Russia began to swallow up Manchuria, until she came into conflict with Japan.

All this took place—in violent contrast with the slow progress of early colonialism—during the space of roughly a quarter of a

century, and the reasons for the acceleration of the colonial process were many and complex. Fundamentally, it was a consequence of the sudden growth of Western technical superiority, particularly in the field of communications. The steamship not only revolutionised the carrying trade; it also consolidated maritime supremacy. And this was only a single aspect of the dynamism of late nineteenth-century Europe. Technological revolution burst the seams of the Western nations' economies. Trade and investment demanded outlets, closed markets, and guaranteed dividends. France and Germany—the new industrial nations of Europe—finding that the first great industrial power, Britain, had taken control of the most rewarding non-European markets, began to seize colonial territories and barricade them with protective tariffs. To counter these developments, Britain—already the largest empire—increased her own overseas possessions by one-third between 1885 and 1900.

Coexistent with the economic motive, however, was that of national pride. In the late nineteenth century, the possession of colonies became an index of international status. But though there was considerable national identification with colonial aims, the latter were exploited, and to a large extent initiated, by individuals. Western expansion in Asia remained very much the product of individual enterprise, even in the age of imperialism. The tempo of Western aggression in Asia was sustained by a variety of ambitions, psychological, political, and economic; adventure, profit, and the propagation of Christianity retained their vitality. The politics of late nineteenth-century Europe were such that these private ambitions were eventually to be underwritten by governments.

1 Portugal

Portuguese territories in Asia after 1850 remained as they had been before. The larger imperial powers had no ambitions to acquire the stagnant Portuguese colonies which represented the debris of the old colonial system. But the Portuguese did not lose interest in a changing Asia, and they benefited—whenever possible—from the belligerence of other powers. In 1859, for example, following British and French precedent, Portugal signed an 'unequal treaty' with Siam. In 1887, she obtained the formal cession of the territory of Macao (originally only leased) from China. To all intents and purposes,

however, Portugal remained outside the stream of imperialism in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

2 *Spain*

The Spanish possession, the Philippines, continued to play an important role in Asian trade after 1850, although from 1870 onwards much of this was dominated by British financial and commercial interests. Spain had at no time, however, seriously regarded the Philippines as a base for territorial aggrandisement, and as a result the country played no more than a trading role until the Spanish-American war of 1898. Although this was, in fact, fought for the island of Cuba in the Caribbean, the Americans occupied Manila.

Like Portugal, Spain remained aloof from imperialist expansion partly because the metropolitan power was industrially backward and in no position to compete with other European nations.

3 *Holland*

Dutch expansion in Indonesia began in 1856 when the *Regeringsreglement*, or 'constitutional regulation'—passed two years earlier by the Dutch government—was put into practice. Its principal effect on colonial administration was to give the governor-general and his council a much wider area of executive authority than before. The regulation also forecast the end of the Culture System,* for the governor-general was instructed to ensure that no oppression should be practised against farmers, and that subsistence crops should not be prejudiced. Reform, however, was extremely slow, as a conservative government in Holland was unwilling to press its governor-general in Indonesia to take positive action in this direction. The struggle for reform was, however, greatly assisted by the publication in Holland (1860) of a novel, *Max Havelaar*, by 'Multatuli'—the pseudonym of E. D. Decker, an ex-official who had served in Indo-

*The Culture—or, more properly, Cultivation—System, first imposed in 1830, forced the peasant to devote a portion of his land to the cultivation of export crops. These were accepted in lieu of land rent. The financial benefits to Holland were immediate, but the stress on cultivation of such export crops as indigo, sugar, coffee, tobacco, pepper, cinnamon, cotton, and cochineal meant a decline in food production. Serious rice famines occurred in 1843 and 1848 and brought about some relaxation in the enforcement of the system.

nesia. In factual fashion, the book put forward the case against the Culture System and the oppressive measures used to sustain it. Decker's novel had a wide public. A former planter, I. F. van der Putte, published a number of pamphlets which also helped in the struggle.

In 1863, van der Putte, who obviously knew the vicious effects of the system from intimate experience, was appointed by a Liberal prime minister to the colonial ministry. The forced cultivation of pepper was abolished in 1862, of cloves and nutmeg in 1863, of indigo, tea, cinnamon, and cochineal in 1865, and of tobacco in 1866. All these had, in any case, ceased to be profitable. Sugar and coffee, however, which were continuing and expanding sources of profit, continued to be forcibly cultivated. In other fields, a number of abuses were removed. Compulsory labour in the forests was abolished in 1865, and the budget of the Indies was made subject to the control of the home parliament from 1867. By the Sugar Law of 1870, the government was to cease its cultivation of sugar in the twelve years after 1878. Coffee continued a state monopoly until 1917, however, and opium, salt, and pawnshops—an extremely profitable line of business—remained state monopolies until the end of Dutch rule. Liberalism, in its Dutch form, saw the colonies as a purely business venture, and any desire to save the colonial peoples from oppression was subordinate to the need to make Holland's possessions safe for private capital. From 1870 onwards, private investment in Java's agricultural production was considerable; the value of state exports declined from 46·5 m. guilders in 1870 to 16·3 m. in 1885, while that of private enterprise increased from 61·2 m. to 168·7 m. in the same period.

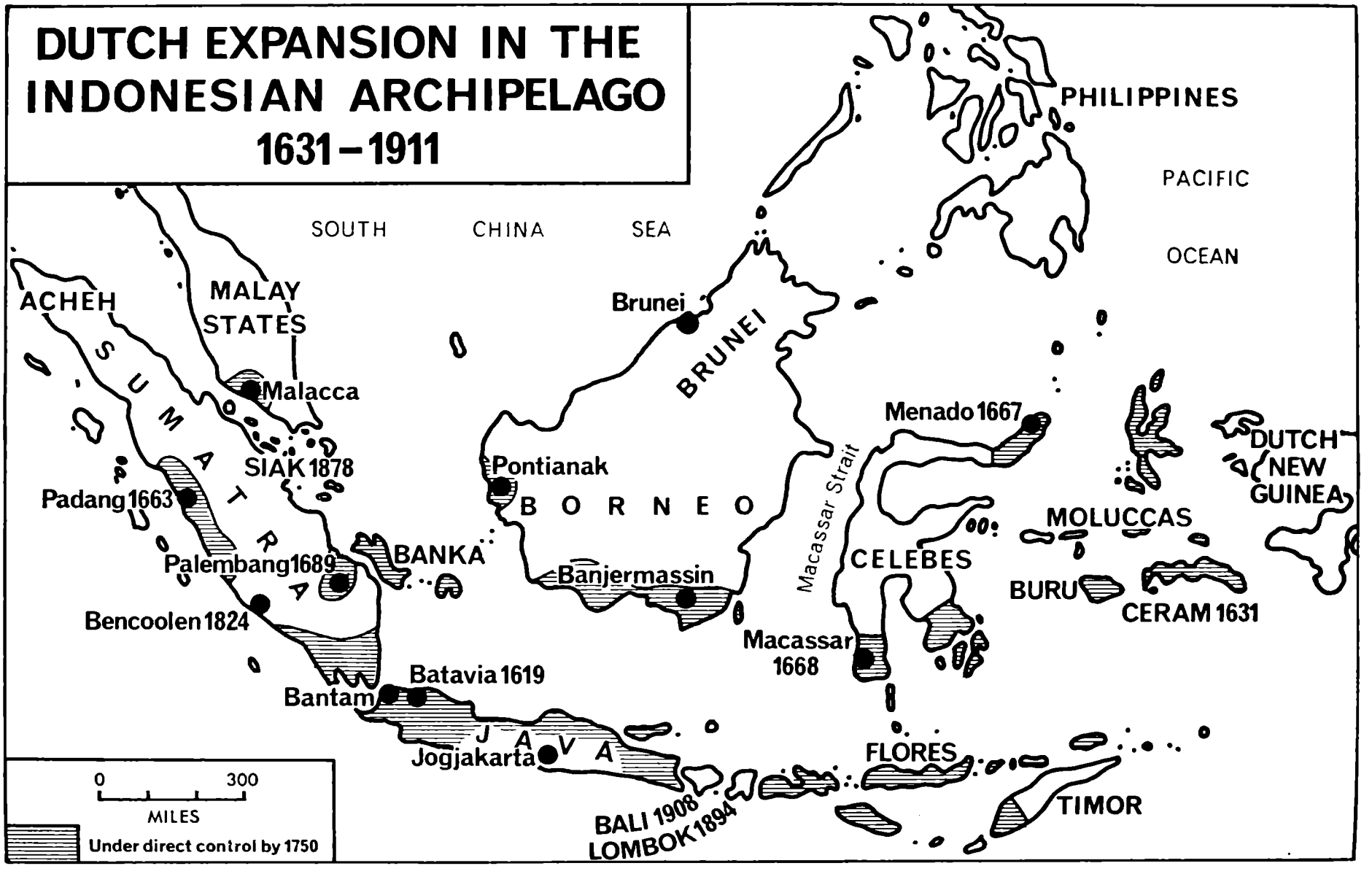
Most of this investment was in Java, partly because profits depended on cheap labour and other parts of Indonesia were underpopulated. But although the Dutch had tended to neglect what was unprofitable—such control as they exercised outside Java was purely nominal—it became apparent after the opening of the Suez Canal (1869) and the development of steam navigation that, if the Dutch did not take over active control of the islands of the archipelago, Britain and perhaps others of the European powers now expanding their activities in eastern seas might do so instead.

Early Dutch activity was concentrated on Borneo, where coalfields and tin deposits were discovered. The Dutch went to war with

the Sultan of Banjermassin (1859–63) and annexed his territories. They were anxious, too, about the island of Bali, though its native rulers had accepted Dutch suzerainty in 1849. In 1858 and 1859 there was heavy fighting in the Celebes before Holland was able to impose control over the south-west part of the island. But the Dutch paid most attention to Sumatra, and in 1856 began a series of actions designed to establish their control over the island. In that year, they subdued the Lampongs districts, two years later the Batak, and in 1868 Bencoolen. They reimposed their rule in Palembang, which was in a state of anarchy. An Englishman had taken over control of the state of Siak in 1856; he had to be expelled. This brought the Dutch into conflict with the state of Acheh, for Siak was one of its dependencies.

Over the matter of Acheh, the Dutch were forced to do a deal with the British. Acheh encouraged, aided and profited from the actions of pirates who preyed upon European shipping, and the Treaty of London (1824) had made Holland responsible for keeping the seas round Acheh free from pirates. The Dutch now maintained that this was impossible unless they occupied the Achinese ports. But the treaty had also ruled out such occupation, by guaranteeing Achinese sovereignty. In return for a free hand in Acheh, the Dutch now agreed to meet certain British demands. By the Treaty of London, Holland had guaranteed Britain the right to trade—without imposition of duty—with a number of Sumatran ports, including some in Achinese territory, but by 1863 British merchants in Singapore were complaining that the Dutch forward movement in Sumatra was prejudicing these trading rights. The Dutch had informed the rajas that the arrangements no longer stood. In return for their free hand in Sumatra, therefore, the Dutch guaranteed Britain's trading rights on an equal basis with their own, as well as ceding to Britain territory on the Gold Coast of West Africa. A treaty to this effect was signed in 1871.

After the conclusion of the treaty, the Dutch opened negotiations with the Sultan of Acheh, on the island of Riau. The talks were unsuccessful, and, on their way home, the Achinese embassy stopped in Singapore and began secret discussions with the American and Italian consuls there. The Italian consul turned down the Achinese proposals, but the American drafted the terms of a commercial treaty. Soon, a false report was circulating that the American consul had asked for warships to be sent to Sumatra to protect American


DUTCH EXPANSION IN THE INDONESIAN ARCHIPELAGO 1631–1911
PHILIPPINES
PACIFIC OCEAN
SOUTH CHINA SEA
ACHEH
MALAY STATES
Brunei
BRUNEI
Malacca
SIAK 1878
Menado 1667
DUTCH NEW GUINEA
Pontianak
BORNEO
Padang 1663
SUMATRA
Macassar Strait
MOLUCCAS
BANKA
CELEBES
Palembang 1689
Banjermassin
BURU
CERAM 1631
Bencoolen 1824
Macassar 1668
Batavia 1619
Bantam
JAVA
FLORES
Jogjakarta
TIMOR
BALI 1908
LOMBOK 1894
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MILES
Under direct control by 1750

interests; this brought a strongly-worded protest from the Dutch to the American secretary of state, who responded with an equally sharp rebuttal.

The Dutch made one more attempt to negotiate with Acheh. But the sultan, though he had failed in 1869 to win assistance from Turkey—the only major Muslim power to whom a Muslim country could appeal—remained unyielding, and the Dutch began the longest and hardest fought campaign in their colonial history. In April 1873, a small force was sent against Acheh but was compelled to withdraw. In December, a larger force succeeded in capturing the sultan's chief minister. When he died shortly afterwards, the Dutch attempted to open negotiations with his successor, hoping that he would accept Dutch suzerainty over Acheh in return for almost complete internal autonomy. These hopes were blasted by widespread revolt among local chiefs, and Dutch troops found themselves faced with a serious guerrilla war. Whenever their forces achieved any measure of success, the Dutch attempted to negotiate, but without result. Disease attacked the Dutch troops with more vigour that it did the guerrillas. Although between 1878 and 1881 a large number of chiefs were forced to submit, when the Dutch tried to set up an administration they found themselves confronted with yet another uprising, invigorated this time by the declaration of a holy war of Islam against the infidel.

The Dutch sent more troops into the area, deciding for reasons of economy to concentrate their forces at a major base, connected by railway to a line of strongpoints. The railway ran from the east coast to the west, and the Dutch thought that, by retiring behind it, they would be free from guerrilla attack in the rear and at the same time could so menace Acheh—which formed the northern tip of Sumatra—that its leaders would be willing to negotiate. Unfortunately for the Dutch, their tactics were taken as a sign of weakness. As the years passed, Dutch policy fluctuated with each new governor, sometimes leaning towards coercion, sometimes towards leniency. Neither was successful. In 1892, they made an attempt to win over an important chief and gave him weapons so that he could establish himself. This also failed, and the chief and his men went over to the enemy four years later.

After over twenty years of useless fighting, it was clear that only a full-scale campaign could break the deadlock. This, which began in

1896 and resulted in the extension of Dutch control, was under the command of General Vetter. In March 1898, a new governor of Acheh was appointed; his name was J. B. van Heutsz, and he had earlier published a plan for the conquest of Acheh and taken a distinguished part in Vetter's campaign. By the beginning of 1899, van Heutsz had occupied Acheh proper, and the rebellious chiefs were on the run. Major operations could now be abandoned, and flying-columns were used to maintain peace and harass those chiefs who were still holding out. In 1898, a new system had been introduced into Acheh. It was called the Short Declaration, and any chief agreeing to recognise the authority of the Dutch was confirmed in his position. In 1903, the claimant to the sultanate and another important chief surrendered to the Dutch. Insurrections continued, however, until 1908, and Acheh remained under military rule for another ten years.

Dutch activities in Acheh had an effect outside Indonesia, too. The period was seeing a revival of Muslim activity in various parts of the world. The success of the Mahdi against the British in the Sudan had been widely acclaimed in Islamic countries, and had even had repercussions in the Muslim areas of India's North-West Frontier. As many thousands of Indonesian Muslims visited Mecca each year, the Dutch felt that good relations between themselves and the keeper of the holy places of Islam might help to reduce tension and make the Muslims of Acheh more amenable to their rule. The Dutch therefore cultivated good relations with the Sultan of Mecca by encouraging Indonesians to make the pilgrimage and by appointing, as Dutch vice-consul at Mecca, an Indonesian Muslim.

Though the difficult campaign against Acheh occupied most of Holland's attention in the last years of the nineteenth century, it did not prevent the expansion of Dutch rule in other parts of Indonesia. The home government was not anxious to extend the area of Dutch control—but this did not inhibit the authorities in Indonesia from bringing the Moluccas and the Lesser Sunda islands under their administration between 1875 and 1881. Dutch rule in other parts of Sumatra was also consolidated during this period. The Dutch were particularly sensitive to the possibility that other European powers might establish themselves among the thousands of islands which make up the Indonesian archipelago, and Dutch naval forces therefore kept up constant patrols in the seas around Indonesia.

In Bali, where Dutch interference had proved both unsuccessful and costly, a rebellion by the Sasaks of Lombok, who were Muslims, broke out in 1891 as a result of oppression by the Hindu rulers of the island. After attempts at mediation, the Dutch sent a military expedition which occupied Lombok in 1894.

By 1911, some three hundred self-governing states—including the remainder of Bali—had come under Dutch control. In effect, the political consolidation of Indonesia under the Dutch had been completed.

4 *Great Britain*

India

From the end of the Sikh wars which led to the final annexation of the Punjab (1849), and with the expansion of British rule to the border of Afghanistan, the British continued their forward movement. During the administration of Lord Dalhousie (1848–56), a deliberate policy of annexation was carried out against a number of Indian states. Dalhousie wished to remove as many of the feudal states as possible, leaving only a few of the larger ones, nominally independent, but actually under the control of the central government. His plan was designed primarily to eliminate the danger to British rule posed by the existence of independent states lying across the communication routes between British territories. But it also aimed at providing better and more efficient government, which might ensure a happier life for the peasant. Dalhousie's expansionist policies did, in fact, have a potent moral content, though this has often been overlooked.

The policy of annexation was based on the Doctrine of Lapse, which was conceived as a suitable legal pretext for taking over a state in which there was no direct heir, and in which the succession could be sustained 'only by the sanction of the [British] government being given to the ceremony of adoption according to Hindu law'. Dalhousie was concerned only with the succession to temporal power, not with the effects and titles of the ruler. The states of Satara, Nagpur, Jaitpur, Sambulpur, Baght, Udaipur, and Jhansi were annexed. Although the doctrine was not applied in every case where it might have been, it was a potential threat to every native ruler. Naturally, it aroused considerable unease, and a further

area of discontent was added in 1851, when another kind of annexation appeared. In that year, the last peshwa of the Marathas—a confederation of princely states which had been defeated by the British in 1818—died at Bithur, near Kanpur (Cawnpore). After the defeat in 1818, the last peshwa had been granted a substantial pension and the right to retain his then purely nominal titles. He died without issue, and his will requested the British government to transmit his personal fortune and his titles to his adopted son, who was known as the Nana Sahib. The British permitted the Nana Sahib to inherit the peshwa's fortune, but not his pension—a perfectly reasonable decision in law, but not politically expedient. It was regarded as deeply unjust. In 1856, the British also annexed the large state of Oudh; for this there was some justification, as it had been grossly misruled by the native dynasty. Dalhousie himself also wished to dispose of the shadowy court of the last Mughal emperor, Bahadur Shah, at Delhi, but the Court of Directors of the East India Company in London would not permit this. Instead, Bahadur Shah's heir was forced to agree that, on his succession, he would abandon the imperial title and vacate the palace at Delhi.

The British also pressed heavily upon the landlord class. Endeavouring to impose British concepts of property on India, they had instituted search into the titles by which landlords held their land. They were anxious to establish property rights on a legal basis, so that they might be protected by law. Once again, the intention was laudable, but the law was unfortunately British and a large number of landlords were unable to satisfy its requirements. Since they could not justify their holdings, they found their land expropriated by the British.* These landlords—there were some 20,000 in the Deccan alone—naturally became dissatisfied with British rule.

It was upon a foundation of widespread unease and hostility that the Indian Mutiny of 1857 broke out. Properly speaking, the Indian Mutiny was, as nineteenth-century British historians called it, a sepoy revolt, i.e. a mutiny in part of the army of the East India Company. It did, however, attract some civilian support amongst those who had been, or felt that they might be, dispossessed by the British. The causes were almost as numerous as the men who took part in it.

*The history of land and revenue settlements in British India is extremely complex and cannot be dealt with here. For a brief survey, see my *History of India* (London 1961), pp. 273–77.

Essentially, however, the initial driving force was the Hindu soldiers' (sepoys') fear that the British intended to force them to become Christians. In their reforming enthusiasm, the British had allowed themselves to regard the Hindu religion as a barbaric pagan creed, beneath contempt. Many officers of the Company's army took every opportunity of trying to persuade their men to become Christians.

Some of the sepoys felt that an attempt would be made to cut them off from their own religion by breaking their caste. Hinduism, unlike Christianity, is indivisibly part of the social order. Man's place in society is carefully ordered by the mechanism of caste. Break a man's caste, and not only is his place in society destroyed but he stands on the threshold of a damnation far worse than the Christian concept of hell. A Hindu believes that reincarnation continues until the highest caste—the Brahmin—is reached after the soul has returned many times and has suffered much. When a Brahmin dies, his reward is oblivion, the heaven of the Hindus. Many of the sepoys in the Company's army were Brahmins and consequently felt that they had everything to lose from the Christianising activities of the British. There had, in fact, been mutinies based on similar fears before 1857.

In Vellore in south India, the sepoys had revolted in 1806 after being ordered to wear a new style of headdress, to trim their beards, and to give up wearing caste marks. This they believed to be an attempt to make them Christians. The mutiny was brutally suppressed. In 1824, a sepoy regiment which had been ordered to Burma refused to move, because it felt its caste endangered by an official refusal to supply them with special transport to carry their cooking pots; caste usage compelled each man to have his own set. Guns opened fire on the sepoys on the parade ground where they were assembled, and next morning six of the ringleaders were hanged, while hundreds were condemned to fourteen years' hard labour on the public roads. Five more were later executed and their bodies hung in chains as an example to their fellows. In 1852, another regiment also refused to cross the sea to Burma. This time, however, the sepoys were simply marched away to another station. A number of other mutinies and near-mutinies had taken place, all with some basis of fear that the British were trying to break the sepoys' caste and make them turn Christian.

By the end of 1856, the whole of India—and particularly the north—was uneasy. Nearly every class had been shaken in some way by the reforms and political changes instituted by the administration. Only the most Westernised Indians were unaffected by fear. The newly emerging middle class had no wish to preserve the old order unchanged, and during the Mutiny they remained actively loyal to the British. But the dispossessed had been awaiting their opportunity. Those princes who had lost the territories they felt to be rightly theirs, the king of Oudh, the last sad descendants of the Mughal emperors at the twilight court of Delhi—all were awaiting an opportunity to rise in rebellion. Their agents were active among the sepoys, playing upon their fears and exciting their apprehensions, recalling the tale that a hundred years after the battle of Plassey would come the day that saw the end of British rule. The fuel was ready for the fire; all that was needed was a spark. The British themselves provided it.

In 1857 it was decided to replace the old musket known as Brown Bess with the new Enfield rifle, which had a much longer range and infinitely greater accuracy. To load the new rifle entailed biting a greased cartridge. The sepoys believed, with some justification, that the grease was made from cow or pig fat—the first, from an animal sacred to the Hindus, and the second from an animal regarded as unclean by the Muslims. The Hindu sepoys saw this as yet another attempt to break their caste as a preliminary to making them all Christians.

'A consciousness of power,' later wrote the commissioner of Meerut, 'had grown up in the army which could only be exercised by mutiny and the cry of the cartridge brought the latent spirit of revolt into action.' At Meerut on 9 May 1857, after the sepoys' refusal of the new cartridges, a sentence of ten years' imprisonment was imposed on eighty-five men of the 3rd Cavalry. The next day, a Sunday, the three Indian regiments in the station shot their officers, broke open the jail, and set off along the road to Delhi some forty miles away. No one attempted to stop them, though there were two British regiments and some artillery in the station. Twenty-four hours later Bahadur Shah, the titular king of Delhi, was proclaimed emperor of Hindustan. The Indian Mutiny had begun.

The Mutiny lasted for eighteen months. It was characterised by extreme brutality on both sides. Exaggeration by British historians

has elevated the affair into a major epic of British heroism; by Indian nationalists, into a war of independence. It was in fact neither. As a rebellion, the Mutiny was unorganised, an atavistic reaction rather than a planned revolt; the mutineers had leaders, but no central leadership. As a military operation, it was a small-scale business. Tiny armies deployed against each other while unarmed civilians—except in Oudh—were anxious only to be left in peace. As an epic, it was one only of incredible inefficiency on the side of the British. As a war of independence, it represented the reaction of a traditional feudal order against administrative and social reform. Its leaders were reactionaries in a changing world, conservative romantics of the type every good nationalist despises.

The Mutiny was, in fact, the meeting of two dying systems; of British India as a 'country' power—an oriental government with European overtones—and of traditional India, unwilling and unable to absorb the militancies of the other. Among the casualties was the East India Company itself, for in 1858 the government of India was assumed by the British Crown. The Company made a graceful exit with a farewell message which was almost poignant in its sentiment. Before this, it had defended itself by pointing out—among other things—that it had laid the foundations of the Indian empire when a succession of administrations (under the control of parliament) had been engaged in losing Britain another great empire on the opposite side of the Atlantic. But petitions, even when expertly drafted by John Stuart Mill, were useless. So the Company addressed its servants in India for the last time: 'Let Her Majesty appreciate the gift; let her take the vast country and the teeming millions of India under her direct control; but let her not forget the great corporation from which she has received them, nor the lessons to be learned from its success. . . . The Company has the privilege of transferring to the service of Her Majesty such a body of civil and military officers as the world has never seen before.'

The assumption of power by the Crown was almost a formality, for the East India Company had, in effect, been mortgagees in possession, the real power being divided between the Board of Control set up under the India Act of 1784, and the governor-general who was appointed by the British government. The 1858 Act 'for the Better Government of India' was reinforced by a proclamation from Queen Victoria to her Indian subjects. It contained imperial

disclaimers ('we desire no extension of our territorial possessions'), evidence of a wise though condescending attitude to the heathen ('firmly relying ourselves on the truth of Christianity . . . we disclaim alike the right and desire to impose our convictions'), and the proposition that with the assistance of God a new and happy era was to come. 'When, by the blessing of Providence, internal tranquillity shall be restored, it is our earnest desire to stimulate the peaceful industry of India, to promote works of public utility and improvement, and to administer the government for the benefit of all our subjects resident therein. In their prosperity will be our strength, in their contentment our security, and in their gratitude our best reward. . . .'

When the Crown assumed power in India, British rule in the subcontinent reached its final patterns. The Mutiny was India's last attempt to throw the British into the sea. Thereafter, a well-disciplined police force and an incorruptible administration, backed by white troops, were all that was necessary for the maintenance of peace within the frontiers. The rulers of India could settle back into the pleasant exercise of efficient—and therefore, by their standards, good—government. The civil service could retire into a remote paternalism, withdrawn from the people yet jerking the strings of their lives. The white man's burden was a collection of files. India became a show piece, the exotic appurtenance of great power, the brightest jewel in the British Crown. But a jewel must be guarded, and Britain's expansion in Asia after 1858 was related to the security of India, the provision of coaling stations for her fleets, and spheres of influence against her European rivals.*

Burma

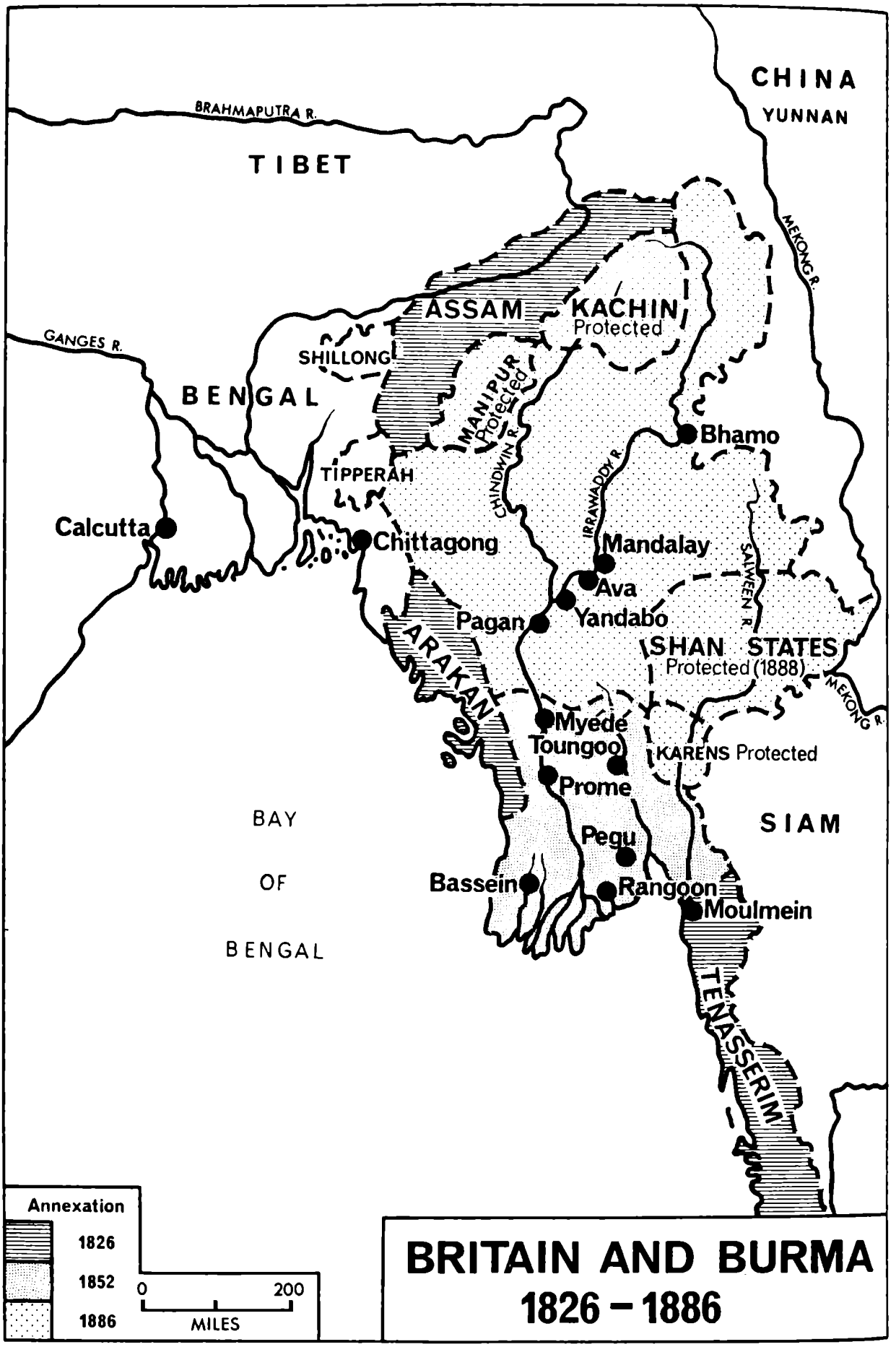
The Anglo-Burmese war of 1826 had been embarked on by the British with genuine reluctance. After its conclusion and the cession of territory, the British had hoped that relations with Burma would be established on a friendly enough basis to preclude further

*These activities are dealt with separately. Those concerned with the eastern periphery of India are discussed in the following pages and also, in terms of inter-European conflicts, on pp. 102 ff; those with areas west and north of India, in the context of Anglo-Russian rivalry, on pp. 82 ff. Britain's philosophy of government and its application—in contrast with that of the Dutch and French—is dealt with in Part Two, Chapter 1.

hostilities. The East India Company was unwilling to encumber its dominions with further territories, and the British government agreed. Unfortunately, the Burmese—humiliated by defeat—became even more arrogant. Britain's relations with Burma were irritated by constant bickering over the terms of the Treaty of Yandabo (February 1826) and by the internal situation in Burma. The British were not unwilling to return certain of the territories ceded to them by the treaty, however, and in 1833 they returned the Kabaw valley to Burma. But negotiations for the retrocession of Tenasserim failed, mainly because the Burmese felt that—if they waited long enough—they would get it back without having to make any concessions in exchange.

Negotiations were not made any easier by the madness of King Bagyidaw. His brother Tharrawaddy rebelled in 1837, and ascended the throne, but he had not appreciated the British envoy's attempts to reduce violence during the revolt and treated the envoy's successor to a number of humiliations, including the flooding of the official residence. Early in 1840, the British representative was withdrawn, and it appeared that war was imminent. Britain, however, was too preoccupied with India to be interested in hostilities against Burma. In 1845, Tharrawaddy in turn became insane, and one of his sons—killing off the others—mounted the throne. The new king, Pagan Min, began a reign of terror and the country soon found itself in a state of anarchy.

After the withdrawal of the British representative, Calcutta received numerous complaints of ill-treatment from British subjects at the port of Rangoon. In July and August 1851, two British merchant captains were faced with trumped-up charges of murder and embezzlement, but were let off—in return for a bribe—by the local Burmese governor. The angry captains lodged a claim for indemnity with the government in Calcutta, and the governor-general, Lord Dalhousie, aware of the threat to British prestige, remarked in a Minute: 'The government of India could never consistently with its safety permit itself to stand for a single day in an attitude of inferiority towards a native power, and least of all towards the Court of Ava [Burma].' Dalhousie decided that the claim for restitution should be made in such terms that the Burmese would be compelled to agree to it. He sent the deputy commander-in-chief of the Company's navy, Commodore Lambert, with three warships


CHINA
YUNNAN
BRAHMAPUTRA R.
TIBET
MEKONG R.
ASSAM
KACHIN
Protected
GANGES R.
SHILLONG
BENGAL
MANIPUR
Protected
CHINDWIN R.
IRRAWADDY R.
Bhamo
TIPPERAH
Calcutta
Chittagong
Mandalay
SALWEEN R.
Ava
Yandabo
Pagan
ARAKAN
SHAN STATES
Protected (1888)
MEKONG R.
Myede
Toungoo
KARENS Protected
Prome
BAY
OF
BENGAL
SIAM
Pegu
Bassein
Rangoon
Moulmein
TENASSERIM
Annexation
1826
1852
1886
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200
MILES
BRITAIN AND BURMA
1826 – 1886

to Rangoon to demand, not only compensation, but the prosecution of the offending governor. The effect was immediate. The Burmese government agreed to pay, *and* recalled the governor.

Unfortunately, the governor of Rangoon's successor was virulently anti-British. When he arrived to take up his post, he brought with him troop reinforcements with which he hoped to overawe them. An official delegation sent by the British commodore was subjected to insults. Lambert's immediate response was to blockade the port and take reprisals on Burmese ships. The governor ordered his shore batteries to fire on the British warships. The British silenced the batteries. Finally, after destroying every ship he could find, Lambert sailed for Calcutta. Although Dalhousie, in his private correspondence, said that Lambert had exceeded his instructions, he had no intention of disowning him. The British prepared for war—though they still hoped to settle matters by negotiation.

An expeditionary force was sent to Rangoon with an ultimatum. This demanded compensation, not only for the fine originally paid by the accused captains, but also for the costs of the expedition which carried the ultimatum. There was a time limit, which expired on 1 April 1852. A few days later, Britain took Rangoon and Martaban. The original intention had been to seize these two towns and also Bassein, in the hope that the Burmese government would be forced to negotiate. But the onset of the monsoon halted further operations, and there was still no response from the Burmese. In July 1852, Dalhousie himself visited Rangoon for consultations with the local commanders. The general (Godwin), with the support of local British opinion, wanted to advance to the Burmese capital, but the governor-general's objective was less extravagant. Dalhousie proposed that the British should merely annex an area large enough to give protection to the three ports they now occupied. His proposal was agreed to by the home government. By the time the government's sanction actually arrived (November 1852), Godwin had occupied Prome. In a very short time, he held the whole province of Pegu, and on 20 December 1852 it was formally annexed. The Court of Directors in London had insisted that this should only be done after a treaty had been signed with the Burmese, but Dalhousie was convinced that no such treaty would ever be signed. He was right.

In 1853, a palace revolution put a new king, Mindon Min, on the

throne of Burma. A more tolerant attitude emerged at the court of Ava, and Mindon soon despatched two emissaries (Italian Catholic priests) to inform the British commander that he proposed sending a peace mission. The priests found the British, not—as they had expected—at Prome, but fifty miles further north, at Myédé which, in view of the silence from the Burmese court, they had meanwhile decided to annex.

The new king did not believe that the British intended to continue in occupation of Lower Burma, and when his peace delegation arrived it pleaded for the return of the territory. Mindon, it quite rightly insisted, was of a very different character from his predecessors, and wanted only friendly relations with the British. But Dalhousie's offer to return the area between Prome and Myédé was, understandably, not enough and Mindon refused to sign a treaty. In May 1853, the British fixed the border of their province of Lower Burma at Myédé. Though Mindon refused to re-open hostilities, the British met with continued resistance in their newly annexed territory, and it took them three years to establish a peaceful administration. The possibility of renewed war with Burma persisted until 1854, when Burmese troops began to withdraw from the border areas.

The peaceful relations which follow were partly a product of Mindon's character and partly of the character of the British representatives who were sent to his court. Though the British would not give up Pegu, a Burmese mission visited Calcutta, was courteously received, and returned home suitably impressed. A British mission, paying a return visit in 1855, was equally well received, but it failed to persuade Mindon to sign a treaty. Nevertheless, in practice at least, a treaty existed, and Mindon refrained from attacking the British when they were occupied with the Mutiny of 1857 in India.

The pattern of British rule in Lower Burma changed over the years. In 1828, Arakan—which, with Tenasserim, had been placed in 1826 under the direct control of the government of India—was transferred to the provincial government of Bengal. Tenasserim, which had been administered under a Mixed System (in which Burmese administrative procedures were retained), was also transferred to Bengal in 1834. When Pegu was first annexed, the British based its administration on that of Tenasserim, but, since the British officials appointed to the administration knew little or no Burmese,

the system gradually developed into a copy of that used in British India. In 1862, the province was renamed 'British Burma' and the administration was centralised—though, in practice, indirect rule through Burmese officials at village level continued.

Relations with Mindon remained friendly and in 1861 the British administrator of Lower Burma, Colonel Phayre, visited Mandalay—the new capital built by Mindon four years earlier—to negotiate a commercial treaty. The aim of Colonel Phayre's mission was to obtain transit rights across Mindon's kingdom. Britain was anxious to open trade with western China and hoped to use the route from Bhamo into Yunnan. Attempts had already been made to find another suitable route, and a certain Captain McLeod had actually reached China in 1837 by way of the Salween river. But the development of the port of Rangoon on the Irrawaddy river emphasised the virtues of the Bhamo–Yunnan route over that of the Salween (whose port was Moulmein). Although, in 1860, the Manchester Chamber of Commerce had pressed the British government to open the Moulmein–Yunnan route to trade in cottons—for which there was thought to be a large potential market in western China—official opinion now favoured the route via Bhamo.

The Phayre mission succeeded in its task, and a commercial treaty was concluded. Britain undertook to abolish customs duties at her border with Mindon's kingdom; Mindon gave British traders freedom to operate along the Irrawaddy in Upper Burma; Britain allowed reciprocal privileges to Burmese traders on that part of the river which ran through British territory in the south; and a British Agent was permitted to reside at Mandalay, to help control trade and to settle disputes on the spot. The first Agent, Clement Williams, arrived in 1862. Williams was able to make a survey of the upper part of the Irrawaddy and—though he himself was not able to proceed further than Bhamo—he felt justified in assuring the government that the route from that town *was* practicable. He recommended the route not only to the government of India but also to his merchant acquaintances and their friends in Britain.

The way, however, was still impeded, partly by lack of topographical information, and partly by Burma's unwillingness to break the royal monopoly of internal trade by implementing the agreement to allow British merchants to operate in Upper Burma. Furthermore, Mindon's own position was menaced by intrigue and insurrection.

In 1866, an attempt to overthrow him almost succeeded; indeed, the situation was so serious that the British Agent, on the king's own advice, evacuated Europeans to Rangoon by river steamer. Insecurity persisted after the king had reasserted his authority, and Mindon used it as an excuse for refusing to sign a new commercial treaty later in the year.

In 1867, however, a new treaty was concluded. The king agreed to give up his trading monopolies—except those in rubies, oil, and timber—and to reduce customs duties to a flat five per cent. Extra-territorial rights were granted to the British Agent in respect of disputes between British subjects, and a Mixed Court was authorised for proceedings between British and Burmese. Mindon also agreed to the appointment of a British Agent at Bhamo, permitted Britain to explore the Bhamo–Yunnan route, and allowed British steamers to navigate the upper reaches of the Irrawaddy river—though these last three concessions were not specified in the commercial treaty. The third of them reflects the growing competition between Britain, France, and the United States for the China trade. France and Britain were in direct competition for the western Chinese market, and the French were already exploring the possibility of a route to Yunnan along the Mekong river (see page 60).

Attempts to explore the Bhamo route continued. A rebellion in Yunnan prevented one British expedition from reaching Kunming, the capital, but both officials and merchants firmly believed that the route was practicable. Some even advocated that a railway should be built from Burma to Shanghai. But, although merchant interests were anxious that Britain should establish control over Upper Burma, the government of India was not in an expansionist mood. The viceroy, Lord Lawrence, was content to keep things as they were, primarily in the interests of Indian finance. It also turned out that trade along the upper reaches of the Irrawaddy was not particularly profitable. However, even this did not destroy the dream of a great supply route into China, humming with British trade. In 1874, the British government—in response to a petition from British Chambers of Commerce—ordered a survey of possible routes. As the government of India still leaned towards the one via Bhamo, an expedition was planned to survey the route between there and Shanghai. In July 1875 there arrived in Bhamo a certain Captain Margery, who had come from Shanghai. A few months later, he set

off again on the return journey, as an advance party of the main expedition. On 21 February 1876, Margery was attacked and murdered by Chinese tribesmen who had heard that a railway was to be built into China. The main expedition returned to Bhamo, and the whole affair was abandoned. So, for the time being, was the hope of opening a trade route or of building a railway; the British investigators sent to enquire into the murder of Captain Margery reported that the terrain was unsuitable.

Mindon, aware of the pressure being put on the British government by powerful mercantile interests, tried to create a counterbalance by negotiating with other European countries and, in particular, with France (see page 103) which was uneasy at the attitude of British business circles towards Burma. The British, not surprisingly, looked with disfavour on Mindon's activities in this direction, and there were other areas of friction, too. One of these emerged when a mission under the leadership of Sir Douglas Forsyth arrived in Mandalay in 1875.

The mission was concerned with the status of the Red Karens, a hill tribe inhabiting western Karenni. These tribals were slave traders, and their incursions into Burmese territory in search of merchandise had been a constant source of trouble to the Burmese. In 1873, Mindon sent troops into the area. The British objected. Mindon then claimed suzerainty over the tribes. Ultimately, Forsyth was sent to negotiate a settlement which would guarantee the independence of the Red Karens. In this, he was successful. But when he returned home, Forsyth complained that he had had to take his shoes off and squat on the floor during audiences with the king. This aspect of Burmese court etiquette—a highly simplified version specially designed for Europeans—had caused no particular comment before the Forsyth mission. But the golden age of imperialism was just beginning, and the question of the envoy's shoes became a matter of high politics. It appeared to strike at the superiority of the white man. The government of India instructed the British Resident at Mandalay not to take his shoes off in future. The king refused to receive the Resident unless he did. All the British succeeded in doing was to cut off their representative from direct contact with the only person in Burma who mattered.

