

TALES OF  
OUR GRANDFATHER

OR

INDIA SINCE 1856

EDITED BY

F. & C. GREY

WITH A FRONTISPIECE

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## PREFACE

THE following "tales" were originally written in the form of letters to my grandsons in America. They embody the experiences of a lifetime spent in India, beginning with the days of the mutiny. I have now revised them, making a few additions; and in order to provide a ready means of reference to the sequence of events, I have put together as an introduction the following details of my Indian service.

I was sworn in, at the East India Company's office in Leadenhall Street, in the autumn of 1856, but being post-dated to the Addiscombe Cadets, my service counts only from the 13th December of that year. I was first attached to a regiment stationed in Bengal, in the centre of the flourishing silk industry which then existed round Murshidabad. Among the silk-factors I saw something of that large, hearty, pre-mutiny method of life, which differed so materially from the pinched existence of to-day; they showed me also some good sport.

The regiment to which I was attached mutinied in March 1857, and I was transferred to Lahore, where I remained tied down till the middle of September, in spite of efforts to get to Delhi. When I did at last reach Delhi, the assault was over and nobody wanted a raw ensign. However, I got away with Greathed's pursuing column, but was detached, from near Agra,

to join the garrison of the Aligarh fort. Nor was I able for many months to escape permanently from that trap. Sir Thomas Seaton passed through and took us with him in his operations in the Doab, in the beginning of 1858, but back we went to Aligarh afterwards, and there I remained till employed, in May, as adjutant of a battalion of military police then being raised. I was allowed to leave that in September 1858, to join Sir Hope Grant in Oudh, and was there till all was over in June 1859.

Then I took "language" leave to Calcutta, with some faint hopes of the China war. But my luck continued adverse, and at last I gave up the army, going as assistant commissioner to the Punjab in December 1859. I served in Lahore, in Jhelum, and in charge of the Pind Dadan Khan subdivision, till transferred to the frontier in the beginning of 1861. That brought me again among old comrades of the Punjab irregular force, and I resigned civil employ for another three and a half happy years in the army. The commander-in-chief promoted me in 1862 into the Bengal army, on the recommendation of Sir Neville Chamberlain, commanding the Punjab force. But this was a misfortune, for when Chamberlain next year invited me on his staff to the Ambela campaign, my commanding officer refused to spare me. I invoked the brigadier, then the divisional general, but in vain; my C.O. was a most distinguished soldier and of iron firmness, and neither general would help me.

Next year, 1864, my new regiment was countermanded when actually shipping their horses for Assam and the Bhutan war, but I applied to Lord Lawrence, who sent me there as a civil officer in December 1864. Twelve months later I became political officer with

the Eastern column, in succession to Colonel Agnew, the judicial commissioner of Assam, who was promoted to the Western column as chief political officer.

After the Bhutan operations ended, I went in April 1866 to Calcutta to clear my accounts. Lord Lawrence then transferred me to the Punjab, and I rejoined the frontier. There I had charge of the Dera Ismail Khan district for two years, but lost it in July 1868. In the end of that year I went to Calcutta, where, in the following June I obtained a degree of honour and gold medal for Persian. I had previously passed the "High Proficiency" examination in Urdu, and the "Higher Standard" in Bengali. Meanwhile Lord Mayo had employed me in the negotiations with Amir Sher Ali Khan of Afghanistan, at Ambala in March 1869, and from June I was on special duty in the Foreign Office—engaged in correspondence with the Amir's prime minister, in preparing and carrying out measures for obtaining intelligence of Central Asian affairs, in negotiating a treaty with Kashmir, &c. In intervals of these duties I held charge of the Simla district and hill states, and of the Rohtak district, till in March 1871, I took charge of the Bahawalpur state. Thence I went home in the commencement of 1873, very ill, but with sanction from the Indian Government to accompany the Russian expedition to Khiva when I recovered. The Home Government would not allow this, but they attached me to a deputation sent to meet Nasiruddin Shah of Persia in Brussels and to accompany him while in England.

In March 1874, I took charge of the Ferozepore district, and in December 1876 I was deputed by the Punjab Government to the Imperial Assemblage at

Delhi. There I attained my majority and was gazetted C.S.I. on the 1st January 1877. In March 1877, I again took charge of the Bahawalpur state, and again went home, very ill, in the beginning of 1879. In October 1880 I resumed charge of the Ferozepore district, and in August 1881 I was sent to Peshawar as judge. In the following spring I was transferred to Calcutta to examine in Oriental languages, till, in December 1882, I was recalled to take charge of the Hissar division. That and the Ambala commissionerships were united to the Delhi division while I was on furlough in 1884-85, and I was appointed to the combined division in March 1886, after a winter in Hissar spent in preparing the "forecast" for the revision of revenue settlement in that district. In December 1894 "Colonels' Allowances" brought my regular civil service to an end, but it was renewed in April 1899 by my appointment to the Bahawalpur state for the third time. In 1903 I considered that I had trained the very able chief sufficiently to take my place, and this was sanctioned, though he was only twenty, and the lieutenant-governor had suggested my staying for another year. Thus the 1st of May 1903 finally ended my Indian service.

L. J. H. GREY.

*April, 1912.*

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# TALES OF OUR GRANDFATHER

## CHAPTER I

### LAHORE

Disarmament—A Ruse—Mutiny—Blown from Guns

THE whole station was at a dance, on the night of the 13th of May 1857, when orders came round for a brigade parade next morning. Of course we cursed Brigadier Corbett, who commanded at Lahore, as we went from the dance to our regimental parades at dawn, for none of us had any idea of what was coming, and few knew of the events at Delhi. After various manœuvres, we found ourselves in “contiguous columns”; that is to say, that four infantry regiments were in close columns of companies side by side, with the native cavalry in close column on the right and the artillery beyond them.

We were ordered to reverse our front; the manœuvre is complicated, and took up our whole attention, so that the East India Company's native regiments did not observe that the Queen's regiment (which was the right column of the infantry) had marched off from its rear and stood facing our new alignment. Similarly, the artillery moved off to face our new alignment with-



out notice by the wheeling cavalry. Thus, when we got the order "eyes front," we were looking on the 81st Queen's ramming down cartridge, and the artillery holding port-fires over the vents! Then came the order "pile arms"; each company filed away from its arms, and the regiments formed up again in column behind their arms. Carts were ready, a British company fell out and loaded up the stacks of arms; then the Brigadier addressed the disarmed troops in complimentary terms, speaking of their services and loyalty, and treating the disarmament as a matter of precaution, not mistrust. Afterwards the bands struck up, the regiments marched off to their lines with colours flying, and every one went home to breakfast.

For the cavalry the order had been "dismount, loosen belts"; and then, as the sabres fell to the ground and the men were ordered to lead out their horses, they understood that these would be taken from them, and some let their horses go. For hours these overfed troopers fought and tore about over the cantonments, and many were injured before they were all secured. People out for their morning rides and drives had a bad time; the chaplain in particular was, I heard, chased in his buggy round the church. That is always unpleasant. I was once so chased; my mare could gallop, but so could the horse; in despair I was about to abandon her, when I saw Englishmen (the dull Jats only stared open-mouthed); they beat off my pursuer, caught him, and shifted my saddle on to him. Another time, being chased by a bull camel, I prepared to shoot;

for one cannot dismount from a camel at speed, and a mad camel is an awkward customer. But I reached some carts, and the sturdy cartmen intervened till, luckily, the bull spied a *danchi* (female camel) in the distance.

This disarmament of the Lahore garrison no doubt saved the Punjab. There was a partial outbreak at Lahore later; and similar disarmaments in other stations were not all so successful. But Lahore was the important point, and in saving that the Punjab was saved by Brigadier Corbett; and thereby India. It was touch and go for a moment whether the Sepoys would march off from their arms; but discipline and habit are strong, the British officers hustled the men to smart obedience, and they were away from the stacks before they could collect themselves to resist. Moreover, the British line and the guns, all at the "ready," were imposing. Fortunately, these were British batteries, though there were many excellent native batteries in the Company's army then.

After this we had a dull hot time in tents, watching the disarmed troops. At night we kept watch, for we were living in the men's lines, and I recall the weariness of "sentry-go." I volunteered for the siege of Delhi, but a young ensign, barely "dismissed drill," had no chance. It was not till news arrived of the heavy losses of the first day of the assault that I was allowed to start, and even then I had disappointing detentions on the road.

In March of 1857 my first regiment mutinied at

Murshidabad in Bengal. The European serjeant-major was turning it out for parade and the men rushed at him, but the colonel, who had been with them all his military career, managed to pacify the Sepoys. The regiment was disbanded, and the colonel blamed because he had not coerced them with an irregular cavalry regiment which was there. It was lucky for us that he did not attempt this, for the cavalry would certainly have gone too, and a considerable English community might have been sacrificed. I was then sent to another regiment at Lahore. After the disarmament there on the 14th May, described above, the Sepoys still had plenty of arms in the lines. At noon gunfire on the first of July, the Sepoys rushed on some Punjab levies, which were being raised and trained at Lahore, to secure their muskets. They were driven back to their lines, and there we attacked them. A heavy dust-storm came on, and I lost the levies I was with, but scrambled on to a gun as it limbered up to follow the mutineers who were evacuating the lines in the darkness. But we lost touch in the blinding storm; the gun I was on came to grief in a deep water-course, and it was not till next day that the mutineers were cut off and brought in by the country people under direction of the civil officers.

Fifty-two were sentenced to be blown away from guns. They marched up in soldierly manner to six guns and were fastened, two and two, to the muzzles. None of the successive batches faltered; but at the very last, the rear man of one pair, being loosely tied, evaded

the discharge, which blew away his front man. Of course his sentence had still to be carried out, but from the shock and the scorching his nerve was gone, and he made a painful scene. It was a sad business altogether, but absolutely necessary in order to overawe the remaining native regiments.

Mutiny is an awful thing; the officers are so helpless when means of coercion are lacking. History tells the scenes which took place all over India, when regiments broke out in stations where there were no British troops; but such tragedies had occurred before elsewhere. When the Sikh army *panchayets* (regimental councils) determined to attack British India in 1845, some of the brigades and regiments were under British officers; Napoleon's old officers, who had made that army, had all left by that time, carrying off large fortunes. In some cases the Sikhs merely dismissed their British officers good-naturedly; in other cases, when opposed, they mutinied and murdered them. Later, in 1848, that army again revolted. At Bannu there was a governor, Fateh Khan Tiwana, a nobleman of renown, who attempted to restrain the garrison. They turned on him and besieged him and his clansmen in the fort. A pathetic chapter in Edwardes's book, *Two Years on the Punjab Frontier*, describes how, when provisions failed, the noble Khan sallied forth alone. "It is my life you want," he said to the troops; "take it and let the others go." They shot him down and marched off to join the rest of their army.

## CHAPTER II

### AT DELHI

After the "Storm"—A Single-handed Attack—  
The Gift of Tongues—Hodson's Horse

WHAT a sight was Delhi after the six days' "storm" (14th to 19th September 1857) and the flight of the rebel army across the Jumna! Except troops and camp-followers, not a living soul did I see as I rode out to join the field force on the 23rd September; the city had been abandoned by its inhabitants. At the Cashmere gate I had to dismount and lead my horse through the vaulted gateway, so choked was it with rich stuffs and other valuables, which the guard made plunderers throw down there. Just inside that gate is an open square. When the stormers got in there, a friend of mine saw every mouth wide open; it seemed absurd to him till he found that his own was open too; all were shouting. At that moment a white man galloped in from the rebel side, on an artillery horse fully accoutred. In a moment the men had him off to bayonet him, but he was saved. Awful must have been his lot among the mutineers—his life spared to serve their guns, but ever in jeopardy. And the shame of it! Well, he lived, but what a life for the rest of his days!