Mindon's rule lasted for twenty-five years, and towards the end the question of his successor loomed large. In Burma, there was no

natural right to the succession. Burmese kings nominated their own heirs, and not necessarily their eldest sons. The most popular candidate for the succession to Mindon, fearing assassination, fled to the British Residency for protection and was sent, with his brother, to Calcutta. Mindon himself attempted to nominate three princes as joint rulers, but could not succeed in imposing this solution. When he died in 1878, he had failed to ensure the succession. The Thibaw prince was therefore placed on the throne by a clique of palace officials who were under the impression that he would be merely their puppet. He might well have been so, if he had not—on their advice—married Supayalat as his principal wife. She, a dominating personality, persuaded the weak Thibaw to have eighty members of the royal family murdered (February 1879) on the pretext that they were planning a rebellion. The British Resident protested and threatened to withdraw, but this *démarche* had little effect as the Resident had no personal contact with the king. Supayalat now proceeded to take over control of the government.

The viceroy of India, Lord Lytton, advised the home government to intervene, but the British were too much involved in Afghanistan and Africa. British troops were not available in the numbers it was believed would be necessary to occupy the country. In 1879, after Britain's Resident in Kabul, the Afghan capital, had been murdered, the Residency staff at Mandalay was withdrawn in case the Burmese should elect to follow the Afghans' example. The court at Ava now began to fear the possible consequences of the British withdrawal, and a Burmese ambassador set off with letters and presents for the viceroy. He and his suite, however, were halted at the border of British Burma, and, when it was discovered that they carried no proposals for an acceptable settlement, they were turned back. Contact between the British and the Burmese was now completely broken.

In 1882, the possibility arose of a settlement of Burmese frontier claims against the Indian state of Manipur, and it seemed that friendly relations might be re-established. But the Burmese envoy was recalled from Calcutta before agreement could be reached, and Burmese troops began to threaten Manipur itself. Britain sent reinforcements to the aid of the raja, and the Burmese immediately retired.

The internal situation in Upper Burma rapidly deteriorated. Feudatory states rebelled, and Chinese guerrillas attacked and burned Bhamo. In 1884, a rebellion was planned which received

some support from the British High Commissioner in Rangoon. He advocated British intervention on behalf of one of the princes then living in exile in the French Indian possession of Pondicherry, but the government of India was not interested and, in any case, the prince died in 1885. Rumours of the intended rebellion produced, in Mandalay, a spate of executions of potential supporters. The British and Chinese business communities in Rangoon demanded intervention, but they were ignored by the government of India.

In the meanwhile, Thibaw had begun to flirt with the French (see page 103). A treaty was agreed on, and Thibaw received a rather vague promise of French military aid, but the French government repudiated both when it became clear that Britain would not tolerate them. Unfortunately for Thibaw, he had already—in the belief that the French would support him if necessary—begun a move against British interests in Burma. Urged on by French commercial interests, he had decided to attack the major British trading organisation in Upper Burma. This, the Bombay Burmah Trading Corporation, held the concession for extraction of teak from the forests north of Toungoo, part of which were in Upper Burma. The corporation was accused of extracting more teak than it had paid for, of bribing Burmese officials, and of failing to pay Burmese foresters the amounts due to them. Without delay and without examining the evidence, the corporation was found guilty of defrauding the king of the equivalent of £73,333, and the foresters of £33,333. The corporation was ordered to pay twice the first sum to the king, and the second to the foresters. In default, its timber and property would be seized. This decision was published in August 1885.

An appeal for arbitration was rejected by the court of Ava in October. As the war department in Calcutta had, for some years, had a plan ready for the invasion of Upper Burma, the viceroy felt able to issue an ultimatum on 30 October. It was to expire on 10 November. Thibaw was caught unawares. In his reply, he refused to re-open the case, but said that a British envoy would be received at Mandalay 'as in former times'. Another part of the ultimatum had demanded that he place the conduct of his external affairs under the control of the government of India. In response to this, he stated that 'friendly relations with France, Italy, and other States have been, are being, and will be maintained'.

For the British—threatened, as they believed, by French expan-

sion in Indo-China—there was no alternative but to act. On 14 November, British troops crossed the frontier, and a fortnight later, after an almost bloodless campaign, occupied Mandalay and took Thibaw prisoner. The British would have preferred to set up a protectorate, but the only suitable candidates were dead—either murdered by Thibaw or having died in exile. On 1 January 1886, Upper Burma was finally annexed and in the following month became a province of British India. The abolition of the monarchy produced a reaction throughout Burma, even in those parts previously administered by the British. The pacification of the country took five years of heavy fighting and the employment of 32,000 troops and 8,500 military police.

The Indian administrative model was applied to the whole of Burma. This was a mistake, for Burmese customs and traditions were totally different from those of India, but the fact was not officially recognised until 1937. Burma was thereafter separated from India.

Malaya

Britain's interest in Malaya in 1850 was mainly related to the maintenance of the port of Singapore, but in view of the growing importance of Singapore and the beginnings of European rivalry in South-east Asia, a British forward movement into the native states of the Malayan mainland was inevitable. The main stumbling-block was Siam, which claimed suzerainty over a number of the states and interfered in the internal affairs of others. In 1858 a civil war broke out in Pahang state, and exiles solicited aid from the Siamese. Soon, there were indications that the Siamese intended to place their own nominee on the throne of Pahang, as well as in the similarly disturbed states of Trengganu. Under pressure from the Singapore Chamber of Commerce, the British governor of the Straits Settlements, Colonel Cavanagh, sent a warship to Trengganu (July 1862) which delivered an ultimatum demanding that the person of the claimant be given up. This was refused, and the warship then shelled the fort. But the claimant fled inland and the expedition was rendered powerless. In March 1863, however, the Siamese—protesting, meanwhile, against the British action—withdrew their protégé. They continued to claim Trengganu but made no further attempt to take over the state.

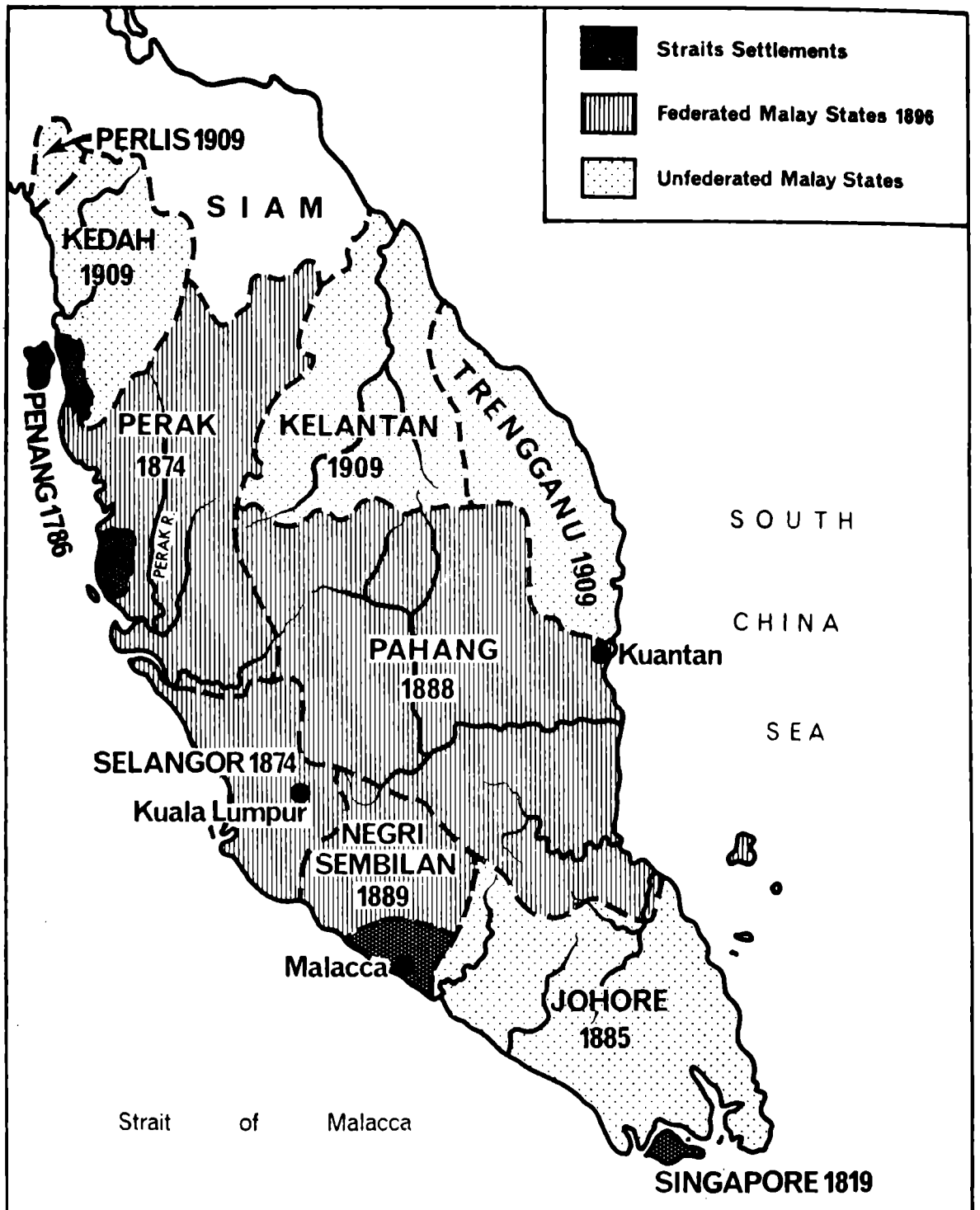
Cavanagh's action, and his other interventions in the affairs of the

Malay states, caused a stir in Britain and he was ordered to abstain from further interference. But great pressure was building up in Britain to transfer the administration of the Straits Settlements from the India Office (where it had been since its foundation) to the Colonial Office, in the hope that more attention would be paid to British interests in Singapore and Malaya. It was certainly true that the government of India had neglected Malaya. British trading and financial interests resented it—for one thing, Singapore was becoming a base for commercial expansion in eastern Asia and, with the growing power of the Dutch in Indonesia and French attempts to create an empire in Indo-China, an aggressive policy was needed if Singapore was to survive and prosper. In 1867, therefore, responsibility for the Straits Settlements was transferred to the Colonial Office.

The change made very little difference at first. Indeed, the policy of non-interference with the Malay states was carried out even more rigidly than before, in spite of growing insecurity and disorder there. The British government was not willing to occupy more territory in the area. But by 1873 this attitude had changed.

Several factors helped to bring this change about. The most important were the growth of trade between the Straits Settlements and the Malay states, and the intensification of international rivalries. In the 1850s and '60s, new areas of investment in planting and tin-mining had been opened up, mainly by Chinese entrepreneurs. Both European and Chinese capital was invested in these enterprises, and the Malay rulers were also involved. Most of the labour employed was Chinese, and the allegiance of the labourers in the states of Perak, Selangor, and Negri Sembilan was disputed by two rival secret societies. The widespread lawlessness which resulted, as well as endemic piracy which made Malayan waters unsafe for commerce, reinforced the merchants' demand for British intervention. But the most decisive factor was the certainty that, if Britain did not intervene, some other European power would do so. As late as 1871, however, the British secretary of state for the colonies still felt able to inform the Singapore Chamber of Commerce that the government would not interfere in the affairs of the Malay states except to suppress piracy or repel aggression against British territory. At the time, Britain was in fact too weak in Malaya to interfere with any chance of success.

A new government in Britain, however, decided upon a new



BRITISH PENETRATION OF MALAYA 1874 – 1909

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policy. In September 1873, the newly appointed governor of the Straits Settlements, General Sir Andrew Clarke, was instructed to use his influence with the native princes to bring about peaceful conditions in their states, to find out at the same time what conditions were actually like in each of the states, and to report whether in his opinion 'any steps can properly be taken by the Colonial Government to promote the restoration of peace and order, and to secure protection to trade and commerce'. The secretary of state also suggested that it might be necessary to appoint a British official to reside in the states. It was implied, in fact, that a sort of veiled suzerainty might be assumed.

Clarke interpreted the instructions as giving him authority to take a positive line, and an opportunity presented itself in the state of Perak, where there was a dispute over the succession. The new order in Malaya can be said to have begun in 1874, when the governor made his own nominee—who was also the legitimate claimant—the Sultan of Perak. This was confirmed by the Pangkor Engagement, which provided that the British would help to maintain order and protect the sultan. Clause 6, the most important and far-reaching in its consequences, laid down that 'the sultan receive, and provide a suitable residence for, a British official, to be called a Resident, who shall be accredited to his court and whose advice must be asked and acted upon in all questions other than those touching Malay religion and custom'. Clause 10 rounded off the description of the Resident's position in the state: 'The collection and control of all revenues and the general administration of the country are to be regulated under the advice of these Residents.' Clarke also mediated between the Chinese factions in the state and produced an agreement by which the rival secret societies undertook, under threat of a financial penalty, to destroy their stockades and weapons, give up their boats, and guarantee to keep the peace.

Clarke next turned his attention to the state of Selangor, and in February 1874 an agreement was made by which the sultan accepted a British Resident in the state. Negri Sembilan presented certain problems, as it was in fact a federation and there were rivalries amongst the parts making up the state. Civil war in Sungei Ujong was suppressed with some difficulty by a British force, and by the end of 1874 British advisers were established there as well as in Larut, Lower Perak, Klang, and Langut.

The new governor of the Straits Settlements, Sir William Jervois, who succeeded Clarke in May 1875, wanted to abandon the Residency system and rule the states directly through 'Queen's Commissioners', and there was a struggle between him and the secretary of state over the functioning of the system. Jervois was also somewhat impatient with traditional abuses, and his views encouraged the first Resident of Perak—who was himself something of an idealist—to act impetuously. The Resident was murdered in November 1875, and a rising followed which was suppressed without much difficulty. The danger of a general rebellion, however, led to a large number of troops being brought in from India and Hong Kong.

The Residency system was given a new lease of life on the insistence of the secretary of state, who rightly maintained that any attempt at direct rule by the British would certainly result in violent opposition. The working of the Residency system depended entirely on the character of the men appointed. Most of them were persons of tact and intelligence, and many reforms were undertaken by the states' rulers on their advice. Gradually, the system established itself, and the British were able to set about expanding communications in order to assist the development of the economy. European investment was encouraged, and railways and roads opened up the country.

By 1895, all the principal Malay states were operating under the Residency system. Problems there had been. The difficulties of communication with Singapore left Residents very much to themselves, and though from 1876 to 1882 the governor of the Straits Settlements had a secretary for Malay affairs the appointment was discontinued because no one with sufficient knowledge of the states and their problems could be found to fill it. This was all very well while the economic development of the peninsula was in the hands of Chinese capitalists, but the influx of European capital made it necessary for some central authority to coordinate the administration of the states. As a result, the Federated Malay States were inaugurated in July 1896.

The Federation Agreement protected the sultans and increased their income, while giving the British complete administrative control. At the same time, the appearance of sovereignty was left to the Malay rulers, thus giving the British a convenient escape device by which they could ignore problems relating to the peculiar posi-

tion of the Chinese both as capitalists and labourers. As a result of the new order, the population increased and revenue grew from eight and a half million dollars in 1895 to twenty-four millions in 1905. Railways and roads were built, and post offices and banks spread over the country. The rate of progress was formidable, and without parallel in the history of British overseas administration.

In 1909 a Federal Council was formed at the desire of the sultans, so that they might have some representation in their own government. The council, however, functioned merely as an agency of the British High Commissioner, and the sultans had no legislative functions whatsoever. There were sound reasons for this. The first ten years of the twentieth century saw an economic revolution in Malaya which hurled her into an industrial maelstrom. The concomitants of this new development—health, education, techniques—could not be dealt with by the sultans, bogged down in their mediaeval attitudes and lack of expertise. Vast amounts of foreign capital flooded into the tin mines and rubber estates of Malaya. By 1900, Malaya was producing half the world's total output of tin. Rubber, first planted in 1877, was slow to compete with the Brazilian product, but the rubber boom of 1910–12 resulted in such an expansion of acreage and technical efficiency that by 1914 Malayan rubber could be delivered in New York at a lower price than rubber from South America.

In 1909 the four states of Kedah, Perlis, Kelantan, and Trengganu came under British control, under the terms of the Anglo-Siamese treaty of that year, but all refused to join the Federation. Johore, although in treaty relationship with Britain since 1885, was also outside it, and did not accept a British adviser until 1914.

By the outbreak of the First World War, the political structure that was to last until the Japanese invasion twenty-nine years later had been established. It consisted of three distinct systems—the Straits Settlements, a British colony directly controlled; the Federated Malay States, administered behind the front of sovereign native rulers; and the Unfederated States, in which the British adviser (not Resident) interfered as little as possible.

North Borneo

British possessions in Borneo after 1850 at first consisted only of the independent state of Sarawak and the colony of Labuan, but by 1878

two merchants—the brothers Alfred and Edward Dent—had obtained from the Sultan of Brunei territorial rights in North Borneo, subject to the payment of annual sums to the sultan. Then came the British North Borneo Company, which received a charter from the British government in November 1881. The charter included provisions that the company must always be British, that its foreign relations were to be handled by the British government, that it must carry out certain reforms including the abolition of slavery, that ports in the territory it controlled must give free facilities to the Royal Navy, and that its chief local officer should be appointed only with the approval of the British government. The company did not pay its shareholders particularly handsome dividends, but its actual administration of the territories it controlled was reasonably efficient.

The granting of such a charter resulted in protests from a number of countries, principally Holland and Spain. The Dutch were appeased by a statement that the British government would not assume sovereign rights in Borneo, and in 1885 Spain gave up her claims to a portion of North Borneo in return for Britain's recognition of the Spanish presence in the Philippines. In 1888, North Borneo, Sarawak, and Brunei were made British protectorates—mainly to discourage any designs on the area by France and Germany, who were both looking for territory in South-east Asia. Up to 1902, the North Borneo Company continued to acquire small pockets of territory. Until 1946, North Borneo remained divided into the state of Sarawak, the territories of the chartered company, and the protected state of Brunei to which a British Resident was formally appointed in 1906.

5 *France*

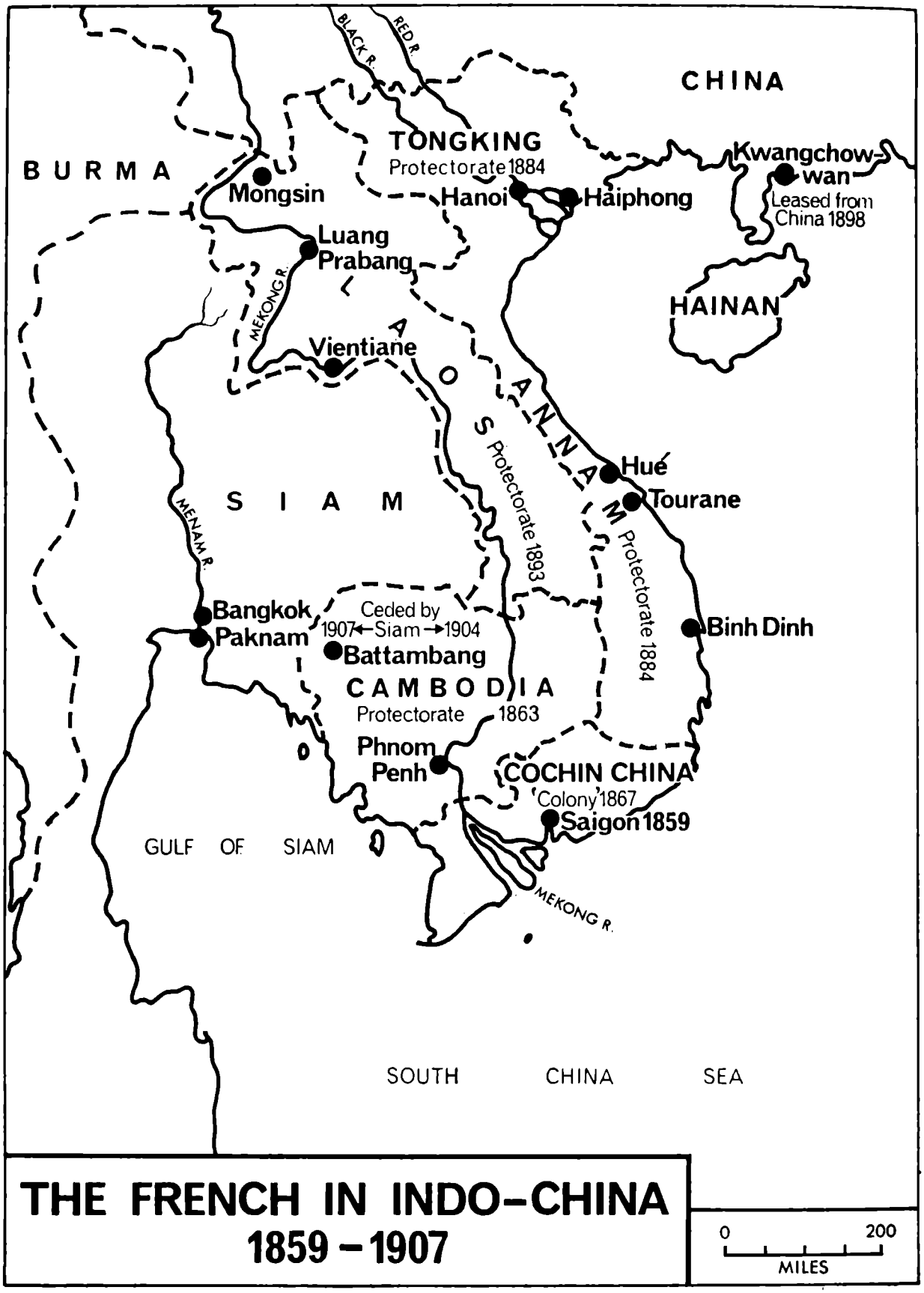
The French, having no trade to protect or expand in South-east Asia, chose to protect Christian missionaries instead. In Vietnam, in 1851–52, the Emperor Tu-Duc's oppression of native Christian communities was intensified, and two French priests were executed. France protested, Tu-Duc rejected the protest, and the French bombarded the fortifications at Tourane (Da Nang). This, however, did not deter Tu-Duc. In 1857, the Spanish bishop of Tongking was also put to death. This inspired Spain to offer France a base in the

Philippines for the strong naval squadron she already deployed in Chinese waters.

France, anxious for empire and glory, seized enthusiastically at the excuse to interfere in Vietnamese affairs. In 1857, a French envoy was sent to the Vietnamese capital of Hué to present three demands. These were for religious liberty for Christians; the establishment of a French commercial agency at Hué; and permission for the appointment of a French consul at the same town. These terms, as the French had hoped and expected, were refused. Freed from other commitments by the Anglo-French occupation of Canton in 1858 and the conclusion of the Treaty of Tientsin, a Franco-Spanish naval force arrived off Tourane in August of the same year. They destroyed the forts there by shellfire and then landed a small force. Unfortunately, Tourane had been stripped of everything of value by the departing Vietnamese, and the force was too small to attempt an attack upon Hué. The French admiral decided that more profit could be obtained elsewhere. He therefore proposed seizing the port of Saigon, the centre of the great rice-growing area of the Mekong delta, and did so without much effort in February 1859. The re-opening of hostilities in China, however (see page 120), delayed further activity until 1861.

In the meantime (November 1859), a new French commander, Admiral Page, had been instructed to open negotiations with Tu-Duc. This time, France increased her demands to include the appointment of consuls in the three parts of Vietnam and a *chargé d'affaires* at Hué. Tu-Duc procrastinated, and Page destroyed some more forts at Tourane before continuing on his way to China to reinforce the French forces there.

The small combined French and Spanish garrison at Saigon, consisting of 1,000 men, soon found itself besieged by about 12,000 Vietnamese. It held out for nearly a year (March 1860–February 1861) until, with the end of the war in China in January 1861, a strong naval force and 3,000 men under Admiral Charner were sent to relieve it. On 25 February, Charner defeated the besiegers at the battle of Chi-hoa and followed up his success by occupying part of the provinces of Bien-hoa and Go-cong. Charner's successor, Admiral Bonnard (1 November 1861), within a few months of taking over, was in control of the whole of lower Cochin China, Pulo Condore, and all the islands at the mouths of the Mekong river.


CHINA
BLACK R.
RED R.
TONGKING
Protectorate 1884
BURMA
Mongsin
Hanoi
Haiphong
Kwangchow-wan
Leased from China 1898
Luang Prabang
MEKONG R.
HAINAN
Vientiane
LAOS
ANNAM
Protectorate 1893
Protectorate 1884
Hué
Tourane
SIAM
MENAM R.
Bangkok
Paknam
Ceded by 1907←Siam→1904
Battambang
Binh Dinh
CAMBODIA
Protectorate 1863
Phnom Penh
COCHIN CHINA
Colony 1867
Saigon 1859
GULF OF SIAM
MEKONG R.
SOUTH CHINA SEA
THE FRENCH IN INDO-CHINA
1859 – 1907
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Tu-Duc's response to these catastrophes was to send two envoys to the French in May 1862, who explained that the emperor was being pressed by an insurrection in Tongking and wanted to settle matters in the south. Within a month, a draft treaty was signed at Saigon by which Tu-Duc ceded the three eastern provinces of Cochin China to France, and agreed to pay a large indemnity by instalments over the next ten years. He also promised toleration to the Catholic minority in his own territories, and that he would open the ports of Tourane, Balat, and Kuang-an to French trade. Unfortunately, French ratification of the treaty was delayed, as the ship carrying the negotiators back to France was held up by storms. In the meantime, during December 1862 a series of rebellions took place in the new French possession, as a result of the replacement by Vietnamese of the French officials who had been supervising the administration in each of the three provinces! When the treaty finally arrived in Hué with French ratification, Tu-Duc refused to add his, and only gave in after Bonnard had threatened to send French aid to the rebels in Tongking.

The French position in Cochin China was becoming perilous in 1863. Not only was the area riven by rebel activity, but the government in Paris also seemed to be losing enthusiasm for colonial expansion in Indo-China. Tu-Duc had sent an emissary to Paris offering a larger indemnity than agreed, if the French would return the ceded provinces, and the French emperor, Napoleon III—doubting whether he could put into practice his plans to place a nominee on the throne of Mexico *and* indulge in a colonial war in Asia at the same time—hesitated. But he was won over both by the French minister of marine's threat to resign if Cochin China was given up, and by a feeling of irritation at Tu-Duc's attempt to wriggle out of his agreement.

While the French were re-establishing order in the three provinces, affairs in Cambodia gave them an opportunity to extend their influence in that kingdom which, in the past, had with difficulty maintained her independence from her neighbours, Siam and Vietnam, by paying tribute to both. In 1861, the youngest brother of King Norodom rebelled against him and forced him to flee the country. Norodom went to Bangkok hoping to gain Siamese military support. The rebels, however, were suppressed by Norodom's second brother with the inadvertent aid of a French gunboat which

had been sent to Phnom Penh to protect French missionaries. The rebels took its presence to mean that Norodom now had French support. The French had, in fact, as early as March 1861, offered Norodom help to preserve his independence, but he had refused it on the grounds that he owed his throne to the goodwill of Siam which—through its Resident in Phnom Penh—exercised considerable control over the Cambodian administration. In March 1862, Norodom was able to re-enter his capital, Oudong, without the aid of Siamese troops.

In September 1862, Admiral Bonnard tried to convince Norodom that France, as the conqueror of Cochin China, should be paid the tribute normally sent to Hué. In the following year, Bonnard sent a French naval lieutenant to be Resident at Oudong, instructing him to make a survey of the country. The Resident reported that Norodom was totally under the control of the Siamese representative. Bonnard's successor, Admiral Lagrandière, paid a visit to Norodom in July 1863, hoping to persuade him—before the Siamese had had time to strengthen their position in the country—to accept French protection. Norodom, still insecure on his throne, was reluctant to give up his former relations with Siam and Vietnam in case the French should decide not to keep Cochin China after all, but Lagrandière convinced him that the French were there to stay. Finally, he persuaded Norodom to accept French protection.

Cambodia's submission to France resulted in a certain amount of diplomatic activity which caused Napoleon III to hesitate before ratifying the treaty. Britain supported Siam's objection that Cambodia was a vassal state and could not carry on negotiations without the approval of the Siamese. The Siamese Resident in Oudong forced Norodom to sign a document reaffirming his vassal status and admitting that he only held Cambodia as viceroy for the King of Siam. Furthermore, although Norodom had succeeded in 1860, he had not yet been crowned; the King of Siam announced that he would himself attend the coronation. The French maintained that the presence of the King of Siam would amount to a restatement of Siamese claims over Cambodia—which was quite unacceptable. Siam then insisted that Norodom be crowned in Bangkok. As the Siamese were in possession of most of Norodom's regalia—which he had left in the security of Bangkok during his flight—they had at least a bargaining counter.

Norodom decided to leave for the Siamese capital. Without the regalia he could not in fact be crowned—and spiritual legitimacy was all-important to Eastern monarchs. Despite the French Resident's threat to occupy the Cambodian capital, the king set off for Bangkok. But, on 3 March 1864, French marines occupied the royal palace at Oudong and hoisted the French flag, and when Norodom hastily returned to his capital he was presented with a copy of the protection treaty duly ratified by the French emperor. Norodom had no alternative but to ratify the treaty, and he did so on 17 April 1864.

The French now put pressure on the King of Siam to return the Cambodian regalia. Siam agreed, with the proviso that Norodom should be crowned by officials representing both Siam and France. France accepted the Siamese condition and the ceremony took place in June 1864, but the French Resident—notwithstanding the agreement—refused to allow Siam's representative to place the crown on Norodom's head. The frustrated Siamese delegation departed, but not before it had repeated Siam's claim to suzerainty over Cambodia and the provinces of Battambang and Angkor. The dispute was not yet over. After his coronation, Norodom made a state visit to Saigon, but he was also determined to pay homage to the King of Siam. In April 1865, therefore, he went to Kampot, accompanied by the French Resident who had been unable to dissuade him. The King of Siam, however, did not appear at the rendezvous.

Negotiations between France and Siam over Siam's claim on Cambodia continued until, in 1867, a treaty was concluded in which Siam surrendered all her claims in return for a similar surrender of French claims in the provinces of Battambang and Angkor. Norodom was not consulted before the deal was arrived at, and, though he protested to both France and Siam, his protests were ignored.

Though the status of Cambodia had at last been established, the security of the country had not. In June 1866, a rebel (who had assumed the name of a Cambodian prince who died in infancy) defeated a royal army. He himself was later defeated and disappeared. Reappearing, he was again defeated by both Cambodian and French forces, whereupon he vanished once more. This performance went on for some months until, in December 1867, the rebel was finally caught and killed by the inhabitants of a town in which he had sought refuge.

Resistance to French rule still continued throughout the French provinces of Cochin China from armed bands based in the three provinces of western Cochin China. In June 1866, the French occupied these provinces against very little opposition. When they occupied the delta of the Mekong river, the French began to look to the possibilities of trade with western China just as Britain, who controlled the delta of the Irrawaddy, was doing (see pages 44 and 104).

The foundations for subsequent French expansion were laid by a young naval officer, Francis Garnier, who was not only driven to explore unknown territories, but was also inspired with a profound hatred for Britain. He believed that Britain was rotten. 'Strike her and she will fall', he said. He made it his mission to see that Britain was shaken so that, when the fall came, France would be able to pick up the largest pieces. In 1866, Garnier was sent with a surveying mission under Doudart de Lagrée—who had been French Resident in Oudong—to explore the upper reaches of the Mekong river. The expedition, after visiting Angkor, went upstream to Luang Prabang, whose king warned them not to try to enter the Chinese province of Yunnan because of a rebellion there. Under Garnier's persuasion, the expedition disregarded this advice and pushed on. After penetrating into Chinese territory, Doudart de Lagrée died, and when the expedition reached Talifu Chinese officials refused to allow it to go on. The expedition was forced to withdraw, but it had proved one important thing: the Mekong river was not suitable as a trading route to China. On its return, however, the expedition followed a different route, across Yunnan to Hankow. While in Yunnan, it had learned that there were waterways linking the province with the Red River in the Vietnamese northern province of Tongking. Garnier's dream of a trade route into China from French territory now changed ts geographical background from the Mekong to the Red River.

The expedition's discoveries were of interest to a French merchant at Hankow, Jean Dupuis. During 1868–69, Dupuis had been in Yunnan where he had obtained a contract to supply the Chinese army with weapons. In 1871, Dupuis set off southwards, reached the Red River and sailed down it to the sea. In the following year, he used the route—overcoming both the resistance of the officials in Tongking and the topography of the country—to deliver his

goods to the Chinese in Yunnan. He returned with copper and tin and an order from the Chinese for a cargo of salt. But in Hanoi the local officials who controlled the salt monopoly refused to sell any to Dupuis. The French merchant was not dismayed. With the aid of a number of armed men, he occupied the city and then sent off an appeal for support to the French government in Saigon. The Vietnamese also appealed to Saigon for Dupuis to be instructed to withdraw.

The situation in Tongking, however, was disturbed by more than Dupuis and his men. As a result of the suppression of the Taiping rebellion in China (1864), large numbers of fleeing rebel troops had crossed the border into Tongking. There, they terrorised the countryside. Tu-Duc, as a tributary of the Chinese emperor, appealed for help to his overlord, but the Chinese government troops sent from Canton to his aid went over to the rebels when they arrived in Tongking. These rebels were called 'Black Flags' by the French, after the banners they carried.

The French governor of Cochin China regarded the anarchy in Tongking as an excellent excuse for expanding French influence and seizing control of the potentially valuable Red River delta. He was given a free hand by the French government, although he was told not to intervene with armed force. The governor, however, chose to send Garnier—of whose opinions and ambitions he was well aware—with a small force of French and Cochin Chinese troops to negotiate with the authorities at Hanoi. Garnier arrived in Hanoi on 5 November 1873.

The local officials refused to talk, and Garnier issued a proclamation declaring the Red River open to trade. The officials prepared to attack Garnier's small force, but before they had a chance to do so, Garnier seized the citadel (on 20 November), enlarged his force with volunteers, seized five more strong points and, in effect, took over the administration of lower Tongking. Though the Emperor Tu-Duc at Hué was prepared to negotiate, the Tongkingese officials were not. Instead, they called the Black Flags to their aid. The Black Flags appeared before Hanoi in December 1873, and during a sortie against them Garnier was killed.

Garnier's death postponed French expansion in Tongking by ten years. He had been determined to construct a French empire in Indo-China, and hoped—by making it impossible for France to back

out of situations he had created—to force the French government to support him. The French government, however, had repudiated Garnier before the news of his death became known, and the governor of Cochin China had sent an envoy to negotiate a settlement with Tu-Duc and to order Garnier to cease his aggressive activities. The envoy, Philastre, arrived in Hanoi on 3 January 1874. His first act was to give up the strong points held by Garnier's men, and to expropriate the merchant Dupuis' vessels. Having thus, in effect, diminished French prestige, he went on to negotiate with Tu-Duc. The result was not as disadvantageous to the French as it might have been. Tu-Duc recognised the French presence in Cochin China, agreed to the appointment of a French Resident at Hué, and opened three ports—Hanoi, Tourane, and Qui-nhon—to trade. At these ports a consul and a small protective force were also to be permitted. A treaty of commerce gave France preferential rights over other countries and the right to appoint French officials to the Customs service. In return, Tu-Duc was released from payment of outstanding sums owed to the French under the original indemnity, and given technical advisers to reform his army. The French were determined that their interests were going to be paramount in Vietnam.

Once again, however, the French had misunderstood the effects of moderation. Tu-Duc assumed that the French withdrawal from the Tongking forts was a sign of weakness—which in fact it was. France was still suffering from the consequences of her defeat in the Franco-Prussian war of 1870–71. Garnier had consciously sought to destroy that humiliation in the vigour and glory of colonial expansion. The new government in Paris was sensitive to the demands of the former, and unconvinced of the value of the latter; it was also inclined to dismiss French pretensions in Asia as yet another product of the tinsel foreign policy of the Second Empire.

As soon as French troops had withdrawn from Tongking, Tu-Duc restarted his persecution of Christians. He harassed the new French consuls, and punished those who had in any way supported the French. He even tried to involve China by ostentatiously renewing his tributary relationship with Peking. Anarchy, however, still persisted in Tongking. Chinese refugees flooded not only Tongking but the Laos states, increasing banditry and lawlessness. Tu-Duc even went so far as to encourage the bandits in the hope that the

French might get entangled with the Chinese reinforcements he called to his aid in an endeavour to defeat them.

France had certainly been aware that, interfering in Vietnam, she might find herself in conflict with China, and she had made attempts in Peking to divert China's suspicions of her intentions. But when the British were actively engaged in exploring trade routes between Yunnan and Burma in 1875 (see page 44), France decided that, in order to forestall the British, she must assume control of the Red River which had been opened to her by the treaty of 1874 but had been unusable because of the disturbed state of Tongking. Diplomatic pressure in Peking produced a promise that Chinese troops would withdraw from Tongking, but China still insisted that Vietnam was a vassal state. The French, on the other hand, claimed that the treaty of 1874 had made Vietnam a French tributary—though in fact the treaty explicitly stated that Vietnam was an independent state. This clause, indeed, was the foundation of the treaty.

The Chinese reply to French claims was given in 1880. At the request of Tu-Duc, more Chinese troops were sent to Tongking. They succeeded in defeating the rebels, and the Chinese announced their action as aid to a vassal. In return, Tu-Duc sent an embassy to convey his gratitude to the Emperor of China. This went too far for the French. Europe was on the march in Asia and the faint-hearted would undoubtedly lose out in the scramble not only for colonial possessions but for national prestige. Status—perhaps national security *in Europe*—might well depend on that prestige. It was not even a European power that was threatening French ambitions, and in the climate of the ninth decade of the nineteenth century no European nation could conceivably accept a position inferior to China. In July 1881 the French parliament voted new funds for military operations in Tongking. The excuse, once again, was the safety of French nationals. Ostensibly, a French expedition was sent against a force of Black Flags in the Hanoi area. Instead, the French seized Hanoi itself in April 1882, though the French commander was killed when the Black Flags attacked the city.

The French government was now headed by Jules Ferry, one of the chief supporters of French expansionism. A strong military force was sent to the east. The commander's task was to bring both Tongking and Vietnam under French control. In August 1883, a French fleet moved up the Hué river and attacked the forts protect-

ing the capital, inflicting considerable loss of life on the defenders. A party from Hué, under a flag of truce, informed the French admiral that Tu-Duc had died the month before, that there had been a struggle for the throne, and that a new emperor, Hiep-Hoa, now ruled. A cease-fire was arranged and on 25 August a treaty was signed by Hiep-Hoa and the French envoy, Dr Harmand, by which Vietnam became a French protectorate. By the terms of the treaty, France took over Vietnam's foreign relations, French Residents were appointed to all the principal towns, with authority over local Vietnamese officials, and the forts at Hué as well as all others required for peace-keeping were to be handed over to the French. In return, France undertook to suppress disorder in Tongking and ensure the opening of the Red River to trade. The province of Binh-thuan, bordering Cochin China, was ceded to France, and Vietnam handed over all her warships and agreed to pay an indemnity secured upon the Customs revenue.

Not unnaturally, this precipitated the expected conflict with China. The history of the years 1883–85 is extremely confusing—for one thing, war and negotiation were concurrent. On the French side, there was a strong conflict of opinion between the French navy and the French foreign office. A large number of individuals, often with highly conflicting aims, conducted negotiations in Paris, Peking, Tientsin, and Shanghai. On both sides, bellicosity inhibited fruitful negotiation.

In Vietnam itself, China sent troops from Yunnan to bases at Son-tay and Bac-ninh. The French began an advance against Son-tay, but after capturing the town of Pallen they could go no further because the defenders had cut the dykes and flooded the countryside. Nevertheless, in December 1883 Son-tay was actually captured. The arrival of French reinforcements resulted in considerable areas being brought under French control by March 1884. In the same month, a new treaty was concluded in Hué, by which France assumed responsibility for the administration in Tongking, while areas ceded to France by the previous treaty, including Binh-thuan, were returned to Vietnam.

The French now found themselves at war with China because of their attack on Chinese troops at Son-tay and Bac-ninh. An attempt to bring about a settlement at Peking resulted in the signing of a draft convention in May 1884 by which, in return for the with-

drawal of Chinese troops from Tongking, France agreed to guarantee China's southern frontier. This satisfied neither side, for it left Chinese suzerainty in doubt and French ambitions frustrated. As China did not withdraw her troops from Tongking, a clash with French forces was only to be expected, and during one engagement the French were defeated at the town of Bac-le. Another French force, after heavy fighting, captured Lang-son from the Chinese in February 1885.

In the meantime, French naval forces had attacked Chinese military installations in northern Formosa and destroyed a Chinese fleet at Foochow on the Chinese mainland. Returning to Formosa, the ships captured the Kelung forts after several attacks in March 1885. A little later, the French admiral also occupied the Pescadores. Though weary of indecisive combat, neither side was able to win a major victory until, on 28 March 1885, Chinese forces attacked the French at Lang-son and heavily defeated them. The French, in panic, evacuated the town and fled, leaving behind them their guns and baggage.

The news of this defeat brought down the Jules Ferry cabinet. Negotiations to end the war were already in progress at Peking, and on 9 June 1885 the Treaty of Tientsin—the terms of which were almost identical with those of May 1884 (known as the Li-Fournier Convention, after the Chinese minister, Li Hung-chang, and the French envoy, Commandant Fournier)—was concluded. This agreement was certainly necessary to both sides. Though the French were not actually winning, the Chinese were losing. The Chinese army, though possessing the most up-to-date weapons, was badly led and worse trained. It was no match for the French, except by accident. There was also a distinct possibility that, if China tried to maintain Vietnam as a vassal state, she would lose some of her own territory. By agreeing to the treaty, China regained Formosa and the Pescadores.

During the crisis, the court of Hué had been the scene of a series of palace revolutions. In November 1883, Hiep-Hoa was assassinated. In July 1884, his successor was deposed. A year later, the new emperor was compelled to flee to Laos. The French finally placed their own candidate, Dong-Khanh, on the throne, appointed Residents in the provinces, and generally tightened their grasp on the country.

In Cambodia, the king was forced to transfer control of the government to the French Resident, and French officials, by the terms of an agreement signed in June 1884, were put in charge of the provincial administration. This provoked a rebellion by one of the royal princes which kept the French occupied from January 1885 until the prince surrendered in 1892. During the campaign, French forces were severely mauled and casualties were high.

While these events were taking place, Cochin China was also disturbed by the threat of invasion from the Vietnamese province of Binh-thuan and by a revolt in Saigon itself. French troops had been considerably depleted by the demands of Tongking and Cambodia, but the Saigon uprising was crushed. Binh-thuan and Phu-yen were pacified, in a particularly ruthless and bloody campaign in 1886, by a Vietnamese partisan loyal to the French. Tongking was not entirely pacified until 1895.

In 1887, the French reorganised their new empire into the *Union Indochinoise*. A civilian governor-general headed the administration, with a lieutenant-governor in Cochin China, a resident-general in Vietnam (Annam and Tongking), and another in Cambodia.

The final phase of French expansion in Indo-China—the establishment of a protectorate over the Laos states in 1893, and the occupation of two Cambodian provinces ceded by Siam in 1907—are dealt with in Chapter 3 (page 106 ff), as they can be more conveniently understood in terms of Anglo-French conflict over the position of Siam.

France's empire was conceived in violence, and violence never wholly disappeared from her possessions in Indo-China. But the stimulus—though not the final purpose—of the violence on the part of the Indo-Chinese changed over the years. Instead of stemming from a *traditionalist* desire to keep out the French it became *nationalist*, intent on getting rid of them. From 1907, colonial nationalism, fostered by increasing contact with the West, threatened French rule in Indo-China as it did other Western powers in their colonial possessions.

6 Russia

East Asia

Russian consolidation on the shores of the Pacific was greatly aided by the discovery in 1850, by a Lieutenant Orloff, of the mouth of the

Amur river. In the following year the Russians were able to establish two settlements some way up the river. In 1852, one of the Kurile islands, Urup, was occupied and so, in 1853, were Alexandrovsk on the western coast of Sakhalin, and a settlement on Castries Island. The exigencies of the Crimean war, which prevented Russia from victualling her Far Eastern outposts by the long sea route, probably inspired the governor of Eastern Siberia, Count Muravieff, to annex the Amur. The terms of the Treaty of Nerchinsk (1689)—by which Russia had recognised the Amur as Chinese territory—were disregarded, even though the Russian settlements on the Sea of Okhotsk and on the Sea of Tartary were on Chinese territory. Muravieff therefore equipped an expedition to sail down the Amur river to Shilinsk. The Chinese offered no opposition.

In the meanwhile, an Anglo-French naval force had appeared off the Russian settlement of Petropavlovsk in Kamchatka, in August 1854. It was unable to capture it, and when a larger force returned three months later, it was found that the town had been abandoned. The English and French, however, captured the island of Urup in the following year. After the end of the Crimean war in 1856, the Russians reoccupied their lost territory.

Muravieff, who had gone to St Petersburg in 1855, returned in 1857 with a free hand to do whatever he thought necessary. During the few months following his return, troops and supplies were sent down the Amur river. Count Putiatin, on his way to Japan (see page 144), followed the same route. The Russians now offered to support the Peking government against the Taiping rebels (see page 117), in return for the cession of Manchuria. Though this loaded offer was rejected, China in 1858 was in no real position to resist. By the Treaty of Aigun (May 1858) Russia gained the whole of Siberia without the loss of a single soldier or the payment of any money. In 1858, with Peking occupied by Anglo-French troops, the Russians were able to extract further concessions from a beleaguered Chinese government, including the whole of Manchuria's Maritime Province. The Russians now occupied all the sea coast north of Korea. Later in the year 1859, the town of Vladivostock was founded and the Russians began to think of a railway running from there to St Petersburg.

Russia had now reached the limits of eastward expansion, but unfortunately still did not possess an ice-free port. For this, she was

compelled to look south. It is here important to note that Russian expansion in the Far East was a reflex against restrictions placed on expansion elsewhere. The Crimean war had frustrated Russian ambitions in the Balkans. Because of this, activity in Central Asia and on the inner Asian frontiers of China was intensified. Unfortunately, though Russia had discovered the depth of Chinese weakness in relation to foreign penetration, Russia was a land empire, virtually without sea communications. The difficulties involved in moving troops and supplies across great distances and difficult terrain inhibited Russia from making a vigorous attack on China, and probably, as a result, annexing the whole of the northern portion of that country. At this period, Russian intercourse with China followed the caravan route from Kiakhta along the Gobi desert to Peking. Little exploration or survey work had been carried out in the northern areas, and no Russian explorer appears to have penetrated China south of Peking. Estimates of the material wealth of China were almost exclusively based upon that of the barren wastes and wild deserts of Mongolia and Manchuria. If the Russians had been reliably informed on the conditions in China proper, they would probably have made the attempt—and despite the difficulties, probably with success—to absorb at least the northern half into the Russian empire. Because of this ignorance, the Russian attitude towards China was reasonably friendly.

This happy relationship was, however, broken by events in Chinese Turkestan. In 1863, the Muslim population broke into revolt under one Yakub Beg. The defeat of the Manchu generals sent to restore order led to internal dissensions amongst the rebels, and anarchy throughout the province. The Russians, on whose borders a reign of terror now subsisted for nearly eight years, at last decided to take affairs into their own hands. The situation in Chinese Turkestan seriously affected Russian trade in that area, and, furthermore, unrest is no respecter of frontiers. Russian forces entered the district of Ili and defeated the rebels in 1871. After pacifying the area, Russia told China what she had done and that she was willing to restore to China the territory she had occupied, as soon as the Chinese were capable of maintaining their authority there. By 1879, the Chinese—assisted by the death of Yakub in 1877—had restored order in Kashgar and, marching on Ili, requested its return. The Russians ignored the request. The Chinese envoy

sent to St Petersburg negotiated a treaty by which Russia returned a portion of Ili in exchange for five million roubles and commercial privileges. The envoy, on his return to Peking, was repudiated and clapped in gaol under sentence of death. This upset the Russians so much that they sent a naval force to the China coast, and war was only averted by the intervention of the British ambassador in Peking. Despite the efforts of a war party at the Chinese court, a treaty was negotiated and the envoy released.

The treaty of 1881 called for the restoration of most of Ili to Chinese sovereignty, the payment by China of a rather larger indemnity (nine million roubles), and navigation rights on the rivers of Manchuria—the first step to the Russification of that country. Other provisions protected the rights of Russian farmers in the area retroceded, and gave new rights to Russian consuls and traders. Furthermore, Russian scientists and cartographers had surveyed the area fully, making any future occupation of Ili a much simpler task. The treaty, on the whole, was a most profitable transaction for Russia.

The occupation of Ili had demonstrated the overwhelming difficulties any attempt to reach the fertile plains of China would have to contend with. Mountain ranges, snow-covered table-lands, and sandy deserts, easy to annex but impossible to hold as bases, acted as a barbed-wire entanglement against the possibilities of expansion. Only two practicable routes lay before the Russians should they decide to attack China: the caravan trail from Kiakhta, which was quite impossible for heavy military traffic; and through Manchuria. Russian attention now turned towards the construction of military highways, the building up of lines of communication, the exploration of river systems, and the establishment of bases.

The routine was simple. One or two Russian traders would arrive in a small town. If they were not well received—their rights were guaranteed by treaty—a *sotnia* of Cossacks would appear to 'protect' them, and a military post would be established. The same process then continued southwards. All this, it must be remembered, was in Chinese territory. As in the case of the Europeans in southern Asia, the flag followed trade.

One result of events in Chinese Turkestan was the penetration of China by Russian geographers and intelligence agents who compiled a vast dossier of commercial and strategic information. The Russians

also began to map the coastline of Korea, where one day they hoped to achieve their ice-free port. In the meantime, the first sod of the Trans-Siberian Railway was cut in 1891. The 4,000 miles of track were finally completed in 1905. There was very little doubt that Russian ambitions in the south were soon to have the backing of adequate strategic communications. This fact was certainly recognised by the Japanese, and the Sino-Japanese war of 1894–95 (see page 126) was fought primarily to forestall future Russian expansion into Korea. Japan's forced renunciation of her territorial claims led to profit for Russia, for the increased indemnity payable by China to Japan had to be borrowed from foreign bankers. The Russians, in association with the French, made the first loan, and in exchange Russia acquired leases which included the town of Port Arthur on the Liaotung peninsula. The Franco-Russian effort to dominate China by the construction of railroads is reviewed in Chapter Three, Section 2 (page 129). This attempt was finally frustrated by the Japanese.

In 1901, Russia had tried to have her illegal occupation of the whole of Manchuria recognised by China. This was opposed by Great Britain and Japan, and in 1902 Russia agreed to withdraw her troops from Mukden and part of south Manchuria, to return the Eastern Railway to China within six months, to evacuate Mukden and Kirin altogether within the following six months, and to withdraw from Chinese territory within a third period of six months. These promises were not kept, and Russian troops and military installations were reinforced. In June 1903, the Japanese government suggested an agreement by which the contracting parties would respect the integrity of China and Korea, while recognising Japan's interests in Korea and Russia's in Manchuria. These proposals were rejected by Russia. In February 1904, Japan recalled her minister at St Petersburg and, three days later, attacked the Russian fleets at Chemulpo and Port Arthur, and landed troops at Chemulpo. Russia was defeated on land through a combination of Japan's command of sea communications and the total destruction of a Russian fleet which was intended to destroy these communications.

A peace treaty was signed between Japan and Russia at Portsmouth (USA) in September 1905. The terms were remarkably mild. No indemnity was claimed from Russia, and both sides agreed to withdraw their troops from Manchuria. Russia, however, gave up

to Japan her rights in the Liaotung peninsula and in the railways of south Manchuria, and recognised Japanese interests in Korea. The Russian drive towards domination of China was halted.

Central Asia

Russian expansion in Central Asia was untroubled by wider international implications, though her movement in the general direction of the frontiers of British India was to frighten the British into military action on their northern borders on at least two important occasions (see page 91 ff.).

The Russian non-aggression treaty with Khiva, concluded in 1842 after the submission of the ruler (see page 23), continued to be respected for the sole reason that Russia was expanding elsewhere. After the founding of Fort Peroffski (1853) on the ruins of the town of Ak Musjid in the Sir Darya, the Russians planned to cross the desert of Kyzil Kum to Tashkent and then go on to Samarkand and Bokhara. This plan was delayed by the outbreak of the Crimean war, though Russian strategic surveying continued. After the end of the Crimean war Russian eyes turned once again towards Turkestan. The ruler of Khokand attempted to stop Russian penetration of the Sir Darya in 1860 and was defeated. By the middle of the same year, Russian troops had captured Tashkent. They now proposed to occupy the khanate of Khokand. It was at this stage that news of Russian activity in Central Asia reached the outside world. Because of the interest it aroused in Europe—and particularly in Britain—the Russian chancellor, Prince Gortchakoff, issued a Note explaining Russian policy. The gravamen of his argument was that the existence of semi-savage tribes on the borders of a settled territory was a continuing menace to the peace of that territory. It was therefore necessary to impose peace on them, but unfortunately when that was achieved other tribes menaced the newly pacified areas. The process of civilising must, therefore, continue. In nineteenth-century terms this reasoning was impeccable, and it was a statement of imperial logic which was immediately recognised by Britain—who was following the same logic herself.

The Russians, having cleared the air, continued their 'civilising mission'. In December 1864, the Amir of Bokhara invaded Khokand, seized a Russian envoy and demanded the immediate conversion to Islam of all Russians in Khokand. But after meeting Russian

forces at Irdjar, the amir and his troops fled, leaving the road to Samarkand wide open. The new governor of Turkestan, General Kaufmann, in an endeavour to achieve his aims without bloodshed, offered a treaty to the amir. By its terms, Samarkand would be formally ceded to Russia. The amir found the treaty unacceptable, and once again attacked the Russians, only, for the second time, to be put to flight. Kaufmann then occupied Samarkand and, leaving a small force in the citadel, moved on in a final attempt to dispose of the amir once and for all. After his departure, the Russian garrison found itself besieged by over 20,000 men, but it managed to hold out until Kaufmann's victorious return. A treaty with Bokhara was finally signed in June 1868. The terms included an indemnity payable in gold; the cession of the valley of the Zerafsham, and the city of Samarkand, to Russia; free passage through Bokhara and protection whilst there for Russian subjects; and the right to trade. Kaufmann, in return, undertook not to 'occupy or molest' the city of Bokhara.

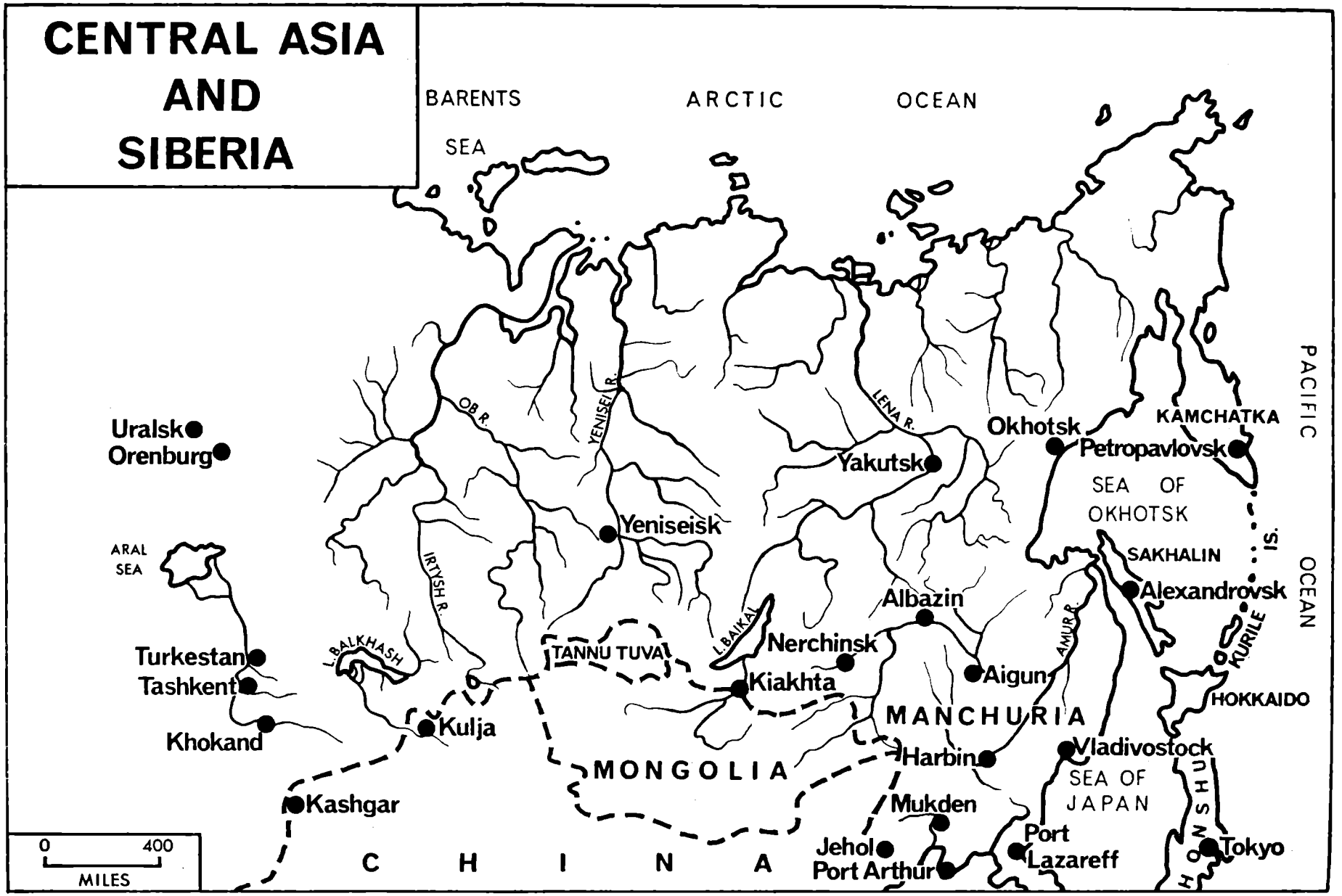
Success along the line of the Jaxartes turned Kaufmann's attention to the Russification of the whole of east Turkestan. In 1851, a treaty had been signed with China, the Treaty of Kulja, which legalised trade between the two countries, but, apart from caravan traffic between Jungaria and Semirachensk and the construction of factories at Tchugutchak and Kulja, the agreement had not been particularly productive. The existence of the treaty was kept a secret until 1861, in an attempt to conceal from England the objects of Russian expansion in Asia. The actual terms of the treaty were not disclosed until 1871. But Yakub Beg's rising in Kashgar in 1863, though it created the possibility of acquiring additional territory, demonstrated the difficulties of administering the turbulent tribes. Chinese Turkestan could wait. Kaufmann, therefore, turned to the west, where Khiva remained unsubdued and the upper Oxus still unoccupied. Geography and climate were still the real enemies. In the way of the Russian advance were the arid wastes of the Kara Kum and the frozen region of the Ust Urt plateau. In 1869, a strong fort was established at Krasnovodsk on the eastern shore of the Caspian Sea, and preparations were begun for another expedition against Khiva. But a rebellion of Kirghiz tridesmen and Cossacks of the Don threatened Uralsk and Orenburg, and was not suppressed until late 1870. Kashgar, also, again burst into rebellion. Yakub Beg was

rumoured to be conspiring with the rulers of Bokhara and Khiva to raise a holy war against the Russians. The order was given to march upon Khiva when news came of the abandonment of Ili by the Chinese. Under Russian pressure, the Muslim rebels evacuated Chinese territory as the Russians occupied it. The danger in eastern Turkestan was now over.

There still remained, however, the problems of Khiva and Bokhara. Russian agents incited the Turkomans to revolt against the Khan of Khiva and, while he was occupied with the rebellion, a Russian force—moving across the steppe from Krasnovodsk—was to attack the Khivan army. Again, climate, topography, and the guerilla tactics of the Khivans combined to repulse the Russian expedition. Kaufmann now determined to settle the Khivan problem once and for all. His plan was an attack with large and well-armed forces, divided into two prongs, one starting from the Caspian and the other from Tashkent.

In March 1872, a column commanded by General Kaufmann in person, and comprising some 5,500 men and eighteen guns, left Tashkent. Another of under 3,000 men commanded by Colonel Markossoff advanced from the Caspian, and a third, under General Vereffkin, of 2,000 infantry and six guns, moved down from Orenburg. The khan sent out emissaries to India and Persia, seeking aid, but without success. He then declared he would fight to the bitter end. The three columns, moving at between twenty-seven and thirty miles a day, pressed on despite intense cold. Kaufmann had given instructions to the other commanders that, should they reach the oasis of Khiva before him, they must wait before they attacked the city—the glory of its capture was reserved for the governor of Turkestan.

Despite the khan's declared intention to fight every inch of the way, the advancing forces continued their march across the sandy deserts without interference, apart from an occasional encounter with marauding Kirghiz or Turkomans; and, on 26 May, General Vereffkin reached the Oxus. There he found a fort of considerable size, occupied by the Khivans. The next day a party of the enemy was discovered lower down the river, who on seeing the Russians sent an envoy with an offer of surrender! While discussions were in progress, the main body of the Khivan forces made off. The tactics were repeated later in the day. In the evening, the town of Khod-


CENTRAL ASIA AND SIBERIA
BARENTS SEA
ARCTIC OCEAN
PACIFIC OCEAN
OB R.
YENISEI R.
LENA R.
AMUR R.
Uralsk
Orenburg
Yakutsk
Okhotsk
KAMCHATKA
Petropavlovsk
SEA OF OKHOTSK
Yeniseisk
ARAL SEA
IRTYSH R.
SAKHALIN
Alexandrovsk
KURILE IS.
Albazin
L. BALKHASH
L. BAIKAL
Nerchinsk
TANNU TUVA
Turkestan
Tashkent
Kiakhta
Aigun
HOKKAIDO
MANCHURIA
Khokand
Kulja
Harbin
Vladivostock
MONGOLIA
SEA OF JAPAN
Kashgar
Mukden
HONSHU
Jehol
Port Arthur
Port Lazareff
Tokyo
CHINA
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MILES

jeili was found to be deserted. After occupying it, the Russians received delegations from various Kirghiz tribes offering their submission. Attacks by bodies of Yomud Turkomans continued, but all were unsuccessful.

On 2 June, a number of Khivans came to the Russian camp pleading for protection, and from them Vereffkin learned that the khan's forces numbered as few as 7,000 men. On the same day news came that General Kaufmann would probably reach Khiva in three or four days. On 6 June, the khan sent an invitation to the Russian commander suggesting that he should come to Khiva and arrange peace terms, and asked for an immediate armistice. Vereffkin, remembering the khan's previous treacheries, refused. Later, he heard that Kaufmann had fought and dispersed a considerable Khivan force that had attempted to oppose his crossing of the Oxus. Apart from this information, Vereffkin had no news of Kaufmann's actual whereabouts. The former had now reached Khiva and was considerably harassed by constant attacks by small bands of Khivans as well as by gunfire from the city walls. Vereffkin decided to attack. On 9 June, he advanced, pushing back the enemy and silencing many of their guns, to within fifty yards of the city gate.

At this point, when the city could easily have been captured, and when his officers were ordering the final assault, Vereffkin remembered his instructions to wait for Kaufmann. Vereffkin consequently ordered a retreat and was himself wounded in it. As soon as the bombardment of the city ceased, an envoy came out asking for an armistice, which was agreed to; but it was broken by the Khivans, and the Russian bombardment was renewed. That same night, news arrived that Kaufmann was barely seven miles away, and was engaged in negotiations with the khan's uncle. The terms of peace agreed upon were severe and entirely contrary to Russia's declared intentions. They included the cession of the entire territory of Khiva from the right bank of the Oxus, together with the river delta, an indemnity of 2,200,000 roubles, customs exemption for Russian traders, and the relegation of the khan into a vassal of the Tsar. After the signing of the treaty, Kaufmann entered Khiva on 10 June 1873.

The next stage in Kaufmann's plans was a treaty with Bokhara. This was signed in October 1873, and established the right of free navigation of the Oxus and the establishment of trade between

Russia and Bokhara. The Russians now began to establish the rudiments of administration in their newly acquired dominions. The new province of Transcaspia was formed in the winter of 1873, with its headquarters at Krasnovodsk. The pacification of the area was, however, difficult, and plans for the building of new towns were temporarily suspended because of a rising in Khokand. The khan appealed to Kaufmann for assistance, claiming that the rebels were Kirghiz from Russian territory. The request was refused. The trouble in Khokand continued well into 1875, in which year Kaufmann sent an envoy to the khan asking permission for a Russian expedition to pass through Khokand on its way to Kashgar. On his arrival, the envoy found that the khan's brother had joined the rebels and so had the state army. The khan decided, under the circumstances, to put himself under Russian protection and fled to Tashkent. His successor sent an envoy to Kaufmann blaming the insurrection on the oppressions of his predecessor, and expressing his desire to live in peace with the Russians. Unfortunately for him, the people of Khokand were being incited to a holy war. Kaufmann now acted. The Russian campaign was successful and the city of Khokand was captured. The task of pacification was not so easy. In March 1876, the khanate of Khokand was annexed and formed into a province of the Russian empire, under the name of Ferghana.

The Russification of Central Asia proceeded with speed and decision, though not without opposition. The Turkoman country was conquered by General Skobelev between 1881 and 1884; this included the occupation of the Merv oasis (1884). The land between Merv and Pandjeh was similarly taken in 1884–85, and a war with Britain narrowly avoided. The Russo-Persian and Russo-Afghan frontiers from the Caspian Sea to the Chinese border were finally delimited between 1885 and 1895. In March 1895, a treaty was signed with Afghanistan by which all the Pamir north of the branch of the Oxus flowing from Sarikul and a line drawn eastward to the Chinese frontier passed into the hands of Russia. An empire had been built in thirty years.

7 *The United States of America*

The imperialist activities of the USA in Asia during the period of the scramble for empire were, in the main, though by no means exclu-

sively, concerned with trade and investment and the diplomacy necessary for their exploitation and protection. It is very important to recognise the fact that the expansion of the United States towards the Pacific seaboard of North America was, in a precise sense, imperialist. The ample territory available not only for safe investment but also for immigration kept the United States out of the race for colonial possessions, which offered very dubious advantages compared with those of continental America. Such territories as were acquired by the USA were intended to supply stepping stones towards east Asia and its trade and, in the specific case of the Philippines, the necessary status symbol of a great power in terms of late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century international politics.

Apart from an insistence, in 1843, that the US government would never consent to the annexation of Hawaii by either Britain or France, American official interest in those islands was slow to mature. In 1854, a treaty of annexation signed between the American consul and the Hawaiian king was not even submitted to Congress, and it was only the expansion of missionary and commercial activity which produced a treaty in 1875. By this time, America had begun to see the Pacific as merely a frontier area to be crossed in pursuit of a growing commerce with the Far East. With this recognition came the colonial concepts of 'spheres of influence', 'most favoured nation', and the appurtenances of imperialism. Secretary of state Blaine, shortly after the 1875 treaty, declared: 'The Hawaiian islands cannot be joined to the Asiatic system. If they drift from their independent station, it must be towards assimilation and identification with the American system to which they belong by the operation of natural laws and must belong by the operation of political necessity.' To reinforce this thesis—after a further treaty had been signed in 1884, leasing Pearl Harbour as a naval base—the United States refused to join Britain and France in guaranteeing Hawaiian independence.

In 1893, a revolution by American nationals deposed the Queen of Hawaii, and, despite the refusal of President Cleveland to put a treaty of annexation before the Senate, the pressures of American involvement in the affairs of the Far East led to annexation by the unilateral action of the US Congress. In July 1898, Hawaii became part of the United States.

Further extensions of American interests in the Pacific assisted the

expansion of her commercial interests. By 1900, Alaska and the Aleutian islands had been purchased, Midway and Wake islands had been acquired, Hawaii annexed, part of Samoa was under American protection, and Guam and the Philippines were occupied. It was with the latter that the United States became a Far Eastern power.

The Philippines, as we have seen, had been conquered by Spain in the sixteenth century. The penetration of Spanish culture was extensive and deep: no other body of colonial peoples conformed so closely to Western patterns. This was due to the success of Roman Catholic missions. The overwhelming majority of the population was converted to Christianity. Until the middle of the nineteenth century, the Philippines remained a closed theocracy ruled by religious orders who dominated the life of the islands. The opening of the country to foreign trade brought closer contacts with the West as a whole. The abolition of the state monopoly in overseas trade saw the beginnings of a merchant middle class, and out of it grew the desire for national expression. Revolutionary activity amongst the Filipinos resulted in some relaxation of clerical rule. It was at this stage that the United States came upon the scene.

In May 1898, in the course of the Spanish-American war, Commodore Dewey defeated a Spanish fleet in Manila Bay. Annexation followed, though only after considerable opposition in the US Congress. The government of President McKinley denied any colonial mission in the Philippines, but however much America disliked it, however much they criticised the imperialism of other nations (and continued to criticise it) the logic of expansion was inalienable. If the United States wanted to continue with her commercial interests in the Far East, occupation of the Philippines would permit her to guarantee and expand them. The president salved his conscience by declaring that 'there was nothing else for us to do but to take them all, and to educate the Filipinos, and uplift and civilise and Christianise [*sic*] them, and by God's grace do the very best we could by them, as our fellow men for whom Christ also died'. The reply of the Filipinos was to substitute America for Spain as the enemy of their freedom, and it was not until 1902 that the last armed resistance to American rule was finally suppressed.

Despite the pressures of anti-imperialism, the United States had little or no intention of granting independence to the Philippines.

Until 1901, the administration of the country was left to the army, but in that year a civil government under William Howard Taft, later president of the United States, was inaugurated. His instructions from President McKinley are a classic statement of imperialism in its paternal, 'welfare-of-the-nation' period. The government of the Philippines was not to be an exercise in the application of theories, but was designed for 'the happiness, peace and prosperity of the people . . . and the measures adopted should be made to conform to their customs, their habits and even to their prejudices, to the fullest extent consistent with the accomplishment of the indispensible requirements of just and efficient government'.

In 1907 was taken what is often hailed by American historians as a striking step towards self-government, and consequently an example of the essential progressiveness of American colonial rule. In that year, a Philippine assembly was elected and convened, and the Philippine Commission, the administrative body appointed by the US president, became the upper house of a bicameral legislature. That the granting of even this much representation was not entirely an act of altruism can be seen in America's fear of conflict with Japan in the Far East. Theodore Roosevelt wrote to Taft in August 1907: 'The Philippines form our heel of Achilles. They are all that makes the present situation with Japan dangerous. I think that in some way . . . you should state to them that if they handle themselves wisely in their legislative assembly, we shall at the earliest possible moment give them a nearly complete independence. . . . I think that to have some pretty clear avowal of our intention not to permanently keep them and to give them independence would remove a temptation from Japan's way and would render our task easier.'

It is not too difficult to see American policy in the Philippines as a parallel to that of the British in India—prevention of the upsurge of a revolutionary nationalism by the slow granting of representative institutions, coupled with continual promises of independence. In spite of this qualification, however, the United States was the first power to declare explicitly (in 1916) that the independence of a colonial territory in the foreseeable future was the aim of the administration.

The 1907 system remained in force until 1913. In 1909, the clause in the Spanish-American treaty of cession, which forbade discriminatory

tariff legislation against non-American commerce for a period of ten years, ceased to operate. The Philippines were brought inside the American tariff wall, and a free trade policy between the two countries resulted in almost complete American monopoly of the imports and exports of the islands.

CHAPTER 3

Conflicts in the East: Western Rivalries in an Asian Setting

Introduction

THE desire of such newly aggressive European nations as France and Germany for a place under the colonial sun naturally brought them into conflict with other nations looking for colonies, such as Russia and Japan. Much of the conflict, however, was with the established empire of Great Britain, which was by far the largest, most powerful, and most dynamic. Britain's empire was itself not static but expanding, and by 1900 it covered a fifth of the globe. Because of the very size of her overseas empire, Britain often felt menaced without real cause, as in the case of her continuing fear of Russian designs upon India (see page 91 ff). At the same time, the combination of nationalism and industrial expansion which together produced the colonial ambitions of Germany and France (and later, of course, of Japan) was leading to a change in the balance of power in continental Europe. This change was reflected in the shape of European conflicts in the East, and, when the general pattern of colonial Asia reached some stability after 1900, the scene of conflict returned to Europe itself. The rise of Japan, in particular, and the interdict placed by her ambitions on those of Tsarist Russia, was one of the causes of the First World War; Russia, having been turned back from Asian conquest, re-entered European politics after the Russo-Japanese war of 1904–05. The frustrated colonial ambitions of Germany also contributed to the outbreak of hostilities in Europe in 1914.

1 *The Clash of Empires*

Persia and the Persian Gulf

THE STRUGGLE FOR PERSIA

Persia and the Persian Gulf entered international politics in the second half of the nineteenth century as an area of conflict between the Western Powers, and, though they did not lead to actual warfare, there were particularly abrasive international complications. Persia and the Gulf had already been a source of conflict between Britain and Russia for many years before the Age of Imperialism. Indeed, at the end of the eighteenth century (1796), Russia had invaded Persia and her forces almost reached the gates of Teheran. At the time, it seemed as if the Russians would occupy the whole of Persia without much opposition, but the Russian empress, Catherine, died and the army was recalled by her successor. When Russia next moved against Persia, it was with the hope of reaching India, but that attempt ended at the death of the Tsar Paul in 1801. A year earlier, the governor-general of India had sent a mission to Persia to forestall any possible designs on the part of Napoleon, who also hoped to take that road to India. The mission concluded a treaty with the Shah of Persia which, in addition to various commercial clauses, contained a promise that Britain would supply military equipment if the Persians should be attacked by either France or the Afghans.

The French, though forced to evacuate Egypt and Syria, had left behind them a number of agents actively intriguing in the affairs of Western Asia. In 1802, they began making overtures to the Shah of Persia. These were not well received until, in 1804, the French suggested an attack upon Russia which was once again on the offensive in Persia. As the shah had already approached Britain for help, he was evasive, but when Britain sent little else but officers to command the Persian troops, French promises began to sound more persuasive. Napoleon's failure in Europe, however, soon led to the decline of French influence. The Russian campaign against Persia continued, disastrously for Persia. When friendly relations were established between Britain and Russia in 1812, the British withdrew their military advisers from the Persian army, and, acting as negotiators, promoted the Treaty of Gulistan between the two belligerents in 1813. The terms of the treaty were particularly

favourable to Russia. All the territories she had captured in her campaign were awarded to her. Russian naval forces were permitted to navigate the Caspian, but the Persians were forbidden to do so even off their own seaboard. The duty on Russian exports to, and imports from, Persia was restricted to five per cent. Unfortunately, the language in which these terms were couched was so confused that continuous squabbling resulted over their interpretation. The frontier between the two countries was perpetually under armed dispute, until in 1826 Russia forcibly occupied a district claimed by the Persians. At this, the Persians, under the command of the heir to the throne, invaded Russia.

The campaign, which lasted for two years, was a series of defeats for the Persians, who finally capitulated and signed the Treaty of Turcomanchai in 1828. As well as recapitulating all the clauses of the Treaty of Gulistan, it included an indemnity of thirty million roubles and gave to Russia sovereignty over the whole of the Caucasus, excepting a small corner in the south-east bordering on the Black Sea. At the same time, Russia had been engaged in a successful war against Turkey, which resulted in her occupation of the port of Poti on the Black Sea and the fort of Akhaltsikh, between Tiflis and the sea.

Relations between Russia and Persia became almost friendly. The shah realised he could not fight his northern neighbour with any chance of success. Russia henceforth was able to dominate Persia by intrigue rather than by costly occupation, and the country became in every sense a satellite, a front for Russian sorties against the growing power of the British in India, who were already looking upon the Persian Gulf as a bay on the British Indian ocean. The decline of Britain's influence over Persia was a direct result of her unwillingness to help Persia in her war with Russia, despite the obvious advantages to her in doing so. When Persia asked for financial aid to pay her indemnity to Russia, Britain bought her way out of her treaty with Persia (which contained a guarantee to aid her against any other European nation) for the sum of £300,000. The whole of the Anglo-Persian treaty, however, was not abrogated. In particular, a clause remained to the effect that, in case of war between the Afghans and Persia, the British should not interfere except if requested to mediate.

Russia's first move was to jerk her puppet into an attack upon

Herat, ostensibly to rescue the city from Afghan rule. On this occasion, the Persian army was directly commanded by Russian officers. Protests by the British envoy had no effect. Neither did an appeal to the Tsar, who returned an evasive reply. The governor-general of India therefore sent a British officer to Herat to organise its defence. He succeeded so well that the city defied the Persians for nine and a half months. Further British protests at St Petersburg and Teheran having no effect, an expedition was despatched to the Persian Gulf and occupied the island of Kharak. But the raising of the siege of Herat which soon followed did not reduce Russian influence in Persia. The British expedition only fostered ill-will against England in Teheran, and contributed to Russia's hold upon the country.

From the Russian point of view, intrigue was not to be indulged in for the fun of the game or for profits in the mists of the future. Tangible results in the form of exclusive rights in the waters of the Caspian led to the establishment of a naval arsenal on the island of Ashurada, as a forward base for activity in the area. Russia's open support of Persia in a border dispute between her and Turkey again increased Russian prestige and influence, but the death of the shah in 1848 brought the accession of a new ruler and the appointment of a chief minister determined upon a policy which would keep Persia clear of both Russian and British influences. The minister's success in this aim led to his downfall. The shah, jealous of the reputation of his employee, had him executed in 1852.

The problem of Herat again raised its head when the new ruler of that place offered his allegiance to Persia. The status of the city had been defined by a convention between Britain and Persia, signed in 1853, which required the latter not to make any attempt against it. The shah waited nearly three years to make up his mind but, in December 1855, sent an army to occupy Herat. An attempt by the inhabitants to throw out both their own ruler and the Persians received no support either from the Afghans or the British, and in November 1856 the city surrendered to the shah. Britain immediately sent troops to the Persian Gulf and occupied Bushire. A new treaty called for the evacuation of Herat by the Persians; this was completed in July 1857, and the city restored to Afghan rule.

The Russians, though disappointed by the outcome, were advancing into Central Asia, a more profitable area of expansion. They

nevertheless continued the appropriation of Persian territory around the Caspian Sea. Persian protests against these seizures continued throughout Russia's expansion in Transcaspia until, finally, a frontier agreement was negotiated in 1881. Russian influence, however, continued to grow in the frontier areas until Persia was in fact virtually partitioned between the Russians, who dominated the north, and the British, who controlled the south.

In 1896, the shah was assassinated and, under his successor, the deterioration of the country was rapid. Loans from both Russia and Britain were corruptly squandered, and with the decrease in Russian influence after her defeat by Japan in 1905 a revolutionary movement began in northern Persia. In the face of a growing anarchy, those two old enemies, Russia and Great Britain, concluded an agreement in 1907 which formally guaranteed the integrity of Persia whilst dividing the country into zones of economic interest. Further rebellions caused the shah to take refuge in the Russian embassy at Teheran in 1909, and, from there, he abdicated in favour of his son. Two years later, with Russian connivance, he made an abortive attempt to re-occupy Teheran. An American financial adviser, appointed by the Persian government in the same year, challenged the position of both Britain and Russia. The consequence was a Russian ultimatum demanding his dismissal. Persian nationalists thereupon attacked a weak Russian force at Tabriz, killing a hundred soldiers. Russian troops took reprisals and forced Persia to accept the terms of the ultimatum and dismiss the American adviser. Anti-Russian incidents, however, continued until the outbreak of the First World War overwhelmed Russia's long-term plans.

INTRIGUES IN THE GULF

It was not unnatural that the British should consider the western sea approaches to India as of great strategic importance to them. From the Persian Gulf, a foreign power could endanger sea communications with India as well as the land routes to the Bolan Pass. Though Russian penetration of Persia had always posed these threats, it was not until the last decades of the nineteenth century that they became really pressing. And it was not only Russia that was casting covetous eyes on the Gulf. So, too, was France, nominally Russia's ally but certainly more concerned with her own interests than with those of Russia. Later, too, Germany—in what was, at least in theory, an

attempt to by-pass the Suez Canal by constructing a rail-route to the Gulf—also seemed to threaten Britain's paramountcy.

The first overt threat, however, was presented by France. This coincided with open discussion by Russia of plans for constructing a railway from the Russian border to a base she hoped to establish somewhere at the entrance to the Gulf. A Russian engineer was known to have made a survey of possible sites in 1887, and several Russian explorers were active along the Indian Ocean coast of Persia. The French threat, however, was more direct and more obvious. Furthermore, France was acting under the cloak of an agreement with Britain.

In 1862, the two countries had agreed to preserve the independence of the sultanate of Oman, a state on the Persian Gulf with which France had already concluded a treaty in 1844. From 1862, however, British influence in Oman increased until the state was, in practice though not in law, a British protectorate. Most of its foreign trade was in British hands, and to all intents and purposes it was politically a part of British India. On a number of occasions, British troops had protected the person of the sultan from internal rebellion. The British had also removed rivals to the throne and sustained the government with large subsidies. The reigning sultan was as pro-British as his dependent position demanded until, in 1894, France established a consulate at Muscat—the capital of Oman—as she was entitled to do under the terms of the 1862 treaty.

The French consul, Ottavi, spoke fluent Arabic and travelled about the country in Arab costume. He managed to gain the confidence of some of the tribal sheikhs. He even contrived, through interested parties close to the sultan, to suggest that France would be a better—and more generous—friend than Britain. The sultan, already dissatisfied with his inferior position, began to consider the possibility of playing off France against Britain in order to profit himself. In November 1898 the Paris newspaper *Journal de Débats* printed an announcement that France had secured the cession of a coaling station at Jisseh, a land-locked harbour five miles south-east of the city of Muscat. Jisseh was probably the best natural harbour on the coast of Oman and, as its entrance was protected by an island, it was easy to defend against naval attack.

The announcement in the *Débats* was not taken seriously by the British government. The French foreign minister went so far as to

tell the British ambassador that he knew nothing about the matter. The British political agent at Muscat, who could not have been particularly efficient at his job, reported that there was no truth in the rumour. But in the first few weeks of 1899, the sultan himself confirmed—with great reluctance—that a lease had indeed been signed as far back as March 1898. The viceroy of India, Lord Curzon, in February 1899 issued instructions to the British political resident in the Gulf to demand that the sultan cancel the lease immediately. Simultaneously, a British battleship anchored off Muscat in order to reinforce the request with the sight of its guns. After some attempt to avoid British pressure, the sultan gave in and cancelled the lease.

Before London heard of Curzon's action, the British government had announced that, as far as it was aware, the sultan had not granted a lease to the French. When the news did arrive, the government found itself in an embarrassing position—especially as, at the time, it was attempting to put Anglo-French relations, which had been inflamed by incidents in Africa, upon a friendlier basis. Fortunately, both governments were anxious for agreement. The general opinion in Britain was that there was no reason why France should not have coaling facilities at Muscat. Indeed, under the commercial agreement of 1844 between France and the sultan, there could be no possible objection to a French private citizen erecting a coal shed at Muscat, and the 1844 agreement was not affected in any way by the Anglo-French agreement of 1862. There was, however, an invisible stumbling block. In 1891, Britain had herself concluded a secret agreement with the sultan, in terms which were not compatible with the Anglo-French treaty of 1862.

The government of India—in the person of Curzon—felt that all this was irrelevant. If the occasional French ship calling at Muscat needed coaling, the British were quite prepared to supply it—as they had done in the past. The disagreement between the viceroy and the British government was not resolved but, as Anglo-French relations improved, the repercussions of the Muscat affair began to die down. The government of India's attention was directed towards other, more pressing matters. However, agents of the Indian government kept careful watch in the Gulf area. It was to be more than four years before the viceroy considered that a public stand had to be made in the Gulf.

In the meantime, a new threat was being posed by German activity in the area. German statesmen were fully aware of the political and

commercial interests at stake, and they hoped to secure a harbour on the Persian Gulf from which they could undermine British trade and political influence. Their campaign began in 1897 with the opening of a German vice-consulate at Bushire. In 1900, a preliminary surveying party concerned with planning the Berlin–Baghdad railway turned up in Kuwait and tried to impress the ruler with the potentialities of a railway terminus in his state. The ruler, however, refused—as he was obliged to do by the terms of a secret treaty concluded with Britain in 1899—to sell or lease land to the Germans. Germany tried to induce Turkey to despatch a military expedition to occupy Kuwait, but the presence of a hurriedly despatched British cruiser warned the Turks off. The Germans then, through the agency of Turkey, looked for another site and Turkish troops occupied a number of posts. German firms, with government subsidies, were also trying to establish themselves in the area, but under British pressure the Sultan of Kuwait refused to grant them concessions. Other attempts were made but they were no more successful, and nothing of real importance had been achieved by Germany by the outbreak of war in 1914. In fact, in the game of intrigue, all Germany's attempts had been defeated by direct British intervention.

A general feeling had been growing up in British government circles that Britain could not prevent Russian expansion towards the Gulf—an attitude which was regarded as heresy by the viceroy of India. There was certainly a great deal of evidence that Russia was still active in southern Persia, and particularly in those parts of the country nearest to the frontiers of India. The Russians had carried out railway surveys, and Russian warships had been conspicuously visible in the Persian Gulf. A number of new Russian consulates had been opened, and Russian commercial missions were travelling throughout the area. In response, the government of India increased its own activity amongst the rulers in the Gulf, and the viceroy's continued heckling of the home government finally had some effect. In 1902, the Shah of Persia was warned that Britain would not tolerate Russian encroachments in southern Persia. In May of the same year, the British government declared that it would resist any attempt by any other power to establish a naval base or a fortified post on the Gulf. The Russian government, through its ambassador in London, disclaimed any such intention.