I will not attempt an account of the operations, even

so far as I saw them. Campaigning is mainly a matter of hardship, and what were ours compared with those of your Southern troops a few years later? Ill clothed, half-fed, often barefoot, without any of the comforts, even the necessaries, that modern armies take to war—those were warriors indeed. I came suddenly on Lee's statue, when I landed once at New Orleans, and saluted, proud to be of the same race as the hero.

The great struggles about Delhi and Lucknow were war; but the business that I saw consisted mainly of undignified scuffles, often however costing valuable lives. Histories and biographies have told of the deeds of the great Mutiny champions; the Victoria Cross feats are on record; but many a heroism has passed unregarded. Picture an upper room with men firing from the window. There is no access from below, so a crazy bamboo ladder is found somewhere and a youth scrambles up cheering, and tumbles through the opening to his death. Or again, an officer has the luck to get a scratch command. He must earn it by making soldiers of his raw levy. He gets a chance and charges, knowing that he will not be followed. Down he goes and then, for very shame, his men follow. They have learned, and will do better under his successor; he has died to make a regiment.

I knew a lad of the Rurki Engineering College who got away somehow, raised a horse, and joined one of the new cavalry corps after Delhi. They were pursuing a broken enemy and he was having a high time, when greed overthrew him. So long as he took on one or

two at a time he throve, but presently he attacked, single-handed, a dozen or more sullen men, one of whom cut him over the thigh, while another fired a musket into his stomach. Then his troopers saved him ; he recovered, but was lame for life.

Even a squeamish person might shoot a man at a mile, but killing at close quarters is hateful to some. The "crumpling up" of a stricken bird or beast is pitiful to see, but what is that to the sudden awful collapse of stricken man! What happened to the wounded? Well, they were mutineers, and their lives therefore forfeit ; our own wounded have mutilation as well as death to expect, and that tries the bravest. "Don't leave me," said Clifford at the Ambela. "No, Sahib, we will bring you in." He had held his breast-work, above which no finger could be shown, so thick was the fire of the Pathan covering party as their assault drew up to the wall. Then, just at the crisis before they surged over, Clifford countered. The blow never fails if timed to the moment, and he bore the assailants back helter-skelter. Again to the moment he rallied and retired ; he was shot, but his men brought him in to die. He belonged to my old frontier regiment, but Chamberlain had invited me first, and, but for my misfortune in being too useful, in a new regiment, to be spared, Clifford might not have got the chance.

It was not all slaughter in 1857-59 ; punishment was tempered with mercy. I remember a village burning after capture and my following a fine fellow

in his search through the houses to save lives. Then first I appreciated the gift of tongues. One old woman would not quit, but my friend had the blarney—not the language only, but the blarney. Tongues are needful to the soldier. A relation of mine, reconnoitring in China in 1900, was mobbed in a hostile village. Tact and the language got him out, with his orderly and groom, though they lost everything. In Persia, in 1905-6, he twice surveyed many hundred miles through country infested by brigands, who had before attacked a well-equipped mission. Again tact and tongues brought him through. Not only in the intelligence branch, but on field service, reconnaissance is a constant duty, and success needs not the language only, but the blarney.

To return to the Mutiny. When the lull came, in May 1858, I was employed in raising a military police corps near Agra. In September operations recommenced in Oudh, and I threw up my appointment and hastened to my regiment. Reaching Sultanpore, upon the river Gumti, I found that the force had moved three days previously, and that communication was cut off. I was ordered to stay with the garrison there, but escaped after the mess dinner. Next day I hid in the high millet crops, my sais (native groom) getting parched peas for us both from a village. That night we got through the enemy's sleeping pickets by a sandy village road. I trusted my gelding not to neigh as I passed near a picket fire; the rebels, luckily, were all asleep. Next day I reached the camp which the



force had left that morning ; tired and hungry, I went into the village and demanded food. They first required my assistance to dislodge some rebels who, after the departure of the troops, had seized the little fort commanding the village. We advanced upon it, but, as we approached the gate, matchlocks protruded over the wall, and my following melted away. There I stood, not knowing what to do next, when the gate opened and men issued warily and congratulated me on my escape from the rebels ! They, so they said, were the real loyalists, holding the fort for the Government. Really, I fancy it was a case of rival factions, but I cared nothing so long as they fed me and sent me on my way. I reached the force that afternoon, and Sir Hope Grant, I was told, said civil things. My Sultanpore host must have been surprised when he missed me. It was the colonel himself, of the 35th Queen's; but I had no qualms in evading his hospitality, as I had once before been caught in the same way at Aligarh, and thereby missed the Relief of Lucknow. No doubt he gave me up for lost, because, when he sent out a convoy later, it was repulsed by the rebel body that I slipped through.

On my ride from Lucknow to Sultanpore, I had overtaken a troop of Hodson's Horse ; the young British officer in command was in a litter, with a sword-cut on the leg. We got news of a marauding party that had crossed the Ghogra river near the point we were passing, and this officer agreed to my taking his men to attack them. I had not gone far, however, before

he galloped up, having got bandaged somehow and hoisted on to his horse. "He was —— before he was going to let any —— Piffer take Hodson's Horse into action!" We frontier force men were known as Piffers from the initials of the Punjab Irregular Force. I had been posted to the force after Delhi, and its veteran regiments had a high reputation, whereas Hodson's Horse, though since famous, were but a raw lot raised in 1857. However, it was no time to quarrel with my comrade then; moreover, he was my senior.

## CHAPTER III

### THE GREAT MEN

Hodson—Edwardes—Chamberlain—Nicholson—The End  
of the Rebels—Lifting a Herd of Camels

A LAD so young as I could only admire at a distance the paladins of the Mutiny. I can just recall Hodson: alert, active, indomitable; he was the Stuart of our army, and under his watchfulness it lay secure. He died at Lucknow, in the Kaisarbagh. When such a place is taken, those defenders who are too late to escape “go to earth,” and “bolting” them is dangerous work. Hodson had come in there on some duty, and saw hesitation round a door; no one cared to enter first and be shot. It was no business of Hodson’s further than that heroes always show example; he did so, and who shall say he was wrong? but the loss was irreparable.

To picture Hodson, stand in the gateway of Humayún’s tomb and watch the hero traverse the long causeway to the tomb, through the vast enclosure swarming with the enemy. See him summon Bahadúr Shah from the midst of his followers, and, by the sheer awe of his dauntless resolution, take the monarch back with him to the troop waiting at the gate—none daring to gainsay. Then thank

God who raises up in England's need such men as these.

At a similar distance I knew many others: Edwardes, who with Van Cortlandt attacked Multan in 1848; Sir Neville Chamberlain, who led expedition after expedition on the border, Reynell Taylor, and others. Chamberlain was not only proverbial for successful generalship, but earlier, in Afghanistan and the Punjab wars, as a mighty leader of irregular horse. A Chilianwala man once told me that the army, discouraged by the defeat of the first day, was extraordinarily cheered next morning by Chamberlain and his men riding in "with each a Sikh's head on his charger." This, of course, was his way of putting it; the fact was that, being in command of the irregular cavalry outposts, Chamberlain rallied them at dawn, surprised and routed the Sikh Horse in front of him with great slaughter. His one fault as general was the valour which deprived the Delhi army of his services too soon after his arrival there. Leading an attack, he leaped his horse over a wall among the enemy and was shot down.

The surprise of the Sikh Horse arose from an Oriental peculiarity. The "Catch-em-alive-oh" (our name for Indian irregulars not under British discipline) will swathe himself up, head and all, and the nip of a winter's morning thus affords opportunity for enterprise. He also loves huge jack-boots, easy to shed. I recall our delight with a horse galloping down to us with one boot fast in the stirrup. The rider asleep,

enveloped in his quilt, had rolled off the startled nag, clean out of his off-side boot !

In 1879, I asked the Viceroy's military adviser why Chamberlain had not the command-in-chief of the Afghan war, then commencing. The answer was that he was an unlucky general, always wounded ! He had received many wounds, the last at the Ambela in 1863. He was where, generally, the general in command should not be, leading a column of attack. Another of the paladins of that day, Reynell Taylor (who was the chief political officer, and equally had no business there), got his turban knocked off by a bullet in that attack, and was swathed in its folds. Chamberlain was panting by his side, hampered by a game leg, out of which a hand's-breadth of bone had been knocked in Afghanistan. A gay young Afridi orderly was exasperating Chamberlain by skipping along in front up the steep hill and encouraging the lame warrior to "come on !" Chamberlain thought that Colonel Taylor was hit and stopped a moment to get breath and give sympathy—and then his arm was smashed ! He walked unassisted down to camp, through the supports and reserves cheering him to the echo, but it was a serious thing to have the general disabled in one of the tightest places (and it remained so for weeks) that our troops have ever been in on the frontier.

I have heard it said that Hodson's derring-do was only for the gallery ; but the sneer conveyed a military virtue. The deeds of Chamberlain, Hodson, and their

like were done *for example*. They were soldiers too good to risk lives they knew valuable except for sufficient object. I think that Chamberlain did not approve of the V.C.—at any rate, till the Ambela, he never, I believe, recommended for it—considering that the best a man can possibly do is only his duty. Keyes was our first V.C. for frontier work. His splendid action, at the Barrara Heights in 1860, stopped a rout such that Chamberlain started a regiment from the reserve with orders to receive friend and foe on their bayonets. Nevertheless, speaking under correction, I believe that Keyes's cross was not given on Chamberlain's recommendation.

Nicholson I cannot remember meeting. In 1866–68 I held the district on the frontier of which he had been in charge before the mutiny. He was a hard man; indeed one has to be so in managing Afghans; my friends Gholam Sarwar Khan Khakwani and Khuda Baksh Khan Khattak were the only men there who held their own with Nicholson. Gholam Sarwar had lost an arm when at Multan with Edwardes and Van Cortlandt; Khuda Baksh had a reputation even before that splendid enterprise. In 1845 Khuda Baksh held a frontier post for the Sikhs, and the Wazirs called on him to surrender it, or they would kill his son. The raiders had driven in the garrison in a hurry, and had caught Khuda Baksh's family outside, and they brought the boy under the walls. "Kill him," answered the heroic Khattak; "God can give me other sons, but He could not give me back my honour." Gholam Sar-

war, too, was a right doughty Khakwani. The name is really *Khúk Wani*; the Emperor Ahmed Shah was hunting a boar (*khúk*) which rushed into an encampment of this tribe. They turned out sword in hand to defend the right of asylum, and the emperor named them pigmen (*khúk-wani*), which has become their title of honour. *Melmastia*, or hospitality, and *Nana-watal*, asylum, a good Afghan is ready to die for, and that is about the only virtue they have. Another of Edwardes's warriors was Kaloo Khan Gandapur. Many years later one of his sons murdered the other; the widow came to me at Simla to get the murderer off—"why should she lose both sons?" And what was her claim upon me! Kaloo failed me once to the peril of my life, and *therefore* she considered that by the *Pathanaki*, the Pathan code of honour, having forgiven, I should go all lengths to help him and his.

In 1856 I came out to India with another of our paladins, Outram, who was then proceeding to command in the Persian war. He was called the Bayard of the Indian army, *sans peur et sans reproche*. I have known others like that; in fact, heroes—Stonewall Jackson, for instance—are God-fearing men. One of our own family, an old "Peninsular," used to say his prayers walking about; when interrupted, he would swear at the intruder and go on with his devotions. Swearing was a manner of speech with the old "Peninsulars"; Lord Clyde, our chief in the mutiny, was a perfect volcano. In the Peninsular war, our Sir John, like Winkelried, took several French bayonets into

his body to make room for the men behind him. My aunts always said it was eleven bayonets on which he spread himself out, jumping down into a courtyard. Nevertheless, he lived to fight the Mahrattas and the Sikhs.