The government of India decided upon a show of strength in the Gulf, and in November 1903 the viceroy in person, accompanied by an impressive force, set off on a ceremonial tour lasting three weeks and designed to impress the rulers of the Gulf states with the might and majesty of the British empire. In this it succeeded, although Russia continued to intrigue in the Gulf until 1907, when the Anglo-Russian agreement was concluded.

Note EGYPT AND THE SUEZ CANAL

The opening of the short sea route to the East via the Suez Canal in 1869 was an important factor in the expansion of Europe in Asia. The cutting by several weeks of the journey to India and points east affected not only trade but, in conjunction with the steamship, the strategies of the Western powers. Indeed, by the end of the nineteenth century, Egypt had become virtually a border province of British India. The strategic frontiers of British India were already established in the Persian Gulf and at Aden, and, though Egypt was administered by the British as a separate entity, the government of India continued to direct affairs in the Gulf, at Aden, and until 1905 in Somaliland on the African coast as well.

Egyptian policy, however, though fundamental to India's security, was directly under the control of the British government. Except in the case of the immediate threat posed by Bonaparte's Egyptian campaign (1798), the British were slow to appreciate the importance of speedy communication with India, and it was not until the 1830s that the overland route from Alexandria to Suez came into use. The idea of constructing a canal across the isthmus of Suez had been in existence for some time, particularly in France. Bonaparte's surveyors had begun work on the project during the French occupation, but Britain favoured the construction of a railway, and a part of one—between Alexandria and Cairo—was actually built in 1854. Nevertheless, the French engineer, de Lesseps, succeeded in obtaining a concession from the Egyptian government to cut a canal, which was finally opened by the French empress, Eugénie, in 1869. Britain, fearing the growth of French domination in Egypt, had unsuccessfully tried to obstruct de Lesseps by putting pressure on the Sultan of Turkey, the nominal overlord of the Egyptian ruler. All that happened, however, was that the latter became increasingly independent.

The canal company—a private organisation—showed little profit in the first years of the canal's operation. In 1875, the Khedive (ruler) of Egypt, pressed by debts amounting to several millions of pounds, sold his shareholding in the canal company to Britain, who had not subscribed to the original funding. The new British holding amounted to nearly half the total shares. One advantage was that the two principal shareholders, Britain and France, now had two essential interests in common—'the freedom of the Suez Canal, and the proper administration of Egyptian affairs', as the French foreign minister put it in 1882. Instability in Egyptian affairs might well have threatened the use—and even the existence—of the canal. This was of interest to others besides Britain and France, since the use of the canal was guaranteed to every maritime nation, but as the principal stockholders Britain and France were in effect the guarantors.

Already in 1876, Egyptian revenues and expenditure had been put under Anglo-French control, primarily in order to protect European investors. This situation was challenged in 1882 when there was a nationalist rebellion led by a colonel in the Egyptian army, Ahmed Arabi. As the Sultan of Turkey—still nominally overlord—was unable to send troops to support his viceroy, it was left to Britain and France to take action. The commanders of the French and British fleets off Alexandria ordered Arabi to dismantle fortifications there, but he refused. The French government hesitated over its next move, but the British—after France and Italy had refused to participate in action against Arabi—shelled the forts (July 1882) and occupied Alexandria. Events moved with some rapidity. At the request of the Khedive, the British occupied the area round the canal known as the Canal Zone and crushed the Arabi revolt at the battle of Tel-el-Kebir (September 1882). Egypt became, except in law, a British protectorate.

To ensure international use of the canal, a convention was finally signed (after much negotiation) in October 1888, by Britain, France, Germany, Austria-Hungary, Italy, Russia, Spain, Turkey, and Holland. The first article guaranteed free use of the canal in time of war as well as peace. In one sense at least the Canal Zone became an international territory, though in practice Britain exercised the extra-territorial rights herself on behalf of the other powers. This situation was, not unnaturally, irksome, particularly to France, who

now found herself—by her own inaction at Alexandria—squeezed out of Egypt. The French tried to induce the Sultan of Turkey to reassert his sovereign rights, and it was even rumoured that Turkey intended to construct a railway across the Sinai peninsula to the edge of the canal at Suez, but Britain warned Turkey off and made a naval demonstration in Egyptian waters in order to reinforce the warning. The sultan gave way (1906).

The threat to Britain's position in Egypt during the last quarter of the nineteenth century reflected the efforts of European powers—France, Germany, and Italy—to acquire colonies in Africa. In fact, these efforts only tended to consolidate Britain's position in Egypt and to the south, in the Sudan. The canal remained the feeder-line of European expansion in Asia. British control of the Canal Zone did not inhibit this in any way, though it did indirectly place a limit on the ambitions of the new imperial powers and particularly those of Germany, which made an attempt to by-pass the canal. On the whole, the freedom of the Suez Canal was an example of Western cooperation, and, though Britain's position in Egypt was resented, no real effort was made to dislodge her.

Afghanistan and Tibet

Britain's attitude towards the states on the northern borders of India was conditioned by her fear of Russian expansion in Central Asia. Russia, too, feared the extension of British influence on her borders, even when those borders were thousands of miles apart. Both Russia and Britain had their theorists of what came to be called the 'forward' movement. Russian generals, no doubt, dreamed of an attack upon British India and were encouraged by politicians who had no particular desire to conquer India, but saw a method of putting pressure upon the government in London. Statesmen do not have to believe in the dreams of their soldiers, even if they do nothing to discourage them.

Considerable ignorance, both topographical and strategic, led to British actions which, in the perspective of history, appear almost ludicrous. But, at the time, Russian expansion in Central Asia did appear to menace India. British aims, therefore, were to forestall Russian domination on the periphery of northern India and to create buffer states in which British–Indian influences would be predominant. A somewhat similar situation existed between the French

and British empires in Indo-China (see page 102 ff.) where, although Britain stopped short of war in Siam, the occupation of Upper Burma was precipitated by fear of French intrigue.

The first British reaction to spring from her fear of Russian intentions occurred with the Afghan war of 1839–42. At this date, the Russian advance base at Orenberg was nearly 2,000 miles away from the nearest English post at Ludhiana on the frontier of the Punjab. In between lay, not only Afghanistan, but the independent Sikh kingdom of the Punjab. Both militarily and politically, the war was disastrous for Britain. In 1848, however, the Punjab was annexed, bringing the frontier of British India up to that of Afghanistan, a fact which only intensified British anxiety over Russia's intentions.

The resumption of Russia's forward movement in Central Asia after her failures in the Crimean war (see page 66 ff.) increased the persuasiveness of arguments in favour of expanding the frontiers of British India. The likelihood of a clash between the two empires in Afghanistan now had some substance. However, one of the lessons the British learned from the Mutiny of 1857 was that anarchy in India was more dangerous than a distant threat of Russian expansion. The post-Mutiny viceroy, Lord Lawrence (1864–69), insisted upon concentrating British effort within India, on the premise that—as he wrote in the last state paper of his administration—'our strongest security would be found to lie in previous abstinence from entanglements either at Kabul, Kandahar, or in any similar outpost'. This attitude persisted until, in 1874, the russophobe British conservative prime minister, Disraeli, decided on a new approach towards the Russian advance in Central Asia.

In Afghanistan, in the meantime, a struggle for power had ended in 1869 with the apparent triumph of Shere Ali. The Indian government decided to support the new Amir in his attempt to form a strong and permanent government, but to do so without directly interfering in Afghan affairs. In the same year, the Russian government had informed a British emissary that it would not itself interfere in Afghan affairs and invited the government of India to demarcate the northern frontiers of Afghanistan. The British government rejected a suggestion that it should warn Russia that any attempt to interfere without genuine provocation in the affairs of Afghanistan (or of neighbouring countries) would be met by force.

The British government, though accepting a Russian attack upon India as unthinkable, nevertheless believed that a neutral Afghanistan was an impossibility and that that country must either be in Britain's sphere of influence, or in Russia's. It was obvious which alternative the British preferred. To achieve visible ascendancy and so to divert Russian attention to more distant places—preferably on the inner Asian frontiers of China—it was, the government maintained, necessary to have a British representative in the Afghan capital. The real danger was that Russia would gain influence in Afghanistan without the British actually knowing about it until presented with the fact of its existence. The British wanted to appoint agents at Kabul and Herat to keep an eye on events. But this the Amir would not accept. The British felt they had given the Amir arms and money and guaranteed his position against Russian encroachment—without any compensating gains. The viceroy, Lord Northbrook, maintained that any attempt to *force* a British representative on the Amir against his will would be more likely to assist the Russians' plans than to counter them. On this issue, over which he and the British government were at variance, Northbrook resigned in 1876.

His successor, Lord Lytton, fully in sympathy with the British government's determination to establish political ascendancy in Afghanistan, wrote to the Amir informing him that a British mission to Kabul was already on its way. The Amir replied that he would refuse to receive it. Lytton thought he could frighten the Amir into receiving the envoy by hinting at a possible use of force, but the Amir did not reply to Lytton's second communication and the viceroy began to fear that Russian intrigues were afoot. He was, however, undismayed, and in fact welcomed the possibility of war with Russia. Lytton advised the home government not to wait for an excuse but to take the offensive in Central Asia, where, he maintained, Russia was weak.

The British government, though anxious to expand Britain's presence in Central Asia, was not prepared to fight a war with Russia. For them it was Russian intrigue, not physical expansion, that had to be combatted. In the summer of 1877, it appeared to Lytton as if the British government was actually considering the possibility of an alliance with Russia against Germany. On his own responsibility, Lytton ordered military preparations to be made in

India for the occupation of western Afghanistan, and began to lobby for support in Britain against the secretary of state for India, Lord Salisbury, whom he believed to be the author of the British government's policies. Lytton was mainly concerned with Britain's prestige, and he insisted that failure to act in Afghanistan might have harmful effects inside India. A new secretary of state, Lord Cranbourne (1878), though not accepting the premise of a Russian attack on India, did authorise Lytton to repeat the demand for the establishment of a British representative at Kabul.

This did not go far enough for Lytton. He proposed to frighten the Amir into submission or, if that did not work, to occupy the Kurrum valley and—though only temporarily—Kandahar, 200 miles to the south. In fact, in anticipation of what he believed to be the inevitable, Lytton had already occupied Quetta, in Baluchistan, as a forward base in 1877.

In 1878, tension between Russia and Britain had been increased by the latter's refusal to acknowledge the Treaty of San Stefano, which settled Russia's disputes with Turkey. In order to bring pressure to bear upon Russia, Disraeli ordered the occupation of the island of Cyprus and rushed Indian troops to Malta. In response, Russia sought to edge Britain towards the logical conclusion of Lytton's policy—a military expedition against Afghanistan. On 13 June, a Russian agent set off for Kabul with instructions to demand from the Amir an arrangement very little different from that demanded by Lytton. The British government protested to St Petersburg, but did not inform Lytton that it had done so. The viceroy meanwhile instructed the British mission which had set out for Kabul to demand, as a preliminary to negotiations, that the Russian representative be required to withdraw. In this, he was supported by Cranbourne, who did not realise what was going on. Disraeli and Salisbury (now foreign secretary) then instructed Cranbourne to inform Lytton that, before acting, he was to await a reply from St Petersburg to the protest of which he had not previously been informed. Lytton's plans, however, were so far advanced and the British government apparently so undecided, that the viceroy decided to ignore his instructions. On 20 September, he ordered the British mission to cross the Afghan frontier. At the border, the mission was refused entry by Afghan frontier guards.

Though the British government resented Lytton's unilateral

action, it could not ignore this 'affront'. The viceroy was therefore instructed to move troops over the Afghan frontier, and to issue a proclamation urging all Afghans to rise and overthrow their Amir. But a few days later, Lytton was requested to moderate his activities. The British cabinet was divided, and Cranbourne was openly defying the decisions of his own prime minister. With Cranbourne's support, however, Lytton decided to go ahead, and he informed the cabinet on 19 October that British troops would cross the frontier. At Cranbourne's insistence, the cabinet submitted. An ultimatum was issued, and when it expired on 21 November the invasion of Afghanistan began. After a number of desultory engagements, followed by the occupation of Kandahar and Jalalabad, Shere Ali fled to Russia. There he died in February 1879. His son, Yakub Khan, signed the Treaty of Gandamak in May of the same year with the British. By this treaty, Yakub agreed to conduct his foreign relations only with the advice of the British. In return, he would receive protection against foreign aggression, money, arms, and, if necessary, troops. A British Resident was to be appointed to Kabul. A telegraph line between Kabul and Kurrum was agreed to. The British were to occupy Kurrum, Pishin, and Gibi, and the Khyber and Mishmi passes.

But all was by no means over. History was to repeat itself. In 1841, Britain's humiliation had begun with the murder of a British representative in Kabul. On 3 September 1879, the new British Resident, Louis Cavagnari, was murdered by rioting Afghan soldiers. Though the new Amir was by no means responsible for this, the British insisted that an example must be made. Once more, British troops advanced into Afghanistan.

The Amir abdicated the day British troops entered Kabul, and Lytton asked for permission to annex Kandahar and the surrounding district. But the British government preferred to fragment the country—to offer Herat to Persia, and to place a feudatory ruler in Kandahar. The Shah of Persia, advised by the Russians that acceptance of Herat would make him a British vassal, refused the offer, but Kandahar, under a local chieftain, was declared an independent state under British protection.

The British government opposed the restoration of Yakub and suggested that the son of a former Amir, Abdur Rahman (who had just returned after a long exile in Russia) should be given considera-

tion. As Abdur Rahman had in fact been sent to Afghanistan by the Russians to contribute yet another element to the disorder there, this was something of a counsel of despair. The viceroy, however, offered Afghanistan (without Kandahar) to Abdur Rahman. Before the reply arrived, the Disraeli government fell—over the issue of Afghanistan. The new Liberal administration recalled Lytton and replaced him with Lord Ripon, but the new viceroy continued the negotiations with Abdur Rahman—against the advice of local experts—and in June 1880 Abdur Rahman was recognised by the British as Amir of Kabul.

Even this did not end the Afghan imbroglio. Yakub's brother, Ayub, attacked and defeated a British force near Herat, and the survivors fled to Kandahar, which was in turn besieged by Ayub. A relief force under General Roberts was sent from Kabul to its relief. With the assistance of Abdur Rahman, Roberts's force reached Kandahar and routed Ayub's army. At the same time, the British evacuated Kabul. After a certain amount of indecision over what to do with Kandahar, it was finally transferred to Abdur Rahman in 1881. The British also evacuated the Khyber and Kurrum districts, though they retained Pishin and Gibi. The debris of Lytton's forward policy had now been brushed up.

Lord Ripon wanted to reinforce the Afghan settlement by reaching a diplomatic understanding with Russia. Now that the forward policy had been abandoned, there seemed reasonable grounds for assuming that agreement could be reached. Unfortunately, though the Russian government was apparently amenable, Russian generals were still pushing southwards and were now only 200 miles from the Merv oasis on the northern border of Afghanistan. The Russian government explained that the continuing advance was designed merely to impose peace, and that further military operations in Central Asia were not under consideration. But the Russian generals were determined to press on with their own ambitions, and the British government—in spite of Russian assurances—issued a public declaration in April 1881 that it would not tolerate any interference in Afghan affairs.

Once again, the British cabinet was divided. One group believed that no treaty could restrain Russian ambitions. Another was equally convinced that Russia intended to continue her policy of appearing to menace British India. The prime minister and the viceroy felt that

diplomacy in the Russian capital was preferable to action in Afghanistan. The consequence of these differences of opinion was that the British government had no policy at all. In December 1882, however, Lord Kimberley became secretary of state for India. He had no faith in the value of direct negotiation with Russia, and he instructed the viceroy to promote closer relations with the Amir of Afghanistan and to increase the annual subsidy paid to him by the British. No more pointless policy could have been devised, since Abdur Rahman was still not obliged to follow British advice or even, for that matter, to ask for it. The Russian advance in Central Asia continued, and, in February 1884, the Russians occupied Merv.

There was now no purpose in having a treaty with Russia, as her territories abutted on Afghanistan. The British cabinet therefore decided to negotiate an agreement on the demarcation of Afghanistan's northern boundary. Russia took the initiative and proposed that the two governments should immediately define the area to be surveyed by any boundary commission. The British agreed and suggested that, as a preliminary, Russia should withdraw from Pul-i-Khatun and the Afghans from Sari Yazi. Russia rejected this proposal and demanded instead that the Afghans should withdraw from Pandjeh, which they had occupied in June 1883, on the grounds that it and Pul-i-Khatun were not Afghan territory. Both the British and Indian governments took this demand as a sign of imminent aggression, and the Russian government was warned that its policy might lead to war. But before the Indian government could move troops to reinforce her diplomatic démarche, the Russians had occupied Pandjeh (30 March 1885).

The Amir, who was visiting Rawalpindi for talks with the viceroy, asked the British to keep negotiations going at St Petersburg while he himself prepared to attack the Russians. He did not seem particularly upset at the loss of Pandjeh, and also claimed to be in a position to defend the town of Herat should the Russians move against it. It was decided to submit the question of Pandjeh to arbitration by the King of Denmark, and Pandjeh was eventually given up to Russia, but, in spite of this, Britain's decision to give the fullest support to Abdur Rahman nearly led to war with Russia over yet another area, that of Zulficar. A settlement was, however, reached. At the same time, the British government publicly declared that the maintenance of Afghanistan's independence was essential.

Negotiations with Russia continued—though so slowly that it was not until July 1887 that agreement was reached. The settlement then agreed was adhered to over the succeeding years by Russia.

Fear of Russia's designs against the British position in India did not, however, disappear. On the contrary, it remained at the centre of British–Indian policies until the Anglo–Russian entente of 1907. The forward school of British generals and statesmen continued to influence policies towards Afghanistan and Persia. Generally speaking, the British government was unwilling to interfere directly in Afghan affairs, at least as long as Abdur Rahman was alive. Britain intensified her construction of strategic railways in north-west India and achieved the demarcation of the Indo–Afghan border, but it was not until the viceroyalty of Lord Curzon (1898–1905) that the government of India once again took an activist view of the Russian menace.

This state of affairs was precipitated by reports that Russian officials were dealing directly with their Afghan counterparts on certain frontier matters—an infringement of Russia's formal agreement to consider Afghanistan as outside her sphere of activity. The viceroy advised the Amir not to reply to letters from Russian officials but, as the Amir thought they should be formally rejected, it was agreed that he should do this. In February 1900, Russia submitted a memorandum to the British government. In it, the Russians claimed that, though they had refrained from having direct relations with Afghanistan, this was no longer possible because of the long frontier shared by the two countries and because it was highly inconvenient for all complaints to be channelled through the British government instead of being settled by local officials. The Russian government stated that local relations were of a non-political character and that their local settlement could therefore not affect the Anglo-Russian agreement on Afghanistan. The British government made no reply until after the death of Abdur Rahman in October 1901, when it informed the Russians that British policy in Afghanistan would be unaffected by the change of ruler.

In the autumn of 1902, the British, already alarmed by expressions of independence on the part of the new Amir—who had stated publicly that he would make trade arrangements with Russia which might well include the import of arms—heard rumours that a Russian mission would soon arrive in Kabul. In December 1902,

Russia announced her intention of opening up direct diplomatic relations with the Afghan government, but said that she would not be sending representatives for the time being. Before the British government could formulate a protest, the Amir himself rejected the Russian proposals. The British government did not share the viceroy's apprehensions about a possible Russian move into Afghanistan, but it once again went so far as to warn Russia not to interfere. In November 1903, the Russian government was informed that it must formally recognise that Afghanistan lay in Britain's sphere of influence; in return, the Amir would be permitted to have direct relations with the Russians on non-political matters. In the following month, the Russians replied that they adhered to the original agreement on Afghanistan, and that they did not intend to appoint a representative in Kabul 'for the present'. The situation remained fluid until the Anglo–Russian entente of 1907 stabilised relations between the two countries, across Asia from Persia to China.

Before this took place, however, Anglo–Russian conflict resulted in a British military expedition into what was at least nominally a Chinese tributary—Tibet.

As Britain had extended her influence—in the form of protectorates—over the hill states bordering Tibet, problems were created by the fact that the ruler of Tibet, the Dalai Lama, claimed politico-religious suzerainty over the states which had been drawn into the orbit of British political and commercial interests. As Tibet had been a Chinese protectorate since the eighteenth century, the situation was further complicated. There was, however, a unity of purpose between the theocracy which dominated Tibet and its Chinese overlords. Both wanted to keep the Westerners out. Naturally, this presented a challenge which, in the second half of the nineteenth century, could not be overlooked by men who believed the world should be wide open to Western exploitation, whether missionary or commercial. The policy of seclusion was, however, welcome to the British as long as it was capable of keeping other nations—especially the Russians—out of Tibet and away from India's Himalayan borders. Britain had in fact specifically recognised Chinese control over Tibet's foreign relations by a convention in 1886, which, in exchange, had given Chinese recognition to Britain's occupation of Upper Burma. In 1890, China gave up Tibetan claims

to suzerainty over the state of Sikkim, and trade between India and Tibet was regularised three years later.

Unfortunately for the British, and ultimately for the Tibetans, Peking's control over Tibet was seriously weakened in the last decade of the nineteenth century owing to China's own troubles and to the distance—more than 2,000 miles—between Peking and the Tibetan capital, Lhasa. There was little point in Britain negotiating with China, as the Chinese were no longer in a position to enforce their will on Tibet, yet the British could not negotiate frontier problems directly with the Dalai Lama as they had no representative in Lhasa.

The absence of direct communication between Britain and Tibet was underlined by the prevalence of rumours concerning Russian activity in the country. A new Dalai Lama, who succeeded to temporal power in 1893, established an arsenal at Lhasa, and—in an attempt to offset Chinese influence, French missionary penetration, and the threat of British expansion—made an approach to Russia. In September 1900, he sent an envoy to the Russian Tsar. This envoy was in fact a Russian subject, a Buryat Mongol named Dorjiev. The Dalai Lama's initiative not unnaturally aroused apprehension in London and Calcutta, though Russia assured the British government that the meeting had no diplomatic or political significance—which was probably true. Nevertheless, rumours persisted of secret treaties giving Russia a protectorate over Tibet. Current Russian aggression in Manchuria and elsewhere seemed to confirm the possibility of Russian designs upon Tibet.

The viceroy, Lord Curzon, wanted to take military action in Tibet, whereas the British government—though prepared to consider the opening of direct relations between Lhasa and India—was not willing to sanction a military expedition. In the summer of 1902, the situation seemed to call for urgent action. A Chinese official who was supposed to meet the British political officer in Sikkim to discuss border problems did not turn up at the rendezvous, and the government of India heard that he had received orders from Peking to avoid the meeting until after Russian troops had arrived at Lhasa! The government's fears were reinforced in August 1902 when the British minister in Peking reported that a secret agreement on Tibet had probably been concluded between Russia and China. Curzon urged the immediate despatch of a military expedition to

Lhasa, but the British government preferred to continue with diplomacy rather than force of arms. This caution was supported by a Russian declaration which stated that, if a British expedition moved into Tibet, the Russians might be obliged to take measures to protect their interests.

In April 1903, the Russian government declared that *no* secret agreement concerning Tibet existed and that there were no Russian agents in the country. However, they added, should the British annex or establish a protectorate over Tibet, they would feel free to find compensation elsewhere. Although the Russian denials were, in fact, truthful, Curzon did not believe them. The British cabinet appeared to be divided in its views. The foreign secretary, Lord Lansdowne, informed the prime minister that the secretary of state for India would instruct Curzon not to send an expedition into Tibet; the secretary of state, on the other hand, interpreted Russia's answer as giving Britain a free hand. He proposed that a British representative with an escort of 200 men should cross the Tibetan border and meet with Chinese and Tibetan officials at Khambajong. This they did, but nothing emerged from the meeting and, in October 1903, the cabinet authorised the expedition to advance as far as Gyantse. A month later, the Russian and Chinese governments were informed of this and duly protested. The British force—which had now grown to 8,000 men—continued to move forward, massacring Tibetans and occasionally negotiating, until finally it reached Lhasa. There the only evidence of Russian penetration that could be found was two rifles of Russian manufacture.

The British cabinet was unwilling to become deeply involved in Tibet. It was, in fact, more interested in arranging a rapprochement with Russia. Although it had supported an expedition to Lhasa for reasons of prestige, it was not prepared to sanction a British protectorate over Tibet, or the occupation of Tibetan territory. The government disowned its own representative, Colonel Younghusband. Indeed, it held him responsible for endangering the whole of future relations with Russia. The Anglo–Tibetan convention which was finally concluded contained an injunction against Tibetan concessions to foreign powers, but very little else. No British Agent was appointed to Lhasa.

The Russian position in Central Asia was to be seriously weakened as a consequence of the Russo-Japanese war, though in 1905 there

were still rumours of Russian activity in Tibet and in 1907 the probability of Russian expansion there was still felt to be real enough to justify a specific mention in the Anglo–Russian entente.

The British incursion into Tibetan affairs was to have an ironic sequel. The Dalai Lama, who had fled from the British to Mongolia, found himself unable to resist the re-imposition of Chinese authority in 1906. Chinese suzerainty over Tibet was confirmed once again by a convention between China and Britain. In 1910, a Chinese army advanced upon Lhasa, and the Dalai Lama—with his adviser Dorjiev—fled once more, this time to British India. After the Chinese revolution of 1911, the Tibetans were able (in 1913) to throw off Chinese suzerainty, and in 1914 negotiations between Tibet, China, and Britain led to British, though not Chinese, recognition of Tibetan independence.

Burma and Siam

Imperialist activity in South-east Asia from 1850 onwards was mainly a product of rivalry between the well-established British empire in India, Burma and Malaya, and the French, determined to acquire an empire in Indo-China. Britain's primary aim was to avoid a contiguous frontier with French possessions and to maintain some form of *cordon sanitaire* between the two imperialisms. French attempts at penetrating Upper Burma, which resulted in its annexation by Britain in 1886, were essentially a side issue, though an important one. The danger of open war between the two countries was in fact created by what was known as the 'Siamese Question'.

The situation in Burma was brought about by the desire of the Burmese kings of Ava to maintain their territories against British encroachment. Over an essentially trivial provocation, Britain had annexed Lower Burma in 1852 (see page 41), and though the King of Ava, Mindon Min (reigned 1853–78), remained on reasonably friendly terms with the British, he refrained from making agreements with them until 1862, when he signed a commercial treaty. After serious internal disorders, Mindon—in the hope of obtaining arms from Britain—agreed to a treaty (in 1867) which granted to Britain extra-territorial privileges. Unfortunately, the British put many obstacles in the way of supplying arms to Mindon, as they feared that he might use them in an attempt to recover those parts

of Burma now occupied by the British. Mindon therefore began to cultivate relations with other European states, notably France and Italy, in order on the one hand to obtain arms, and on the other to create some sort of counterbalance to British pretensions. The French were in fact already well established in Upper Burma. They had helped in the construction of Mindon's new capital at Mandalay; Frenchmen supervised the Royal Mint, and ran Mindon's arms factory. A Burmese envoy negotiated commercial treaties in France and Italy in 1872. A French representative arrived in Mandalay in 1873 to obtain Burmese ratification of the treaty. There he signed three secret agreements, the first offering French good offices in the settlement of disputes to which Burma was a party, the second to provide French officers to train the Burmese army, and the third to allow Frenchmen in Burma to be subject to Burmese law. These agreements were soon repudiated by the French government on the grounds that its envoy had exceeded his instructions. The Italian treaty remained simply a commercial convention and was duly ratified.

The deterioration of Anglo-Burmese relations under Mindon's successor, Thibaw, was compounded by Thibaw's attempt to play off France against Britain. A Burmese mission, sent to Europe in May 1883, ostensibly to collect scientific and industrial information, began negotiations in Paris for the supply of French arms. A démarche by the British government produced categoric assurances from the French that no facilities would be granted to the Burmese for the purchase of arms. Britain's suspicions were not, however, allayed by the fact that the Burmese mission remained in Paris. Under British pressure, the French government finally admitted in July 1884 that the Burmese were trying to negotiate a full political alliance with France. The French government promised that no such alliance would be concluded. The Burmese mission, however, was still in Paris in the following January. The French government assured the British that, though a commercial agreement had been signed, that was all. A French consul was, however, to be stationed at Mandalay.

The consul arrived in the Burmese capital in May 1885 and it soon became clear that the French had been granted wide concessions. A French bank was established in Mandalay, and a railway from Mandalay to Toungoo in British Burma was financed. Rumour had

it that the French were negotiating to take over the postal system, to run river steamers on the Irrawaddy in competition with the British-owned fleet, and to open a trade route to the French possession of Tongking. The consul did, however, try to persuade Thibaw to establish better relations with the British. In August 1885, the contents of a letter given by the French prime minister, Jules Ferry, to the Burmese envoy in Paris in the previous January, leaked out. The letter contained a discreetly worded promise that, as soon as the French had fully established their control over Tongking (where they were still involved in war with China; see page 64), arms would be supplied to Burma. Ferry had, however, fallen from office in March 1885 because of his forward policy in Indo-China, and the new French government repudiated its consul in Mandalay and recalled him to France.

This left the Burmese king, Thibaw, without foreign support, though he proceeded on the assumption that it still existed. Indeed, it is reasonably certain that the French government was only biding its time until its difficulties in Tongking had been overcome. The British, however, having been offered a suitable pretext for war, sent Thibaw an ultimatum. The British found Thibaw's reply unsatisfactory and, in an almost bloodless campaign, they occupied Mandalay in November 1885.

The desire to trade with China was the primary cause of Anglo-French rivalry in the Indo-Chinese peninsula. Both the British and French had been hoping that an easy route could be found into south-western China down which trade could flow, either through the Irrawaddy delta (controlled by the British) or the Mekong delta (controlled by France). A number of expeditions by nationals of both countries had been made in an endeavour to find out whether any route was practicable. The French had discovered as early as 1868 that the Mekong river was useless as a trade route. They then turned their attention to the possibility of a route into the Chinese province of Yunnan via the Red River in Tongking. The British had also been exploring a route to Yunnan from Bhamo in Upper Burma, but had abandoned their efforts after the murder of one of the explorers in 1875; the accession of Thibaw to the Burmese throne in 1878 put a stop to further investigations. The British nevertheless continued to search for a suitable route from Lower Burma. The prize sought by both Britain and France was the

monopoly of trade with western China, and it is not improbable that, if France had been less preoccupied with the war in Tongking and if Britain had not annexed Upper Burma, this conflict of interests might have spread to Europe.

After the British occupation of Upper Burma, Anglo-French hostility was centred on Siam. Most of the hostility was on the French side, for, in its empire-building, France was inclined to see British intrigue where it did not exist and to believe that there was a deliberate British policy to exclude France from areas in which Britain had decided to expand. In fact, Britain's actions were frequently stimulated by French provocation. The annexation of Upper Burma is the most important example. In the case of Siam, however, the situation was rather different. Britain had no intention of occupying the country and was, indeed, anxious to preserve Siamese independence. This did not prevent her from occupying territories in tributary relation with the court of Bangkok, but the surrender of small territories to both Britain and France paradoxically helped Siam to preserve her independence.

Siam's escape from imperialist occupation had something in common with that of Japan. A modernising ruler and aristocracy created conditions in which the European powers could trade with safety and profit. Diplomatic relations with the West had been friendly before 1850, and in 1855 Siam recognised that the danger posed by Western expansion increased the desirability of soft words. Britain, which now possessed a land frontier with Siam, took the initiative in 1855. An unequal treaty of the Chinese type with extra-territorial rights and freedom from the operation of Siamese laws was signed in that year. The Siamese, in an endeavour to balance British influence, concluded similar treaties with France and the United States in 1856, Denmark and the German Hanseatic cities in 1858, Portugal in 1859, Holland in 1860 and Prussia in 1862. In 1868, a British representative negotiated similar treaties on behalf of Belgium, Italy, Norway, and Sweden. Britain, however, reaped the main profit. Soon, British firms carried on most of the foreign business in Bangkok, held the largest portion of the teak forest concessions, and had the biggest capital investment in the country. France, as it did in China, gained more for Christian missionaries than for French merchants.

When France began to expand in Cochin China, the Siamese

feared that the French had imperialist designs on territories over which Siam exercised suzerainty. In 1863, the King of Cambodia was forced to accept French protection and Siam accepted the situation in a treaty with France in 1867. As the French increased their control over Vietnam, they claimed that certain areas occupied by Siam, or over which Siam exercised suzerainty, had been at one time part of Vietnam and should be restored. Their view—one particularly suited to French expansionist ambition—was that Siam, frustrated in her hopes of expanding southwards into Malaya and Burma and westwards into Cambodia, had intruded in Vietnam's sphere by turning her attention to the Laotian states in the north. In 1872, at the request of the King of Luang Prabang whose territory was being threatened by armed refugees from the anti-Taiping campaign in China, Siam had sent a force to cooperate with the king's army. The Chinese retired to fortified strongholds, and the Siamese withdrew after obtaining a rather vague acknowledgement of their suzerainty. The activities of the Chinese continued to make the King of Luang Prabang dependent upon Siamese support.

In 1883—the year before the French established their protectorate in Vietnam—a Siamese–Laotian force was severely defeated by the Chinese. A large Siamese force was then sent to garrison Luang Prabang. This force arrived in October 1885, and two Siamese commissioners were appointed to share the administration of the country with the king. The Siamese force had been dispatched with such secrecy that the French representative in Bangkok only learned of it after the expedition had left. The French chose to believe that Siam was acting on British advice, but this belief appears to have been unfounded.

Siam's action brought a warning from France, which also put pressure on the Emperor of Vietnam to advance his claim on Luang Prabang. Siam explained that she had merely been helping the King of Luang Prabang against Chinese bandits. Vietnam, however, laid claim to the region on the grounds that Luang Prabang had paid tribute-money to her since the seventeenth century, and the French asked Siam to accept a joint commission to examine the boundaries of Luang Prabang. In May 1886, an agreement was reached which permitted the French to instal a vice-consul at Luang Prabang. The Siamese, however, kept the consul waiting for six months, so that their forces in Luang Prabang could crush the Chinese. Soon after

he finally arrived, in February 1887, the consul was told by the Siamese commander in Luang Prabang that the country had been pacified. The commander was also able to present him with a map of the territories belonging to the King of Luang Prabang, which he maintained made the appointment of a joint frontier commission no longer necessary.

The name of the consul was Auguste Pavie. He had a great reputation as explorer of the Mekong valley, and he had been instructed to explore routes connecting the Mekong with Tongking. Pavie left Luang Prabang in March 1887 but promptly returned to the capital when news reached him that it might be attacked. When he arrived, he found that the Siamese had left the capital with the main body of their army. Early in June, however, the capital was indeed attacked by a chief who was both anti-French and anti-Siamese, and whose two sons had been taken to Bangkok as hostages. This chief sacked the city, and the king, his Siamese advisor, and Pavie were all forced to flee. The Siamese invited the king to Bangkok while another Siamese expedition was prepared. The hostages were sent back to Luang Prabang.

Later in the year, Siam agreed to the establishment of a joint Franco-Siamese frontier commission. The French, however, who were engaged in the pacification of the upper region of Tongking, were determined to annex the area claimed by their tributary, the Emperor of Vietnam. French forces moved against the Chinese bandits in twelve areas claimed by Vietnam, and defeated them. In October 1888, Siam agreed to the surrender of these territories to the French.

The British annexation of Upper Burma in 1886 had also involved a block of Shan states, nominally independent but paying allegiance to the Burmese kings. The British had intended to make the Salween river the eastern boundary of their new territories, but some of the Shan states stretched across the river. The most important of these trans-Salween states were Keng Tung and Kiang Hung. If Britain decided on the Salween frontier (see map, p. 40), the question of who would control the Shan areas on the other side of the river posed certain problems. Neither China nor Siam could be allowed to absorb these. It was unthinkable that France should be permitted to extend her frontiers to meet those of British Burma. The British therefore decided to secure the allegiance of the trans-Salween states

themselves. In an attempt to avoid antagonising Siam, Britain invited her to take part in delineating the boundaries across the Salween. Siam did not accept the invitation, but she did accept the decision of a British commission which reported in 1889.

The French now appeared on the scene with the suggestion that Siam should be designated a buffer state between the British and French territories and that the Siamese frontiers should accordingly be delineated. The French ambassador in London proposed that, in the first instance, the frontiers of Siam with Burma and Annam should be settled. In the case of Luang Prabang, the French government proposed that a line be drawn from a point due east of the city south to the Mekong river, and that from there on to Cambodia the river should be the frontier between French and Siamese territory (see map, page 56). The British government, though agreeing in principle with the idea that Siam should be a buffer state, asked for further details of the proposed boundary with Annam. In August 1889, Britain submitted her own version of the frontiers of Siam, and asked for French comment. The French government did not reply until February 1892.

The delay was explained by the despatch in 1890 of a mission of exploration under Auguste Pavie to study the topography of the Laotian states and, in fact, to pave the way for further French expansion. France's aim was to increase her influence in the area and decrease that of Siam *before* discussing with Britain the delineation of the frontier. Siam, aware of French intentions, began to make preparations to resist any encroachment.

In February 1892, Pavie was appointed Resident Minister in Bangkok. The day after his appointment was announced, the French ambassador in London—after stating that his government was anxious to avoid conflict with Britain—suggested that the best solution to the Siamese problem was for both countries to guarantee that they would not extend their influence beyond the upper Mekong. As French influence did not yet extend that far, the proposal had a suspicious ring to it. But, before discussions could proceed, there was a change of government in Britain. In two Notes of December 1892 and April 1893, the new government stated its view. This was that Britain's annexation of Upper Burma had brought with it certain rights east of the Mekong river. Part of the northern area (Kiang Hung) of the Shan state of Keng Tung lay on

the east bank of the river, as did Keng Cheng, a dependency of Keng Tung. Britain intended to transfer the Kiang Hung area to China, and the Keng Cheng to Siam. The Notes warned France that her suggestion was unacceptable and that, unless the French were prepared to be more precise about Siam's eastern and northern borders, Britain could not conclude any agreement fixing the frontiers of that country.

At this point, negotiations broke down, although not before the French ambassador had revealed, in a conversation with the British foreign secretary, that France did not propose to admit that Siam had any claim at all to territory on the left bank of the Mekong; everything on that side of the river belonged to Vietnam. To this astonishingly frank disclosure the British took no formal exception, and France was encouraged to carry on with her plans. The protagonists of a forward policy had already begun preparing public opinion in France for further expansion in Indo-China. A number of 'incidents'—the expulsion of two French agents, and the death (from natural causes) of a French representative at Luang Prabang—were presented as examples of Siamese wickedness. Agitation in the French chamber of deputies had led, in February 1893, to the governor-general of Indo-China being instructed to take action against the Siamese if immediate reparation was not received, and in March, at much the same time as the French ambassador was making his candid remarks to the British foreign secretary, Pavie in Bangkok was presenting the French case that all territory on the left bank of the Mekong belonged to Vietnam. The Siamese government suggested putting the matter to arbitration, but Pavie demanded the immediate evacuation of Siamese forces from the disputed areas. The following night, the French organised three military columns to occupy, by force if necessary, the territories they claimed on the lower Mekong. One of these columns actually seized a town in Siam while the other two continued to advance.

Aware that their army was no match for the French, the Siamese again suggested that the matter should be referred to arbitration. At the same time, they sent desperate appeals for help to the British government. All they received in response was the advice that it would be wise not to do anything to provoke the French. Frontier incidents continued. The Siamese attacked one French column which had occupied an island (Khone) in the Mekong river and captured

the French commander, but under pressure from Britain they released him. Incidents, whether real or imagined by French publicists, were used by the French government to keep the situation tense. One which received wide publicity in France concerned a French official who had allegedly been murdered by the Siamese; in fact, he had been killed when the force he was attached to attacked a Siamese party. By the time the truth was established, the French version had created such a public outcry in France against the Siamese that the government felt justified in taking offensive action against Siam—as it had intended to do all along.

In July 1893, it was rumoured in Bangkok that the French intended to send a naval squadron to blockade the port. The British despatched a warship to reinforce a gunboat already there, to protect British lives and property. They informed the French government of this move and added that they were trying to persuade the Siamese government to negotiate with France. In return, the French promised that they would inform the British about the movement of their own naval vessels off the coasts of Siam. In July, Pavie told the Siamese authorities that two French gunboats were being despatched to reinforce the one already anchored opposite the French legation. He asked for pilots to bring the gunboats up river from Paknam. The Siamese replied that, by the terms of the Anglo-Siamese treaty of 1859, no foreign warships could pass Paknam without Siamese consent. Pavie ignored this argument and insisted that the French vessels would proceed up river even if the Siamese tried to stop them.

The Siamese now began to close the river. The British government reminded the French that they had promised to inform Britain of the movement of French ships, and also stated that British naval reinforcements would abide by the treaty and would not go beyond Paknam. The French government assured Britain that the French vessels would also remain there, and on 13 July Pavie reported this assurance to the Siamese government. On the same day, however, two French warships arrived at Paknam to find the British vessels already there. The British commander advised the French to wait for instructions. Instead, they began to move up river. At this, the Siamese were unwise enough to fire the first shots, although they were unable to stop the ships proceeding. Pavie at once seized the opportunity of demanding that hostilities at Paknam be stopped and

that Siamese troops should be withdrawn from the Mekong. The Siamese—who were in no position to do otherwise—agreed. The French government, however, wanted a great deal more. It instructed Pavie to deliver an ultimatum demanding that the whole of the territory on the left bank of the Mekong (including Luang Prabang) should be ceded to France; that a large indemnity should be paid for the damage to the French ships at Paknam; and that those responsible for the firing, and for the alleged murder of the French official, should be punished. These demands were presented on 20 July. The Siamese accepted the second and third of the demands, but tried to compromise on the first and most important of them. Pavie refused to discuss the matter, and announced that he would leave Bangkok on 26 July if the Siamese did not accept *all* the demands. As soon as Pavie had left, it was assumed that the French would impose a naval blockade on Bangkok.

The British government now, rather belatedly, recognised the danger to British interests posed by France's ultimatum. For some reason, the British had chosen to believe that French claims on Siam were confined to territories on the lower Mekong. If Siam were forced to accept the terms of the French ultimatum, however, the French on the upper Mekong would acquire territory bordering on British Burma and would undoubtedly threaten British interests in the region. Britain instructed her ambassador in Paris to ask the French foreign minister for a clear and unequivocal statement of France's aims. The French minister replied that, as the terms of the ultimatum had been made public, the French government could not go back on them, but he assured the British that, after Siam had accepted the terms, the way would be open for the establishment of a buffer state between the British and French empires in the Indo-Chinese peninsula. In spite of their previous experience of French assurances, the British accepted the minister's statement at its face value and urged the Siamese government to yield to the French demands. This the Siamese did, two days after the French had begun to blockade the Menam river below Bangkok. But the French made additional demands, and they continued to insert all sorts of supplementary terms into the negotiations which followed. Though the British pressed France to modify her terms, they remained neutral—mainly from a fear that more active participation on Siam's side might lead them into a European war. The French,

too—despite the bellicosity of their colonialist elements—had become unwilling to envisage the possibility of driving Britain to action. It is, nevertheless, a little difficult to decide what that action might have been.

The British were more interested in their own future position in the north than in Siam's immediate troubles. They put an expert on the Shan states, J. G. Scott, in charge of the legation in Bangkok to represent Britain on the Buffer State Commission which was to decide upon the boundaries between the French and British spheres in the area of the upper Mekong. In 1892, arrangements had been made between China, Britain, and Siam for rectification of the eastern frontier of Burma. Two areas (Kiang Hung and Mong Lem) had been ceded to China on the understanding that they should not be transferred to any other country without Britain's approval. After the French had forced Siam to surrender territory on the upper Mekong, the Chinese—without reference to Britain—transferred Kiang Hung to France. Britain had also intended to cede Keng Cheng to Siam, but France now claimed it, as it lay on the left bank of the Mekong river. It was in this area that the buffer state was to be formed. Scott and Pavie arranged to meet at Mongsin, the capital of Keng Cheng, at the end of December 1894.

The ruler of the state, who had no idea what was going to happen to his territories, decided to hoist the French flag over his palace. Unfortunately, the British delegation arrived first. The ruler fled. Scott then had the French flag replaced by the British. When Pavie arrived, the affair nearly blew up into an international incident. The commission was abandoned, and negotiations were transferred to Europe. Neither Scott nor Pavie, the experts, could agree, and Scott persuaded his government that any buffer state would be so weak that it would undoubtedly try to preserve itself by intriguing with both the French and the British, and would therefore become a source of conflict rather than of reconciliation. On Scott's advice, the British government abandoned the whole project.

The failure of the Buffer State Commission resulted in an outburst of anglophobia in France, and at one moment it seemed that the two countries were drifting into war. In the negotiations which began in June 1895, Britain gave up her claims to territory east of the Mekong in return for a guarantee of the integrity of the Menam valley. A viable Siam emerged, in exchange for claims Britain had never, in

any case, had any intention of pressing. The French acquired a large amount of territory, but it was some time before they realised that it had little or no economic value, whereas they had given up French claims on the Menam valley, one of the richest regions in the whole area.

The Anglo-French agreement signed in July 1896 did not affect French claims in the west, and Franco-Siamese conflict continued there, though always at a level cool enough not to antagonise Britain. Anglo-French rivalry over the trade routes to Yunnan resulted in the construction of a railway from Hanoi to Kunming, but the British abandoned a project to connect Burma with Yunnan because of the engineering difficulties. In April 1904, the conclusion of the *entente cordiale* ended Franco-British conflict over Siam and opened up a new phase in Siam's relations with the two countries. Siam had been forced to give up 90,000 square miles of territory in order to preserve her independence, and, in 1904, a new treaty with France included Siam's formal renunciation of suzerainty over Luang Prabang. A joint commission was appointed to settle the frontier with Cambodia. In 1907, Siam surrendered two Cambodian provinces to France and, in return, received back a small amount of territory that she had given up in 1904. In 1909, Britain—in return for abandoning her extra-territorial rights in Siam—persuaded the Siamese to give up their claims on the Malay states of Kelantan, Trengganu, Kedah and Perlis. With these matters settled, Siam could now consider herself safe from foreign encroachment.

2 *The Penetration of China*

European penetration of China reflects a new stage in the evolution of the Western empires. On the surface, it might appear to be a repetition of the beginnings of dominion in India and elsewhere—of the flag following trade. But this was not so. Territorial aggression did take place, but only, to any significant degree, on the inner-Asian frontiers of China. Russo-Chinese relations were a product of the conflict between two *land* powers, a type of conflict which follows a different logic from that of maritime empires. Elsewhere, China was the victim of imperialism without annexation. Russia apart, the Western powers preferred to acquire 'spheres of influence' rather than territory, and to indulge in what was frequently cooperative

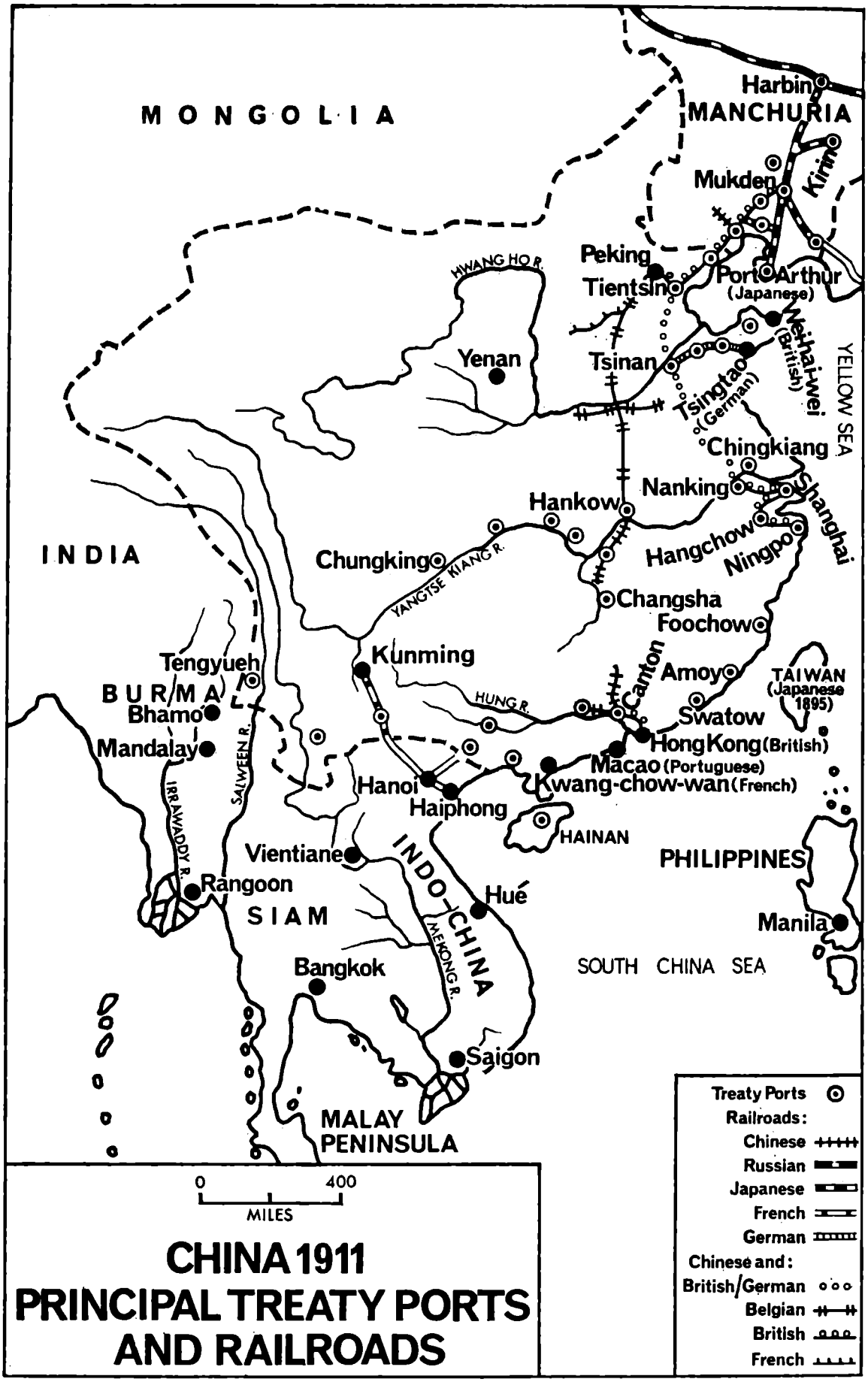
pillaging rather than in the risks of attempted dominion. This situation was, in part, due to the fact that no single European power was really capable of absorbing China into its imperial system. Certainly, none could afford to fight the others for it. This did not mean that there was no conflict of ambitions, but the conflict was on a new level and it was a level unique to the period of highly-developed capitalism. The weapons were no longer armies and navies, but loans and concessions. Lenin called the years from, roughly, 1870 to 1914 'the era of investment-imperialism'. Others, with China particularly in mind, have used the phrase 'aggression by railroad'. Both are right, but it was also a period in which the rising chauvinism of Germany and Japan produced what might be called the 'imperialism of prestige', of the desire of the 'have-nots' to stake their claim to international status in the current vernacular of the 'haves'—i.e. in the possession of overseas territory and spheres of influence.

Forcing the gates of China, for so long barricaded against intrusion by the West, was the achievement of the British. The Treaty of Nanking (1842) ceded to Britain the island of Hong Kong and opened four ports, in addition to Canton, to foreign trade. These ports, Amoy, Foochow, Ningpo, and Shanghai, were the first of the so-called 'treaty ports' which became the bases for Europe's penetration of China. (See page 142 for a note on extra-territoriality and the treaty ports system.) The Treaty of Nanking, and a supplementary treaty signed in 1843, fixed a schedule of tariffs on exports and imports. There was also a 'most favoured nation' clause, which was reproduced in later Chinese treaties with the United States (July 1844), and France (October 1844). This clause—which was in effect a guarantee that each signatory would receive the same privileges as might be granted at any future date to any other power—became the basis of China's relations with the West. The treaties deprived China of the right to fix her own tariff levels at a time when an increase in the revenue from Customs duties was most needed by the Chinese government. Nevertheless, realising the fiscal advantages of increased trade even at tariff levels outside its control, the government not only reconciled itself to the opening of the four ports but even to the opening of more.

The Chinese government, however, was unwilling to progress from the treaty-port principle towards the opening up of inland

China to foreign penetration. The court at Peking would not permit foreigners to travel freely throughout China, nor allow Western diplomatic representatives at the capital, nor grant Christian missionaries the right to proselytise. They had appeared to give way in an imperial edict of 1844 by permitting the French to erect Roman Catholic churches in the treaty ports and allowing Chinese nationals to become Roman Catholics; and two years later, the French had also won an edict of tolerance promising the restoration of such churches in other parts of China as had been confiscated during past persecutions. But these edicts, as well as one extending tolerance to Protestants were, in practice, resisted. The hostility of the Chinese government did not, however, prevent Christian missionaries from illegally leaving the treaty ports to carry on their evangelical activities elsewhere, and because foreign missionaries—like all other foreigners—were protected by treaty from the operation of Chinese law, the Chinese could do no more than return them to the treaty ports, from which they set out again as soon as possible. All these factors, and the extra-legal position of foreign nationals in particular, created dangerous friction.

Between 1842 and the second wave of Western aggression in 1856, the pressure of the West upon China increased. During this period, the smuggling of opium into China, which had been the cause of the war of 1839–42, continued unabated. Attempts by Britain to make the Chinese government legalise the trade were abortive. By the 1850s, the import of opium rose to some 60,000 chests, double the amount in 1830. The money the merchants received from their imports of opium paid for vastly increased exports of tea and silk. But the Chinese market for machine-textiles, which had been thought to be vast, turned out to be disappointingly small. The European merchants believed that this was because of heavy internal taxes on goods in transit, but the real reasons were peasant self-sufficiency and rural poverty of which the Europeans, in the ghetto of the treaty ports, were unaware. The merchants lobbied their home governments for aid in opening up what they thought to be an immense potential market in the interior, with the result that there was intense pressure for revision of the existing treaties. The treaty ports, though centres of aggressive competition between the merchants of various countries, were united in a desire for change, in their impatience with Chinese resistance to Western



CHINA 1911
PRINCIPAL TREATY PORTS AND RAILROADS

penetration and their desire for the diplomatic support of their respective governments.

Friction between the Western powers and the Chinese government was reinforced by the latter's weakness in the face of a series of peasant-based rebellions which tattered much of China for two decades. Although the part played by foreigners in these revolts against the authority of Peking was, on the whole, minor, it was not without importance to the history of Western aggression in China. The general deterioration of the Chinese administration, riven by corruption and shaken by the very size of the problems presented to it, had resulted by the end of the 1840s in a state of affairs ripe for rebellion. A number of natural disasters—particularly the overflowing of the Yellow River in 1852—disturbed rural patterns and encouraged banditry and disorder. The patrolling of coastal waters by Western (mainly British) gunboats drove pirate gangs inland, adding yet another element of unrest. The inability of central government officials to impose or maintain order naturally led to a diminution of the emperor's prestige and tarnished the 'mandate of heaven' which was supposed to give authority to the administration. The growth of secret societies, which tended to polarise opposition, also contributed to the tension.

The principal outburst against the Chinese government was the Taiping rebellion, which lasted for thirteen years and was finally suppressed only with assistance from the Western powers. The rebel leader, Hung Hsiu-ch'üan (1814–64), had failed the examinations for the civil service; after a serious illness, he had seen visions. He found an explanation of these visions in the Protestant Bible, and, from the assumption that he had seen God and Jesus, he went on to the realisation that he was the Younger Brother of Jesus, with a mission to save mankind from evil. Hung's followers organised a military-religious society called *Pai Shang-ti hui* (God Worshippers Society) which attracted many of those whose lives had been disturbed by the breakdown of authority and economic chaos. Their first attack on government troops took place in July 1850. Having won this battle, Hung moved on to capture the city of Yung-an in Kwangsi province, where, in September 1851, he proclaimed the Heavenly Kingdom of the Great Peace (*T'ai-p'ing t'ien quo*). By March 1853, the Taipings had captured the second city of China, Nanking, but they were unable to take the capital, Peking.

Because of their lack of trained personnel, the Taipings were not capable of administering the territory they had conquered. They did, however, try to establish a primitive economic communism—all possessions being given to the treasury which, in turn, supplied the people. Unfortunately, the Taipings' strict puritanism and anti-Confucian ideology alienated many who might have given them support against the Peking government. Nevertheless, faced also with a number of smaller rebellions, the government was unable to re-impose its authority.

At one time, the Christian element in the Taiping rebellion had seemed to warrant support from the Christian West, but it was soon discovered that the Taipings' Christianity was, to say the least, unorthodox, and it also became apparent that a Taiping victory might even result in a strong central government more capable of resisting Western demands than the existing Ch'ing dynasty.

As central government control crumbled under the weight of internal rebellion, the Westerners on the coast were also preparing their attack. Once again, it was the British who had taken the first step, though without success. In 1847, they had attacked Canton, from which they withdrew after a promise was given that foreigners would be granted access to the city. They considered making another attack in 1851, but decided that such an operation might increase internal anarchy and thus interrupt profitable trade; soon after, their attention was temporarily diverted by the Crimean war (1854–56).

In 1854, however, Britain, France, and the United States requested a revision of their treaties on the basis of the 'most favoured nation' clause, which in the British treaty of 1842 provided for such a request after the lapse of twelve years. This request was refused—not at Peking, where there were no Western diplomatic representatives to make the request—but at Canton, Shanghai, and Tientsin. This refusal raised the old problem: should the Western powers continue to accept the exclusion of their diplomatic representatives from Peking, or should they force the Chinese court to adopt Western diplomatic practice? There was no real doubt about the answer. The Western powers were losing patience, and, they believed, prestige.

It was the British who found a suitable point of conflict, one which may appear trivial today but represented that preoccupation with

status which was to be a characteristic of the subsequent half-century of Western relations with China. In October 1856, a Chinese vessel owned and crewed by Chinese, but flying a British flag, having a British captain, and the British possession of Hong Kong as its port of registry, was boarded by Chinese officials at Canton. On the grounds that the vessel, the *Arrow*, was a pirate, the officials arrested most of the crew and hauled down the British flag. Britain's demands for satisfaction for this 'insult' to the flag were ignored, though all the arrested crew members were in fact released. The British, however, were not to be deflected by this. The crew were only Chinese, but the flag was the Union Jack. The day after the crew was released, a British naval force sailed up the Canton river, captured the forts commanding the approaches to the city, and bombarded the Chinese viceroy's palace. The Chinese replied with what was undoubtedly, despite its ambiguity, a declaration of war. In Britain, the government supported the action of its representatives on the spot, and was defeated by a vote in the House of Commons. Parliament was dissolved but, in the election that followed, the voters demonstrated their approval of the government's China policy. France also had discovered a suitable *casus belli*; a French missionary, Chapdelaine, had been seized by the Chinese in Kwangsi province, tortured and executed. Prestige and morality linked hands. The rights of both 'incidents' are doubtful. The Chinese action over the matter of the flag may well have been arbitrary—but they were certainly within their sovereign rights in acting as they did. The French missionary was in an area expressly forbidden to him by treaty. Legality, however, was of little consequence; the Western powers were determined to force the emperor in Peking to accept their view of the world. It took them four years to persuade him.

France and Britain prepared for war. The United States, which late in 1856 had put a Chinese fort on the Canton river out of action in reprisal for another flag insult, declined an invitation to join in. Action was delayed until 1857 by Britain's preoccupation with Persia (see page 84) and the outbreak of the Mutiny in India (see page 34), but a British and French force seized Canton in 1858 and deported the Chinese viceroy to Calcutta. The allies' main aim, however, was to menace the emperor at Peking. Soon, their fleets captured the Taku forts protecting Tientsin, and in June 1858

Britain, France, Russia, and America were in a position to conclude treaties with representatives of the central government. The terms included the right to establish diplomatic missions in Peking. With the conclusion of these treaties, British and French forces withdrew.

When the first British and French representatives arrived off Tientsin in June 1859, however, they were prevented from proceeding to the capital. Four British gunboats, trying to continue upriver, were sunk by the guns of the Taku forts, which had been restored to China after the signing of the treaties in the previous year. This repulse brought back the British and French forces, much augmented, in 1860. The allies, sweeping the Chinese defenders before them, entered Peking in October of the same year, to find that the emperor had fled to Jehol, in Mongolia.

In the subsequent treaties, France obtained sanction for Catholic missions to own property in the interior of China, as well as the restitution of property previously confiscated. But Britain secured the lease of the Kowloon peninsula opposite Hong Kong, as well as winning a significant place in the annals of what might be called cultural aggression. The Chinese had seized a British party which was negotiating under a flag of truce. As a reprisal for the execution of twenty men of the party, the British negotiator, Lord Elgin, destroyed some two hundred buildings of the emperor's summer palace near Peking. Elgin's family seems to have had something of a tradition for looting the beautiful; his father, forty years before, had removed portions of the frieze, pediments, and metopes of the Parthenon in Athens, and sold them to the British Museum.

The privileges secured in the treaty settlements of 1858–60 were, by the most favoured nation clause, also assured to the United States and Russia. The treaties themselves invoked no new principle, but they enlarged the extent of foreign rights in China. The principal gains were made by Britain and Russia. Britain already possessed Hong Kong, which, because the estuary of the Canton river was too shallow for deep-draft shipping, became the port of call for traffic with south China. In 1860, the security of Hong Kong was reinforced by the acquisition of Kowloon on the Chinese mainland. Britain's position gave her considerable prestige, because she was the only Western nation—except Portugal—in possession of a territorial base actually on Chinese soil. Her policy became primarily directed at seeing that no other Western power acquired a base

nearer to Peking than her own. Britain's interest was to keep China open to trade—and trade through Hong Kong—rather than to acquire further territories. The attempts by other nations to establish 'spheres of influence' were, in part, aimed at undermining Britain's trade by political dominance rather than direct competition.

The British trade position could be held comparatively easily against the maritime powers, but not against the encroachments of the land-based power of Russia. Indeed, when Britain and France had succeeded in opening China to merchants and missionaries, they had inadvertently permitted Russia to annex Chinese territory. Russia's move towards the Pacific had, to a large extent, been made at China's expense (see page 67), but Russia still required formal acknowledgement from China of the 'cession' of territories she had occupied. This she received in the Sino-Russian treaty signed in Peking in November 1860, which China granted as a reward for Russian mediation between the court and the allies. At that time, the Chinese were more alarmed by the occupation of Canton and the threat to Peking than by Russian designs on Manchuria. From the treaty, Russia obtained not only confirmation of what she already held, but a bonus in the shape of the whole Maritime Province of Manchuria, between the Ussuri river and the Pacific, on whose coast she had already founded in July 1859 the town of Vladivostock.

The allied capture of Peking helped to bring about a change in the balance of power at the Chinese court. The death of the anti-foreign Hsien-feng emperor, in August 1861, was followed by a *coup d'état* by Prince Kung, the emperor's brother—who believed that the only way to save the dynasty was to appease the foreigners rather than fight them—and the Dowager Empress T'zu-h'si. The government, having accepted the principle that it was preferable to put down internal rebellion instead of resisting the foreigner, turned to the problem of the Taipings. Government forces had already had some success against them by using Western arms and Western mercenaries, though the Western powers officially disapproved of the use of both. Taiping forces, however, in the last great surge of the rebellion, reached the outskirts of Shanghai early in 1862. Britain and France swiftly became willing to cooperate with the government, in defence of the treaty ports. The actual suppression of the Taipings which followed, though assisted by the activities of foreign military

officers, was really a Chinese achievement. At the same time, it was a victory for Western weapons and training methods. In this sense at least, the Chinese had learned some of the lessons of Western aggression. The Taipings were finally defeated when Nanking, the rebel capital, was taken in July 1864 by a Chinese general without foreign assistance.

Though the internal threat to the dynasty had been overcome, the Western powers were now fully entrenched in China. Over the next few years eleven new treaty 'ports', some of them inland, were opened. The trade in opium was legalised. Foreign imports were made subject to so low a transit duty that they could favourably compete with local products. The Chinese Imperial Maritime Customs Service, staffed by foreigners, ensured the necessary revenue to defray indemnities due under the various treaties. Missionaries were now free to travel in the interior, and Chinese converts began to take advantage of their religion in order to claim and be granted the protection of the Western powers. Foreign gunboats sustained the position of the Western ministers in Peking. The armed honeymoon of the treaty system had begun.

The honeymoon lasted until 1870. The period from 1860 until that date saw a continuing increase in anti-foreign sentiment and an attempt by China to modernise herself in an endeavour to resist Western pressures. The Chinese government had before it the example of a modernising Japan, but Chinese society was unable for a number of reasons to mobilise the forces necessary for modernisation. The source of its difficulties lay in the Confucian institutions of Chinese society, which proved even in decay to be remarkably durable. In order to modernise, it was necessary to destroy traditional institutions and the modes of thought they represented. Japan—presumably because her institutions were themselves adopted from outside—had found them comparatively easy to dispense with. For China, it was different. Even so, in the 1860s, China did appear to be making vigorous efforts to modernise—rather more vigorous, in fact, than Japan at that particular time. The most immediate need was for Western armaments, and Prince Kung used the excuse of suppressing internal rebellion in order to procure Western arms which he hoped could later be used to keep the foreigners in check. Arsenals were constructed, shipyards established, Western scientific and technical manuals translated. China

appeared to be well on the way to becoming a modern military and naval power.

It was, however, an illusion, for with this limited modernisation went a simultaneous attempt to revive the traditional form of government. This reactionary process emerged from the desire to restore stability to a social order shaken by internal rebellion and Western aggression. It was essentially conservative in motivation, and expressed an urge to return to that state of independence from 'foreign' ideas which for so long had lain at the foundation of China's sense of superiority. Those who sought to revive the past consistently rejected modernisation because the Chinese tradition was essentially antagonistic to it. The attempt at conservative restoration was carried out with considerable vigour, but it was dependent on the re-establishment of central government authority. Internal rebellion had been suppressed, and traditional government restored in the provinces. But this did not increase authority at the centre, since, though the provincial governors who had established themselves after the suppression of rebellion were administrators in the old style, they emphasised *regional* power. Their loyalty to the dynasty was fundamentally conditioned by the freedom they were permitted to exercise in their regional areas. The central government was now dependent upon their goodwill, not upon its own authority over them.

It is easy to see why the Chinese considered the activities of Christian missionaries as a distinct threat to the social order, based as this was upon Confucian morality. Catholic and Protestant missionaries carried their religion to every part of China during the 1860s. The Catholics were the most active, as, in spite of persecution before the signing of the treaties, there already existed a Chinese Catholic community. By 1870, this numbered about 400,000. In the same year, the number of Chinese Protestants was only about 6,000, and most of these were to be found in or near the treaty ports. In the interior, Western missionaries soon began to threaten the position of traditional élites. The humanitarian activities of the missionaries—in the case of orphans and other welfare services—were, generally speaking, more efficient than those of the local gentry. Furthermore, with their extra-legal status and the advantage they had of being able to call for aid from their own government, the missionaries were able to challenge local authority because they

were not subject to it. Most of the converts—sometimes sneeringly, but no less truthfully called 'rice Christians', because their conversion had been bought by hand-outs of food—came from among the poorer sections of Chinese society, and it appeared that Christian missionaries were mobilising the lower classes against the gentry. Their activities were, in a real sense, subversive, but the central government, intent upon fulfilling its treaty obligations with the Western powers, could hardly move effectively against Christians. Individuals, however, suffered from no such inhibitions. Anti-Christian incidents, in the main unorganised, were continually taking place throughout China, creating an ever-widening area of hostility with the West.

The question of treaty revision again presented itself in 1866–69. The European merchants in the treaty ports were demanding a large number of extra concessions, including the right to construct railways in the interior, the abolition of certain taxes, and a number of other items. Anti-foreign elements among the Chinese governing classes, however—encouraged by their successes against internal rebellion—were demanding the expulsion of foreign missionaries. Britain's representatives negotiated a treaty which was violently attacked by British commercial interests, and their lobby at Westminster was sufficiently influential to persuade the British government to refuse to ratify its terms. This inevitably harmed the prestige of Prince Kung and the moderate elements in Peking. The rejection of the treaty was a blow to Sino-British cooperation, and the end of the honeymoon was soon precipitated by an incident which took place at Tientsin in June 1870.

The incident resulted from interference by Western representatives intent on protecting the treaty rights of foreign missionaries. On the whole, the British had preferred that these rights should be enforced by the Chinese authorities themselves—though this had not prevented them from using force when they felt it necessary to nudge the Chinese into action. The French, however, having no commerce to protect, used anti-missionary incidents as an excuse for taking action designed to impress the Chinese with their superior strength. This they did partly for the sake of prestige, but mainly in the hope of extending their political influence. French Sisters of Charity supplied the match for an explosion by offering money to people who delivered Chinese orphans to them. The Chinese viewed

this as an incitement to criminals to kidnap children for profit. A mob which gathered outside the orphanage in Tientsin was fired on by the French consul, who was then murdered, as were twenty other foreigners including ten nuns. The Western powers, fearing a popular rising was imminent, despatched gunboats to Tientsin. War was only prevented by the situation in Europe, for France's defeat by the Prussians had left her without the means to support her bellicose demands in China. But the incident left Sino-Western relations torn by fears of Chinese militancy and anger at the breakdown of the era of cooperation.

From 1870 onwards, the threat of Western military action inside China to protect the interests of Western nationals was reinforced by encroachments on the periphery of China as well as on states in traditional tributary relationship with the Chinese empire. Newly active European powers, particularly Germany, began to develop a desire for overseas possessions and the increased international status they undoubtedly brought. Britain, believing that her worldwide trade was about to be threatened by new imperialisms, greatly expanded her empire. The opening of the short sea route to the East through the Suez Canal facilitated rapid movement of troops. The construction of international telegraph cables (1870–71) brought the Far East not only nearer to European home governments, but also to the reading public. A new sense of destiny began to infuse the literate. Doctrines of the 'survival of the fittest' gave the support of 'scientific truth' to imperial-commercial theory. Duty and patriotism created the concept of the 'white man's burden'. Pressure groups had always existed in the power structure of the colonial nations. Usually they represented entrenched economic interests, but in the last decades of the nineteenth century, a new group appeared—the informed public, to whose opinion democratic governments were particularly vulnerable. Western conflicts in Asia came to reflect the state of public opinion in the European nations as well as commercial desires to maintain or expand trade.

Competition between the Western nations soon became intense. Britain, with the largest stake in Asia, was on the defensive. Russia and France sought to expand territorially from their bases in Manchuria and Cochin China. The United States accepted the increase in trading profits brought about by British activity, without descending from her high-minded, critical pedestal. Even Japan

prepared to stake her claim for a share in the apparently inevitable carving up of China. Russian and French territorial expansion are dealt with elsewhere (page 66 ff. and page 54 ff.), as are Japanese and Russian involvement in the affairs of another Chinese tributary, Korea (page 70 and page 150 ff.).

The Sino-Japanese war—fought primarily to gain control of Korea—altered the balance of power not only in China but between the competing foreign nations. From the Sino-Japanese treaty of 1895 (Shimonoseki) Japan was to gain Formosa, the Pescadores, and the Liaotung (South Manchuria) peninsula. Korea's independence was recognised, and China was left with a large indemnity to pay, a commercial agreement, and the commitment to open up more treaty ports. The British, who had on the whole been pro-Chinese, turned away from China after her overwhelming defeat by Japan. Japan's success, however, did not please France, Russia, or Germany—the latter newly arrived on the imperial scene and anxious for territory. Russian interests were definitely threatened by the proposed cession to Japan of the Liaotung peninsula, with the ice-free harbour of Port Arthur at its southern extremity. The Russian finance minister, Witte, deciding that there was more profit to be made out of being an ally of China than an enemy, persuaded France and Germany to join Russia in demanding that the peninsula be returned to Chinese sovereignty. A Russian Note to Japan declared that Japanese possession of Liaotung 'would mean a constant threat to the capital of China and at the same time would render illusory the independence of Korea, and that it constitutes accordingly a permanent obstacle in the way of peace in the Far East'. The German minister in Tokyo made a threatening speech, the navies of the three powers poised themselves to break communications between China and Japan, and even Britain advised the Japanese to submit. Japan was forced to evacuate Port Arthur.

Britain made the serious mistake of underestimating Russia's ambitions in the Far East as well as her capacity to achieve them. This illusion did not last long, however, for it soon became obvious that Russia was prepared to prosecute her designs on China with the greatest vigour. The principal problem facing the Russians in their eastward expansion had been the difficulty of overland communications. In effect, Russia's Siberian possessions were not so much an extension of European Russia as overseas territories supplied and

maintained from the sea. This was a perilous situation, for foreign naval forces, particularly those of Britain, could interrupt the long sea communications between European and Asiatic Russia without difficulty. As early as 1885, Russia planned the construction of a railway link between European Russia and the port of Vladivostock on the Pacific. In 1891, with the aid of French capital, work was begun on both ends of the line and completion was expected by 1903 (ultimately, it was 1905).

The building of the Trans-Siberian railway was an event of great significance in the history of Western aggression in East Asia. For the first time, a major imperial power was to emerge outside the range of British naval activity. British supremacy at sea had, until the construction of the railway across Siberia, been the final arbiter of colonial conflict. All European possessions in Asia were acquired and maintained by sea—and the sea was dominated by the British navy. Russian railway construction in central Asia had already seemed to threaten the security of India and British interests in the Near East. The completion of the Trans-Siberian railway would clearly endanger Britain's diplomatic and commercial ascendancy in China. Britain was to be faced by a land-based military power against which her naval forces could not be used.

This anticipated reversal of Britain's long-established—and, by other powers, long-disliked—strategic dominance was welcomed by those nations who feared Russian designs *in Europe* as well as by those who hoped to profit in Asia from any diminution of British ascendancy. The diversion of Russian energies to the Far East meant some relaxation in the rivalry between Austria and Russia in the Balkans, a rivalry which also involved imperial Germany as Austria's ally, and France, which had contracted an alliance with Russia in 1893 and was compelled to give Russia her support as the price of its continuance. Germany, Austria, and France, therefore, had significant *European* reasons for supporting Russian expansion in Asia. Because of this, Britain could find no allies against Russia's ambitions, as she had earlier been able to do when those ambitions were concentrated in Europe. Britain's need for support in face of such an uncooperative Europe was to lead her into an alliance (1902) with Japan, which could supply what Britain lacked—namely, powerful land forces. Britain was not, however, the only European power whose interests were menaced by Russia's preoccupation

with the Far East. France, too, was threatened. But ironically enough, France had hoped, through her alliance with Russia, to bring pressure to bear on Germany in Europe, and, when Russia turned her back upon Europe, France was still forced to support her in case opposition might result in Russia turning to Germany. Russia's Far Eastern activities, in effect, postponed conflict in Europe for twenty years. When Russia's Asian policy was shattered by her defeat in the Russo-Japanese war of 1904–05, she returned to European politics, with the result that continuing crises in the Balkans finally precipitated the outbreak of the First World War in 1914.

The association of Russia, Germany, and France, which was first directed against Japan in 1895 but was essentially anti-British, was still in existence ten years later. Effective cooperation between the three countries was inhibited by hostility between France and Germany. A genuine working partnership might well have resulted in the carve-up of China amongst the three countries, and it is difficult to see what Britain alone, or Britain and Japan in alliance, could have done to prevent it. But because of the conflict of purposes, the conquest of China was achieved by financiers rather than soldiers.

Russia's first move after her demands on Japan in 1895 was to arrange a loan through French and Russian bankers of four hundred million gold francs at a low rate of interest to help China pay off her indemnity to Japan. The loan represented about half the total. Also in 1895, the Russian minister, Witte, negotiated French participation in the establishment of the Russo-Chinese Bank. The French were, in fact, the principal shareholders. The bank was authorised to act in financial matters on behalf of the Chinese government, and also to acquire 'concessions for the construction of railways within the borders of China'. By the middle of 1896, Russia was asking for permission to build a railway from Vladivostock across Manchuria, in order to avoid the extra costs of construction involved in skirting round Chinese territory. The suggestion was presented in Peking not only as being in China's trading interests but also as having strategic value in case of any repetition of Japanese aggression.

In spite of these arguments, the Peking government was reluctant to accept the proposal. However, when the Chinese statesman, Li Hung-chang, visited St Petersburg for the coronation of Tsar Nicholas II, a secret treaty of alliance was signed (June 1896)

between China and Russia. It included clauses providing for joint action against any Japanese attempt to expand at China's expense, and for the building of a railway across Manchuria by the Russo-Chinese Bank. The first step was the establishment of the Chinese Eastern Railway Company, in which the shareholding was restricted to Chinese and Russian nationals. The railway, after its construction, was to become Chinese property in eighty years or to be available for purchase by the Chinese after thirty-six years. But in the meantime, the company was to have 'the absolute and exclusive right of administration of its lands'. This gave a special extra-territorial status to the land on which the railway lay, and it was protected by 'railway guards' who were to be, in effect, Russian regular troops.

The Russians also renewed their intrigues in Korea, and in 1897 the Russo-Korean Bank—a branch of the Russo-Chinese Bank—was founded. In this venture, Russia was again supported by French finance and diplomacy. France, too, was contemplating a railway from Indo-China to the Upper Yangtse river, which was intended to divert the trade of south-west China to a French port, thus reducing the importance of Hong Kong and Shanghai. This colossal project was never completed, partly because of the engineering difficulties (south China is particularly mountainous), and partly, after 1898, because of strong British opposition. A narrow-gauge line between Hanoi and Kunming in Yunnan was, however, completed in 1910. But in 1897, both the Russians and the French were staking their claims to possible areas of annexation by establishing spheres of influence linked to their own possessions on the Chinese borders by new railway constructions. They also, through a Belgian syndicate, received a concession in May 1887 to build a line from Peking to Hankow, running through the Chinese interior.

Of the three powers involved in the demands on Japan in 1895, Germany was of little value to the other two after they had succeeded in intimidating Japan. However, neither Russia nor France wanted to drive Germany into the arms of Britain—nor in fact did Germany particularly want to be driven there. If Germany joined forces with Britain, it was possible that, should Russia's designs in Asia be frustrated, she would return to her old forward movement in Europe. In the conflict between the desire for prestige abroad and the needs of national security at home, Germany's diplomatic efforts became distinctly schizoid and, as a result, ineffective.

At the time of the three-power demands on Japan, German bankers had been promised a share in the loan to China. But they were in fact excluded. Germany retaliated by giving diplomatic support to certain minor clauses of the Treaty of Shimonoseki and then joined with Britain in negotiating a loan to China which would pay off the second half of the Japanese indemnity. Germany, of all the powers now nibbling at China, was the only one without any territorial base in the Far East. As a reward for her intervention against Japan, Germany had asked the Peking government for a coaling station for her naval vessels on the China coast. China refused on the grounds that other nations would then demand compensating concessions elsewhere. The German government, only temporarily deterred, decided to wait until some suitable opportunity arose for a 'reprisal'. The French and Russian governments, Germany's 'allies', had in fact put pressure upon Peking not to grant territory to her. The French, fearing that German intentions were directed towards that part of the Chinese coast nearest to their possessions in Indo-China, obtained a guarantee from the Chinese government that no other power would be granted rights in the area. Germany, however, had decided upon Kiaochow Bay, on the coast of Shantung, and, on the excuse that two German missionaries had been murdered in Shantung, sent a naval force which took possession of Kiaochow in November 1897. This act precipitated a scramble for concessions amongst the Western powers.

The Russians, who officially opposed the German action—though the tsar had tacitly consented to it—took the opportunity of sending a naval squadron to Port Arthur, and in December 1898 they secured a twenty-five-year lease of the Kwantung peninsula (not to be confused with the province of Kwangtung, around Canton in the south) which included the port of Dairen. The British, who adopted an attitude of benevolent neutrality in spite of Germany's request for diplomatic support, now felt forced to conclude that the old partnership of Russia, France, and Germany had been re-established—at least against China. The partnership had instituted a new type of colonialism—that of the leased territory. In fact, though not in law, the leased territories in China were colonies and with the 'railway zones', represented a step towards the division of the country amongst the leasing powers.

The French were not behindhand in their demands, and in April

1898 they gained a naval base at Kwangchow-wan on the Kwangtung coast and the right to have a French national appointed as Director of Chinese Posts. Britain, too, was taking compensation. Already in control of two-thirds of China's foreign trade, she was determined not to have any door shut in her face. The British government declared in March 1898 that it was 'opposed to the alienation of any portion of Chinese territory or to the sacrifice of any part of Chinese independence'. Nevertheless, when it seemed clear that territory *was* being so alienated, Britain acquired in April 1898—by means of a threat of naval action—the port of Wei-hai-wei on the coast of Shantung, north of Kiaochow. As it was easier to threaten China than it was to protect her against the demands of the other European powers, Britain preferred to join the scramble instead of resisting it. Britain also obtained a lease of further territory on the mainland opposite Hong Kong, the opening of more treaty ports, and a promise that the appointment of Inspector-General of Chinese Maritime Customs would remain in British hands for as long as Britain retained the largest portion of China's trade.

Britain's occupation of Wei-hai-wei was designed primarily to counter Russian influence in the Yellow River region. In fact, the port was still under Japanese control—although they were about to evacuate it. They had retained it after the war of 1894–95 as security for the fulfilment of the terms of the peace treaty. The Japanese gave Britain their support on condition that she would assist Japan if, in the future, Japan should have to take similar action 'to strengthen her defences or promote her interests'. It was inconvenient that Germany had already stated her intention of making Shantung a German sphere of influence. In this case, Britain was forced to make a break in her traditional policy of opposing any grant of exclusive trade rights in China. She recognised Shantung as an area of German monopoly. In general, however, the equilibrium of exploitation had been adjusted, and the balance of profit—in Britain's favour, of course—restored.

Britain's agreement with Germany over Shantung had, however, established the new principle of *exclusive* spheres of influence, i.e. areas of Chinese territory in which one foreign power was granted preferential or the exclusive right to construct railways or other subjects for capital investment such as mines and factories. Britain, adapting her traditional economic attitudes to suit new challenges,

claimed her sphere of interest to be the whole basin of the Yangtse river—an area containing about half the population of China. Unfortunately, the Chinese government had already granted to a Belgian syndicate—acting as a front for the Russians and French—the concession to build a railway through the Yangtse basin between Peking and Hankow. Though there were protests after Britain learned who were behind the Belgians, China ratified the contract. Britain's reply was to demand concessions for five lines, including one which would be competitive with that from Peking to Hankow. Britain's demand was accompanied by the threat that, if these concessions were not immediately granted, China's 'breach of faith' over the Belgian concession would be considered as an act of deliberate hostility. The Chinese government gave in.

It now seemed likely that these frequent threats of force might lead to intra-European conflicts which could readily spread to Europe. Britain's position in Europe was, to say the least, uncomfortable, as she had no continental ally. In 1898, it seemed as if an Anglo-French clash was imminent, not because of the situation in the Far East but over an incident in Africa, at Fashoda on the White Nile. France, however, realised that her Russian alliance was not of much value against Britain, who could easily destroy French maritime communications, and so she turned more towards conciliation and made an effort to help lessen Anglo-Russian hostility.

Britain's position was also improved by a significant redirection of United States policies in East Asia. The Americans, while remaining unsullied by the stigma of colonial aggression, had profited by Britain's actions to the extent of accepting trading and missionary privileges. But in the 1890s a variety of stimuli initiated an expansionist policy on America's part. Her occupation of the Philippines in 1898 was facilitated by the British, who prevented a German naval force from harassing the American squadron off Manila. This friendly act may well have prevented hostilities between Germany and the United States and the possible acquisition of the Philippines by Germany. Though America's new possessions in the Pacific and in the Philippines presented a potentiality of power, that power did not yet exist. The United States could hardly hope to compete with the European nations for territory or for spheres of influence in China and it was therefore in her interest to maintain the original principle of the treaty system—equal opportunity for all. Britain

had taken this attitude, too, until in what she believed to be self-defence she demanded a sphere of influence in the Yangtse basin. It was now America's turn to become the champion of what was known as the 'open door' policy.

This policy was simply the one which had been operative during the early period of Western economic penetration of China. It had envisaged fair and equal treatment for all nations without discrimination or preference on the part of the Chinese government. While this situation persisted, free trade and individual enterprise—the fundamentals of Britain's imperial policy—were protected. But the pattern was disturbed as soon as China was invaded by bankers and concessionaires, because their activities could not be divorced from matters of national prestige and political advantage. The subsequent negotiations for construction concessions, for loans, and areas of capital investment, were not commercial transactions carried on by merchants; they were questions for diplomats and government representatives. The railway zones, in particular, formed a lien taken upon Chinese territory in anticipation of the eventual disintegration of Chinese sovereignty.

The British—in order to preserve the appearance of adhering to the principle of free trade while they participated in the scramble for concessions—tried to draw a distinction between commerce and investment, and to apply the 'open door' theory to one and the principle of exclusivity to the other. It was a sensible attitude to take, but its pragmatism was bolstered by fallacious arguments designed primarily to mollify Liberal opinion in Britain. A series of agreements was concluded, firstly with Germany, and later with Russia (1899), which virtually defined the respective spheres of investment. At the same time, Britain was determined that no preferential treatment in matters of ordinary commerce should be granted to the other Western powers in these regions.