To look at India now, who would imagine the chaos of fifty years ago? Tribe rose against tribe, in 1857, religion against religion, village against village. The Indian Empire is a medley of various races, languages, and creeds. Fifty years ago (as, I believe, at this hour), all the old grudges were smouldering, and the moment that the British hand was withdrawn the people flew at each others' throats. For the revolted Sepoys there was no sympathy; I once saw retiring rebels attacked from a town which they passed, which impartially attacked us too as we followed. At all ferries and fords of rivers, villagers lay in wait for the Sepoys who left their ranks and made for their homes with plunder acquired in their mutinies, and numbers were killed in this way. Where they or we were too strong to be molested, the country people simply stood aside; indeed there were engagements where husbandmen were seen ploughing when the rebel artillery opened. As the British gradually got the upper hand, the country everywhere settled down behind our columns, thankful for rest after months of disorder and faction fights.

Gradually, by the end of 1858, the line of columns had swept the rebel masses across the border into the Terai—namely, the foot-hills and jungles below Nipal. The Nipalese barred their advance, while we held the



river lines against their return. Decimated by malaria and desperate with hunger, they made some formidable attempts to break back during the spring and summer of 1859, but were generally headed and defeated. In one of these efforts, the 1st Sikhs, of the frontier force, were very hard pressed. Sikhs shine in a losing fight, and they held on with stern tenacity till relieved. One of their young officers is mentioned hereafter as assistant political agent with me in the Bahawalpur state. He was very forward in the fight till badly wounded, and again was much to the front in the Ambela struggles of 1863. Once when a regiment was driven back there, with the Afghans following hard, this officer seized a handful of men, took them up a spur flanking the rush, and stopped it by his fire.

By July 1859, all the rebels that had not come in (under the amnesty extended to such as had not murdered Europeans), or that had not broken through into the jungles of Central India (to be there gradually mopped up within a year), had dispersed to die in that pestilential Terai. But from January to June 1859 they kept us busy heading them back, or attacking and breaking up their gatherings. I saw a singular sight in one of these attacks up the shingly bed of a stream; the shingle was leaping in fountains under the discharges of grape. We there captured the last guns the rebels had. They were very much broken in spirit towards the end. Once, after a long day's scout in the heat, my men were quenching their parched throats at a stream, and I had neglected to send a patrol up

a road which debouched there from the forest. And then, from that very opening, not 200 yards off, appeared the head of a column of horse ! Had the leader only charged at once, his chance was good, but he hesitated and lost it. We overworked British officers had become careless by then, being weary of the business.

I spoke above of Kaloo Khan Gundapur : his failure in 1867 led to my being taken prisoner, as mentioned further on. The border taunted him for it, and he never got over it ; but he was a good fighting man all the same. When Edwardes and Van Cortlandt were pacifying the Derajat border, in 1848, one Shahzad Khan, a Nasir, came down as of yore with his flocks and herds from the mountains. Edwardes demanded grazing fees. "Come and take them," said Shahzad ; so Edwardes went with a body of Sikh horse, and some Gundapurs—among them Kaloo, the second chief of that tribe. Edwardes charged into the Nasirs' camp, but his Sikhs had no stomach for it ; only Kaloo and the Gundapurs rode through with Edwardes. Kaloo was wounded and taken. A Nasir poked his match-lock into Edwardes's waist, but it missed fire ; while he primed again Edwardes hit him over the head and rode on with one man only left. But luckily that man was a cattle-thief, whom Edwardes had under trial, but allowed to come with him for the day's fun. Right in front of them as they got through the camp were the Nasirs' camel herds, whose guards had rushed into camp to join in the fray. Now the thief was in his element. He and Edwardes between them lifted

the entire herds, with the Nasirs yelling behind! (Once you get camels on the gallop they only need steering.) Shahzad was so disgusted that he packed camp and went off to the hills, and never returned during Edwardes's lifetime. But he sent in Kaloo before leaving. There were giants in those days: those frontier chiefs were noble fellows. One only ever played me false; it was a question of whether he should run the district or I, and, allowing for Pathan ideas, I cannot blame him. I pulled through because the rest were on my side. But the loyalty of him, as of all, to Edwardes and Van Cortlandt, in their struggle with the Sikhs in 1848, is a splendid story—splendidly told in Edwardes's book, *Two Years on the Punjab Frontier*.

The descendants of these men are becoming Baboos. Kaloo's grandson is reading for the B.A. degree in a missionary college (!) But he tackled and slew an outlaw not long ago, so may make a Kaloo yet. The son of another of my Dera friends was sub-judge in a district I held, and the people complained much of him. I have had other handfuls in my time. A scion of Afghan royalty in Ferozepore, in 1881, kept me so busy pacifying my sturdy Jats, that, weary of making apologies, I obtained his transfer. He used to have a special brew made for himself in the distillery: *Mukarwa-ul Kalub* he called it—the "heart-strengthener." Nevertheless, aristocrats, of the right sort, are very much preferable as public servants to the ordinary product of our Indian schools and colleges: they have family honour to maintain.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE NATIVE ARMY AND THE MUTINY

Chilianwala—Indomitable Sikhs—Unnoticed Gallantry—Useless Carbines—The Cause of the Mutiny—The Officer of To-day

THE East India Company's native army was splendid in appearance, huge men, well set up and admirably drilled. Against Indians they had fought well, and even in the first Afghan war they did creditably; but the Sikh army was altogether too much for them. A friend told me how he went into action at Chilianwala. He was a newly joined youngster, and he thought that these great grenadiers, who towered over him, big man as he was, could go anywhere and do anything. And indeed at first it was all swagger and confidence: "*Company ji ki jai!*" (victory to the Company); presently the round shot came smashing in; still they pressed on; but the Sikhs would not budge, and qualms arose—" *Badmash nahin bhagte* " (the scoundrels won't run!); then came grape range, 600 yards, and many casualties; "*Are bhai kya karen?*" (brothers, what's to be done?); and no further could they be got. They were leaping in their excitement and panic, and firing into the air. Then came a rush of Sikh cavalry and a stampede. My friend looked back and saw an old subadar (native captain)

staggering along with the colours, and two Sikh troopers close on him. My friend rushed to help, but the subadar was down; he seized the colours; one trooper split my friend's skull and the other nearly cut his head off, but he turned the colours under him as he fell. My friend was picked up alive in the morning with the colours safe; the frost had stanchèd the flow of blood. His neck was sewed up, but it was a year before the skull closed.

The Sikh army, trained by old soldiers of Napoleon, was very formidable, though John Company's officers would not believe it. Van Cortlandt knew this, but his warnings were scoffed at in the messes. At Ferozeshah he was "galloping" for Lord Hardinge, and as he went with some order he met a Sepoy regiment reeling back from the Sikh entrenchments. "Well, Major, how do you like the Sikhs now?" he called to one of his chief opponents as he rode by. "D—— the Sakes," roared the Irish officer in command, but there were tears in his voice. Men whose regiments fail in war are inconsolable as Rachel.

An uncle told me that Ferozeshah was as severe as anything he experienced in the Crimea with the 63rd. He was in the Company's army before he bought his British commission, and of course he declared that his own regiment did well. I forget its number; they did not all fail perhaps, but certainly the Punjab wars proved that they could not face the Sikhs. At any rate, whatever the Sepoy army may have been in the old days, it was rotten from pampering and indis-

cipline when I joined it, and when it revolted it made a poor show. Out of all that mass of over 200,000 trained men and officers, not one leader arose of any value, and though they had ropes around their necks, the men never fought really well except behind walls. Our Punjab frontier force was splendid; and even the newly raised Punjab levies were good. I saw the native adjutant of a Punjab cavalry regiment do a fine thing. We were fording the Rapti river, and a man of the Rifle Brigade was carried away. The native adjutant, heavily accoutred as he was, spurred his horse into the swollen river, off a high bank. He could not swim, and was got out with difficulty, and a British officer of the regiment rescued the rifleman. A non-commissioned officer of the same corps speared five successive mutineers, being missed by each; but the sixth shot him. Such gallantry was too common to be noticed.

Of course, each of those rebel soldiers had held his fire to the last; but in these days it is difficult to imagine how vile were our weapons fifty years ago. Cavalry carbines were hopeless. I was a fair game shot, but once when my men were missing even the target at fifty yards, the colonel told me to show them how, and I could not hit the bull, do what I would. Against men who threw themselves down and cut at the horses' legs, the troopers held their carbines at arm's length, pistol fashion.

Why did the mutiny occur? There are many explanations; the one I favour appeared in a recent book

by Captain Winter : “ Coming as I did from the Sikh regiment of Ferozepore, commanded by a well-known disciplinarian, Colonel Brazyer, it was a shock and a revelation to me to see how matters were managed in an old-fashioned line regiment. I no longer wondered that such a system was the moving cause of the mutiny of the Bengal army.” The *excuse* in 1857 may have been the greased cartridges, but the *cause* of the army’s mutiny was pampering. The men were unmanageable, and we were divested of all authority by Headquarters ; the right of appeal, even in matters of promotion, had no limit short of the Governor-General. Woe to the school, the army, or the state, in which discipline is thus relaxed.

Of course under such circumstances the officers were not very keen ; the good men mostly tried to get away from their regiments. Moreover, under a system of pure seniority and unlimited service, the senior officers were often incompetent. The juniors thought mostly of sport ; nor were we instructed as nowadays. I entered the army by a nominal examination. I was a fair classic, but knew nothing else except a little surveying which I luckily learned. During the summer of 1859, on the Nipal frontier, I exchanged Latin and French for mathematics with the Rurki College lad before mentioned, who had got a commission for gallantry and had to pass. After the close of the operations, I went to Calcutta, in July 1859, to try, like others, for a job in the China war. Failing in this, I studied in the Civil Engineering College, and also went

in for the language examinations. I remember, for the "interpreters," being set the Queen's Proclamation to turn into Urdu, and a page of the Pay and Audit Regulations into Hindi!

Soldiering in those days one picked up as one could, and the Crimean men who came out to help us were little better instructed than we.

How different now! Some promotion papers for captain which I recently looked over were bewildering. The officer in question was then in Persia, in the Intelligence Branch, and his papers must have disappointed a Belgian customs officer, who thought he had got something useful for the Russians, who were then being unpleasant. The packet was registered to the Seistan Consulate, and marked "Confidential," which deceived the Belgian. However, they fortunately reappeared in time for the examination. Modern requirements seem to me excessive. Looking over an algebra recently, I was amused by traces of the heart-searchings of its former Staff-College owner. What does it serve soldiers to distribute guests round a table in special groups thousands of different ways, or to sum series by the "method of differences"! However, they shoot and ride none the worse; the modern subaltern is as good a sportsman as we were, and is no doubt a better soldier.



## CHAPTER V

### ON THE FRONTIER

Tigers—Biluchi Raiders—Tied Skirts—Through the Whirlpool—  
An Eccentric Colonel

LIFE on the frontier was hard in the early 'sixties, but it had its relaxations. Outpost duty came round every third month, for in those days a frontier cavalry regiment had only three officers besides the commandant and adjutant. But when not on outpost duty one could always get ten days' leave for sport. There were wild asses then, fleet, untamable; even with relays it was only possible to ride down foals. We had two of these foals running in our lines among the horses, and again later in our horse farm, when I had charge of the Bahawalpur state. There we tried to breed mules from them, but without success. Other sports were hawking the obara, a small bustard, and spearing boars in the riverside jungles; for shooting there was plenty of duck, partridge, &c., also hog deer and the big swamp deer in the river jungles. There were also tigers that lived on these and on the herds, but they were too wily for me.