United States action in defence of the 'open door' policy consisted of a series of Notes sent in 1899 to the Western powers and Japan requesting them not to interfere with 'any treaty port or any vested interest' in their respective spheres of influence. The Notes also suggested that it be agreed that only the Chinese government should collect Customs dues, and that no preferential harbour or railway charges should be allowed to nationals of the country in whose sphere the port lay. Britain, France, Germany, Italy, and Japan

agreed on condition that all the other powers accepted. Russia refused. Although she had already declared Dairen to be a free port, Russia would give no undertaking about preferential tariffs on the railways she was constructing in Manchuria. In actual fact, Manchurian trade was of little value, and what there was went to a traditional market in Russian territory, but the Russian threat was not to commerce as such, but to the whole foreign presence in China. One section at least of the Russian government was ambitious to gain control of the Chinese administration. This would have meant that other powers would either have to accept a policy dictated by Russia, or would themselves have to assume actual sovereignty in their spheres of influence by military force.

This potentially explosive situation, however, was resolved by a sudden upsurge of Chinese xenophobia, which took the foreign powers by surprise. They had expected China to remain passive while they themselves were engaged in carving her up, to do nothing except fulfil her treaty obligations and quietly accept any demand made upon her. However, the humiliation of defeat by Japan had aroused strong feelings of patriotism. In particular, the Chinese had realised that the indemnity demanded by Japan amounted to three times China's annual revenue and that to pay it would put China irretrievably into debt with foreign bankers. The Chinese reaction took two opposing lines. The first was a demand for reform and modernisation; the second for the expulsion of the foreigners and a return to traditional seclusion.

Most prominent among the advocates for reform was K'ang Yu-wei, who became adviser to the Kuang-hsu emperor in the summer of 1898. The emperor, who had ascended the throne as a minor in 1875, had been dominated by the empress-dowager, T'zu-h'si, who had exercised power during his minority and who continued to control the administration. Nevertheless, for a short while the Kuang-hsu emperor was given his head and, under the influence of his reformist adviser, instituted the so-called 'hundred days' of reform. The innovations of June to September 1898 do not, on the surface, appear particularly radical, but against the background of Chinese conservatism they were genuinely revolutionary. Reforms included the reorganisation of civil service and military examinations and the establishment of an organised education system, including an imperial university whose curriculum was to

embrace both Western and traditional subjects. The Chinese government was to begin railway construction on its own account, while the army and navy were to be reorganised on Western lines.

The flood of imperial decrees concerning these reforms caused considerable dismay in conservative circles and in September 1898 the empress-dowager seized the person of the emperor and reassumed the regency. Many of the reformers were arrested and executed, though K'ang himself managed to escape to Japan. A large proportion of the reforms were abandoned, and a new attempt was made to save the country from disintegration. This time it was the conservatives who were to have their chance. Their desire to expel the foreigners had, of course, immediate popular appeal. China's defeat by Japan, the arrogance of the foreigners, the scramble for railway concessions, and the continuous irritant of missionary activity, inspired bitter resentment on practically all levels of Chinese society. To add to the general feeling of unrest, famine broke out in a number of areas.

The reactionary elements who now dominated the court found a suitable executive for their ambitions in a secret society called *I-ho Chüan*, or 'Righteous Harmony Fists', who came to be known to foreigners as the Boxers. Originally, like most Chinese secret societies, the Boxers had been anti-dynastic, and their original slogan was: 'Overthrow the Ch'ing; destroy the foreigner'. But, under pressure from court sympathisers, they became exclusively anti-foreign, with the stress on anti-Christian and anti-Chinese-convert. The growth of the Boxers' influence was assisted by economic and political conditions. They represented genuine popular resentment at the contemporary state of the country. Chinese officials gave active encouragement and support to the Boxers, enrolling them as a local militia and condoning their attacks upon Christians. By the end of 1898, their slogan had become: 'Uphold the Ch'ing; exterminate the foreigner'.

From 1899 onwards the Boxers became more and more aggressively anti-foreign. In Shantung province, they persecuted Christians, and killed an English missionary. The Chinese governor, under pressure from the European powers, was replaced, but at court he was hailed as a hero and appointed governor of Shansi. In June 1900, in Chihli (in Hopei province), Christians were massacred, and all foreigners stood in danger. To protect them, and also the

legations in Peking, an international force set out from Tientsin on 10 June, but it was strongly attacked and only just managed to fight its way back. To protect the foreign residents of Tientsin, it occupied the Taku forts commanding the river approach to the city on 17 June.

This act was greeted by the Boxers, understandably, as a declaration of war. The Tientsin concessions were attacked and the ministers of the foreign powers in Peking were ordered to leave the city within twenty-four hours. On 20 June, the German envoy was murdered on his way to the foreign affairs department and, that afternoon, foreigners and Chinese Christians were besieged in the Roman Catholic cathedral and the legation quarter. An allied expedition fought its way to Peking and relieved the legations in the middle of August. Throughout the country, foreigners were in grave danger, although, except in the north-west, little loss of life occurred. But in Hopei, Shansi, Mongolia, and Manchuria, more than two hundred foreign missionaries and several thousand Chinese Christians were killed. At court, however, there were those who realised the dangers of war with the foreign powers and successfully restrained the more hot-headed officials. They were also successful in dissociating the government from the actions of the Boxers, and this was recognised by the foreign admirals off Tientsin, who declared that they were merely defending their nationals against the Boxers.

By the autumn of 1900, the situation from the Chinese point of view was nothing short of disastrous. Peking was occupied by the allies, and was being plundered of its treasures by their troops. The court had fled to Hsianfu, and foreign troops roamed Hopei rescuing foreigners and inflicting arbitrary vengeance. The Russians had taken advantage of the troubles to occupy most of Manchuria.

The settlement finally agreed to in 1901, though harsh, nevertheless protected China's territorial integrity. An Anglo-German agreement designed to prevent the acquisition of land or the closing of the 'open door', was accepted in whole or in part by France, the United States, Italy, Austria, and Japan.

The terms of the protocol between the allies and the Chinese included the erection of a memorial to the murdered German minister; the prohibition of arms imports for two years; the payment of an indemnity of more than £67,000,000 at the then sterling

value, plus interest at four per cent, in thirty-nine annual instalments to end in 1940. This sum was secured upon the maritime Customs and the Salt Tax, and was divided in varying proportions—the largest going to Russia—among thirteen of the powers. Other provisions included extra-territorial and defensive rights for the legation quarter in Peking, and the occupation of strong points between Peking and the sea to ensure communications.

Instead of saving the Chinese empire, all the empress-dowager and the reactionary elements clustered around her had succeeded in doing was to increase China's foreign indebtedness and humiliation. They had also ensured the end of the dynasty. At the same time, however, the possibility of partition had receded. If the Boxer insurrection had occurred only a few years before it did, it would have supplied the excuse for annexations. Yet from the troubles, China emerged with its independence guaranteed, if restricted. This was due to a number of factors ranging from the unwillingness of the great powers to involve themselves in the possibility of large-scale conflict in Europe over the division of China, to their recognition that there was more to be gained from 'spheres of influence'.

Russia's refusal to evacuate territories in Manchuria now crystallised the long-feared threat to the commercial interests of Britain and the United States, as well as to the growing territorial ambitions of Japan. Britain, with 250,000 troops committed in South Africa to the prosecution of the Boer War (October 1899–May 1902), was on the defensive in China. Britain's sense of isolation had become intense and her government was even more anxious than before to acquire a Western ally in east Asia. The United States, though friendly, exercised moral rather than military power. Attempts to reach an understanding with Germany were wrecked on the rock of Germany's preference for having Russia immersed in Far Eastern problems instead of European ambitions. But Britain and Germany did cooperate against Russia in one matter. In 1900, on the excuse that she had supplied the largest contingent in the campaign against the Boxers, Russia demanded that one of her generals be appointed to command the international force. Germany was anxious that the appointment should go to a German national. Britain supported Germany, and the result was that Count Waldersee was given the command. The subsequent coolness between Russia and Germany produced a corresponding warmth in Anglo-German relations, and

Britain was able to obtain Germany's endorsement of the need to maintain Chinese territorial integrity and the policy of the 'open door'. But when in 1901 Britain tried to enlist German aid against Russia in Manchuria, the German government insisted that her previous endorsement had only applied to China proper, and not to Manchuria. Germany was obviously an unsatisfactory ally, and Britain turned to the only remaining alternative—Japan.

The Anglo-Japanese alliance was formally concluded in January 1902 (see page 153). Its effect was to modify Russia's China policy. The treaty forestalled any possibility of a Russo-Japanese agreement on the partition of north-east Asia between them, and instead secured Japanese support for the continuance of the treaty-system in China. The Anglo-Japanese alliance in fact injected a new, stabilising element into the chaos of Western-Chinese relations. In April 1902, Russia consented to withdraw her troops from Manchuria—except in the case of Port Arthur, which was a leased territory—in three stages spread over eighteen months. The first stage was completed by October 1902 but, instead of withdrawing further, Russia began to reinforce her troops and continued to build up not only her military forces, but also her navy in east Asian waters. Despite lengthy negotiations (August 1903–February 1904), an armed conflict between Russia and Japan led to the former's overwhelming defeat in a war which ended with the Treaty of Portsmouth (USA), concluded in September 1905 (see page 153 ff.).

Japan's victory ended the hot period of imperialist activity in China. It also turned Russia back to Europe, one of the consequences of which was the outbreak of the First World War. Purely European considerations had led Britain into alliance with France (April 1904). In June 1907, a Franco-Japanese agreement confirmed the status quo in China, and this was followed by conventions signed between Russia and Japan in which both powers agreed to maintain 'China's independence and territorial integrity', while at the same time secretly dividing Manchuria into Russian and Japanese spheres of influence. The Anglo-Russian entente of August 1907 settled the various rivalries between the two countries throughout Asia. Only Germany and the United States remained outside this pattern of alliances. As for China herself, though her integrity was guaranteed she was still threatened by the expansion of spheres of influence.

After the collapse of China's anti-foreign policy, symbolised by the failure of the Boxers, another attempt was made at internal reform. The period 1901–11 saw considerable institutional change. The empress-dowager, who had disposed of the reformers of 1898, now put into effect a programme even more radical than theirs had been. There was, in fact, no alternative, since the growth of a republican revolutionary movement could only be combated by deep and productive change. Ironically, the extent of the reforms, carried out in the hope of saving the dynasty, instead ensured its downfall. Modernisation needed a sense of Chinese nationalism, and the dynasty itself was foreign in origin. Modernisation, too, meant new political institutions inimical to the continuance of the monarchy. Nevertheless, the government continued its attempts at modernisation with considerable vigour and corresponding success.

Any detailed analysis of the rise of republican and anti-dynastic movements in China in the first decade of the present century is outside the scope of this work. It is essential, however, to understand something of the role played by the Chinese provinces in the growth of nationalist organisations. Railway construction and its complements—foreign loans and spheres of influence—represented an important catalytic element. The scramble for concessions in 1898 had ended any likelihood of a policy designed to avoid foreign-financed and foreign-operated railways proving successful. The Russian and Japanese lines in Manchuria, German lines in Shantung, and French in Yunnan, had increased foreign control of natural resources as well as of regional consumer markets. Though other lines were in theory owned by the Chinese, the foreign loans with which they had been financed were secured by a guarantee that they would be operated by foreign managements, and their profits were geared to the payment of dividends to foreign shareholders. The Chinese provinces were anxious to get rid of this foreign domination and establish lines themselves but they were unable to convince the central government—which was, in any case, helpless in face of the Western powers—or to raise sufficient capital themselves.

As railway loans were the chief tool of imperialist activity in China, so any attempt to meddle in the existing pattern of railway development naturally had serious political implications. Attempts by a Chinese entrepreneur, Sheng Hsuan-huai, to organise a centralised project for railway building inserted yet another factor into

an already tangled equation. In association with the central finance minister, Sheng tried to float foreign loans for the construction of railways. An agreement was reached with a consortium of French, British, German, and American bankers, in May 1911. Provincial patriots condemned the central government for permitting—in the interests of a dubious entrepreneur—yet another slice of profit to be sold out to foreign financial interests. They were further incensed by an imperial decree to nationalise, buy out, and put under *central* control all the existing railways. This was, in effect, a direct rebuff to provincial interests. A 'railway protection' movement came into existence under the leadership of local élites, mainly of the landlord class. Widespread civil disobedience followed, and many of the leaders were arrested. The dissatisfaction of the provincial middle class (landlords and merchants), peasant unrest resulting from economic hardship, and the growth of radical student organisations, all helped to prepare the way for revolution.

The anti-dynastic rebellion of 1911, however, was locally improvised and almost completely unplanned. But it did receive widespread support. In an endeavour to suppress it, the central government recalled Yüan Shi-k'ai, who had been responsible for extensive army reforms but had been dismissed after the death of the empress-dowager in 1908. The principal republican leader, Sun Yat-sen, was not in China when the revolt broke out, but he arrived back in time to be elected to the provisional presidency of the Chinese republic. Sun was inaugurated at Nanking in January 1912, although he offered to resign in favour of Yüan Shi-k'ai (who had been made prime minister and commander-in-chief as the price of his recall) if Yüan gave his support to the republic. After a good deal of public and private negotiation and intrigue, Sun resigned the provisional presidency and Yüan took over in March 1912.

The revolution was almost entirely negative in its achievement. It did get rid of the dynasty. The old order, centred upon the emperor and drawing its strength from a Confucian bureaucracy, was swept aside. Institutions of very considerable antiquity gave place to Western forms of government. But more constructive steps were inhibited by the generally-held belief that, if foreign, and in particular Japanese, intervention was to be avoided, it was necessary for the new government to devote itself to maintaining civil peace. Yüan, too, had more the ambitions of a founder of a new dynasty

than those of a republican president, and he was soon in conflict with the revolutionaries.

Republican opposition to Yüan was intensified by his relations with the imperialist powers. He and his government were just as much in need of funds as the dynasty they had overthrown, and there was no one to turn to but the old money-lenders. The foreign powers were, of course, anxious that China's new ruler should be strong enough to exercise real control over the country, because continuous civil disturbance could do nothing but interrupt trade and diminish the Customs revenues upon which many loans were secured. The majority of influential Chinese also supported Yüan, in the hope that a strong central government would resist the foreign powers. But in the conditions of the time, no government, however powerful, would have been able to do so. The foreign diplomats and bankers decided to back Yüan, although Japan—which felt she had more to gain from a China in anarchy—was an exception. Her interests were in territorial aggrandisement, not in dividends. But the railway consortium, which now included both Russian and Japanese bankers, was too powerful for her.

The six-power banking consortium insisted on more security for future loans, and demanded that the revenue from the Salt Tax should be added to the existing guarantees and that, like the Customs dues, it should be collected by a mixed Chinese and foreign administration. Patriotic Chinese protested against this further mortgaging of China's revenues to foreign powers. The United States, after disputes within the consortium, decided to leave it, announcing—for public consumption—that she had left on the grounds that the new terms were an infringement of China's integrity. The loan agreement was therefore finalised in April 1913, with only five members of the consortium.

Foreign control of Chinese revenues was increased. The maritime Customs revenue, on which much of China's foreign loans were secured had, in the past, been remitted to the Peking government. Now, the foreign commissioners were actually to receive the revenue funds themselves and—after deducting maintenance and other fixed charges—to remit the remainder direct to the International Committee of Bankers in Shanghai. Foreign control of the city of Shanghai was also increased by the abolition of the Mixed Court which had been established in 1864, where a Chinese magis-

trate had shared judicial functions with a foreign consular assessor. In 1911, the consular body took over sole responsibility. The overthrow of the dynasty in 1911 also had its effect in certain of the peripheral areas of the Chinese empire. Tibet threw off Chinese suzerainty in 1912, and Russia established a protectorate over Outer Mongolia.

With the outbreak of the First World War, in August 1914, the Western banking consortium collapsed, and Yüan Shi-k'ai was left alone to face a hostile Japan which became, first the caretaker, and then the inheritor of Western interests. The restraining effect of the treaty system disappeared, as its Western supporters were now locked in a life-and-death struggle in Europe. The Western powers were in retreat, Japan was ready to advance. The disintegration of China, which had been avoided during the high noon of Western imperialism, was now at hand.

Note EXTRA-TERRITORIALITY AND THE TREATY PORT SYSTEM

In those Chinese ports opened to foreign trade by the treaties of the 1860s, substantial areas of land were leased at low rents and in perpetuity to the British and French governments. The British held concessions (as they were called) at Canton, Amoy, Chinkiang, Kiukiang, Hankow, Tientsin, and Newchwang; the French at Canton, Shanghai, Hankow, and Tientsin. Fourteen of these ports were in existence in the 1860s, and the number was increased during the following years. In them, foreign consulates exercised legal jurisdiction over their own nationals, who were not subject to Chinese law. As time passed, the concessions acquired their own police forces, taxation, and other administrative functions. These enclaves were colonial possessions in practice, without being colonial territories in law.

The treaty port system was originally designed to protect foreigners from Chinese judicial procedures, which included torture. But under the system, foreign firms were also free from Chinese taxation. The advantages of the system were quickly recognised, and, during the 1860s, treaties were made by Prussia, Denmark, Holland, Spain, Belgium, Italy, and Austria-Hungary. Even the nationals of countries which did not have specific treaties with China could obtain the same privileges by making an arrangement with the consuls of countries which did. By the 'most favoured nation'

clause, all the powers in treaty relation with China automatically received any additional privileges granted to any one of their number. By the beginning of the twentieth century, the system consisted of some ninety ports, with about 350,000 foreign residents.

The full working out of the treaty port system is best demonstrated by the port of Shanghai. In 1863, the British and American concessions were joined to form the Shanghai International Settlement. As the importance of Shanghai as an entrepôt of foreign trade increased, a Municipal Council was established, and taxes were levied upon residents—including Chinese, who had no representation on the council. Each nation had its consular court, and Western nationals could be litigated against only in these courts. Appeals from British consular courts were heard in Shanghai; from French courts, in Saigon; from the Spanish, in Manila; the Dutch, in Batavia; and the Russians in Vladivostock. In 1864 a Mixed Court was established in which foreign and Chinese residents had the right to be tried by their own judges and by their own laws. This court was abolished in 1911. Extra-territorial rights were finally abandoned in January 1942, ironically enough, at a time when most of the ports were occupied by the Japanese.

3 *The Western Powers and Japan*

In the seventeenth century the rulers of Japan had closed their doors against the Europeans. Except at a Dutch trading centre, carefully isolated on an island near the port of Nagasaki, no foreigners were allowed to land on Japanese shores. It was only to be expected that, after having penetrated China, another closed country, in the 1840s, the Western powers should seek a way into Japan. Attempts had been made by Russia and Britain during the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries to establish trade relations with Japan, but the real threat to Japanese seclusion was to come from the growing strength of the United States. American vessels had tried to establish trade as early as 1797. When, in 1848, the United States finally reached the eastern seaboard of North America, the push across the Pacific began in earnest.

Commodore Perry, the American naval officer who was to break into Japan's long isolation from the West, did not, however, approach the country across the Pacific but by the normal European

route round Africa and up the China coast. On his way, he called in at the capital of the Ryukyu islands, the town of Naha on Okinawa. The King of the Ryukyus was a vassal of the *Daimyo* (feudal lord) of Satsuma in Japan, and Perry insisted on being officially entertained in the royal palace. He also called at the Bonin islands where he planted an American flag; these islands were not, however, occupied by the United States until the Pacific war of 1941–45. In July 1853, Perry entered Edo (Tokyo) Bay. After a few days of insisting that he must only be received by officials of the highest rank, he managed to deliver a letter from the President of the United States addressed to the Emperor of Japan. Perry did not know that the emperor was merely a puppet, and that he resided not at Edo but at Kyoto. The real ruler of Japan—known as the Shogun—did have his capital at Edo. After delivering the letter Perry left, proposing to return with a larger force in the following spring. His departure was followed by the arrival of a Russian expedition led by Count Putiatin, but Putiatin had no more success in his attempt at negotiation. Nevertheless, the door had been pushed ajar.

The Japanese were fully aware of Western activities in China and feared a similar attempt on Japan. Yet they were ill-equipped to resist. Their principal cities lay on the coasts, open to naval attack, and their antiquated cannon and other weapons could stand no chance against the superior fire-power of Western warships. The shogun's capital of Edo, with over a million inhabitants, could be starved into submission by a simple naval blockade of the bay. The shogunate itself, originally a powerful military dictatorship, was in decline, and the ruling elements were divided on what attitude should be taken towards the foreigners—defence or friendship? When Perry returned in February 1854 with a more substantial force, the Japanese had not agreed a policy. Under the threat of Perry's guns, however, they began to negotiate in the hope of being able either to bluff him or to escape with granting the minimum of concessions.

After a good deal of bargaining and veiled threats, the Treaty of Kanagara was signed in March 1854. Its terms were extremely mild. Two ports—Shimoda on the Izo peninsula, and Hakodate on the northern island of Hokkaido—were to be opened to American ships for provisioning and a limited amount of trade. Ship-wrecked Americans were to be well treated, and an American consular agent

was to be permitted to reside at Shimoda, which was, from the Japanese point of view, suitably isolated and difficult of land communication. The treaty also included a 'most favoured nation' clause on the Chinese pattern. Japan signed similar treaties with Britain (in October 1854) and with Russia (in February 1855). The Russian treaty opened an additional port, Nagasaki, to foreign trade.

None of these agreements was a full commercial treaty, and in 1856 Britain and France—at war with China—announced their intention of negotiating a full treaty with Japan. To stave off such an attempt, in October 1857 the Japanese signed further agreements with Russia and the Netherlands, permitting much more extensive but still carefully regulated trade at Nagasaki and Hakodate. It was, however, to be left to the American, Townsend Harris, to open Japan completely to foreign trade. Harris was the American consul at Shimoda, and by careful negotiation—unsupported by force or by the threat of force—he persuaded the shogunate that the conclusion of a reasonable commercial treaty with the non-imperialist United States would forestall the demands of the Europeans, who would certainly have insisted on much harsher terms. But the treaty signed in July 1858 was little different from those which had been forced upon China. More ports were to be opened to trade; the towns of Edo and Osaka were to be opened to foreign residents; import and export duties were to be fixed; and extra-territorial rights were to be granted. In return the United States promised to supply ships, weapons, and expert advisers to Japan. Within a short time, similar treaties were concluded between Japan and the Netherlands, Russia, France, and Britain.

The result of this foreign penetration, however shallow, was to have serious consequences both for the Japanese and for the West. In Japan, the ripples swelled outwards into a wave which was to engulf the shogunate, restore the position of the emperor, and turn Japan into a powerful modern state.

The treaties were not welcomed by the majority of the Japanese, and the shogunate was condemned for its weakness in giving in to foreign pressure. The imperial court, which in the heyday of the shoguns had been merely a symbol of certain sacerdotal functions, became the natural focus of opposition. The slogans of the anti-shogunate forces became 'Honour the emperor', and, more significantly, 'Expel the barbarian'. In the resulting disorders many

leading Japanese supporters of foreign trade were murdered. The operation of the treaties themselves added to the growing political chaos. Speculation by foreigners in gold and silver resulted in serious fluctuation of prices. Export demands for such items as silk and tea also disturbed the old price levels. The import of cheap goods from abroad, including textiles, severely injured local industries. The growing influx of foreigners into Japan, too, led to friction, and a number were murdered by anti-foreign extremists. In recompense, heavy indemnities had to be paid by the shogun. Under a combination of pressures—internal economic changes, the inability of the administration to expel foreigners, and the alienation of the *samurai*, or warrior class—the shogunate began to collapse.

The situation was brought to a head by the issue in 1862 of an edict by the Komei emperor (1846–67), ordering the shogun to expel all foreigners by the summer of the following year. The shogunate informed the foreign envoys of the imperial edict but gave them verbal assurances that nothing would be done to carry it out. But there were others more willing to act, and in June 1863 shore batteries at Choshu on the Shimonoseki Straits began firing on American, French, and Dutch vessels. In reply, the American warship shelled the forts and a French landing party destroyed them and their ammunition. Nevertheless, attacks on Western shipping continued and in September 1864 a combined fleet of French, British, Dutch, and American vessels demolished all the forts along the Straits. This action was followed up by a demand for a large indemnity. However, the Western powers waived the indemnity in return for further trade concessions granted in June 1866.

Meanwhile, in September 1862, four Britons had been murdered at Satsuma. By threatening a naval bombardment, the British extracted an indemnity of £100,000 from the shogunate. They also demanded an indemnity from the town of Satsuma and the punishment of the murderers. In response to this, the fort of Kageshima fired on British ships. The British thereupon levelled much of the city by shellfire, and sank all the Japanese ships in the port. Japan paid a further indemnity of £25,000, and developed a respect for Western military power which later resulted in friendship with Britain and mutual cooperation in the building up of a Japanese navy. In this, the men of Satsuma played a vital role. One thing at least was emerging from these troubled times. It was becoming clear

to many Japanese that the future lay, not with the declining shogunate, but with the imperial revival favoured by the leaders of Satsuma and Choshu.

The British minister, Sir Harry Parkes, recognised the fact and made it his business to become acquainted with some of the younger Japanese leaders and to give them advice. It soon became known that Britain looked with favour on the revival of the emperor's authority and the unification of the country. The United States, preoccupied with her own civil war and its consequences, played only a minor role in these decisive years, but the French openly supported the shogunate and the French minister, Leon Roches, had very close relations with the shogun's government. The leaders of Satsuma and Choshu believed that a secret agreement was, in fact, signed between the shogun and France in 1867. French instructors trained the shogun's army and French capital helped to finance an ironworks and a dock at the entrance of Edo Bay. But in spite of Roches' influence, the new shogun, Keiki, who had reluctantly assumed office in 1866, decided after several months of civil war to capitulate and in November 1867 he handed over his administrative powers to the new Meiji emperor, who had also succeeded in the previous year. Some supporters of the shogunate refused to surrender and the last centre of resistance, at Hakodate, was not crushed until May 1869.

The new rulers of Japan were just as helpless in the face of Western military superiority as the men they had replaced, but they had learnt two important things from the experience of foreign penetration. The first was that it was impossible to expel the foreigners by force. The second was that, if Japan was to resist foreign encroachment, she must be modernised militarily and economically. Initially, it was necessary to placate the foreigners—although this was in direct contradiction of the policy which had inspired the imperial revival. In March 1868 the emperor received foreign envoys, and attacks upon foreigners were thenceforth ruthlessly punished.

Japan's leaders were faced with the problem of raising revenue, so that they could extend and consolidate the authority of the central government against armed opposition and also finance their modernisation projects. The extremely low Customs rate (five per cent) which had been forced on the shogun in 1866 had left the

country wide open to a flood of cheap foreign goods. Now, tariffs on foreign trade were fixed by treaty. The new government could not, however, without the danger of reprisals by creditors, repudiate the debts of the shogunate. The government was reluctant to borrow money from any single country and, in any case, most countries were none too willing to lend. Japan was not considered by Western financiers to be a particularly safe or profitable area of investment. Two loans—in 1869 and 1871—were raised in London, but foreign capital otherwise played only a small part in satisfying the government's need for money. Internal monetary, banking, and tax reforms, however, as well as growing confidence in the government's activities, enabled large bond issues to be floated and the necessary funds to be raised inside Japan itself.

Nevertheless, modernisation could not be achieved without the help of Western expertise. Many foreigners therefore found employment with the Japanese government and private enterprise, as railway and marine engineers, financial and legal advisers, agricultural experts, military and naval instructors, university and school teachers. All were employees, and no more. Very soon, Japan presented a modern face to the world. But the transformation that had taken place and was continuing to take place created numerous problems. With the modernisation of the Japanese economy and the introduction of more advanced medicine and surgery, the population increased to such a level that Japan became increasingly dependent upon imports of foreign rice, as well as upon raw materials from abroad for her new industries. In order to preserve her independence from Western economic interference, Japan was forced to seek overseas markets for her goods. The rapid creation of modern armed forces—designed primarily to warn off Western encroachment—soon led Japan to expansionist policies; the second half of the nineteenth century being the age of imperialism, her quest for international status of necessity included a desire for empire. Here, Japan was forced to compete not only with the established imperial powers but with such new ones as France and Germany.

For some time, the Western powers' attitude of cultural and racial superiority did not allow them to take Japan's attempts at modernisation seriously, though they were perfectly willing to profit financially from her efforts. On the whole, they could not consider Japan as a competitor in world markets nor as a potential imperial rival. The

white man's burden could hardly be lifted by an inferior race. During the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, most of the larger vessels for the Japanese navy and mercantile marine were built abroad. The equipment for mines, industries and railways was imported from Western countries. Until 1880, foreigners—mainly British—controlled nine-tenths of Japan's foreign trade. Secure in their extra-territorial privileges, as they pocketed their profits, the Western powers were inclined to look upon Japan's attempts at modernisation with cynical amusement. They resisted any attempt to revise the treaties or restore Japan's right to alter her Customs tariffs. The foreigners' main argument against discussing treaty revision was the 'uncivilised'—i.e. non-Western—Japanese legal system. Until something was done about this, the Western powers would not accept the application of Japanese criminal or commercial law to their nationals.

An effort *was* made to revise the treaties in 1887, but when the terms were prematurely revealed they created a storm of protest in Japan. The government—which had tried to impress the Western powers by a modernisation campaign which included Western-style ballroom dancing—was forced to bow to popular pressure within the country, and the negotiations were abandoned. By 1890, however, considerable headway had been made with reforms in the Japanese legal system, and in 1894 an agreement was finally concluded with Britain which was to come into force five years later. Treaties with other countries followed. Thus extra-territoriality ended in 1899, although complete control of the fixing of Customs dues was not restored to Japanese hands until 1911.

While creating its claim to status in Western economic and political terms, Japan had begun quite early to imitate the West's aggressive techniques. The first expression of this was her announcement that all territories inhabited by Japanese, or belonging geographically to the group of islands which made up Japan, were by right Japanese. These claims covered the Ryukyu islands (which include Okinawa), the Bonin islands, the Kuriles, Sakhalin, Hokkaido, and Korea. Hokkaido was without doubt Japanese, having paid allegiance to the shogun, though its population was of the non-Japanese Ainu. A vigorous programme of colonisation and development was set in motion. Sakhalin and the Kuriles were also claimed by Russia, but an agreement resulted in the acknowledge-

ment of Japanese sovereignty over the Kuriles in return for her abandonment of claims to Sakhalin (1875). In 1878, the Bonin islands were annexed without opposition.

The problem of the Ryukyus was somewhat complex. Ethnically, the inhabitants were related to the Japanese, and in feudal times the islands had been considered part of the domain of the ruler of Satsuma. In 1868, Japan finally claimed the islands as part of her territory and when, in 1871, an attack on the islands by Formosans led to the killing of some of the inhabitants, the Japanese demanded redress from Peking. The Chinese rejected Japanese claims on the Ryukyus (the King of the Ryukyus had sent tribute embassies to Peking), and disclaimed responsibility for the savages of Formosa. In reply, Japan occupied southern Formosa (1874). When Peking protested, the Japanese demanded an indemnity. On the edge of war, the Chinese gave in, paid the indemnity, and the Japanese withdrew. The King of the Ryukyus, who had signed treaties with various Western powers as an independent sovereign, was persuaded to accept Japanese rule, and, in 1879, the islands became part of Japan.

In Korea, the situation was similar but even more difficult, for the country had, in the past, accepted (often simultaneously) a tributary relationship with both China and Japan. In 1868 and 1869, unaware —like practically everyone else—of the coming changes in Japan, Korea had refused to receive envoys from that country.

Japan feared that Russia, in her search for an ice-free Pacific port, might have designs upon Korea. Russia's presence in Korea would be a serious hindrance to Japanese expansion and would restrict the possibilities of her gaining from the disintegration of China, which the aggression of the Western powers seemed to be bringing about. Nevertheless, Japan did not yet feel herself strong enough to indulge in responsibilities on the Chinese mainland. In 1875, however, when a Japanese gun-boat was fired upon by a Korean fort, an armed expedition was despatched and succeeded in forcing a treaty. China on this occasion made no objection to Korea negotiating as an independent power.

Japan's opening of Korea was followed by treaties with the Western powers, as well as bringing about the activity of a reform party in Korea itself. China, a bulwark of conservatism, now lent her support against the reformers in Korea and, in 1882, the con-

servatives attacked the Japanese legation in Seoul as a reply to Japan's overt support of radical elements opposed to the government. Japan demanded, and received, an indemnity and the right to guard her legation with her own troops. In 1884, another outburst of conflict between conservatives and reformers led to appeals for help, addressed to China and Japan. Both sent assistance and, in 1885, an agreement was signed between the two countries by which each undertook to warn the other of any intention to send troops into Korea, 'in case of any disturbance of a grave nature'.

Internally, Japan was, by 1894, ready to march out in strength on to the stage of world politics. Her army and navy were fully westernised, and behind them lay an industrial pattern to serve them and profit by their successes. The opportunity was to come in Korea. In that country, conflict continued between the government and the partisans of reform, and the menace of Russian designs grew stronger. In 1894, a rebellion broke out, and China—maintaining, rather belatedly, that Korea was a tributary and not an independent power—sent in troops to suppress it. In accordance with the terms of the 1885 agreement, China informed Japan of her action; but not until after the troops had been sent. Japan responded by also sending a force to Korea. Though the rebellion quickly ended, neither China nor Japan removed their troops from Korea—and, when the Japanese proposed that China should cooperate with her in reorganising the administration and suppressing disorder, China claimed exclusive authority in Korea and the right to decide both the number of Japanese troops in the country and the use to which they were to be put. The Chinese government thought that Japan was not in a position to go to war, as a bitter struggle between the lower house of the Japanese parliament and the government was then dividing the land. In China, the old contempt for the country that had once copied her civilisation blinded her to the changes in Japan. Though they had been warned by Tokyo of the danger of war, the Chinese began to increase their troops in Korea. In July 1894, a clash between Chinese troops and a Japanese naval force was followed by a declaration of war.

Some historians have seen, in the speed and enthusiasm of the Japanese response, the desire of the government to unite the nation by a policy of expansion, which would at the same time divert demands for a cabinet responsible to an elected parliament. What-

ever the reason, internal dissensions ceased. The Chinese were soundly defeated and, by the Treaty of Shimonoseki (April 1895), gave up considerable territory and agreed to pay a large indemnity. Japan gained, or thought she had gained, the Liaotung peninsula in southern Manchuria, Formosa, and the Pescadores, and the opening of certain ports.

The other Western powers had resisted Britain's efforts to prevent the Sino-Japanese war, and they soon united in a successful effort to deprive Japan of much of her profit from it (see page 126). Britain abstained, but Russia, Germany, and France exerted pressure which resulted in Japan giving up the Liaotung peninsula and caused great popular indignation in Japan. Japan had always feared the Western powers and her fear had been the spur to modernisation. Now she came to distrust them, too, for, within five years of their forcing her to give up her claims to Chinese territory on the ground that these claims threatened China's integrity, all the powers—including Britain—had secured leased territories in China. Russia had gained Port Arthur and the Liaotung peninsula, of which Japan had been almost forcibly deprived for the sake of 'Chinese integrity'.

In fact, Russian ambitions in Manchuria threatened to put a stop to Japan's imperial hopes, although there were powerful elements in Japan who believed that some agreement could be reached with the Russians over the division of territory. These elements were headed by Japan's elder statesman, Ito Hirobumi, who maintained that Japan was not strong enough to challenge Russia. Another influential group strongly advocated an alliance with some European power to counter Russian moves. Britain was the obvious ally. Negotiations took place with both Russia and Britain late in 1901. The Japanese approach to Russia had begun as early as 1898 when Japan submitted a proposal that, if the Russians would agree to regard Korea as exclusively within the Japanese sphere of influence, Japan would acknowledge that Manchuria and its littoral were exclusively in Russia's. The Russians, who had no respect whatsoever for the armed forces of Japan, declined this offer. In April 1901, Ito, by then prime minister, consented to the opening of negotiations with Britain, but he was replaced in May by a minister with more genuine pro-British sympathies. When Ito was later (November 1901) on his way back from a visit to the United States, he paid a call at St Petersburg and the Japanese government—which had

reached the stage of a draft treaty with Britain—had to issue an official statement that Ito's visit to Russia did not have its approval. In January 1902, the Anglo-Japanese treaty of alliance was signed.

The treaty, though specifically binding the two parties to maintain 'the independence and territorial integrity of the empire of China and the empire of Korea', also recognised that Japan had 'in a peculiar degree, politically as well as commercially and industrially' special interests in the latter country. This meant, in effect, that Britain accepted Japan's claim to decide the future of Korea. Furthermore, in the event of war with Russia, Britain would remain neutral unless a third power became involved. To Japan, the alliance meant that she had been accepted as a great power on equal terms with Great Britain. Nevertheless, she did not consider the alliance as an excuse for war with Russia.

The Russians were flooding troops into their Far Eastern possessions. In February 1904, Japan broke off negotiations, and on the night of 8 February Japanese torpedo boats attacked the Russian fleet at Port Arthur, inflicting serious damage on two battleships and a cruiser. At the same time, Japanese troops were landed in Korea where they seized the capital, Seoul. On 10 February, Japan declared war on Russia. The Russians were quite unprepared for the vigour of the Japanese attack. The Russian war office had made no preparations for such an event, for they had assumed that Japan would not dare to declare war on Russia. In May 1904, Japanese forces crossed the Yalu river into Manchuria. Other Japanese forces besieged Port Arthur and occupied Dairen. Port Arthur fell in January 1905.

The war continued in a series of great land battles which, by March 1905, had severely weakened both sides. Russia was further unnerved by revolutionary disorders in European Russia. Her only chance of gaining the initiative was at sea. If, by some bold naval action, she could cut Japan's strategic lifeline—by which men and munitions were transported from Japan—the whole course of the war could be altered. The Russian Baltic fleet was therefore despatched to the rescue. The movement of this fleet, in fact, nearly led to hostilities in Europe, as the Russian vessels fired on some British trawlers in the North Sea under the impression that they were Japanese torpedo boats! France, allied to Russia, was nevertheless unwilling to antagonise Britain, especially as an entente had been concluded between the two countries in 1904. But she had no

intention of renouncing the Russian alliance, and therefore put coaling stations in Madagascar and Indo-China at the disposal of the Russian fleet. Germany, anxious to displace France as Russia's ally, also offered coaling facilities. The German action brought a warning from Britain that, should Germany become involved in war with Japan, she would have to take the consequences. Russia suggested that the old cooperation between Germany, France, and Russia which had been so successful against Japan in 1895 should now be revived. But the German government was not prepared to risk war merely for Russia's Far Eastern interests.

Since the Suez Canal was closed to Russia—as were British coaling stations—the Russian fleet was forced to sail all around Africa, but it finally reached the Tsushima straits on 27 May 1905 (on its way to Vladivostock) where it was met and destroyed by a Japanese fleet. The war was then virtually over, and to all intents and purposes Russia's Far Eastern adventure was at an end. In one sense at least, the sound of guns in the Straits of Tsushima was to be echoed nine years later by those in Europe.

Both Russia and Japan were anxious for peace and, through an American initiative, a treaty was signed at Portsmouth (USA), in September 1905. By its terms, Japan's 'paramount interests' in Korea were recognised, Chinese sovereignty was restored in Manchuria, and Japan took over the Russian lease of the Liaotung peninsula and the southern part of the island of Sakhalin. After considerable argument, Japan claimed no indemnity. When the treaty terms became public knowledge in Japan, there was great popular indignation at what was thought to be a very small return for such an overwhelming victory, but those who protested were unaware that the great financial and human sacrifice made by Japan had exhausted her ability to continue the war. Japan had, in fact, gained some very real advantages. The Russian threat to Korea was removed, and the way was open for Russo-Japanese agreement on spheres of interest in north-east Asia.

Agreement could easily have been reached without recourse to a disastrous war if Russia had not rejected Japan's overtures. Between 1895 and 1902, Japan had been prepared to come to an agreement which would have given Russia a free hand in China in exchange for recognition of Japanese interests in Korea. Britain would have been unable to oppose Russia's ambitions as, without European allies,

she could hardly have resisted Russian expansion with the strength of her naval forces alone; there is very little doubt that Russia could have marched to Peking without much difficulty. But she underestimated Japan's new military strength and expertise. So, too, did France. Japan was, however, by no means all-conquering. Even during the Russo-Japanese war, the result was far from a foregone conclusion. Japanese forces might easily have been defeated at Keitoukai in January 1905, when Japanese troops were severely hampered by the intense cold of the Manchurian winter. Only incompetence on the part of the Russian commander saved the Japanese from a crushing defeat.

The Anglo-Japanese alliance was renewed *after* the end of the Russo-Japanese war but *before* the signing of the treaty at Portsmouth. The terms were rather different from those of the treaty of 1902, representing a distinct change in the balance of advantage. After the Japanese victory over Russia there was now no real threat to Japan's security or to her ambitions. But in the case of Britain, a Russian rapprochement with Japan or a Russian victory during the war would have led to an intensification of Anglo-Russian conflict; afterwards, Britain was still faced with the possibility of renewed Russian expansion in Western and Central Asia, and it seemed possible that Germany—freed temporarily, at least, from the Russian menace in Europe by the political and military chaos which followed her defeat by Japan—might decide to attack France. If this happened, Britain would be involved. Whatever the case, it was certain that a Japanese alliance would be of great value to Britain. If Russia were to move against India, Japan could again threaten action in Manchuria. If Germany attacked France, the Japanese navy could take over Britain's protective role in the Indian Ocean and the Pacific and so allow British naval forces to be concentrated in European waters. The new treaty, therefore, was extended to cover India, and the alliance was to become operative if either of the signatories was attacked by any other power—not, as in the 1902 version, by two or more. In return, Britain explicitly accepted Japan's 'special interests' in Korea. This, in effect, approved Japan's operations in Korea and her eventual annexation of the country, which was to take place in 1910.

Britain and the United States did, however, prevent Japan from taking over southern Manchuria, which she regarded as hers by

right of conquest. As in 1895, Japan was despoiled of her gains by foreign pressure—the pressure not of violence but of possible financial sanctions which Japan was in no position to resist. In fact, from the Russo-Japanese war China regained sovereignty over Manchuria, which she could hardly have reimposed herself. Nevertheless, she was forced to reassign the Russian leases to Japan.

The Japanese government, beset by Anglo-American interests, by continued Chinese hostility, and by military extremists at home advocating the seizure of Manchuria by force, was driven into making an agreement with their late enemy, Russia. In June 1907, Japan had concluded a treaty with France which, after the usual pious declarations concerning Chinese independence and integrity, contained a clause agreeing that each party would give support to the other's 'situation and territorial rights' in the Chinese empire. In the following month Japan reached an agreement with Russia which contained secret clauses partitioning Manchuria into Russian and Japanese spheres of influence. With these treaties, Japanese, Russian, and French interests were mutually recognised and protected.

Japan's new treaties did not, however, affect the Anglo-Japanese alliance. On the contrary, they made it even more purposeful, since Britain herself was moving towards a rapprochement with Russia in the hope of establishing a new grouping of European powers against Germany. In August 1907, an Anglo-Russian entente was concluded which settled the two powers' outstanding differences in Persia, Afghanistan, and Tibet. The alliances between France and Russia and Britain and Japan now became interlinked. Only Germany and the United States were left out in the cold.

By the end of 1907, the pressure of financial and commercial interests on the British government had decreased and it was able to accept (though not formally) that Japan had a 'special interest' in south Manchuria. In 1906, Japan had founded a company to operate railways in southern Manchuria. After the Russo-Japanese peace treaty, she had obtained from the Chinese government a declaration that it would not itself construct any railway running parallel with the existing line between Chang-chun and Port Arthur. Towards the end of 1907, however, China granted to a British firm a concession to construct a line forty-seven miles long, running parallel with the existing south Manchurian railway. On the basis of China's earlier

promise, the Japanese protested, but China took no notice. The British government, however, gave its support to the Japanese objection, and the Chinese government was forced to back down. Britain's stand was evidence of a distinction between political and commercial advantage which had not previously been apparent in her Asian policies. In face of the changed power-balance of 1907, Britain was not prepared to jeopardise the whole Anglo-Japanese alliance merely to give a British firm a commercial advantage.

The United States, however—excluded from the new pattern of alliances in east Asia—had no such inhibitions. America's interests were primarily commercial, and it was the duty of the American government to further them. An American railway tycoon, E. H. Harriman, immediately after the signing of the Treaty of Portsmouth, had offered to buy the Manchurian lines which the Japanese had acquired from the Russians. Harriman's dream was to girdle the earth with a Harriman-controlled transport system linking the Trans-Siberian railway with steamship services across the Atlantic and the Pacific. His offer was not accepted by the Japanese, even though a tentative agreement had at first been entered into. Japanese nationalism was not prepared to share the profits—political or monetary—with a foreign financier. But Harriman was not deterred. He produced another plan, and obtained the support of the American government. He also obtained a preliminary concession to build a railway right through Manchuria. With this as a bargaining counter, the American secretary of state, Philander C. Knox, proposed late in 1909 that the Manchurian railways should be 'neutralised', bought up, and operated by an international syndicate. His proposals had little chance of success, and what chance they had was reduced even further by inept diplomacy. The only sequel was that Japan and Russia concluded a secret agreement in July 1910 which not only confirmed their respective spheres of influence but provided for mutual support in their defence. Britain discreetly supported Japan and Russia, and pressure was brought to bear on China to persuade her to repudiate the railway concession granted to Harriman.

The most important effect of the Russo-Japanese war was to confirm Japan's imperialist pretensions. By 1914, she not only ruled Formosa and Korea but had established a privileged position in Manchuria; from this base, in the years between the First and

Second World Wars, she was to attempt to gain total domination of China. Though the Western powers' built-in conviction of white superiority was still unfrayed by 1914, they had been forced to accept that Japan was an exception to the rule. The long-term effect upon the colonial peoples was of even greater consequence. Japan's defeat of a major European power was viewed by colonial nationalists as the first battle between East and West, as a heartening victory in the struggle of the Asian peoples for freedom from Western domination. The Japanese achievement was discussed in every bazaar from Hong Kong to the Persian Gulf, and Japan could even claim a special responsibility for the Chinese revolution of 1911, as many of its leaders had been inspired by Japanese example and by Japanese political thinkers. The eyes of Asia's revolutionaries were now fixed upon Japan. The war which broke out in Europe in 1914, to which Japan's victory over Russia had contributed so much, was to release not only Japan's own imperialist ambitions—only capable of being satisfied at the expense of the West—but new Asian nationalisms. Together, they were to end Western dominance in Asia within a single generation.

Note FOREIGN PENETRATION OF KOREA

The encroachment of foreign powers upon those countries peripheral to the Chinese empire which acknowledged Chinese suzerainty was a feature of the new imperialism which developed in the 1870s. Of these countries, the most important from China's point of view was the kingdom of Korea, which also had the peculiar distinction of being the last of the ancient kingdoms of east Asia to be opened to Western contacts. Apart from very restricted trade rights granted to Japan—which produced a situation rather similar to that of the Dutch in Japan before the opening of that country—Korea in the mid-nineteenth century was completely secluded, not only from the outside world, but also from its overlord, China. The Chinese government handled Korea's foreign relations but, except that they received an annual payment of tribute money, the Chinese were just as much shut off from the kingdom as anybody else. Though Western vessels sometimes touched upon the coasts of Korea, their crews were not allowed to land and shipwrecked sailors were deported to China. All attempts to negotiate treaties for open trade were resisted by the Koreans, sometimes with violence.

This situation—highlighted by Korea's repulse of a French force in 1866—led to a certain amount of rivalry amongst those who hoped to be first to open up the country. In 1871, an American force of five warships was also repulsed with the loss of two American dead. American demands for an apology were rejected by the Korean authorities. In reprisal, the American fleet destroyed five forts and killed about two hundred Koreans, but it was forced to sail away without achieving anything else. In its innocence, the Korean government believed that it had defeated a foreign force in battle and that it would be able to go on doing so.

The Western powers brought pressure to bear on Peking, but this produced no results. The Chinese insisted that they could not force Korea to open itself to foreign trade—though, paradoxically, Korea could not embark on trade negotiations without first having the approval of its suzerain, China. Though this appeared perfectly reasonable to the Chinese government, to the Westerners it merely looked like exasperating prevarication.

The main threat to Korea was to come from Japan and Russia. In 1875, a Japanese survey party landed on the Korean coast and was fired upon by Korean troops. This was taken as an excuse for demanding that Korea, in reparation, should forthwith agree to open up trade with Japan. Asked for advice, the Chinese government told the Koreans to negotiate, and in February 1876—under threat of force—Korea arrived at a treaty with Japan opening up three Korean ports to Japanese trade; the treaty also contained a clause stating that Korea was an independent state. The country's seclusion having been breached, the Chinese soon decided that Korea should be opened to all the powers then trading with China itself—in the hope, no doubt, that they would, as in China, restrain one another's ambitions. In 1882, with China's assistance, Korea negotiated a treaty with the United States. This was followed by treaties with the other Western powers (in 1883–86), although only Japan and the United States opened diplomatic missions in the Korean capital of Seoul. All these treaties contained a clause recognising Korea as an independent state. This could only mean that Korea was rejecting its tributary relationship with China, and China was therefore faced with taking some kind of action. The alternatives were that Korea should be allowed to drift away from China, or that Chinese authority should be imposed by direct military action.

China decided upon the latter course. In 1882, on the grounds that she was obliged to restore order after an anti-foreign rising in Seoul, she began her intervention. The Japanese legation in the capital had been attacked by the rebels, and both China and Japan sent troops to Korea. The Chinese troops, however, outnumbered the Japanese, so Japan accepted an indemnity and withdrew. China now tried to dominate Korean politics by means of advisers; they were encouraged by the success of a pro-Chinese court faction which gained control of the government.

The triumph of a reactionary court party, backed by Chinese troops, forced reformist elements in the country to look outside Korea for both inspiration and support. Missions abroad, including one to the United States in 1883, flooded Korean intellectual circles with foreign ideas about reform and modernisation. Most of these ideas were transmitted by way of Japan, and many Japanese came to regard themselves as playing the same role *vis-à-vis* Korea as the Americans had played in the opening up of Japan. Korean reformers, with the knowledge and support of the Japanese legation in Seoul, murdered a number of conservative and pro-Chinese ministers and seized the person of the king in an attempted *coup d'état* in December 1884. They were, however, defeated by the Chinese commander, Yüan Shi-k'ai, and forced to flee the country.

The Sino-Japanese war of 1894–95 was precipitated by a rising in Korea which had strong anti-foreign—and, in particular, anti-Japanese—aims. The Japanese succeeded in expelling Chinese forces from Korea and declaring Korea an independent state, but they were unable, in spite of three separate attempts, to set up a Korean administration capable of modernising the country on Japanese lines and following a pro-Japanese policy. Other results of the war produced side effects on the Japanese position in Korea, particularly when, in 1896, the King of Korea took refuge in the Russian legation at Seoul, where he remained for more than a year. Between 1896 and 1898, an attempt was made by the Koreans themselves to carry out reforms on the Chinese pattern, to help protect the country against foreign aggression. But, like their Chinese contemporaries, the Korean leaders had little or no contact with the mass of the people, and a conservative reaction took place which led to suppression of the reform movement at the end of 1898. The conservatives, however, were no more able than their predecessors

to unite or strengthen the country against growing pressure from Japan and Russia.

Western interests, including Russia, withdrew from Korea after the Russo-Japanese war of 1904–05 when the Western powers—implicitly or explicitly—recognised Japanese ambitions in Korea. Initially, Japan only wanted to establish a protectorate over Korea. In 1904, she had forced Korea to accept Japanese financial and diplomatic advisers. In November 1905, she sent a mission to Korea which secured, from the king, control of the country's foreign relations. These were now to be exercised by a Japanese Resident-General. The Japanese hoped to achieve Korea's own cooperation in the modernisation of the country, but in this they were unsuccessful and the king went so far as to try and persuade other countries to give him aid. Japan demanded even more extensive control over the Korean administration, and the king finally abdicated. Korea then became a Japanese colony, in fact if not in name. When a Korean assassin murdered a former Japanese Resident-General at Harbin in Manchuria in August 1910, this gave expansionist elements in Tokyo the excuse they wanted for annexing the country. Korea remained a Japanese colony for thirty-five years.

PART TWO

Aspects of Imperialism

CHAPTER I

Imperial Challenge and Colonial Response

Introduction

As the Western nations intensified the rate of their penetration in Asia, the need to explain and justify *to themselves* the motives behind their expansion also increased. The process of expansion was itself so fascinating that it tempted scholars, politicians, and poets to theorise about it. Their theories, naturally enough, were shaped by the circumstances of the age of imperialism. They were also designed to attract and inspire those sections of public opinion whose support was necessary to the activities of government.

In the latter part of the nineteenth century, a large body of people suddenly became aware of the actuality of world events. This was a result of the growth of newspapers and periodicals which, as communications spread, were able to give news of far-off events in Asia within a very short space after they occurred. Because of this sense of immediacy, the newspaper-reading public felt an involvement in affairs which could very easily be turned to account in terms of demands for government action. It therefore became important for governments to try to manipulate public opinion in both specific and general terms.

The development of communications, and in particular the extension of the telegraph to Asia after 1870, did more than bring the Western public—or, rather, the literate part of it, which was comparatively small—into touch with events. It also increased the possibility of government intervention in those events. Affairs which, before, had been left to the man on the spot and rationalised

afterwards, now became the primary responsibility of ministers of the home government and, in a very real sense, had to be rationalised *before* the event. General theories of imperialism, explanations, in effect, for the overall pattern and purpose of Western imperialism, were therefore essential. The late nineteenth century proliferated them. Some were universally accepted by all Western nations. Social Darwinism, for example, with its doctrine of the survival of the fittest, was one of these. The corollary that superiority implied responsibility—'the white man's burden'—was also important in developing a sense of idealism among the actual administrators of colonial territories. Each country, however, produced certain more specifically nationalist theories, which were sometimes given expression in the tone of the administration itself.

Both theories and practice had their effect upon the colonial peoples. The purpose of this section is to examine some theories of imperialism and their application, as well as the nature of the response they produced in the colonial peoples who were subjected to them.

1 *Ideas of Empire and their Expression*

Britain, the largest of the maritime empires, had acquired the major part of her overseas territories before theories of imperialism were either necessary or fashionable. Her motives had been comparatively simple, of the kind that hardly need theories to support them, i.e. primarily economic and strategic. But the possession of an empire, and particularly the territory of India, permitted certain attitudes to be given early administrative expression. Essentially, the British—and the other peoples who followed them along the imperial way—considered that at least a part of their mission in Asia was to 'civilise' the natives, to bring them the boons, both spiritual and material, of a superior civilisation. This attitude was apparent in India before 1850, and its effects persisted, even after reforms were virtually abandoned following the Indian Mutiny of 1857. In fact, the later nineteenth-century theorists of imperialism were primarily concerned with reviving the old crusading purpose and giving it a modern look by expressing it in more up-to-date language.

The early nineteenth-century British view of a 'civilising mission' seemed on the surface to be a sensible partnership between God and

Mammon, between trade and evangelism, for it was firmly believed that pagan darkness was a barrier to commerce. The basis of this belief was entirely empirical. The great outsurge of the Industrial Revolution in Britain had introduced a new element into the class structure, a thrusting, eager and self-conscious body, agitated by the new excitements of technology. The manufacturing middle classes saw, in the products of their looms and ironworks, the materials of a New Jerusalem. Only if they accepted the idea of Divine Purpose could their minds encompass the possibilities of the brilliant new world opened up by the Industrial Revolution. Belief in a civilising mission, allied with the desire to trade, changed the old order of colonial aggrandisement. The new manufacturers were not interested in political domination as such; in fact, some of them believed that colonial territories were actually an impediment to the development of Britain's new role as supplier to the world, ruler of an empire of trade. To civilise a native was to create a customer. To oppress him merely cost money. This view was summed up by Thomas Babington Macaulay in a House of Commons speech on the 1833 Charter Act (designed to extend the rights of the East India Company), when he said: 'To trade with civilised men is infinitely more profitable than to govern savages.' Distaste for empire was not, however, really a positive feeling, though some advocated giving up the colonies—particularly the insalubrious ones on the coast of West Africa. But on the whole, no one of influence ever anticipated giving up India, save in the very distant future, after its inhabitants had been Christianised, liberalised, Westernised, and taught to speak good English.

This was the formidable task the British actually set themselves in India. The early reformers believed they could bring about the moral regeneration of India—an essential step towards the achievement of their aims—by proselytising. They did, however, realise that it would be no easy task. To Methodists and evangelicals in England, the relationship between God and man was entirely personal; access to it could only be achieved through His revealed word. A minimum standard of literacy was therefore essential to conversion, and the ability to read and understand the Bible was a revolutionary instrument. Education, they were convinced, would raise the Indians out of their slough of superstition and idolatry. Macaulay, the father of English education in India, maintained that

if his educational plans were carried out there would be no need to proselytise. The operation of knowledge among the 'respectable classes' would convince them of the superiority of Christianity and the necessity of conversion.

The early empire-builders realised, however, that the regenerative effects of English education would take a long time to show. In the meantime, two hundred million Indians had to be governed, and the Bible offered little constructive advice on matters of everyday administration. The evangelicals believed that knowledge was the key to heaven and to heaven-on-earth as well, to individual happiness and dignity; through knowledge of Divine Law, man would purify man's law. But, since the fundamental pattern was ordained by God, not man, they did not believe that man's law was capable of transforming character or liberating the individual. It was to be left to the Utilitarians to offer a workable solution, and they did this by substituting human for Divine law, by removing God from the equation. In their way, they were revolutionaries, believing that the regeneration of man *could* be achieved by legislation, by transformation of the conditions of living. To them, sin was a product not so much of man's unawareness of God as of poverty; the moral condition of a people was dependent upon their material life. This was a matter of politics, not of education. 'Ignorance', wrote James Mill in his *History of British India* (1819), 'is the natural concomitant of poverty; a people wretchedly poor are always ignorant; but poverty is the effect of bad laws and bad government; and is never characteristic of any people who are governed well.' Mill was a social mechanic. To him, efficient government and the presence of experts to run the machinery were all that mattered.

The spare, cold logic of the Utilitarians proved, however, to be too drab to withstand the warm Messianism of the early Victorians and, in practice, a compromise was pursued between the long-term regenerative power of education and the immediate effectiveness of reforming legislation. Basically, both the evangelical and the Utilitarian approaches were abstract. Both groups believed that society could be renovated according to some universal theory—for the former, it was the morality of Christianity, for the latter a sort of theology of institutions. The combination of their ideas became, in time, part of the system of British government in India, but essentially the attitude of both groups was based on superiority and a

formidable contempt for Asian civilisations. The prophets of Utilitarianism insisted that modern government should have no truck with superstition, that it should not be bound by the shackles of the past. They were the spokesmen of a *new* gospel, of a *scientific* creed which opened the way to progress and happiness for all. They had the blinkered energy of all great revolutionaries. Contempt for anything outside the immaculate confines of the 'scientific' theory of Utilitarianism was implicit. Nothing in Indian civilisation was found to be of value. James Mill, the author of a book which was to become the bible of British reformers in India, thundered to his disciples: 'No people how rude or ignorant soever, who have been so far advanced as to leave us memorials of their thoughts in writing, have ever drawn a more gross and disgusting picture of the universe than what is presented in the writings of the Hindus.' Christian missionaries, too, inflamed by visions of the greatest numerical conversion of all time, saw the Devil staring at them from the faces of the Hindu gods, whose worshippers seemed almost lost for ever in dark and bloody superstition. Between them the Utilitarians and the Christian missionaries institutionalised their contempt until its shadow darkened the whole of Victorian thinking about India.

The period of great social and political reform ended in the nightmare of the Indian Mutiny of 1857. In this rebellion, many of the British saw the lineaments of anti-Christ when, in reality, it showed the bewilderment of a people being hustled too rapidly and with too little sympathy into a new and frightening world. The events of 1857 awoke the British to a shattering awareness of just how fragile was the structure of their rule in India. The edifice rocked with the earthquake of an outraged social order. Almost overnight, Britain's attempt to change the life of the mass of the Indian people was abandoned. In a sense, the Indian Mutiny was a war between the gods, and it was the Christian god who retired battered from the field.

The British attitude towards colonial responsibility, as reflected in the administration of India before the assumption of power there by the Crown in 1858, was that of a minority—of philosophers and administrators who had a general belief in the duty to civilise through the spread of Christianity. But in the second half of the nineteenth century, partly because of the threat posed by other colonising nations, a new mood began to develop amongst British

politicians and intellectuals, and by the end of the century—under the influence of the new popular press—a much wider area of public opinion was receptive to ideas of empire. Such ideas were usually demagogic in character, a series of slogans rather than a coherent philosophy.

The root cause of this new mood was the challenge facing Britain's existing empire and her international status. Most of her overseas possessions had been acquired without the need to face major competition; it had been a slide to empire rather than a struggle for it. But in the last decades of the nineteenth century, the expansion of Britain's empire in Africa as well as in Asia became a matter of necessity. Unless she increased the extent of her territories, Britain could not adequately defend the hard core of what she already possessed. Theories of empire—and popular jingoism—merely supported and rationalised aggressive action; they did not initiate or, except in the most minor way, influence policy. In one sense, however, theories of empire sustained the colonial administrator in his often difficult and unrewarding task of ruling native peoples, while popular jingoism created a feeling of national pride in the empire which could be played upon by politicians at home.

The change in attitudes to empire on the intellectual level was, in the main, a response to the Liberal policies of Mr Gladstone. It seemed to many people at the time that Gladstone was intent upon dismantling the empire, though, in effect, the existence of imperial possessions imposed its own logic on governments, whatever their party colour. The new imperialists went further than believing that something of great intrinsic value would be lost if the empire were dismantled. Withdrawal from India, wrote Sir John Seeley in his book *The Expansion of England* (1883)—one of the major influences in shaping the new imperial ideas—would be 'the most inexcusable of all conceivable crimes and might possibly cause the most stupendous of all conceivable catastrophes'. And he was referring to the effect on the people of India as well as on Britain's position in the world.

India, to the prophets and the publicists of the new imperialism, was much more than the scene of a unique experiment in the government of alien peoples. It was also the keystone in the arch of British power. From India, they believed, the *pax Britannica* could spread outwards over the face of the world. Sir James Fitzjames Stephen,

who had been Law Member of the viceroy's executive council in India from 1869 until 1872, hailed what Rudyard Kipling was later to call the 'Queen's Peace' as comparable only with the universal peace announced at the time of Christ's nativity. The source of the Queen's Peace, in whose shadow flowered all the civilised arts, was the law, the 'gospel of the English'. To the law, all reverence was due.

Nevertheless, the doctrines of the new religion of empire were military doctrines, and force, authority and direction were essential. The prophets were not ashamed of this; on the contrary, they were loud in praising the fact. 'I deny', wrote Stephen, 'that ambition and conquest are crimes', and went on to point out that nations were continually engaged in a 'competitive examination for greatness'.

These beliefs were founded upon the experience of governing India. But in the final analysis their source lay in the prejudices and emotions of the British who ruled there. The Services in India believed that political power was the great creative force of civilisation, and that its proper exercise would raise man to the highest plane. Those who had observed the Services in action—Stephen and Sir John Strachey, who were their philosophers and propagandists; Kipling, who was their poet laureate; and Curzon, who was to give their beliefs the fullest and final expression—looked beyond, to the spread of the *pax Britannica*, to a great world empire, in which the law would bring happiness to all. It was a grandiose vision, but to them it did not seem impossible of achievement. Naturally, they regarded India as the great powerhouse of ideals and purpose. But above all, it was the visible proof that such beliefs actually worked. 'The true fulcrum of Asiatic dominion', wrote Curzon in 1894, 'seems to me increasingly to lie in Hindustan.' Significantly, he added that 'the secret of the mastery of the world is, if they only knew it, in the possession of the British people'.

These views did not go unchallenged, for other types of imperialism had powerful protagonists in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. There was the imperialism of the mob, which was music-hall jingoism, the 'send a gunboat and shoot the bloody natives' imperialism which Disraeli helped to make popular. Then there was the imperialism of those who thought that the best way to rule a dependent empire was to do so indirectly, by using indi-

genous institutions and manipulating the puppets of a native ruling class. This was the imperialism favoured by Swettenham in Malaya, and others in Egypt and Nigeria. Many of these men had acquired their colonial experience in India, as had Sir Alfred Lyall who was the spokesman for many theorists of indirect rule. These men, and others who thought as they did, believed just as wholeheartedly as Stephen and Strachey in the moral content of political power and its exercise. They differed by refusing to accept force as the basis of that power. Nor did they believe in what has come to be called the Westernisation of alien societies by imposing sophisticated political institutions which had no traditional roots. Lyall, for example, maintained that the effect of Western civilisation on India was to dissolve the bonds of Indian society without putting anything in their place. Concentration of power in the hands of the British, who were fundamentally indifferent to the traditional demands and pressures of the Indian social order, was producing, wrote Lyall, 'that condition of over-centralised isolation with shallow foundations and inadequate support, which renders an empire as top-heavy as an overbuilt tower'. The supporters of indirect rule were convinced that there had to be some compromise between the 'civilising' actions of the British and the feelings of the people, and that the British must therefore develop some genuine respect for the traditional beliefs and institutions of their subjects. If this was not forthcoming, discontent would assuredly polarise and lead to an attack upon the alien rulers as the only remaining symbol of authority. This school of thought was to win in the end, although in a way which its supporters could never have envisaged. But the revolution in political thinking was not to take place until after the impact of the First World War.

In the Age of Imperialism, ideas of empire did not closely regulate the actions of governments. Despite the range of thinking on imperial problems, much of which was highly detailed, it did not produce a neatly integrated ideology directing affairs of state. It is extremely important to recognise this, as far too much emphasis can be put—and, indeed, has been put—upon the effect of these ideas on actual practice. The climate of imperialism, the intellectual atmosphere, did bring together politicians, colonial administrators, journalists, industrialists, and writers in a community of shared, though extremely general, ideas, and ambitions. These men were

united at least in their worship of that palladium of British power, the Empire, and they created for it a hagiography and a large number of shrines. But in the purely practical field of politics, the ideas which counted were those held by the great pro-consuls, by, for example, Curzon, Cromer, Milner, and Rhodes. It was these men and their actions which influenced governments and, consequently, the actions of those governments, even if the latter actions were in rejection rather than acceptance of the pro-consuls' policies. Very few people in Britain doubted the importance of Britain's empire, and all, in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, were anxious to preserve its existence. This attitude, in fact, cut across party lines, and to that extent represented a genuine consensus of national opinion. The progressive wing of the Liberal party for a variety of reasons swung against imperialism, but, in practice, this was a swing not against the empire, but only against the authoritarian way in which it was administered and the sometimes unsavoury manner in which it was expanded.

Yet both imperialists and anti-imperialists shared one basic view which can be simply described as 'moral'. This view had always existed in the minds of theorists of empire. Good government implied a moral judgement, an active humanity. Such preoccupation with the imperial *purpose*, which was shared by administrators and theorists alike, resulted in considerable obscurity over *ends*, and particularly those whose realisation lay in the future. The imperial purpose was not seen as a continuing process, something to be worked out to a conclusion. There had indeed been many statements to the effect that, ultimately, after irradiation with the British spirit, the colonial peoples might one day be capable of self-government. But, in effect, it was not self-government that was to be realised but association *in* government, and even this was only to be on what might be described as the basis of the schoolroom. Mock assemblies were established but their hands were kept away from the levers of power. This was because the doctrines of imperialism emerged in response to the challenge of power, not of moral ideas. Imperialism was a weapon of defence and, as such, was of as much importance as the Royal Navy.

The British have never been a particularly warlike people, and military doctrines have never had any lasting appeal for them. As a result, the thorough-going imperialists failed to win the real backing

of the British people, although occasional bursts of jingoism helped to push their actions forward. In general, the doctrines of imperialism were of more inspirational value to the colonial administrator, not so much as a guide towards carrying out his task, but rather as a justification of his existence. As a working philosophy, imperialism appealed only to a minority and a minority which felt itself being undermined. Imperialism, with its philosophers and its poets, was a symbol of an empire in decline and facing challenges, some obvious, some of great subtlety. When the poets and the empire-builders were shouting most loudly about duty and responsibility, the majority of the British people refused to listen. In fact, Britain's own 'native race', the working classes—who had themselves been grievously exploited—began to declaim their own slogans, demanding democracy for themselves and a stake in their own destiny. The imperial vision, a minority's vision, was to be eclipsed by the demands of the majority.

The range of British imperial ideas—from advanced philosophical systems down to doggerel verse—was an index of their true purpose as the propaganda of an empire at war. Every move of the new imperial powers, particularly in the cases of Germany and France, was fundamentally an attack upon Britain's dominating position in the colonial world. The Dutch were faced by no such challenge. Although they had their theorists of empire, they did not need to fortify themselves with doctrines of superiority; they merely put them into practice in their only important colonial possession, Indonesia. After 1901, however, a new attitude towards colonial responsibility did emerge. Though Liberals in Holland had criticised the method of exploitation known as the 'Culture System' (see page 27), they were in fact voicing the opinions of those who attacked the system because it was a government monopoly. The claims of private enterprise played as great a part in this criticism as those of humanitarianism. But in the last decade of the nineteenth century it became obvious that the supporters of private enterprise cared very little for the interests of the Indonesians. In 1901, Abraham Kuyper became prime minister. In 1880, Kuyper had published a pamphlet, *Ons Programme*, which argued that the government must adopt a policy of moral responsibility for the welfare of the people of Indonesia. In office, Kuyper launched what

became known as the 'Ethical Policy'. Dutch socialists had been proclaiming that there should be 'government of the Indies for the Indies', and a Liberal, van Deventer, had argued that all money drawn from the Indies should be repaid. The government, as an earnest of its intentions, cancelled the repayment of a substantial loan so that the administration of the Indies should have funds available for indigenous improvements.

In theory, the new reforms envisaged delegation of power from the Dutch government to the governor-general and, through him, in stages, to the Indonesians themselves. In practice, however, the decentralisation was limited, and until 1914 the governor-general was still tightly controlled by the home government. Decentralisation in Indonesia itself, though elaborately systematised, was still subject to excessive interference by Dutch officials. The Dutch method has been succinctly described by a British historian, J. S. Furnivall, as: 'Let me help you, let me show you how to do it, *let me do it for you.*' In fact, widespread reforms—administrative decentralisation, a wider use of Indonesians in the administration, the extension of village-level education, and so on—were more a sop to the conscience of Dutch liberals than anything else.

Germany, flexing its muscles in the international ring, only needed the crudest of literary and philosophical justifications for the existence of its newly found power. The primary stimulus of Germany's quest for overseas possessions was economic nationalism and the need for commercial outlets. Commerce and its needs are hardly subjects for general emotionalism, and Germany's expansion was rationalised, for domestic political consumption, as a search for status, for a place in the sun previously denied to her by the fact of her late arrival in the scramble for empire. Consequently, imperial ideas were generally expressed in the most basic and bellicose form. But, except for her short-lived colonies in Africa, Germany had no opportunity to acquire a colonial purpose. The desire to possess colonies, for strategic or commercial reasons, can be simply explained. The German colonies in Africa were acquired in response to a campaign by missionaries and merchants which mobilised patriotic feeling in Germany and led to the foundation of the Colonial Society (1882). This evoked so much clamour that the government was forced to take action. But an empire, however

small, is essential to the existence or development of theories of imperial responsibility; fundamentally, such theories are justifications for *possessing* an empire, not for acquiring it. In principle, at least, all the imperial powers accepted that—whatever the economic, strategic, civilising, or prestige reasons for acquiring colonies—once they were acquired, the powers had certain humanitarian responsibilities towards the inhabitants. In 1885, the Berlin Convention, which established freedom of trade in the Congo basin, bound the signatories 'to watch over the preservation of native tribes and to care for the improvement of the conditions of their moral and material well-being'. This principle was not put into practice by the new imperial powers until many years later.

The French approach to empire was, like that of the other powers, a product of the general motives of late nineteenth-century imperialism: the desire for international prestige and the creation of markets and outlets for trade. The imperial pretensions of the Second Empire, however, had little to do with commerce. The search was for status, not trade. But it was to a considerable extent disguised behind a *mission civilisatrice* as demanding as Britain's had been in the first half of the century. After the collapse of the Second Empire in 1870, economic motives grew in strength, although the desire to 'civilise' remained.

French expansion in the last two decades of the nineteenth century, which included the occupation of territories in the Indo-Chinese peninsula, was carried out under a veil of secrecy because of considerable opposition in France. The opposition was based, not on moral or humanitarian principles, but on patriotic ones. Expansion abroad at a time when population was declining was generally held to be a waste of men and money, seriously weakening the French position against Germany. France had no real period of popular jingoism, nor of the more intellectual imperialist sentiment characteristic of late nineteenth-century Britain. However, after 1860, there did grow up—amongst those with fairly obvious vested interests—a distinct concern with the overseas expansion of France. The comparative lack of public interest tended to leave the mechanics of French expansion to a small coterie, and there was a great deal more parliamentary interest and interference in colonial affairs in the case of France than there was in Britain.

The commercial and strategic motives of French imperialists were virtually unsupported by a literature of imperialism, whether expressed in books or newspapers. But French imperial thought was by no means confined to economic and military problems. At the end of the nineteenth century, the *mission civilisatrice* lay at the core of French colonial activity. Within limits, the French hoped to assimilate their colonial subjects into the larger empire of French culture. Colonial education was designed to produce Frenchmen, and representation in the French parliament sought to integrate the colonies into the metropolitan system. This concept was as arrogant as any held by British evangelicals towards India, for it implicitly stated French contempt for the indigenous civilisations of their colonial subjects. This view was, until recently, defended by French apologists on the grounds that it also implied the ultimate acceptance of equality; a Frenchified native *was* French. Indeed, those of France's colonial subjects who became culturally assimilated also became so French in feeling that they preferred to live in France rather than in their own country.

The practical problems of a policy of assimilation, however—the zeal or indifference of administrators, the high cost of education, and many other factors—prevented it from going really deep. This was characteristic of the general situation in all the colonial possessions. Whatever the imperial policy, it could not be fully implemented for the simple reason that it would have cost the imperial power too much. Essentially, imperialism was a matter of exploitation, commercial, political, and strategic. What was offered in return—the 'boons' of Western philosophy and thought, all the apparatus of the *mission civilisatrice*—was a bonus designed in part at least to assuage feelings of guilt and to satisfy psychological demands of great complexity.

Russian imperialism displays similarities to that of the Western powers, but there are also significant differences. A number of factors peculiar to the Russian situation in the second half of the nineteenth century were responsible for these. The most important, perhaps, was that Russia was the only one of the imperial powers to expand overland. The 'manifest destiny' of the Russian people, like that of the Americans, was to reach the Pacific. This movement eastwards, and later towards southern Asia, obeyed the logic of land

frontiers—that law and order must expand if they are to exist at all, and that no settled area can tolerate anarchy on its borders. The commercial motive for Russian expansion was late in developing, primarily because the Westernisation of Russia itself was slow. The process was agonising and created great strains in the social order. The importation of finance capital and modern industrial techniques from the West after Russia's defeat in the Crimean war enabled her to pursue aims similar to those of other industrialised powers, but because of the size of the country, and its history, the effects of industrialisation were different from those in Western Europe. The power complex in Russia—the autocratic tsars, the civil service, the army, and the church—displayed a continuing pattern of conflict, not only within itself, but in face of the modernisation process as well. The latter, of course, included the new financial, commercial and industrial interests who supported imperialist expansion from purely economic motives.

Their position is symbolised by the career of Count Witte, Russian finance minister from 1892–1903. During his period of office, the finance ministry dominated Russian imperial affairs. Witte was responsible for the construction of the Trans-Siberian railway and the Chinese eastern railway across Manchuria. Russia's forward policy in East Asia was almost entirely a product of the activity of this one man, representing, as he did, powerful financial and industrial interests. Witte summed up his attitude in the following words: 'My motto is trade and industry always in the front, the army always in the rear.' Witte's imperialism was investment imperialism; he was not concerned with the acquisition of territory. His policy was gradually to obtain full economic control of such areas as Manchuria and to do it with the prior agreement of the Chinese.

Witte's policy was undermined and finally destroyed by adventurism amongst certain speculators, court favourites, and the bellicosity of professional soldiers. But there were other reasons for its collapse. The most important of these was the withdrawal of support by the business section of the Russian community. During the 1880s, the Society for the Furtherance of Russian Industry and Trade had insisted that Russian industrial production would find its future markets in Asia. Russian manufacturers could not compete in Europe, and it was essential that markets in Central Asia, China,

and Japan should be developed before Britain's commercial position there became unassailable. This view received wide support in the Russian liberal press. During the late 1880s and the 1890s, public opinion of all persuasions—except extreme left—fully accepted and supported Russia's 'manifest destiny' in East Asia. The customary language of imperialism can be found, during this period, in many Russian books and periodicals. By 1900, however, changes were taking place in influential opinion. Russian heavy industry found itself in difficulties because of over-production. The Society for the Furtherance of Russian Trade and Industry admitted that its hopes in East Asia had been greatly exaggerated. Liberal opinion became more concerned with the revolutionary situation inside Russia than with imperial enterprise and began to suggest that the vigour put into Russia's East Asian adventures might be better employed at home in the expansion of the domestic market. The extreme left demanded far-reaching political changes. All sides criticised the government's policy.

Nevertheless, those whose opinions were influential were by no means wholly against the search for foreign markets. East Asia had, for a variety of reasons, proved to be unprofitable. Why not, then, turn to the south and west—to Persia and the Bosphorus? This view did, in fact, result in renewed Russian interest in Persia (see page 85). In Persia was to be found the principal example of Russian *cultural* imperialism; the teaching of the Russian language was begun at a school founded in 1901 in Teheran by the St Petersburg Society for the Exploration of the East, as well as in seven other schools. A mission from the Russian Orthodox church was established in the Lake Urumia region in an endeavour to further relations with the Nestorian Christian communities there.

Russia's defeat by Japan in the war of 1904–05 turned her eyes back towards Europe, to pan-Slavism, and to an uneasy but genuine entente with Britain. Internal revolution occupied the minds of many liberals as well as extreme radicals. But the theorists of Russian imperialism did not abandon their beliefs, nor the Russian government its Asian interests although they ceased to be a decisive factor in the determining of Russian foreign policy.

In the literature of Russian imperialism, there was little of the soul-searching apparent, for example, in that of the British. There was a sense of superiority and of destiny, but little anguish over

duties and responsibilities. In the areas occupied by Russia during her expansion in Central and East Asia, Russification was not attempted—mainly because the administration remained military in character. Indigenous institutions which did not interfere with the administration were left untouched. Unlike the British and French, the Russian reading public was not well informed on actual conditions in the newly occupied territories, nor was there much interest in Christianising the heathen, a task which could only have led to civil disturbance. Strategic and commercial motives always remained near the surface of Russian imperialism, and very little attempt was made to wrap them up in philosophical and moral justifications.

2 *Nationalism and Revolt*

Domination by the imperial powers of particular areas of Asia naturally opened up those areas to the impact of Western ideas and resulted in attempts by the Asians most affected by the impact to imitate—in self-defence—the ways of their rulers. The concept of nationalism appeared as one of the most obvious attributes of Western dominance. It was not only at the heart of power politics; it seemed to be the scaffolding as well as source of Western superiority. Not unnaturally, this Western example inspired Asians to develop a spirit of nationalism themselves. The colonial experience, however, was not uniform. Apart from the cultural differences between Asian nations themselves, the Westerners also displayed differences. These differences were apparent in their treatment of colonial subjects, and the form of response was correspondingly different.

India, because it had been subject to the radiation of Western ideas for so much longer than other colonial territories, began the process of revolt earlier. In India, after the defeat of the traditionalist rebels in the Mutiny and the assumption of power by the Crown in 1858, the expansion of administration, its growing efficiency, and the feeling of security from armed rebellion was viewed by all classes as an indication of the permanence of the British connexion. The beginnings of nationalism can only be seen in the consideration given by the educated classes to methods by which they could influence the government on their behalf. The basis of such influence

lies in a consensus of opinion, and one of the principal instruments for moulding that opinion and bringing together those who think upon similar lines, is a free press. In Bengal, at the centre of British rule, the *Hindoo Patriot*, the *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, and the *Bengalee*, were, by the 1870s, important organs of opinion. In Madras the *Hindu*, and in the west the *Mahratta* and the *Kesari*, polarised anti-government feeling. All were influential enough to embarrass the administration occasionally. In 1878, a Vernacular Press Act was passed in an attempt to muzzle native-language newspapers, but this merely ensured the great authority and prestige of the Indian-owned papers published in English. The act itself was received by political Indians as a piece of racial discrimination.

Nevertheless, the daily and periodical press became a sort of passport to the new ideas of democracy and political freedom. Through them, a man of the south could feel he had something in common with the men of the north, the east, and the west. Cheap and efficient postal services helped in the interchange of ideas, and the railway could bring men physically together from the furthest points of India.

At the same time, there emerged in India the classic elements of middle-class discontent—lack of employment at a level they felt due to their education and position, and the indifference of the British ruling class to their interests. An educated class with a sense of grievance is often more dangerous than a peasant with a sword. The educated turned to their natural allies, to the middle-class businessmen anxious for support in their struggle for fiscal change. But few, if any, thought of independence.

Most of the Indian moderate leaders were reformers. They sought to clean up their religion so that it could add a strictly Indian counter-weight to their acceptance of the material institutions of the British. Their ultimate aim was self-government within the British empire. In the words of one of them (G. K. Gokhale), they saw India 'industrialised, socially emancipated, and self-governing'. To the British they owed 'the blessings of peace, the establishment of law and order, the introduction of Western education, and the freedom of speech and appreciation of liberal institutions that have followed in its wake', and recognised that 'the continuance of British rule means the continuance of that peace and order which it alone can maintain'.

The first meeting of the Indian National Congress in 1885 was, and was intended as, an expression of moderate opinion. The later role of Congress in the struggle for freedom has tended to obscure the character of its beginnings. Its early programmes were cautious and evolutionary, and had strong British connexions. One of its founders was a retired Indian Civil Servant, A. O. Hume, who, on a visit to England, obtained the support of the radical politicians, John Bright and Charles Bradlaugh. Later, a propaganda sheet, *India*, was published in London, and an Indian, Dadabhai Naoroji, was actually returned to the British House of Commons.

In the beginning, Muslims did not participate in Congress as their principal spokesman, Sir Syed Ahmad Khan, maintained that as democracy meant the rule of the majority it therefore meant government by Hindus. Later, Muslims did join Congress, and by 1890 nearly a quarter of the delegates (totalling almost one thousand in number) were Muslims. By 1892, what might be called the 'loyal period' of Congress was over and criticism of the government was loud and unfriendly. The government of India, which had looked upon Congress as a suitable safety valve, now became hostile. The moderates found themselves threatened on the one side by an unsympathetic government and on the other by growing political extremism.

In 1905, the vast province of Bengal was, for sound administrative reasons, divided. This resulted in Hindu-Muslim conflict and for some years Muslim elements withdrew from Congress. But the main threat to Congress was to come from the extremists. Their philosophy, such as it was, had as its mainstay a belief in Hindu nationalism. This appealed to two apparently irreconcilable elements in India—the orthodox Hindus reacting against Western civilisation by an intensification of their religious beliefs, and the younger men, partly educated in the Western manner yet finding themselves without status in a new system while being unable to fit into the traditional order of society. The result was a strange blending of Western concepts of nationalism with enthusiasm for the old religion.

The most characteristic figure of extremism was Bal Gangadhar Tilak (1856–1920). He first came into the limelight with his attack upon the Age of Consent Bill (passed 1891), which sought to abolish the evil of child marriage. His actions were carried out with such vigour as to endear him to aggressive nationalists, and his reac-

tionary conservatism brought him the strong support of orthodox Hindus. Hinduism itself had been undergoing a reaction to the Westernising tendencies of certain Hindu thinkers of the mid-nineteenth century. In Bengal, Ramakrishna and his disciple Vivekananda led a 'back to the *Vedas*' movement based on the belief in a golden age, assisted by an uncritical approach to Hindu sacred texts. Swami Dayananda, the founder of an organisation called the Arya Samaj, though accepting to some extent the idea of reform in the practices of Hinduism, still maintained that everything worth knowing—including the most recent inventions of modern science—were referred to, however obscurely, in the *Vedas*. Steam engines, railways, and steamboats, all were shown to have been known at least in theory to the poets of the *Vedas* thousands of years ago. This belief was reinforced by the lavish and unscholarly praise bestowed on ancient Hindu civilisation by such people as Annie Besant, Madame Blavatsky, and the American Colonel Olcott. For the first time, Hinduism was given support and reassurance in Western terms. Mrs Besant became a public figure and helped to found the Benares Hindu university and, in 1915, the Indian Home Rule League.

At first, the Hindu revival was more religious than political and because of this was distinctly anti-Muslim. In 1882, Swami Dayananda founded the Cow Protection Society, an overt attack on the beef-eating Muslims. Tilak, searching for a popular hero, found him in the Maratha chieftain, Sivaji, who had successfully fought against the Muslims in the seventeenth century.

In western India, the transformation of the Hindu revival into a political weapon was the work of Tilak in the Deccan and Lala Lajpat Rai in the Punjab. To them, Congress owed its 'war mentality'. In Bombay, Tilak founded the vernacular newspaper, *Kesari*, revived the annual festivals of Ganesha, the elephant-headed god who was, and is, the most popular deity in western India, and created the cult of Sivaji as a symbol of the physical force which, he maintained, was the only way to fight the British. In 1896, a government attempt to enforce plague regulations in Poona was fomented by the *Kesari* into a religious war. Two British officers on special plague duty were murdered. Those responsible were executed, and Tilak was sentenced to eighteen months in prison for incitement to murder.