I have tried all methods for tigers, and laboured infinitely, but only once got a tiger to my own gun. On one occasion, after tracking all day, I found a half-

eaten heifer in the evening. It had got bogged, and the tiger, sinking himself up to the shoulder, had dragged it out ; imagine the strength ! I scraped as much of a hole as I could, and sat down, sending the tracker to remain within call. I had no wraps, as needed for winter work, and I slowly froze. Toward midnight, finding that I could not move, I tried to call the tracker, and found that I could not. Then fright gave me voice, and I succeeded in getting out a croak, then louder, and at last I made him hear. The tiger, we found, had as usual made a cast (they always do so before returning to a kill), had discovered me and gone off. I remember a tiger once similarly finding me out and roaring a good-bye that deafened me. I was crouched in a shallow hole, on the banks of a water-course which showed nightly tracks. As dark fell, two tigers came down, roaring alternately. Then about two hundred yards off they ceased. While I peered into the water-course, my head at ground level, a roar rolled into my ear from behind, which made me jump round. One of the pair had climbed the bank, discovered me as he passed behind, and roared, as they do, with his mouth to the ground.

In summer it was cruel work sitting in holes. One sat close to the kill to conceal one's own scent, so was half poisoned ; then the water trickling out of the spongy ground rose by morning to one's hips ; and the mosquitos raised a fever by bites, which could not be resisted ; for the only chance of the tiger lay in absolute stillness.

Outpost work, though lonely, used to be lively. The squadron took two posts, and the British officer went to the troops alternately ; but, whichever he was with, he could not divide himself as the troops did for rest, but was in his harness the clock round. Now a month in your boots, in summer temperatures of never much below 100° F. even at night, is trying ; so galloping hoofs on the shingle, and the familiar alarm “ *chigha ! chigha !* ” (pursue) used to be welcome. Not that any luck ever came my way. The troops fanned out in detachments, galloping to seize as many passes as possible, and the British officer went to that he thought the likeliest. I have ambushed in a ravine through a summer day, cutting a hole for my head with my sword in perhaps the only bush, while my body roasted at leisure ; but the raiders generally found some other unoccupied path for their return. And even if caught, what was it ? A rush and a scramble : the Biluchis up the cliffs like lamplighters, and the only thing left was to retrieve the cattle and get away if possible without any one hit by their fire.

Two men in my time brought off big *coups*—Merewether and Saadat Khan. Biluchis, I must tell you, dismount to fight. For instance, when the frontier force went off to help in the mutiny, the frontier wardenship was made over to our own tribes. One of these, the Drishaks, met a greatly superior force of raiders ; the fifty Drishaks dismounted, tied their skirts together, and died to a man. This skirt business gave Merewether his chance when he found 600

Bugtis in the plain. Similarly, Saadat Khan, retiring by alternate half-troops, drew out his opponents into the open and accounted for them. Years later the same man had the same chance on the Afghan frontier, with my friends the Waziris, and used it equally well. But Afghans do not tie skirts like the Biluchis, so they "live to fight another day."

No one grudged Saadat Khan his first luck, but it did seem hard that he got both of the only chances going in the 'sixties. His son, Fateh Khan, commanded the cavalry of the escort when I was in the Bahawalpur state. He was a born horseman and horse-breeder, and made a great success of the State horse farm under the assistant political agent, the fighting "Piffer" whom I have before mentioned. Fateh Khan was a Rajput in whose family the title of Raja was hereditary. Though Saadat never bore it, I recognised the title in his son, and got into trouble accordingly; mere captains should not confer titles. I remember one of the farm colts, sired by a vicious English thoroughbred, which with me would not gallop but kept curling up and kicking violently. Fateh Khan, however, made him go; he confided to me afterwards that the brute "rubbed its head on the ground with rage!" He had a brother equally good in the saddle, who unfortunately got concussion playing polo, which I introduced into Bahawalpur, and was unreliable ever after.

I had many Biluch friends; one of them, old Baroo, sitting once over a kill as I have described above, wounded his tiger, which jumped on him. Baroo

made himself small in his hole and the dying beast tried to claw him out. Baroo hung on tight, and though his back was scored all over, the tiger died first. Another, Dosoo, was a renowned cattle-thief. Once he and his brother had lifted a herd in Bahawalpur, a state of which I had charge some years later. Re-crossing the Indus, a mile wide in flood, Dosoo, half asleep, hanging on to the tail of the rear buffalo of the lot, heard his brother, far ahead, cry out "the whirlpool." There is a bad one at the confluence of the Chenab with the Indus, and in their drowsiness they had let the herd drop down-stream. It was too late then to head the cattle straight across-stream, they were soon in the pool, and the next thing Dosoo remembers is lying on a spit of sand holding the tail of a dead buffalo. Of the rest of the herd, and of his brother, he heard no more. He took the "*Tobah*" (vow of repentance), but alas! the flesh is weak! He raided Bahawalpur once more, later, and in the pursuit his arm was cut off. "A judgment," said the countryside, and poor Dosoo took to tracking for a livelihood. A marvellous tracker I found him.

Among my Biluch friends were Koura Khan, the chief of the Khosah tribe, and his son Gholam Haidar. Edwardes's *Two Years on the Punjab Frontier* describes how Gholam Haidar burst into his tent crying "the Bania has run away." The great Sawan Mal, who governed the southern Punjab under Ranjit Singh, was a Bania himself, and those despised oil and corn chandlers bloomed under his patronage. One of them,

Longa Mal, was governor of Dera Ghazi Khan when Sawan Mal's son, Mulraj, rebelled, and he was supported by the Lugari tribe. Their enemies, the Khosahs, sided with Edwardes and expelled Longa Mal after a sharp fight. This Gholam Haidar was a character. There is a proverb about Nadaun—"You may reach Nadaun, but who will return?" "I will," said Gholam Haidar when he heard it, and forthwith started with his retinue. Months later a bedraggled being appeared in Dera Ghazi on foot, hardly to be recognised as the jaunty chief. His horses, his very clothes, were sold; he had lost his followers by the way, lacking funds for their support. But he had been to Nadaun, and returned!

So have I—on forest inspection in the Simla Hill states. Nadaun is one of the many small forts crowning peaks in those hills and supplied with rain-water by cisterns. Gillespie, of Vellore fame, was repulsed and died there, but the Ghurkas evacuated it that night. Then, and even later, the strongest parts of defences had a strange attraction for our leaders, though such in Asia have generally, like Nadaun, some weak point, which daring men will search out if allowed to. No doubt such glorious violence, if successful, is worth the cost; the storming of Hatras, and Aligarh, under Lake, caused the surrender of many strong places. But the over-confidence led also to the three bloody repulses at Bhartpur. In each of these the forlorn hope was led by the same British soldier, a ranker who twice rose to captain and was twice broken!

When not on duty I was constantly out in the jungles and had great sport, though my battery was poor—a 16 bore “two groove” and a 14 smooth-bore (*i.e.* sixteen or fourteen bullets respectively to the pound); so it was probably well that I was unlucky with tigers. In Assam afterwards I must have run great risk in tackling big game with these light muzzle-loaders, till I doubled my charges. My rifle shot to a hair’s-breadth with  $1\frac{1}{2}$  drachms of powder, but badly when I doubled it, and the smooth-bore took 4 drachms with difficulty; but it did not matter at close quarters. Think of men, like Baroo above mentioned, with a single barrel! And only 40 bore! And fired with a match, after priming and blowing! That was risk indeed; and yet Baroo had killed twelve tigers! As I before said, they were giants on the frontier in those days, and sorry was I to leave it, and sad was the result to me of doing so. Had I remained, I should have shared in the Ambela campaign. I have before mentioned my misfortune in losing that, notwithstanding Chamberlain’s invitation to join his staff. It occurred through Chamberlain’s own kindness in recommending me to the commander-in-chief, Sir Hugh Rose, for promotion. Sir Hugh had made a clean sweep in an irregular cavalry corps at Multan, and a new lot of officers were sent to make a regiment of it under a new name; so when Chamberlain invited me I could not be spared.

This colonel, who would not spare a useful adjutant, had seen much service himself, and might have sym-

pathised in my desire for it, but he was as hard as he was distinguished. He was eccentric too. As we trotted to brigade parade one day, we passed a Punjab regiment. Our colonel wheeled us into line and charged it; it was only a recent mutiny levy, but it was in squares before he swung us out when almost on the bayonets. Some of the young soldiers were rather shaken, and no wonder! The mutiny was recent, and the sudden rush of a body of cavalry from out a cloud of dust must have been trying to unloaded men.



## CHAPTER VI

### ASSAM

The Tongso Penlo—Singing through the Jungle—A Leopard  
across a Dressing-table—A new Baking-powder

ONCE, after a hard day's work, I was thinking of home, when a panting messenger delivered a letter from the Chief Commissioner of Assam. It said that "the Tongso Penlo, at the head of a considerable body of men, has given the general the slip, and has gone off to make a raid in Durrung." The letter warned me to have means of sending away my treasure (Government funds), and to induce my wife and the other ladies to go to Gowhatty (the capital of the province, on the safe side of the Bramaputra river) "till the storm blows over." This letter, of the 17th February 1865, reached me by express on the 19th.

I must explain that the Tongso Penlo is the title of the *de facto* ruler of Bhutan, the man who recently supported us against Tibet, and to whom a British mission two years ago carried the insignia of a great Order. His predecessor in 1863 objected to a mission which was sent to the nominal rulers of Bhutan, protesting against the Penlo's raids in Assam. He stopped the mission and treated our envoy vilely. We thereon annexed the submontane tract called the Dooars,

between the Bhutan hills and our own districts on the right bank of the Bramaputra river. One of these latter was Mangaldai (Durrung), the man in charge of which I had been sent to relieve. The Bhutias then attacked our posts along two hundred miles of the annexed tract and drove us out ; near Mangaldai they captured most of a native regiment, and two guns, at Dewangiri. The general was forced to entrench himself in a position in the plain and the commissioner supposed, in the letter quoted above, that the Penlo had masked him there while marching on Durrung. In fact, however, only raiding parties came my way.

The first thing to be done was to send out police to borrow the elephants of some neighbouring Rajas, and to lodge in jail two villages of boatmen and collect their boats. Then I went home to dinner, and to consult about the ladies. Of course they would not budge, whether in Mangaldai or its neighbourhood, so I only sent off the treasure by the elephants and boats I had secured and the boatmen whose flight I had prevented. When presently I received the commissioner's letter of the 22nd February, saying " your treasure has come to hand safely, so that is one source of anxiety off your mind," then I was able to go out and look after the Bhutias with the tea-planters I had rallied. The commissioner's letter added: " I hear that Nulbari has been plundered and burnt: is that true ? " It was not true, though more distant villages of mine had been so. But the commander of the Nulbari outpost reported that the policemen were getting up into the

trees at night! so I thought it time that we should go there. It was about fifteen miles from my headquarters, Mangaldai, and I had a curious experience there a month earlier. I had finished investigating a murder case before dusk, and thought I could walk home by a reasonable hour. While there was light I and my man got along well enough, and then, as the wild creatures are aggressive at night, I set him to sing. He bellowed away at the top of his voice, with an occasional frightened quaver as crash, crash, everything got out of our way. But at last the path ran into a tea-garden, a hole about a mile square cut out of the solid grass jungle, ten to twelve feet high. In this all the creatures out of the ark seemed to have collected, rejoicing in the open space. So, as both buffaloes and rhinoceroses are apt to charge at sight, we gave up tempting Providence, and turned into the owner's vacant hut.

Tea-planters' huts of that day were erections of split bamboo, with furniture of the same. The conspicuous object was always the medicine shelf; for the climate in those new tea-gardens (the tea industry was only just commencing) was deadly, and medicine the chief diet. The planters' regimen then was "quinine daily, castor-oil twice a week, and calomel at the change of the moon!" The very smell of the jungle, and the newly exposed mould in these clearings, made one feel ill. I must explain that the Burmese had long been depopulating the valley of the Bramaputra when we drove them out early in last century. In

gradually retiring, they carried with them most of the young men and women as slaves. The decrepit population left behind rather diminished than increased under the invasion of the all-devouring jungle and the attacks of the multiplying beasts.

That rampant jungle would swallow up London in three years, as it swallowed Assam; under it were everywhere mighty embankments, great tanks, engulfed villages. The discovery of the tea tree was just in time to save the province: I say "tree," because it has to grow to a tree in order to escape the jungle. That discovery brought British planters, and they imported labour, and Assam now surpasses her palmiest pre-Burmese days. But in my time it was still a question whether the jungle would win or the men. When I hurried up in December 1864, to take charge of Durrung, the first trouble arose at the river bank, where the elephants sent to meet me ran away from a tiger. Then at Mangaldai, all night long, drumming and shots went on in the town to frighten off wild beasts. A leopard looked at my wife, that night of our arrival, across her dressing-table, while I had run round the adjacent tank to cut off the retreat of another. Our dinner used to come in procession from the kitchen, one man carrying dishes while another swung a torch and a third beat a saucepan. I thought I had got into a hunters' paradise, but such was far from being the case, for the jungle was much too heavy. For instance, these two leopards lived actually in the compound (the grounds of the

house), and I never could beat them out, even with elephants.

We did not dislike the country ; there was a charm in its very wildness, and in parts it is beautiful to parched eyes from the Punjab. Moreover, it is something to have a climate (however malarious) in which you can camp—we did, most of the summer and rains. We had a good tent, and at any halt grass huts were run up, and we got on fairly well. Mangaldai, my headquarters, was quite a place. Two married planters lived there, and there was actually a baker, to supply us and neighbouring planters. Once, when the bread seemed heavy, investigation discovered the fact that a rascally pedlar had sold the baker “ violet powder ” for baking powder !

The Assamese were opium eaters by necessity of their malarious climate ; whether from the malaria or from the opium, they were the most helpless creatures I have ever met, but I got work out of them. A prime necessity was road-making, a thing never before attempted ; they saw the good of it and worked willingly. On an open road they could at any rate see the beasts which, shouldering their way along an overgrown foot-path, they were apt to stumble upon to their peril. Canoes were largely used for locomotion on the creeks and stream. By fastening two canoes side by side, and throwing a mat shelter over them under which we could creep, we sometimes got about more comfortably than with elephants. These Assamese of Durrung were peaceable, quiet people, very

different from the stubborn, quarrelsome Sikhs of the Punjab. There I could always know when I was passing a Sikh village by the uproar, and often the clatter of staves. If only they had fought it out in their villages, it would not have mattered so much, but the quarrels led to the courts, and courts spell ruin. The other Punjab races are litigious too, but not like the Sikhs—or rather the Jats and Khatri, who supply the militant organisation called “The *Khalsa*.” The Sikh is made, not born; he enters the *Khalsa* (the Elect) by initiation, and thus becomes a Sikh. Whether Jat or Sikh, he is a fine fellow; so are most of the Punjab races, and I infinitely preferred the hard task of handling them to my soft job in Assam.

## CHAPTER VII

### WILD LIFE IN ASSAM

Forest Leeches—Elephants—A wild Bull—Buffalo—  
Hooked out by a Tiger

THE Bhutias were, of course, well trounced eventually—not only in my district, but at Dewangiri. For storming the latter strong mountain position, British and Punjab regiments were employed; the defeats at first had been due to Assam possessing only regiments of local material. Finally, a treaty was made in 1865, with the nominal rulers of Bhutan, for surrender of the prisoners and guns which we had lost at Dewangiri, as mentioned in my last letter. But the Tongso Penlo, who had them, preferred that we should come and take them; so, as my district faced his country, I was constantly on the move. My wife insisted on accompanying me, and we had various troubles. For instance, I fell desperately ill of jungle fever in the Dooars, far away from anywhere, in the wildest foothills and jungles. She nursed me through, and then went down herself, and I, a tottering ghost, nursed her. How we lived in those days, and on what, I cannot recall, but it was rough work. You would think we had game, but who was to find game in solid grass ten feet high! Even in lower stuff once we could only see

the tips of the horns of a herd of buffaloes from the back of our elephant! I remember chasing an elephant in a patch of forest (which, of course, is comparatively open); I was running hard, when I weakened and felt all wet. It was leeches! They dropped down from the trees, they climbed up from the grass, they were all over me—long thin creatures, active as cats, fierce as wolves. Fortunately, they are only in the forest. I have read that, in the late Tibet expedition, a coolie, left behind in the Sikkim forests with a broken leg, was found dead, killed by the leeches, when assistance came back for him.

I had a fine Australian horse; sometimes my wife rode it and I walked; sometimes, when there were streams to cross, she was on the elephant, with me behind on the horse; and the elephant (they dread horses behind them) would get over the ground at a great pace, twisting about to keep an eye back on me. Elephants are wretched beasts, timid, obstinate, and of uncertain temper. I remember one being utterly routed by a charging buffalo. I was on a pad, and could barely hold on and stick to my rifle as my elephant fled; of course, one only uses an elephant where foot-work is impossible. Once, in 1869, in the Rajmahal hills, I was a whole afternoon with four elephants after a tiger. H.R.H the Duke of Edinburgh had taken the pick of the Nawab of Murshidabad's stable, and I with these four refuse could not manage the tiger. Each time the drivers forced them up to him and the tiger charged, they scattered; and one



cannot shoot, but only hold on, when that happens. Before that a bear sent my elephant bolting up a slope which ended in a cliff. I and a cousin then with me were preparing to jump, when it stopped just in time. Another awkward tempered elephant took a friend of mine into a great tank till the water was over the pad, and there they stayed till the brute got over his sulks.

A female which we had, in Assam, for the tent and baggage, picked up a deserted calf in the jungle. The little brute would play about on the march, and the foster-mother would not move without it, so we used to remain tentless and hungry for hours. That would not do, so I harnessed the calf to an old tusker and started it off, but our female, do what we would, charged after it each time and rescued it. Then I borrowed a trained fighter from a neighbouring planter and started the calf again. She charged, but the fighter stopped her every time ; finally he lost patience, butted her round with her head to camp, and then fairly pushed her all the way to her pickets and stood guard till she gave in. Thus we were rid of the calf and went on our way after three days' delay.

Another planter had a sad experience. He hired a female elephant for work at plucking time. A wild bull came and carried her off. He took all his hired labour from their work—at a time when every moment is precious, followed up with drums and torches, and rescued her. Twice again this happened, and he was desperate. He put the driver on the elephant to run her round and round the house, while he bombarded

the bull from the verandahs. At last the bull, full of lead, went off and destroyed his coolie huts. That my friend endured, but when it took to trampling down his tea, he sallied forth. By dodging across deep drains, on planks, which the elephant had to cross laboriously in pursuit, he succeeded in bringing it down at the thirty-sixth shot (he was no artist evidently), and then the job was to get rid of it! It was in the midst of the tea and he declared that he lost half an acre in undermining the brute and letting it down into the bowels of the earth. And he had lost four days' work at plucking-time, which meant hundreds of rupees!

There was real danger from wild beasts in those days; and the mischief was that one could not get them. A bear once killed my post-runner, when he had almost reached my tent. They attack without provocation; a staff officer with the force rode past two and thought nothing of it till he found them following. His wretched pony would only amble and they were gaining; at last he drew his sword and so tickled his mount's ribs with the point that, when it could not kick him off, it boiled up a gallop. Even at Mangaldai once, my wife was coming from the house to meet me, and I saw her from a distance start and run back. I flew. Then I learned that a leopard had jumped out of a bush at a cur gambolling in front of her! A tiger took a cow on the opposite bank of the stream in front of the house, but before I could get there he had disappeared in the solid jungle. Buffa-

loes were troublesome, too, and very hard to kill. A friend of mine, a pensioned native soldier, stiffened himself out on the ground before a charging buffalo. It rolled him over and over with its nose, but do what it would it could not apply its horn. Those of an old bull branch out sideways—I have heard of eight feet stretch!—and therefore, they cannot be applied to a thin object on the ground. I used to practise on buffalo and elephant skulls, which abounded, in order to try and reach the brain cavity; that needs fine shooting against a charging beast. I put three bullets once into a buffalo's head but could only daze and stop him; I finally killed him with a shot behind the shoulder. Another time I ran alongside one trying to bring it down, behind the shoulder, but failed; they are tough beasts. The fact was that I could not afford suitable weapons.

In December 1865, I was sent up to Dewangiri to take political charge; the force was still sitting there, four native regiments (the British regiment had been sent back); and the negotiations carried on at the other end of the frontier, two hundred miles off, were evidently going to remain fruitless. But before I return to the Bhutias, I must tell you more of our troubles. I had occasion to go to a place where, as I was told, my predecessor had received rather a shock. On our way there a rhinoceros stopped our following baggage; that was trouble number one. There was a low pass a little short of my camp, which spot rhino selected for his siesta, and our servants feared him

more than the prospect of my wrath, so they waited till the rhino left. Meanwhile, we starved and were regaled with my predecessor's story. It used to be the Assam practice to rig up huts for the official's stay. It is done by the expert villagers with bamboos and grass in a very few hours ; a row of small huts for the clerks and servants, and a larger one for the white man some way off. In the night a tiger came to investigate. According to custom, the natives in their block trimmed their lamps and shouted. Tigers are timid, so he sheered off to the big hut, where my predecessor lay too paralysed, they said, to get out of bed, turn up his lamp, and handle his gun. It sniffed around, and in time it would certainly have pushed in the grass screen and hooked him out, but for his little dog, which ran and barked furiously wherever the tiger sniffed. And so, we were told, they went on till morning ; of course no native would move, either from the servants' block or from the more distant village. The magistrate's escape was wonderful, for in a similar case, in my time, the tiger at last mustered courage to push in the screen at the end of a coolie barrack, where a man and wife lay cowering, without courage to shout and make light as the others were doing, and it hooked the man out from his wife's side. Well, by nightfall, this story, and the rhino story related by the servants when they arrived, had made my wife a little nervous. I was a very hard-worked man, and she never liked to disturb me (after our earlier Assam days, when I used to be hauled out many

times in a night), so she endured in silence till a wild cat jumped on her bed. This was trouble number two; she thought that the expected tiger of many months (ever since we came to Durrung) had indeed arrived, and I had no more sleep that night.

## CHAPTER VIII

### TO TONGSO

To Coerce the Penlo—A jolly Lama—Subaltern and Brigadier—  
The Bhutias—Lord Lawrence's Instructions

DURING 1864-65 we had made a mess of the Bhutia business, and when I took charge at Dewangiri in the end of 1865 we seemed no nearer the end of it than we had been twelve months before. A new departure was needed. We had made a mistake in undertaking in our treaty with the nominal Government of Bhutan at Punakha, to "render to that Government every aid in controlling its great and powerful chieftains," and also expressly, as regards the Tongso Penlo, that the British forces would compel him to submit himself to the Rajas, acting in co-operation with the "Bhutan forces"—which forces, in fact, did not exist save in the hands of the great Barons, or Penlos, chiefly the Penlo of Tongso.

All this I ventured to explain in a long memorandum of 14th January 1866. In that, as in a previous telegram of 3rd January, I urged that as the surrender of our guns and prisoners, and also the future peace of our border, lay with this Tongso Penlo, it was clear that we must either make our treaty with him, or else coerce him without reference to the Punakha Rajas. If the

latter, then I suggested that “ a rapid movement with a light column to a point within easy reach of Tongso would demonstrate our will and power to advance, both now doubted by the Bhutias, and would probably cow the Penlo into submission ; it would at any rate give the people, who are opposed to a policy which brings a hostile force into their country, the power and spirit to coerce him, if in no other way, by resisting his *levée en masse*, and thereby leaving him defenceless. Having thus enforced the Penlo’s submission to the terms of the treaty, his adhesion thereto might, without derogation to our dignity, be secured by the payment through him of a portion of the equivalent for the annexed Dooars.” My object was to seize the Monass, an impassable river whose bridges are the key to Eastern Bhutan. This would secure our way to Tongso if necessary, as happened when my proposals were accepted. Meanwhile I tried to bring the Penlo to reason through the Lama Guru, or Buddhist Archbishop of that region. This prelate, with whom I made great friends, was strongly in favour of peace, but he could not bend the Penlo. He went to Tongso, but wrote to me from there, saying that in six days’ stay he could get no answer ; and deprecating our displeasure, for his monastery and villages were within our easy reach.