Tilak's successes demonstrated to other parts of India that a vernacular press combined with an appeal to religious prejudices could be used as a revolutionary weapon. Tilak himself was not in any real sense a national leader, but a parochial one, representing not Indians but Hindus and Marathas; his method was to use local pride and a local hero to stimulate the masses. But one thing Tilak did achieve. He proved that it was possible not only to attack the British on an intellectual level and in Western terms, but to arouse the masses in the struggle for freedom.

The arrest and imprisonment of Tilak closed the first period of political extremism. The centre of agitation was transferred to Bengal. There, the newspaper *Yugantar*—edited by a brother of Vivekananda—played the same role as the *Kesari*. In Bengal, the goddess Kali was substituted for Ganesha. The movement in Bengal differed from that in the West. It looked not to ancient heroes but to local patriotism, to the image of a wealthy and flourishing Bengal despoiled by the British. The movement's opportunity came with the partition of 1905. The capital of Bengal, Calcutta, was until 1912 the imperial capital, and this concentration of powers in Bengal did not lend itself to efficient organisation. It was proposed that a new province of Eastern Bengal, with its capital at Dacca, should be created. Logically, this proposition was supported by the existing religious division of Bengal, for West Bengal was predominantly Hindu and the East, Muslim. But partition struck at the belief in the Bengali 'nation'. Nationalists were thus supplied with a ready-made target, for on no occasion were the people most involved in the consequences of partition ever consulted by the government. For the first time, the nationalists had a single specific issue over which to fight rather than vague general beliefs in 'freedom' and 'rights'. If partition could be reversed by agitation, it would be as real a victory, though naturally on a much smaller scale, as Russia's defeat by Japan. Furthermore, partition supplied a rallying point for both moderates and extremists.

Two new weapons were to be used in the campaign—terrorism and the economic boycott. The boycott began in August 1904. It was widely supported especially by Indian mill-owners, and the wearing of homespun cloth became one of the manifestations of the struggle for freedom. Secret societies were formed among students; bomb-throwers and political assassins became popular heroes and

their funerals scenes of hysterical emotion. Terrorist activity was not confined to India and, in 1909, a distinguished Indian administrator was murdered in London. This outrage at least brought home to the British public the existence of a nationalist movement in India. The partition of Bengal was revoked in 1911, though an attempt was made in the following year on the life of the viceroy as he made his state entry into Delhi.

The rise of Japan and her victory over a European imperialist power in her war with Russia offered a startling contrast with the state of India, the backwardness of her economic life, and the subordinate status of her people under foreign domination. Nationalists began consciously to associate their country's poverty with British exploitation. Until the end of the nineteenth century, very few Indians had travelled abroad; this was partly because of the Hindu prohibition against crossing the 'black water' of the sea. When they did travel, Indians found in Europe the same attitude of superiority and colour prejudice as they had suffered in India. Britain's view of her own importance, Indians found, was part of a wider Western belief. When this was realised, the nature of Japan's victory over Russia became clear and the Russo-Japanese war was seen as the first battle in the struggle of Asia for freedom from foreign domination. Nationalists in India and other parts of Asia began to see, if only dimly, the signs of victory, however long that victory might take to achieve.

In Britain, despite a growing reaction against the aggressive imperialism of the late nineteenth century, Indian nationalism was not taken seriously; but, by 1907, reforms in the administration were under active consideration. These took time and in the meanwhile terrorist activities continued. A series of reforms was embodied in the Indian Councils Act of 1909. This increased the right of criticism in the provincial and central legislatures, which had already been established in 1892, and provided for indirect election to them, although the legislatures remained no more than advisory bodies. The reforms, however, introduced a tragic element into the Indian political scene. The Muslims, who had begun to take a new interest in politics, had been driven away from Congress by the religious prejudices of the Hindu extremists and, in self-defence, formed the Muslim League in 1906. They also began to look outside India to the rest of the Islamic world. There, they saw the West absorbing

Muslim countries into its colonial systems. The Muslims began for the first time to see themselves, not so much as Indians, but as part of the greater world of Islam. Fear of the Hindu majority drove them to demand that the principle of communal representation—i.e. the reservation of seats in the legislatures for racial and religious minorities—should be incorporated in the act of 1909. The myth of the 'two Indias' was henceforth given official sanction, and was to contribute to the ultimate partition of the country in 1947.

Elsewhere in colonial Asia, with the exception of the Philippines, nationalist sentiment was slow to crystallise. Until 1901, the Dutch in Indonesia had been neither religious crusaders nor political reformers. Their interest was purely economic, and Indonesia was a classic example of uniquely economic exploitation. Politically, the Dutch preserved the hereditary rulers as far as possible to form the façade of their rule. Traditional society remained virtually untouched. In 1900, for example, only 75,000 Javanese out of the population of thirty million were at school.

After 1901, the 'Ethical Policy' (see page 175) though promising a wide range of reforms remained essentially paternalistic and succeeded in creating neither village democracy nor an Indonesian middle class. The only people who actually benefited from the new reforms were the Dutch themselves, the Eurasians, and the Chinese —who fulfilled, in effect, the function of a native middle class. The Chinese, however, did act as a stimulus to Indonesian nationalism. By 1900, the Chinese minority numbered about half a million, fairly equally divided between the urban commercial class, long resident in the country, and recently arrived migrant labour. The long-established and Indonesian-born Chinese were used extensively by the Dutch as middlemen and tax farmers, and the authorities took care to confine them to this role by restricting them to ghettoes, listing them officially as 'foreign Orientals' and keeping them apart from the rest of the population. Nevertheless, Dutch attempts to reduce the Chinese position in the modern sector of society were not successful.

The newly arrived Chinese, in closer touch with their own country, began to respond to stirrings of Chinese nationalism on the mainland. Their communal solidarity resulted in the establishment of a pan-Chinese society to promote Confucianism, Chinese educa-

tion, and the use of the Chinese language. To these efforts, the Indonesian Chinese responded with enthusiasm, and put their money to work for communal purposes, establishing schools, newspapers, chambers of commerce, and even political organisations. These last were modern Western-type institutions. Confronted with this example at home and that of the Japanese abroad, the Indonesians themselves began to form nationalist organisations.

The first of these to emerge in Western style was founded in 1908 by a retired medical officer, Waidin Sudara Usada. The movement known as *Budi Utomo* ('High Endeavour') was, in the beginning, concerned with the establishment of schools, but it soon became more nationalist than political and numbered amongst its ten thousand members civil servants, students, and some of the native aristocracy. Its example soon led to the formation of many clubs and societies throughout Indonesia.

One of the principal supports of Indonesian resistance to the Dutch during the early years of their penetration had been the religion of Islam. It was not unnatural, therefore, that the first really large-scale expression of Indonesian nationalism should have emerged from an Islamic source. This, the Sarekat Islam, was founded in 1912 and was a by-product of an Islamic revival amongst the Javanese and Sumatrans in response to a wave of Christian proselytism. Originally, Sarekat Islam was an organisation of Javanese batik traders who were endeavouring to resist the stranglehold of Chinese merchants on the rural economy, and its aims were (1) the promotion of Indonesian commercial undertakings, (2) mutual economic support for its members, (3) raising of the intellectual and material standards of Indonesians, and (4) protection of the Islamic religion. The first congress of the new movement was held in Surabaya in 1913, when its leader, Omar Said Tjohro Aminoto, declared that the organisation was not anti-Dutch and would pursue its aims in a constitutional manner. At its first nationwide congress in 1916, delegates representing a membership of 360,000 attended, and a resolution was passed demanding that Indonesia should be granted self-government in association with the Netherlands. Indonesian nationalism, like other anti-colonial reactions, was to receive a special impetus from the Russian revolution of 1917 and it was really that year which saw the beginning of organised opposition to Dutch rule.

In France's possessions in Indo-China, the façade of native administration served to obscure the true sources of power. In Annam, Cambodia, and Laos, the kings and nobility existed alongside the French administration. The actual work was carried out by native officials under French supervision, but without interference except under the most drastic circumstances. In Cochin China, a directly ruled French colony, schools were established from 1879 onwards, where the French language was taught in conjunction with the vernacular. These schools, however, were of a very low standard, being primarily concerned with the manufacture of interpreters. Similar schools were established in the French protectorates, but on a very limited scale. In 1906, public instruction was reorganised, and the education system was based upon the village elementary school with the possibility that a good student could move on to schools where French was taught. Such Western-style education as there was helped to produce Vietnamese nationalism, though there already existed a strong anti-French sentiment amongst the Vietnamese, whose defeat by the French had been both bloody and recent. At no time was the country free from unrest. Conspiracies were constantly being discovered, and suppressed with considerable ferocity. Any attempt at reform by peaceful means was inhibited by the French method of ruling, which was primarily by the exercise of force and the manipulation of traditional forms of government. The past was to be permitted to strangle the future. The French realised very quickly that the introduction of modern forms of government only produced demands for *popular* forms of government. In any case, save for a number of compliant collaborators, the former native ruling classes were strongly anti-French and any attempt at internal reform might easily have got out of hand.

By the end of the nineteenth century, a new generation of Vietnamese scholars, still versed—as their predecessors had been—in Confucian ideas, were responding to the reform movement in China (see page 193). They were also, through the important mediatory influence of Japanese thinkers, becoming acquainted with the ideas of such Western writers as Rousseau, Montesquieu, Adam Smith, Mill, Spencer, and Huxley. After 1905, the Japanese success against Russia attracted several young Vietnamese to Tokyo. One of these, Phan Boi Chau, founded a political association to work for Vietnamese independence under a constitutional monarchy. Chau was,

however, expelled from Tokyo in 1910 because of Japan's friendship with France. He then turned to China and, after the revolution of 1911, visited Canton and founded a new organisation, this time with republican aims. His attempts to raise a rebellion in Vietnam finally led to his capture and imprisonment in 1913. The growing desire of the Vietnamese intelligentsia for direct access to Western ideas had led the French colonial administration to found a university at Hanoi in 1907, but the activities of Chau and other revolutionaries led to widespread student rioting and the university was closed in 1908. It was not re-opened until 1918.

Something of the American experience in the Philippines has already been examined in Part One (see page 78ff), but it is important to realise that Filipino nationalism was already fully armed by the time the United States annexed the country. Under Spanish rule, a powerful urban middle class—Filipino-Spanish and Chinese in racial origin—had been inspired by the short-lived liberal revolution in Spain in 1868, which suggested ideas of reform in the Philippines. After the failure of the revolution in Spain and the absolutist reaction which followed, the Spanish colonial government in the Philippines refused to grant reforms. Naturally, this intensified Filipino nationalism.

The leaders of the new nationalism came from the property-owning classes, who looked to Spain for their higher education. From 1872, the 'Propaganda Movement' demanded such reforms as equality with Spaniards for Filipinos before the law, and Filipino representation in the Spanish parliament. A group of Filipinos in Madrid founded an organisation which published novels, pamphlets, and a periodical. In effect, this group created a national Filipino literature in the Spanish language. Though its members were tolerated in Madrid, their organisation was suppressed in the Philippines. When one of the group, José Rizal, founded a patriotic society in Manila in 1892, he was arrested by the colonial authorities and later executed.

At about the same time, a revolutionary movement began to get under way in the Philippines as a result of the founding of a secret society known as the Katipunam. The society borrowed certain rites from the Freemasons and one of its activities included the publication of pamphlets in the indigenous language, Tagalog. When the

society's existence was discovered by the Spanish authorities in August 1896, a well-organised rebellion broke out. In December of the following year, by a mixture of force and bribery, a truce was agreed between the colonial government and the Katipunam, and the rebel military leader, Emilio Aguinaldo, went into exile at Hong Kong. After the Americans had destroyed the Spanish fleet in Manila Bay (1 May 1898), Aguinaldo returned to the Philippines, raised an army, and attacked the Spanish garrison in Manila before American troops were landed.

Aguinaldo and his supporters believed that the United States was prepared to guarantee Filipino independence and a revolutionary republic was established in June 1898, with a declaration of independence modelled—somewhat ironically, as it turned out—upon that of the United States. The republic promulgated a constitution, sent diplomatic representatives abroad, and purchased arms from Japan (though these were never delivered). In December 1898, the Americans decided to annex the Philippines, and the revolutionary republic began its second war of independence, this time against the United States. Aguinaldo was captured in March 1901, but guerrilla activity continued until 1902 and resulted in considerable loss of American lives.

The American military administration in the Philippines had already begun to encourage the growth of a Filipino political organisation—the Federal (later Progressive) Party—and elections were held in 1907. By 1913, Filipinos controlled the legislative bodies but, as in British India, parliament did not control the executive branch of the government, which remained firmly in American hands.

Outside the narrow definition of 'colonial' response, but no less consequences of the colonial situation, are the several reactions of Japan, Siam, and China to the challenges implicit in Western imperialism.

The response of Japan has already been dealt with in some detail (see page 147ff), but it is worth emphasising once again the fact that Japan's reaction to the challenge of the West was to imitate the West, in the fullest meaning of the word. The intense nationalism displayed by the Japanese after the opening of the country by Commodore Perry was expressed in expansionist terms. Before 1850, the

Japanese had only made one attempt at foreign conquest—when they invaded Korea between 1592 and 1598. Japanese imperialism, therefore, was a product not of Japanese tradition but of the process of modernisation. When, by her own efforts, Japan joined the modern—i.e. the Western—world in the second part of the nineteenth century, it was the accepted behaviour in that world for strong nations to expand at the expense of 'backward' ones. Indeed, the reluctant acceptance of Japan by the Western powers was more a product of its aggressive foreign policy than of its internal economic progress. By adopting the imperialism of the contemporary West, Japan became the only non-Western nation to be accepted as an equal by the great powers.

In the shadow of the Japanese achievement in modernisation, that of Siam is frequently overlooked. There are parallels in the experiences of both countries, though, in the case of Siam, modernisation was adopted not to increase national power but to resist foreign domination. In particular, the capacity of the rulers of the two countries to carry out and sustain the process of modernisation was unequalled elsewhere in Asia. In Siam, this was almost entirely due to the character and personality of King Mongkut (1851–68), who voluntarily opened the country to the West. After the conclusion of treaties with the European powers, Mongkut promoted public works, especially canals and roads, and also encouraged the study of foreign languages. Under his successor, Chulalongkorn (1868–1910), the modernising process continued. The absolute power of the king permitted him to spread reforms from above. Most of these were in the administration and were carried out with the aid of European advisers. The process was slow and was based not on European patterns but, to a very considerable extent, upon those of the British colonial government of Burma. The creation of modern forms of administration in Siam assisted economic growth and made it possible for the predominantly British commercial interests to prosper in the climate of stability they ensured. This situation removed any reasonable excuse for British expansion in Siam, while at the same time identifying British interests with the continuance of Siamese independence.

After the death of Chulalongkorn, the new king, Rama VI (1910–25), continued the modernisation of the country, but with a more nationalist bias. As in Indonesia, a particular stimulus was

given by overseas Chinese living in the country, who responded to the reformist and revolutionary movements in China with a growing sense of patriotism. This in turn inspired anti-Chinese sentiment especially amongst those Siamese educated in Europe at a time when the German emperor was fulminating against the 'Yellow Peril'. In the main, however, nationalist sentiment was directed against extra-territoriality, which ended after the First World War.

Of all the reactions to the imperial challenge, that of China represents the exception. Elsewhere, Asian nationalism was a political response to the nationalism of the West, but this was not the case with China. When revolution came, it was stimulated from outside the country and was primarily anti-dynastic rather than anti-Western, for it must be remembered that the dynasty itself was foreign in origin and remained so in the eyes of most ethnic Chinese. Internal opposition took the form of an old-fashioned struggle for power rather than a desire for modernisation and reform. Such reform and modernisation as was encouraged and initiated by the regime was principally designed to buttress the traditional order, not to change it.

The reasons for the weakness of the forces of change in China were many and complex. The most important lay in the stability of Chinese civilisation itself, which resisted change and consequently any rapid response to Western challenge. On another level, China was economically almost self-sufficient. The country's resources *were* being exploited, though by the use of traditional methods. The relative success of those methods inhibited the desire to change them. The size of the country also meant that those areas subjected to the highest radiation of Western ideas and practice were limited to the coastal cities and their environs. The vast bulk of China remained untouched by both the destructive and the creative effects of foreign penetration. In this, the larger and most densely populated part of China, traditional attitudes remained uninfluenced by those of the treaty ports.

In the realm of institutions—of fundamental importance to the process of modernisation—China presents an interesting contrast with Japan. The Japanese feudal order had produced loyal administrators, merchant capitalists, the acceptance and use of Western ideas, and a sense of patriotism, *before* the opening up of the country. In fact, by the middle of the nineteenth century, the essential

ingredients of modern nationalism already existed. This was not the case in China. There, institutions maintained an equilibrium between the emperor and officials, the landlord-scholar class and the peasantry. There were no interstices in the social order of an essentially agrarian empire for the creative irritants of merchant capitalism. Furthermore, in a society dominated by custom, with an administration regulated by precedent, even rebels were forced to express their rebellion in traditional terms. The 'right to rebel' was itself hallowed by custom and justified by precedent. Politically, the Chinese were always looking backwards. The rulers drew from the past a feeling of self-sufficiency, and they expressed it in an active contempt for 'barbarian' ideas.

The Chinese concept of the universal state—the centre of which was China and the periphery in some sort of tributary relation to it—was antagonistic to the growth of ethnic Chinese nationalism. As the Chinese empire expanded, it drew the conquered into its universal system. The Ch'ing dynasty, itself non-Chinese, suppressed racial or nationalist sentiment because this could easily—and would most likely—have been directed against the dynasty itself. In the past, powerful barbarians on the frontiers of China who could not be defeated had been granted a recognised position in the political and social order of the empire. The same attitude was taken towards Westerners. When foreigners were employed in such organisations as the maritime Customs, they were not treated—as they were in Japan—as tutors from whom the Chinese could learn enough to do without them. They were merely assigned a special place and left to get on with the job in it. Even the treaty ports themselves were merely extensions of Chinese traditional practice, ghettoes, in fact, outside which the rest of China went on in its traditional way.

At the beginning of the twentieth century, Japanese example acted as a catalyst for Asian nationalism. Indeed, the Japanese looked upon themselves as models for the rest of Asia, and particularly for China. Great encouragement was given to Chinese political exiles, both reformers and revolutionaries, but the Japanese were unable to unite the two parties and they became bitter rivals. The reformers, headed by Liang Ch'i-ch'ao, were no longer interested in re-interpreting Confucius, as the early reformers had been under the leadership of K'ang Yu-wei. Liang preferred Social Darwinism and its thesis of the competition for survival. Liang

believed in the creation of an ethnic Chinese nationalism as a weapon of survival. He was a gradualist with an abounding faith in popular education as the means. While Liang was expounding a *philosophy* of nationalism, Sun Yat-sen was building up a revolutionary movement out of the highly-varied opposition groups inside China. His aim was to overthrow the dynasty. Though Sun produced in 1905 his famous Three Principles of the People (*san min chu-i*), a vague ideology of revolution, it was mainly an attempt to give some acceptable common framework to the revolutionary forces. It was the collapse of the traditional system in the revolution of 1911 and the chaos which followed which was to be the forcing-house of Chinese nationalism. It was not until the traditional patterns of Chinese society had been broken down that the search for new, unifying factors could take place. During the years following the revolution of 1911, and in a climate of growing political disorder and warlordism, a great intellectual ferment produced all sorts of ideas, but by 1919 and the student demonstrations of that year in Peking, it had become clear that ethnic nationalism had emerged as the dominant force in Chinese politics.

CHAPTER 2

Was Imperialism Profitable?

Introduction

THE gravamen of the charge levelled against the imperial powers by colonial nationalists was that they exploited their territories to the detriment of the inhabitants. The primary charge concerned economic exploitation and, essentially, the colonial struggle was aimed at wresting control of the profit-making apparatus from the alien government. The special place given to economic exploitation in the propaganda of colonial nationalism was, in the main, due to the obvious existence of Western financial, commercial, and industrial undertakings. These could be *seen* in the cities, where other, more subtle forms of exploitation could not. Furthermore, the imperial powers themselves emphasised the economic motives behind their expansion. The nationalist view—based almost entirely upon the mono-causal interpretation of imperialism associated with such analysts as J. A. Hobson and V. I. Lenin—still has many supporters today, and the persistence of poverty in the former colonial possessions is explained away as a consequence of previous economic exploitation. A large number of highly polemical studies have dealt with the subject of economic exploitation from the point of view of the colonial experience. But it is perhaps more rewarding to examine the issue of exploitation from the point of view of the imperial power itself. If there was exploitation, then the benefits of it should be apparent in the economic life of the metropolitan power. As a fully documented analysis of the effects of empire on the economies of all the imperial powers is beyond the scope of the present work,

the appreciation that follows treats the subject only in general terms, and with particular emphasis on the experience of Great Britain, the archetype of the highly-developed capitalist empires of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

1 Trade

At the end of the sixteenth century, the total trade between East and West—for which the European nations were about to fight in Asia—amounted to about £1 million a year in value. In the middle of the following century, total European *exports* to the East averaged about £400,000 a year. In the fifty-eight years between 1702 and 1760, the English East India Company's exports totalled under £37 million in value. Viewed in modern terms, these figures are not impressive—but they are misleading. What is important is the *unrequited* value of the trade between East and West, for it is this sum which represents the real profit.

After the conquest of Bengal, the English East India Company sought to pay for the cost of its exports to Britain out of taxation in Bengal. Logically, therefore, the shipments from India, less the cost of transport and sale in Britain, should have shown a clear profit for the Company. In actual fact, this was not the case, because the Company was often swindled by its own employees. But unrequited wealth still reached Britain. During the decade 1783–93, funds transferred from India to Britain amounted to something under £2 million per annum. This may not appear to be a particularly large sum, especially as much of it was used by Englishmen returning from India to set themselves up as country gentlemen. Nevertheless, there does appear to have been some capital accumulation which, over the long-drawn-out process of Britain's industrial revolution, did contribute to primary industrialisation which, in turn, transformed the pattern of trade with Asia. This transformation is exemplified in the figures for manufactured textiles exported from Britain (see Table 1). But until 1850, Asia contributed only a small part of Britain's total trade. Until the middle of the nineteenth century, Britain's position as a trading and manufacturing nation was pre-eminent and barely challenged. What profit there was to be got from the possession of colonies was almost entirely Britain's profit—or, rather, the profit of British merchants and manufac-

turers. The industrialisation of other European countries, however, first initiated and then intensified competition.

It is important to emphasise that, in contrast with governments today, in the second half of the nineteenth century the British government did not plan or even seek to influence the general pattern of the country's overseas trade. Those who did were merchants, industrialists, and bankers. It was assumed that they knew what had to be done and that the profits they made were good for the nation as a whole. The government, of course, had certain responsibilities in creating and preserving a favourable climate for trade. Its duty was to protect merchants and property, and in its own possessions to maintain public order and security. But colonial governments did not act as capitalists and entrepreneurs themselves. There was, however, an exception, in the case of the government of India, which built and operated railways, although only because of lack of interest on the part of private capital. Neither did a colonial government have, or even feel, any responsibility to promote the economy of the area under its control. Money invested overseas by private enterprise was intended to make an immediate profit, not to finance any long-term process of economic development. Consequently, there was no overall imperial economic and financial policy.

TABLE 1. Indian imports of cotton textiles from Britain
(in rupees)

Year	*Amount*
1814–15	50,000
1829–30	5,200,000
1860–61	110,000,000
1890–91	300,000,000

The burden of the cost of empire and of its wars was borne by the British Exchequer, and, as the age of imperialism got under way, the weight of the burden sharply increased. This brought considerable profit to the manufacturers of arms and munitions and other materials of war. Many of the wars that took place were a consequence of international rivalry and, except in the case of Africa, were without much financial profit. In fact, the territorial expansion of the British empire in the late nineteenth century, in which strategic and prestige motives played an important part, was coincidental with a real decline in the value of British overseas trade. This was due to

the penetration of traditional British markets *in Europe* by the newly industrialised European powers. But the proximate cause of the decline was the doctrine of free trade. Indeed, a good deal of Britain's late nineteenth-century expansion took place in an endeavour to preserve as yet unexploited areas from the inroads of the new imperial powers whose purpose was, not free trade, but exclusive trade—not *laissez-faire*, but tariff barriers.

It was at this stage that criticism of the principle of free trade became vocal in Britain. This criticism centred around the question of tariffs and other protectionist devices. The feeling of unease in British commercial and financial circles was slow to grow. At the end of the nineteenth century, British commercial and financial supremacy was still unquestionable but by no means unquestioned. Exports had been declining for some time and it was obvious that foreign manufactured goods were presenting increasingly formidable competition in Britain's traditional colonial markets, undefended by tariff barriers. In 1896, the British government undertook a comprehensive survey of these markets. The report that emerged was not particularly favourable, and it ultimately led to suggestions for the economic integration of the empire as a whole and for the reservation of markets to the imperial power. But in fact, in these ideas, the tropical colonies played only a minor role. Britain's principal concern was with the self-governing white colonies of the empire.

As the most important argument of imperialists of all nationalities for the possession of colonies at the end of the nineteenth century was the need for colonial markets as outlets for surplus manufactures, it seems odd that Britain should have waited so long before considering protection. Part of the explanation lies in the rapidity of industrial expansion of Europe and America after 1860. A comparison of the figures for the production of pig-iron will suffice to show the extent of this expansion. Between 1870 and 1903, British factories increased their production by only 50 per cent, while the United States did so by 966 per cent, and Germany by 609 per cent. In 1903, both Germany and the United States had surpassed Britain—in fact, in that year the United States alone produced over twice as much pig-iron as Great Britain. In the same period, British exports increased by only 45 per cent, while American exports almost quadrupled and Germany's doubled. All the newly industrialised countries surrounded themselves with tariff barriers to keep out

British exports. Faced with this, the answer appeared to be to concentrate on empire trade, with markets strictly reserved to the metropolitan power. France, for example, had been quick to erect tariff barriers around her colonies and had done so around Indo-China in 1887.

But protection in itself does not necessarily create trade. By 1914, for example, French Indo-China was only buying 40 per cent of its imports from France. A contrast is presented by the Philippines, which in 1900 purchased about 8 per cent of her imports from the United States; after the imposition of discriminatory tariffs, however, the figure rose to 45 per cent in 1913. Yet Britain, without protection, supplied in the same year 54 per cent of India's imports. These figures, of course, do not relate to the profitability of the markets themselves. Indeed, the majority of the colonies acquired during the age of imperialism at very considerable cost turned out to offer very little in the way of commercial profit. The most aggressive of the new imperial powers, Germany, derived very little advantage from her colonial territories; in fact they took less than half of 1 per cent of her exports. On the whole, however, it is true that the actual possession of colonies, though it did not necessarily create a monopoly of trade for the colonising power, did ensure a larger proportion of the market than would otherwise have been available.

Before 1914, the possession of certain colonies was of considerable importance to certain branches of trade (see Table 2). The Indian market for Lancashire cotton textiles is the most outstanding example. The possession of India by Britain meant an open market for Lancashire cottons at a time when foreign competition had made considerable inroads elsewhere. Cotton goods were one of the few manufactured items that could be sold in colonial markets in considerable quantities. For the United States, for example, the annexation of the Philippines meant that American cotton manufacturers gained a monopoly in a market formerly dominated by the British. The colonial possessions of Great Britain also offered a welcome market for iron and steel products—for use in railway construction, bridges, etc.—at a time when Germany and the United States were undercutting British prices in other markets.

Another important advantage of possessing colonies was that they often proved sources of raw materials. Before 1914, Britain controlled the principal sources of tea (India and Ceylon), raw cocoa

(West Africa), rice and teak (Burma), tungsten ores (Burma and Malaya), tin and rubber (Malaya). In the case of tungsten, however, Germany had acquired almost a monopoly in refining, and practically the whole supply of tungsten for the manufacture of British high-grade steel came from Germany.

The profits of colonial trade were enjoyed by corporations and private individuals and, though the general public derives some profit indirectly from the level of business prosperity, there are

TABLE 2. The importance of India in the pattern of British trade with Asia

BRITISH EXPORTS IN MILLIONS OF POUNDS

Country	1880	1913
India	30½	70¼
Malaya	2¼	7¼
Ceylon	1	4¼
China	8¾	14¾
Japan	3¼	14½
Indonesia	1¾	7¼
Philippines	1¼	1
Indo-China	Negligible	¼
Siam	Negligible	1¼
Total value of exports to British possessions in Asia	33¾	81¾
Total value of exports to other countries	15	39

countervailing costs directly borne by the whole body of taxpayers which tend to cancel out any general profit from private enterprise. In relation to the relatively small portion of total profit deriving directly from colonial markets, the cost of colonial ventures by the state cannot be calculated at anything but a loss. The cost of armaments for the protection and expansion of colonial possessions must always weigh heavily on the debit side (see Table 3). In the cases of Italy and Germany before 1914, for example, the net result of their colonial ventures was certainly a loss. There is no doubt that imperialist propaganda in all countries, including Britain, exaggerated the profits of colonial aggrandisement and that in the national balance sheet the control of colonial markets did not show a profit.

2 *Investment*

The creation of surplus capital is the index of the productivity and the profitability of a country's economy. In the first three-quarters of the nineteenth century, Britain—because of her superior industrial position—was also banker to the world. The growth of industry in other European countries in due course also produced surplus capital. Consequently, the search for markets was paralleled by a search for suitable areas of investment.

TABLE 3. British expenditure on war materials compared with export/import trade with colonial possessions, 1885–1903

	War materials	*Trade*
	£	£
1885	30,577,000	184,000,000
1886	39,538,000	164,000,000
1895	35,593,000	172,000,000
1896	38,334,000	184,000,000
1902	123,787,000	223,000,000
1903	100,825,000	232,000,000

By the early twentieth century, something like one-sixth of Britain's annual national income took the form of savings, and of this sum about one-half was invested abroad. Through a complex of private banks, underwriters, and middlemen, the City of London financed world-wide economic development. By 1914, ten per cent of Britain's national income came from overseas investments. About one-half of this was derived from imperial possessions (including the white colonies), and about one-tenth from East Asia. The French, too, invested heavily in banks which, in turn, invested abroad, though much of this investment before 1914 was in Europe. One-quarter of total French investment was in Russia, and therefore indirectly in Russia's own East Asian investment. After 1900 Germany was also investing heavily abroad.

Apart from investment in industrial or plantation activity in Asia, there was also investment-by-loans. In China, an open market for foreign money after European penetration, twenty-five such loans had been made to the government from foreign sources before 1893. These were secured on the revenue of the maritime Customs. The war with Japan (1894–95) increased China's loan indebtedness. About £6½ million was raised during the war itself, and after the

war was over further loans were floated, in 1895, 1896, and 1898, to pay off the Japanese indemnity (about £30 million). On these loans China had to repay at a high rate of interest, and in gold.

The profitability of overseas investment was safeguarded. Though the capital itself was private, the protection was public, i.e. the home government by diplomatic or military action virtually guaranteed the dividend. There were a number of occasions on which the government did not protect overseas investments and a great deal of money was lost by investors. But generally speaking the interests of private investors and of the home government coincided or were made to coincide by the pressure of parliamentary lobbies. On balance, overseas investment in the age of imperialism did pay off. Indeed, in relation to trade, which grew only slowly between 1875

TABLE 4. Amount and source of income available for overseas investment by Britain in 1871–1913, in millions of pounds sterling

	Imports	*Exports*	*Balance*	*Net income from overseas investments*	*Other invisible income*	*Movements in gold and silver*	*Income available for overseas investment*
1871–80	371	280	− 91	+ 53	+ 90	−3	+ 49
1891–1900	446	305	−141	+ 97	+ 96	−5	+ 47
1900–10	630	489	−141	+151	+137	−3	+144
1911–13	731	599	−132	+188	+160	−8	+208

and 1914, the share of import value representing income from foreign investments grew very rapidly (see Table 4). For the thrifty middle class, investment imperialism was not only profitable but essential, because the area of investment circumscribed by the home markets of the imperialist powers was far too small for the amount of capital available for reinvestment to be completely absorbed. If the surplus had been retained at home, it could only have been either hoarded—which would have led to a depression—or invested at diminishing rates of return. Investment at home on any really large scale would have necessitated a redistribution of the national income, which was what in fact happened after 1914. But this was politically unacceptable to the ruling classes in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Without a radical change in the pattern of income distribution,

the economy piled up capital while keeping down the purchasing power of the mass of the people. The pressure upon the capital-possessing minority to seek overseas areas of investment was therefore intense. Imperialism not only offered areas of investment, but government protection for capital and dividends.

Foreign investment sustained the unequal distribution of the national income and, consequently, the position of the ruling élites. This position, in spite of the beginnings of social reform—which would ultimately alter the balance of society in such a manner as to create a favourable climate for higher investment at home—remained virtually unchanged until 1914.

Retrospect

The Age of Imperialism

THOUGH the Western empires did not start to fall until the end of the Second World War, the process by which they were finally undermined had begun before 1914. From the end of the First World War, the history of the West in Asia is one of slow retreat in the face of rising nationalist sentiment. For over three hundred years before 1850, Asia was in continuous contact with the West. In some areas that contact was accompanied by conquest. But the rate of conquest was slow. After 1850, and in particular between the years 1885 and 1905, the impact of the West in Asia was intense and abrasive. It was, however, by no means entirely destructive.

The consequences of the scramble for empire on the indigenous peoples of Asia are still so much a part of the international scene that the legacy of the imperial period in Asia's history is frequently looked upon as a portmanteau of evils. Indeed, in retrospect, the process of rapid colonisation, the great power rivalries it engendered, and the domination of colonial and semi-colonial economies by Western financial interests which is so much a characteristic of it, does not appear 'good' in any sense of the word. But moral judgements are necessarily narrow, especially if they lie at the core of political ideology. Anti-colonialism, and even the process of rapid decolonisation and *its* consequences, have contributed to oversimplified interpretations of Asia's European age. Of these, that of economic exploitation—the most conventional and long-lasting of all—is certainly in need of revision. It may well be

completely reversible. A juster criticism may well turn out to be that the imperial powers did not exploit their possessions enough, and that the growing economic difficulties of former colonies are, in large part, due to just that.

Economic exploitation—in one form or another—was of course uppermost in the minds of the imperialists themselves. The age of imperialism was, as Lenin insisted, the age of the empires of fully developed capitalism. The growth of Western colonisation in Asia, sustained by the British doctrine of free trade, was the result of a combination of surplus capital and individual enterprise. Furthermore, free enterprise was more than just an economic doctrine, and treaties designed primarily to expand commerce also contained clauses to protect the free enterprise of Christian missionaries. In the age of imperialism, individualism lay at the heart of both legislative and diplomatic action.

Western commercial penetration also resulted in the growth of local Asian economic activity. The Asian entrepreneur became an ally of the Western businessman, though much of his activity was concerned with the stimulation of domestic trade and the production of primary raw materials. The benefits of the incursion of Western capital into the old as well as the new imperial areas were by no means entirely one-sided. In China, for example, the customs, posts, and salt monopolies, admittedly operated by foreigners in the interests of their security for loans, nevertheless gave the Chinese government a guaranteed income free from the sticky fingers of corruption.

Western banking services permitted the government of British India to borrow at rates only one-tenth of those available from native bankers. Western insurance companies offered protection to an extent far wider and more reliable than local organisations. The use of these financial structures was open to all without discrimination and, though no encouragement was given to native imitators, no attempt was made to prevent them from operating. Nevertheless, Western commercial firms in Asia banked and insured with Western organisations and these, in turn, usually invested in foreign undertakings or in the home country. At the same time, it was cheaper and more efficient to import a white man to manage a foreign undertaking than it was to train a native to do so. It is here that the truth of the accusation of exploitation lies. Unwillingness to involve the

colonial people, either in the profit or in the organisation of commercial and industrial enterprises, was seen by colonial nationalists as a deliberate policy of racial discrimination as well as a drawing away of the benefits of reinvestment from the country in which the profit had been made. In actual fact, the reasons for the pattern of Western investment were simply those of quality, cheapness, and efficiency—the ethos of advanced capitalism.

For the efficient functioning of trade, protection for its operators was essential. The unequal treaties with China and other Asian countries were designed to protect the merchant (as well as the missionary) from the rigours of native law which might interfere with private enterprise. In the actual colonial possessions, the need for such protection resulted in the imposition of Western codes of law, of Western tax structures, and a rational administration based upon at least some measure of humanity and justice. Material development demanded modern government. Economic freedom was impartial. Asian merchants were as much entitled to it as Europeans.

There is little doubt that Britain's pre-eminent imperial position has tended to dominate later views of imperialism. In Britain's case, the flag followed trade, for much of Britain's overseas expansion was to protect commerce. But the examples of Russia and France do demonstrate that economic expansion was only one of the causes of imperialism. French penetration in Indo-China was unsupported by existing commerce. The desire for empire was at first more a cultural, religious, and racial matter. Of course, what began as a prestige imperialism soon acquired an economic motive as well, but it did not begin that way. Neither did Russia's. The Tsarist drive into East and Central Asia was primarily political and strategic. In the case of Russia and France, trade followed the flag, imperialism created commerce.

It is impossible to divorce cultural imperialism—the concept of the *mission civilisatrice*—from primarily economic motives. The desire to 'civilise', as a means of creating customers, played an important role in governmental support for Christian missionaries and in the establishment of Western-style educational systems. It is important to recognise the fact that the imperialists did not consciously separate economic motives from their appreciation of the superiority of Western civilisation. Their view was total. The

control of economic forces by the West was a symbol of superior civilisation. What is of interest is that Asia's response to the totality of the Western challenge was mainly towards its religious, ideological, and cultural aspects. In the nineteenth century, attempts were made in Vietnam, Siam, and Burma to revivify local religious and cultural traditions as a protection against the West, though they were not successful. The reason for this was that there was no protection of any sort against the superior *military* power of the imperialists.

Three special cases emerge from the history of Western imperialism in Asia: those of Siam, Japan, and China. All remained outside the territorial empires of the Europeans. Siam survived with its independence intact because one imperialist power, Britain, controlled its economy and was not prepared to allow any other power to achieve either economic or physical dominance. Japan saved herself by a thoroughgoing process of Westernisation. China survived primarily because of its size; no single power could swallow so large a mouthful. But there are also indications—and further research on Chinese records will probably confirm them—that Chinese diplomacy contributed rather more to the preservation of the country than it has been given credit for. Chinese negotiators did play successfully on the fears and ambitions of the Western powers—granting concessions to one, cancelling them to please another, and generally encouraging them to restrict each other's activities.

Elsewhere in Asia, the ruling élites were forced to capitulate and were either superseded by the imperial power or were preserved as fronts for its colonial administration. The removal or sterilisation of these élites had not only political consequences but cultural ones too. Traditional literature, arts, and philosophies suffered considerably from the loss of traditional leadership.

The creation of modern sectors inside the traditional societies—the extension of Western administrative systems, rapid urbanisation on the coasts, the spread of communications, of railways, telegraphs, and postal services—produced revolutionary effects. The substitution of Western political and social values, of modern for traditional systems, took place without the help or the consent of traditional leadership. A consequence of this was the growth of a modernised élite divorced from the traditionalist masses. Among the

members of this élite, nationalism as a political ideal grew rapidly. It did not do so amongst the masses. This, and the nature of the nationalist struggle, encouraged oligarchic tendencies amongst the Westernised élites which have been given full expression since independence.

Essentially, the evils of the age of imperialism were not economic but political, social, and cultural. The intensity of colonial expansion in the late nineteenth century destroyed cultural self-confidence and in its place substituted an irrelevant and ruthless nationalism. In a very real sense, the newly independent nations of Asia inherited nineteenth-century Western concepts of the state and of national superiority, but did so in a mid-twentieth-century situation in which narrow nationalism is in enforced retreat. The difficulties faced by modernising Asian élites, the failures of economic planning, and the continually widening gap between the haves and the have-nots seem to be a consequence of psychological wounds inflicted in the age of imperialism. The West still presents an appearance of superiority—if only on a technical and economic level. The cry of 'neo-imperialism' strikes a responsive chord in the minds of those who have inherited the mantle of the West.

Notes on Books for Further Reading

With the exception of certain 'classics', still available in recent editions, only the more up-to-date works in English are listed in the following notes. For the more advanced student, there are a great many relevant works in other languages. The titles of these and of more detailed studies in English can be found in specialised bibliographies, a selection of which is given at the end of these notes.

The Geography of Imperialism

All the essential information on the historical geography of Asia can be found in R. R. Sellman, *An Outline Atlas of Eastern History* (London 1954).

General works

Michael Edwardes, *Asia in the European Age 1498–1955* (London 1962) sets the 'age of imperialism' in the perspective of the entire colonial period. An Asian view of the same period can be found in K. M. Panikkar, *Asia and Western Dominance* (London 1954), but this work should be treated with some care as there is often more polemic than fact. For South-east Asia, D. G. E. Hall, *A History of South-east Asia* (London 1955), covers events in the area from pre-historic times until 1950. A shorter work, Brian Harrison, *South-east Asia* (London 1954), is also valuable. On East Asia, mainly China and Japan but also touching on South-east Asia when the treatment requires it, the most helpful work is E. O. Reichshauer and others, *East Asia: the Modern Transformation* (London 1966).

India

The external relations of the British Indian empire are dealt with briefly in the Penguin *History of India*, vol. 2, by Percival Spear (London 1966), and specifically for the period 1898–1905 and its background in M. Edwardes, *High Noon of Empire: India under Curzon* (London 1965). For

British and Russian involvement in the affairs of Afghanistan, see K. Fraser-Tytler, *Afghanistan* (Oxford 1963); and in Tibet, Alastair Lamb, *Britain and Chinese Central Asia*, vol. 1 (London 1960), which explores in detail the intrigues, counter-intrigues and delusions which led to the British expedition to Lhasa in 1904. For British-Indian interests in the Persian Gulf, see R. L. Greaves, *Persia and the Defence of India* (London 1959), though this only covers the period 1884–92.

Burma

For Anglo-Burmese relations in general, the best work is A. C. Banerjee, *British Relations with Burma 1826–1886* (Bombay 1947). For the events leading to the final stage of British penetration, see D. P. Singhal, *The Annexation of Upper Burma* (Kuala Lumpur 1958).

Malaya

F. A. Swettenham, *British Malaya* (new edn, London 1948), is a 'classic' by one of the principal architects of the British colonial presence. A work covering a long period of Malayan history, J. Kennedy, *A History of Malaya 1400–1959* (London 1962), gives the best description of the growth of the Residency system. For the vital years 1867–77, see C. D. Cowan, *Nineteenth-Century Malaya: the Origins of British Political Control* (Oxford 1961) and C. Northcote Parkinson, *British Intervention in Malaya* (Singapore 1960).

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Though out of date in some respects, W. A. R. Wood, *History of Siam* (London 1926) is still the most valuable for the period covered in the present work.

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The most detailed work, though somewhat biased against the French, is S. H. Roberts, *History of French Colonial Policy 1870–1925*, 2 vols (London 1929). Vol. 2 deals with the Far East.

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Index