He was as jolly a cleric as Friar Tuck in *Ivanhoe*, and our meetings were amusing. His motto was that of Borgia, “ *Bibamus Papaliter.*” He would ride up with his retinue to near my tent ; there he would be

lifted off his fat pony and carried up to the tent door, where I awaited him, and then on to his seat by my side, for his sacred feet could not be allowed to touch the ground. His chaplains, acolytes, and lay chiefs squatted on the floor around, and then I opened proceedings with the rum bottle ; commissariat rum was nectar compared with their own stuff, so I did not think it needful to run to French brandy. Then, his Holiness being refreshed, I accepted a pinch of snuff from his horn, and we got to business. Of course, they drank the whole time, and it was remarkable that the fresher the archbishop became the 'cuter he got to be. But always childlike and bland ; and I took a great liking to the Bhutias, who are on the whole simple, straightforward, plucky fellows. They had made a very good show against us so far, and we respected them. Dewangiri had been a hard nut to crack, and it brought some good men to the front. When our troops were driven out, Macdonald with a Cachari levy (these Cacharis are not the people of Cachar : they are Mongolians of the Dooars, akin to the Bhutias) covered the retreat and saved the Assamese regiments from destruction, though some hundreds, and two guns were captured by the Bhutias. When Dewangiri was retaken, Trevor of the sappers was first into the great monastery of that place ; bestriding a window-sill, he held the monks at bay till his men could follow him up the ladders. The Bhutias faced the British and Punjab regiments right well, and lost very heavily.

Finally, on the 3rd February 1866, it was decided



to advance. I knew that we could not reach Tongso, but I hoped to settle matters on the Monass river. In anticipation of this advance, I had long been studying what could be done, in the country we commanded from Dewangiri, in the all-important matter of carriage and supplies. It was in that respect that I knew we must break down in attempting any long movement. The political responsibility was very heavy, though the Viceroy in a private letter assured me of his support and countenance. The commander-in-chief's official instructions to the brigadier required him to "conform to the requisitions of the political agent, to halt or advance or to return, provided that his requisitions do not interfere with the dictates of military prudence as approved by your judgment." This order, wrong as it was, enabled me to secure the object of the operations; but it was a terrible load on me, a subaltern dealing with a brigadier! We of course differed greatly, but most cordially. I won a dozen of champagne from the fine old soldier in backing my own judgment, and I was toasted therein flatteringly when we returned from the expedition.

While waiting for orders on my proposals, I knocked about much, and also tried for sport. But there was none; the Bhutias are Buddhists, who may not "kill and eat," so by the law of supply and demand there is no game. Corpses are different; when, later, we lost many elephants, and mules by the dozen with their loads, the Bhutias consumed them all. They pine for flesh, and used to go down to the Bramaputra river

with hill produce, to exchange for fish. It became very gamey ere it reached their distant homes, but that is all one to a Bhutia.

It is an impossible country for a sportsman, being too overgrown for shooting, even were there game. I nearly got into trouble once. I was sure-footed on ground which I understood, but the long slippery grass of those damp hills was new to me. I remember utter helplessness on a steep slope, where my feet would not hold and the grass came away in my hands. I got to safe rock somehow, but it was touch and go. The people were cheery and inoffensive—very different from the western frontier, where, even though with Afghans, and in Afghan dress, idle shepherds would loose off at us in mere sport.

Lord Lawrence's letter, above mentioned, following his telegraphic order for the advance, may be of interest as showing the familiar methods of the time; a young subaltern in these days would hardly receive such a letter. Work no doubt is heavier now, and etiquette stricter, but in my early service a Viceroy was quite accessible. I cannot now recall it, but I think I must have gone to Lord Canning, in 1859, to get appointed to the Punjab Civil Service; however, I remember Lady Canning best, who was most charming. Certainly I went to Lord Lawrence in 1864, and he sent me to Assam and Bhutan, and was quite cordial. Later both Lord Mayo and Lord Lytton were most gracious; indeed the latter was embarrassingly outspoken, but he knew me discreet. Lord Mayo's kindness to me

was extraordinary, and his assassination made a great change in my prospects. I afterwards learned that he put down my name for the C.S.I., to which I was gazetted on attaining my majority. I will now quote Lord Lawrence's letter :—

“CALCUTTA, *3rd February* 1866.

“DEAR MR. GREY,—In the approaching expedition against Tongso, you must be careful to communicate fully and freely with Colonel Richardson and on all military points be guided by his judgment.

“It is very desirable that we should reach Tongso, and punish the chief if he does not send in the guns. I am in great hopes that when he hears that the force has advanced, or at any rate has proceeded some marches on the way towards him, he will submit and restore the guns. Should he do so, the objects of the expedition will be accomplished and the force should fall back.

“But however anxious I am to accomplish these objects, you must understand that I am still more desirous of avoiding disaster. If, therefore, supplies should fail, or carriage fall short, or the difficulties of the way prove, in the judgment of Colonel Richardson, insurmountable, or even greater than it may appear expedient to encounter, then it will rest with that officer to give up the expedition.

“I do not apprehend much from the efforts of the Bhutias, but the route is long and difficult, and supplies for the troops are of primary importance. Unless these are secured, it will not be safe to advance.

“ It will be a great point to establish such depots as may be considered necessary, in strong positions where water is available, and to throw up a sufficient defence against sudden attack.

“ You are at liberty to spend any money which may be required for any purpose connected with the expedition, and when good information is furnished, or even risk run in attempting to procure it, pay liberally. Take sufficient money with you. Keep a good look-out, see that proper discipline is enforced, and protect the peaceable inhabitants of the country.

“ You may quite reckon on my support and countenance.

“ Should the force reach Tongso and fail to recover the guns, blow up the chief fort. I anticipate that he will not stand an attack, but will retreat into the interior. In that case the object will be to damage his power and prestige as much as possible. Don't remain at Tongso longer than is prudent.

“ If the Bhutan Government or any of their people show a disposition to help in coercing the Tongso, encourage them to do so, but don't pay them any money, and take suitable precautions against treachery without appearing to distrust them more than is necessary.

“ If the Tongso Penlo comes in, or gives up the guns, treat him and his people courteously, but *do not pay them any money*. I have no objection to his receiving eventually any portion of the sum we shall pay annually to the Bhutan Government—either direct or

through them, but this point must be settled by the Government of India in communication with the Deb and Dharm Rajas. And in no case am I willing to pay the Tongso Penlo money either for, or immediately after the surrender of the guns. On any doubtful point, write and telegraph for orders. Don't pay the Tongso Penlo any money without such orders.—  
Yours sincerely,

JOHN LAWRENCE.”

## CHAPTER IX

### SOME INCIDENTS OF TRAVEL

Toasts—Country-bottled Beer—Hard Marching—By Mail-cart to Lahore—Frontier Travelling—A Poor Trencherman

EXCEPT “ The King, God bless him ! ” healths are not drunk nowadays ; but fifty years ago they were a great trial. India has perhaps changed more in that time than any country in the world, except Japan. A pre-mutiny man coming back to India to-day would be almost as much lost as a Pilgrim Father in the States. Take the custom above mentioned, or the similar custom of drinking wine with a person. “ X, the pleasure of a glass of wine with you ” ; you smiled and bowed and round came the decanter. With us Company’s officers the celebration was generally in beer ; and in “ country-bottled ” beer, for “ pale ale,” which came round the Cape in bottle, was very expensive. Well, the country-bottled of that day had to be drunk at once, for it turned black if it stood. So when Y said “ X, the pleasure of a glass of beer with you,” then X sent his tumbler, Y opened a bottle, divided it, and the tumbler was brought quickly back ; they bowed and emptied their glasses. Imagine the feelings of an officer joining a regiment who had to go through this ceremony with each of his new comrades !

Nor was that all. I joined my first regiment at Berhampore, the military cantonment of Murshidabad, the ancient capital of the Nawabs, who ceded Bengal to us, and I well remember having to call on every one of my brother officers. Solemnly did every one of them offer me refreshment, and I had to take it too! I forget what the seniors gave me, but the captains and subalterns each produced his brandy bottle and water goblet and drank with me very ceremoniously.

What we did with it all puzzles me now, but no one seemed the worse. Delhi, they say, was taken on beer; it must all have been finished then, for I remember nothing but commissariat rum afterwards. In the standing camp of the siege, however, supplies were plentiful, and what could harm men who worked as hard as the army outside Delhi! In those days we carried our liquor by dint of hard work and exposure. A man would shoot all day in the sun with a basket of beer following him. I remember my colonel shot straighter with each bottle, better than I did on water.

Beer, then, seemed appropriate to the climate. Often after desperate struggles at racquets, in a court of red hot masonry which would have almost baked bread, have I quaffed a tankard and then dived into the swimming bath. I seemed to hear the water hiss as I glided! We built baths and racquet courts everywhere, by subscription; they were necessities of our life, as was the beer. Now, however, beer is thought poison in India; whether the climate has changed, or we have, I cannot say. At any rate, I

am glad that the tot of rum is no longer an institution in British regiments. I remember at dawn, after marching some three hours, the column would halt for the tot, and the men ate anything they had in their haversacks. This made them good for two hours more, and if they tired after that, the order "loosen cartridges" would always freshen them. The heat was trying; I used to pile all I had on my cot, and then get underneath the cot; tents and cots we carried, or campaigning would have been impossible. One cannot often lie out in the summer sun, even if one can find a tuft wherein to hide the head and shoulders, as I have before mentioned when ambushing hill passes for raiders on the frontier.

The sick had a hard time. I remember an officer sent back to the base; he was crying in his litter with disappointment: weakness and misery had broken him down; later he achieved the Victoria Cross. I myself suffered badly with ague: you burn first, and then shiver enough to loosen your teeth. I had some six months of it, but did my duty generally, though I recall dreadful marches in a bullock-cart behind the column.

But it was not all hardship in the mutiny. In the winter of 1858-59, a line of columns was sweeping through Oudh. Mine was a large one, comprising the 7th Hussars, who had a scratch pack affording great fun. Along the line of march, through the numerous orchards, there was fine "schooling" over the walls and banks. We had ski-racing and hurdling, too,



and I remember winning two matches in one morning on my own nags, which helped out my stable, too expensive for an Indian subaltern. I saw one of the Hussars, Topham by name, bolted with, over shocking ground, his horse kicking like a fiend to get rid of an unaccustomed crupper. Topham merely looked bored as he flew past me, though the horse seemed likely to rick his own back and his rider's.

Another great change is in travelling; who would ever have supposed, before the mutiny, that one could sleep across India in comfort 600 miles a day at a half-penny a mile (2nd class)? Well I remember joining my first regiment in Bengal by *dooli dak* (a litter carried by relays of bearers), forty miles a night at sixpence a mile. Afterwards I joined another regiment at Lahore, a three weeks' journey. That was by horsed van so far as the metalled road extended beyond Delhi, and thence by *dooli*. From Lahore, in September 1857, I went to Delhi as volunteer, by mail-cart; but being turned out by senior officers at points along the route, I did not reach it in time for the Delhi clasp to my medal. After we went into quarters on the Oudh frontier, at the end of the operations in 1859, I got to Lucknow, I forget how, and thence to Calcutta by horse-van and the last few miles by rail. Failing there to get out to the China war, I went that winter to Lahore as before, and on to Jhelum by mail-cart. Thence, next winter, I dropped down the Jhelum and Chenab rivers by boat to Multan, and rode across to Dera Ghazi Khan.

Boat travelling was pleasant; you hired a flat-bottomed boat or scow, put up a little shelter therein, and dropped downstream, tying up to the bank at night. One went shooting most of the day, cutting off the bends of the river. *Dooli* and horse-van travelling were also easy, though slow (about forty and eighty miles respectively each night); one slept all night and found a rest house or other shelter for the day, which however was generally passed in shooting. But the fast mail-cart was a great boon, though fatiguing. You were perched high on a box on wheels, with one horse in the shafts and another "outrigger." While you could keep awake, you clutched an iron rail, a few inches above the seat, as the cart bounded over the awful tracks. When sleep endangered your neck, you took the driver's turban and bound yourself to him, as the drivers had only sixty-mile stages and were wakeful. We used in this way to come and go between Multan and Lahore—204 miles, mostly desert—on two months' shooting leave to the Himalaya from the Biluch frontier. I have been thirty hours at a stretch on the cart, but I have also, under favourable circumstances, done the distance in eighteen and a half hours. Sometimes very bad parts of the road would be laid with fascines, but these were apt to bring the horses down at night. Twice in one winter's night have I been shot out, dead with sleep, over the horses, and had to unharness them with numb fingers. The night cold in winter, and the day heat in summer, were both intense in that wilderness.

Slower and more trying was the only frontier method of travelling, namely, riding along the border posts with the commandant's order for horses. In summer of course we rode at night. A cavalry man soon learns to sleep or at any rate to lose consciousness in the saddle, but naps are short between the horse's desperate flounders as you cross stony ravines in the dark. Hard frontier rides recall the mess nights, on which one relaxed. Singing used to be obligatory, and I have heard good songs, but always sentimental—because, I suppose, our life was hard and squalid. It was supposed to be dangerous, too, though few carried arms; what is the use of being “heeled” against assassins! Personally, I never met with anything but civility. I like the *starai ma sha* (“do not tire”), and the *Khudai di mal sha* (“God be with you”), the breezy Pathan greetings and partings. They were very hospitable. Each village had a guest-house, and each household took its turn to supply the fire, tobacco, and food, the cot and greasy quilt, for the honoured guest. I have turned in tired, when benighted, made over my horse without misgiving, and slept in perfect security. I remember painfully one Biluchi's hospitality. His daughter cooked what would have been our good north-country furmity, only it was smothered in *ghi* (clarified butter). I was tired and very hungry, and did well. When I began to fail she stood over me. I drank water and continued. Presently I was getting beaten; I looked at her, but there was no sign of relenting; so I sighed and went at it again. At last

I could no more, and she expressed the poorest opinion of my manhood—" a Biluch would have finished that and another helping." Doubtless he would. They and Afghans are mighty trenchermen ; three of them have been known to finish a goat before giving in.

## CHAPTER X

### BHUTAN

Marching from Dewangiri—A Boar in the Drawing-room—  
The Bridge—Exhausted Men—Dawn

FROM its commencement in the disgraceful maltreatment of our envoy in 1863, up to its official close in the futile treaty of 1865, with the nominal Government at Punakha, the Bhutan affair was a failure, only partly redeemed by success in 1866. Some years later, in urging recognition of the Bhutan campaigns by a clasp, the *Pioneer* said that “the Government and the public were heartily sick and ashamed of Bhutan, and only too thankful to wind the affair up and consign it to oblivion. Had not the guns been recovered when they were, by the force which marched into the interior from Dewangiri, it is impossible to say to what extent, or at what expense, the campaign in that impracticable country might not have dragged along. Lord Lawrence, whose anxiety during the progress of the movement was intense, fully contemplated the possibility of the Penlo’s retiring into the northern ranges of the Himalaya and leaving us to return, still *minus* the guns, after the empty triumph of burning Tongso when we got there. But the thing was to have got to Tongso, for the Dewangiri force

entirely broke down, having accomplished but five marches out of thirteen. Release from this predicament (the result of making the restoration of the guns by the Tongso Penlo a condition of the treaty made with the Punakha Government) was in great measure owing to the dash and *élan* with which the force, notwithstanding the failure of transport and commissariat in the very first march, pressed on by forced marches with three days' provision in pouch, surprised the stockades, and pushed the Bhutias down to the Monass with such rapidity as to pass them, and to secure the iron suspension bridge over that river which was the key to that province." (Tongso.) "Also to the advantage taken by the political officer of the consternation produced by this successful dash (the advisability of which he had urged upon Government) to negotiate the surrender of the guns through pressure of influential chiefs whom our advance had laid at our mercy ; as well as to his then holding back the force from marring the negotiations, and exposing its own weakness, by a further advance. Until, within twelve days" (really it was sixteen days) "after seizing the line of the Monass, the guns were made over to the force, and the Bhutan war, the end of which no one could foresee, was brought to a successful termination." None of the above appears in the Bhutan Blue-book ; therein my telegram of the 23rd February 1866, announcing the surrender of the guns, follows the treaty of some months previous, without reference to the intervening expedition !

On the 4th February the force marched out from Dewangiri, and I started my wife down to Gowhatty, the capital of Assam. I had sent her there originally when I left Durrung; but she afterwards joined me at Dewangiri. An incident of her stay at Gowhatty was a boar in the drawing-room. She supposes that in swimming the Bramaputra, as these restless brutes do, it lost its course. Carried down thus by the river into quasi-civilisation, piggy, to its astonishment, landed in a garden instead of its familiar jungle. There is no hesitation about a boar; he just went straight ahead, and, confronted by the house, he charged through it!

Next day I followed the force and found it stuck half-way in the first march; heavy rain had fallen and the country was most difficult. However, anticipating breakdowns, I had arranged to enlist Bhutia porters, and had also got up a number of my own people from Durrung. I knew that stockades had been erected and resistance was certain, also that in the last resort the Bhutias would dismantle the bridge over the Monass, which river we had no other means of crossing. But the Bhutias had seen our breakdown and consequently I hoped they might be found careless. Therefore, says my report, on joining the force on the 5th February, "I suggested that we might, by a forced march the same night, reach and carry the stockades in the morning, and following up rapidly, save the bridge." So we finished that march and made all ostensible preparations for a long halt to gather up

our carriage and supplies ; then at 2.30 A.M. a picked detachment started. About 8 A.M. we found the first stockade empty ; the defenders were still asleep in their villages, and “ after a further short ascent we attained the crest of the ridge, up which we had been toiling for six consecutive hours.”

Already an impression was made, for my report continues that “ all of the head-men that joined me at different times during the march petitioned to be retained in their present positions.” On we went again, but halted at noon “ for two hours to refresh the men, who were considerably fatigued and had many hours’ work yet to do before they reached the Monass. . . . At 2 P.M. we resumed our march, leaving a detachment of the men least able to endure further fatigue.” Right good fellows they were ; burdened with their equipment, cloaks, and food, they and their British officers were ready for anything. I, too, was carrying my rifle, cloak, &c., but I was too anxiously engaged with my political duties to think of fatigue, whereas for the troops it was simply dull marching. The brigadier and his staff had of course ponies, but I would not be so encumbered, and, with some Bhutias, I kept ahead of the “ Point.”

I was studying Persian then, and always had an instructor in my pocket. Poor fellow, it was almost literally “ in my pocket ” that alarm kept him, and gave him strength for a job unfamiliar to a scholar. When firing broke out at the Salika Raja’s fort, I forgot all about him. I was in a fever about the bridge, and



when the brigadier arrived with the van, I suggested that there was no time for haggling, as it was getting on for 4 P.M. and dark fell at 5.30. One of the staff then charged out on the other flank, while I was hustling a man who I thought was skulking; he was really wounded, poor fellow, but we made it up afterwards. As we went over the wall, I saved a belated Bhutia. His friends had got out in time, but an Afridi Sepoy with me would have bagged him at close quarters had I not knocked up the firelock; the Afridi, who always made it his business to look after me, was greatly offended. Then I thought with a pang of my unhappy instructor, and behold he was at my elbow.

On we went; the troops, says my report, "though now much tired, made extraordinary efforts, and we followed the Raja and his people down the road with such rapidity that we pushed them all off into the forest on either side, and after an arduous descent of 4500 feet reached by sunset an affluent of the Monass separated from the suspension bridge only by a low ridge." And now my troubles began. I of course thought only of my political object, while the staff considered military prudence. Go further then, in the dark, they would not; and the "detachment bivouacked for the night along the path, enduring some hardships." Besides the cold, we suffered from thirst; we could hear the rivulet below, but there was no getting there in the dark. There was a little firing now and again at the rear picket, and they bayoneted one audacious Bhutia. I tried to get there,

but the exhausted men lying along the path were sulky and the hill was too precipitous to allow of movement in the dark except by the path. "Towards morning shots were again fired, and it was then determined that our force should return to Salika."

What an amusing scene is called up by these few guarded words of my report! I was lively, the staff were depressed by cold, hunger and fatigue. I was bent on securing the object of our tremendous exertions, now only  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles distant; they could only think of getting out of what looked like a scrape. And so the discussion went on at intervals through that bitter winter's night, as I lay on my back and argued, with my legs thrown over my unhappy instructor to keep some life in him! What a nuisance they must have thought me; but, at last, my report shows that I got my way, when light returned to cheer our hearts. "At dawn it was agreed that we should proceed as far as the iron bridge, to see whether it was destroyed or defended; but Colonel Richardson determined that no attempt should be made to take or hold it, as the troops were without food."

## CHAPTER XI

### FORWARD TO THE BRIDGE

An Unhappy Scholar—A Crippled Force—Through Snow to the Monastery—Liquor and Tea Soup—The Bridge Gained

I FEAR that I laughed when I picked up my tutor in the morning. The unhappy scholar; he doubtless agreed in the classic saying of a commissariat Baboo: "Sir, war is a very dangerous department." He survived it all, but I lost the poor fellow in the Indus, in 1867; I fear an alligator got him.

We were all stiff on that morning of the 7th February, and painfully hollow; we had started with three days' provisions, but the victuals had been left at the noon halt, with the men who could then go no further. However, we picked up some basket-loads of radishes left by fleeing Bhutias (Bhutia radishes run to three or four pounds weight and are not pungent), and, as the frost got out of the brigadier's bones, he inclined to my side. He was a well-known fighting man, but lame from an old wound. Therefore, says my report, when "on arrival at the bridge it was found in good order, I strongly counselled that a detachment should be left there, otherwise we might in all probability lose the fruits of our forced march before we could again come down from Salika to occupy it. . . . This

proposition was eventually agreed to, and a small detachment was left to hold the towers at either end of the bridge till a relief with provisions could arrive from Salika, for which an express was immediately despatched." I sent one of my Bhutias, who, on promise of a large reward, got up the 4500 feet to Salika with incredible speed.

We followed, and it was indeed "a getting up stairs," for many of the men had shot their bolt. The officers did what they could, and I myself arrived carrying the muskets of two spent Sikhs in addition to my own rifle, but it was late in the afternoon when we got into Salika and fed. The rest of the expedition gradually collected there from behind, but it was a crippled concern. First and last, I believe the tale of our losses was 13 elephants and 193 baggage ponies—chiefly down the hillsides. The Bhutias could be seen camping by each animal, far below, till they consumed him and his load. Elephant, mule, pony—nothing came amiss to these Buddhists, to whom meat ready killed was a Godsend. I see from my report that I squeezed 150 more Bhutia porters out of the archbishop; a Bhutia carries more than a mule can in such hills as these. There is a legend of one who carried a piano up to Darjiling; indeed a woman brought in a well-grown engineer officer for two or three marches, in a chair upon her back; it was not lack of gallantry on his part, but an injured foot.

The brigade-major, as president of our staff mess, was a marvel. We were all, of course, on the men's

rations of Australian tinned mutton and biscuits, but the major had some cunning soups and sauces, which rendered the stringy mess an appetising stew. Moreover, to replace the commissariat rum, he had actually smuggled some brandy, and allowed us a bottle to three! The regimental officers found out that we did not all drink our shares, and their behaviour became indecent; I believe that they drew lots for their turns to loaf around and inquire after our health. I was campaigning for the first time in comfort; I had some kit and I had a tent. It was no bigger than in the mutiny; but I had it to myself. Though merely a subaltern, this was not presumption, but a necessity of my business. I had money and accounts to keep, for I was paying largely for intelligence and for Bhutia assistance; my visitors were endless, too, and I carried a supply of presents for them.

My report says that "on the 13th I visited the Lama of Youngla" (the archbishop) "who, with all the *chowdris* (heads of districts) of the surrounding country had been giving me every assistance in their power." In fact, in seizing the Monass river we had seized them, and through them we eventually obtained the guns. We had got the Monass bridge, which was the key to the Tongso country could we but have used it at once. My report shows that I urged it; on the 8th February "I was very desirous that a force should be pushed on if possible, before the Bhutias could sufficiently recover themselves to oppose us." But before the 13th our breakdown was so evident, that

my efforts were then devoted to "obviating the necessity of further advance, to which I already perceived that want of carriage and difficulties of the country would present almost insuperable obstacles." So, while we slowly accumulated supplies, I extended my influence, and on the 13th February I ploughed my way through snow to the Lama Guru's great monastery at 7600 feet.

I said just now that I had some kit, by way of contrast to the mutiny. Starting from Delhi in September 1857, I had nothing but a change of clothes till I equipped at dead officers' sales. Similarly, in Oudh, in September 1858, I reached the force with only what I carried on my horse. How we lived in the first mutiny year is wonderful; it was, so far as I remember, by orders on the paymasters; no one had any cash or seemed to need any. Clothing of a sort one could always raise, weird garments, but boots were a serious matter. Shoe leather went rapidly with me again in Assam and Bhutan, and my difficulties were great; I remember therefore grieving over the deep snow. My wife, too, I remember floundering in Himalayan sandals when I tried to combine our wedding-trip with shooting bears in 1864. From a comfortable home and every care, she fell into the life of a sporting subaltern, and her experiences were manifold. I can still see her in one picture—of a mountain torrent spanned by a fallen tree, over which the water is lashing. On it I see her with bare feet and shut eyes holding my belt. Shut eyes were her only chance with

the roar and the rush, for vertigo or slip meant good-bye to us both. However, all that is another story, and I must return to his Holiness.

He did us royally. On his mountain eyrie there was no water; they were supplied with that by long rush mats leaning into troughs, to collect dew and rime when snow and rain were not available. The jolly monks, however, were little addicted to water; they produced liquor by the gallon and huge Samovars of hot Tibetan tea soup—mainly melted butter thickened with meal and eaten with the fried tea-leaves. The archbishop wanted us all to remain the night, and I left those of my escort who would drink, about thirty Sikhs, whom he sent back like boiled owls in the morning; the Afghan soldiers returned with me. I have a very pleasant recollection of the Lama Guru. He was invaluable to me; my report says that “through him I entered into communication with the Dharm Raja and his father the Boora Raja” (the nominal Government at Punakha with which we had made the treaty was that of the Dharm and Deb Rajas; of these the former, who is an “incarnation,” is always a child, and is represented officially by his father). “I believed that the guns would certainly be despatched on receipt of news of our advance. . . . In fine, I deemed it of importance to compel this member of the Government of Bhutan” (the Boora Raja) “to declare himself one way or the other, and I was confident that in view of our near approach and the probability of our shortly cutting

him off from support, he" (the Boora Raja) "could hardly declare himself against us." The Bhutias, of course, could not recognise how crippled we were; for we held the bridge, were pushing our troops and supplies there, and I, too, kept on the move.

Perhaps some reader may be surprised at my speaking of an iron suspension bridge. It certainly was a wonder, 303 feet span from tower to tower, of five wrought-iron chains swinging above the roaring torrent. Therein was their failure; it was not guyed, and the roadway, instead of being suspended from the chains, was on them; thus you went down the catenary curve and up again. It was a basket work of canes woven round the five chains; swaying in the breeze even, and so rocking to the passage of ponies and mules that they could hardly keep their feet. Other suspension bridges there were, for foot passage, made of canes only. I was told that 100 feet of cane could be pulled out of a brake with plenty more to follow if wanted! These cane bridges were works of art, like the iron bridge, but the ordinary Himalayan "*Jhula*" (swing) is a single foot-cable and two hand-ropes, kept apart by wooden braces at intervals, over which you climb like a stile. It is a case of tight-rope walking, especially if, as over the small streams, there is only one hand-rope. Before I gained experience on these, I have found myself hanging over a torrent by one hand (the other held my rifle), with my feet on the foot-rope away at an angle. Even laden coolies can cross the double hand-rope *Jhulas*, but a very long one over the Chenab,



in the Chumba state, was the death of a Viceroy in the 'sixties ; he never got over the effort. Our Monass bridge chains were held through the towers by iron pins ; a device whereby the knocking out of the pins would quickly disable the bridge. Therefore my eagerness to get there ; what an anxious time it was for me till we had the bridge safe.

## CHAPTER XII

### SURRENDER AND SUCCESS

Subaltern and Brigadier—An Unhappy Quandary—The Guns  
Surrendered—Scarves and Incense—Compliments on Success  
—Subalterns and Banks

My report shows that on the 16th February, the Dharm Raja wrote to me that "he had sent to bring in the guns, and that he would be answerable for their arrival; that the Boora Raja" (his father, who was the real writer, for his child the Dharm, or religious, ruler of Bhutan) "was desirous to visit me if I would appoint a time and place; and desiring that we would move no further for at any rate five days." So far, then, my plans seemed successful. On the 8th, the day after seizing the bridge, I had wired to Government that "the Bhutias are astounded at our success and the Lama" (my friend the archbishop whom our rush had cut off) "sent an express last night to the Penlo describing what we had done, and what we had the power to do, and urging immediate submission." On the 9th I wired that "the brigadier has communicated to me his instructions to advance." That was impossible at the time, but I was quite willing even up to the 15th, when I wired that "I sanction and advise the advance, feeling sure that vigorous action

now will obtain our object quickly." On the 16th, however, after receiving the Dharm Raja's letter, I determined to trust him, and I wired: "The guns have reached Yongar, and at the Dharm Raja's personal request I have given him five days to bring them in, detaining the force here till the 22nd, when the Boora Raja himself will also arrive."

Then commenced the most anxious period of my life, except that in Ferozepore in 1875. The brigadier protested; the commander-in-chief supported him; the Viceroy, on 17th, telegraphed to me that "he (the brigadier) should be the judge; . . . no overture for delay should be listened to;" and again, "do not stop the advance." It was all very well to back my judgment against the brigadier for a dozen of champagne (as I have mentioned earlier), but to back it against the Viceroy meant ruin if I was wrong. However, *malgré* the angry staff, I stuck to my guns (in two senses), but never was unhappy subaltern in such a quandary. Judge from the correspondence! On the 22nd February, the last day of the five for which, on the 16th, I had officially requested the brigadier to "do me the favour of retaining the force under your command upon this bank of the Monass till the 22nd instant"—on that day the brigadier wrote that, under orders from the commander-in-chief, he intended to push on.

The time I had stipulated was up, but, says my report: "I was exceedingly anxious to prevent a forward movement, knowing that the arrival of the

guns was a mere matter of hours, and that if we advanced we should probably never obtain them at all ; and in fact I have since learned that, had we moved, the Bhutias, suspecting our motive to be conquest, and not the guns, would have thrown them into the nearest river and made the best resistance they could." So I replied to the brigadier, placing "distinctly on record that I consider the object of the present expedition to be on the point of attainment, and that should the forward movement unfortunately delay the surrender of the guns, that delay will probably be attributable only to the suspicion of our motives engendered in the mind of the Bhutias by our forward movement." On the 23rd he replied : " I do not feel justified in further delaying my force," and he requested me to " inform the people that we are acting as friends of the Bhutan Government." I objected that " we shall be acting in direct opposition to the wishes of the Government of Bhutan," *i.e.* the Deb and Dharm Rajas, from whom that morning I had received " letters announcing the surrender of the guns and requesting that our force should not cross the Monass." I added, in my rejoinder to the brigadier, that " we cannot reasonably expect any assistance from the subjects of that Government," namely, my Bhutia porters, without whom the force would soon again have come to a standstill.

Nevertheless, the troops were actually crossing the bridge to attack the heights beyond, when I was able, at eleven o'clock, to stop them and to write to the

brigadier: "As the guns have been surrendered, I have the honour to request that you will initiate arrangements for the evacuation of the Bhutia territory by the force under your command." It was a near thing. I had taken a high tone with the Boora Raja on the 22nd; knowing, as my report says, that the advance of the force "would ruin everything, I insisted on the guns being produced the following morning at any cost." Luckily I carried my point, for, as I wired to Government on the 23rd, "to have advanced would have entailed loss of life to no purpose, and would have lost us the guns. . . . The guns were given up to me this day and the force will immediately return." The Viceroy replied: "Result extremely satisfactory," and that is the last I ever heard of the matter officially. Indeed "least said soonest mended." We had nothing to show for all the cost and trouble save these two guns! We got back our prisoners, too, and a bedraggled lot they were. Men who had declined to fight and surrendered by hundreds were not much cause of rejoicing.

The cis-Monass Bhutias *would* believe, in spite of my protests, that we should retain their part of the country, and they asked me to drive away a marauding party which had crossed by one of the cane bridges before described. This was done during the long halt between the 8th and 22nd February, and the cane bridge was destroyed. My report says that "I passed through a very fertile country, and was well received." Too well, indeed! At the chief villages I passed,

there were altars erected, before which I was seated and incense burned, and I was smothered in silk scarfs; whilst the grinning Afridis of my escort munched the oranges and other votive offerings. I felt more like a fool than a Deota (Demi-god), but I had to go through with it every few miles. I felt anxious for these people when we left, and I appointed the Boora Raja's State visit for the 9th March at Dewangiri, where I could receive him in state. There, doubtless, we fell on each other's necks and made it up, though I do not remember much about it; at any rate, I made it all right for my friendly Bhutias.

I had hurried back to Dewangiri by the 26th February to write my report and make up my accounts, but the force did not get back till the 3rd of March. Then we drank the brigadier's dozen of champagne which I had won, and I proposed the toast of the Tongso Penlo, who had given us an agreeable outing. That gentleman would not come in, and remained unpleasant for some time afterwards. But we now both longed to get back to the Punjab, and I went down to Calcutta as soon as I could. There the Governor of Bengal delivered me from the hands of the Accounts Department by footing my bills. It was a tradition that the "Accounts" Baboos received a percentage on all that they could cut from officers. Now, I had spent money largely, and could only keep rough accounts. Moreover, in India visitors (foreign visitors) mean presents, and my visitors were legion. Of course, excess value

is returned, and I carried Government goods for the purpose, for which I accounted, and also for the sale prices of the piles of silk scarves and other drapery received as presents, and of any stuff captured. Among other things acquired in my tours was an enormous pair of tusks, which I gave to my escort. I explained failure to account for the late wearer by saying that "the elephant unfortunately escaped." No one demurred to that; a Baboo, writes Sir Ali Baba, cannot see a joke, "he can even pass a C.S.I. without smiling." Still, I should have been in great difficulties with my four months' transactions had not the Bengal Government taken the Accounts Department off my hands.

The Bhutan business was only nominally under Bengal, so the lieutenant-governor passed on my report to the Viceroy with very little remark, and the Viceroy made none at all thereon. Later, however, the former wrote to me that he "felt very strongly at the time, and so (if I am not greatly mistaken) did Lord Lawrence, that it was to your bold and skilful policy, to the accuracy of your intelligence, and to the assistance you gave to the military commander, that the success of the final expedition from Dewangiri, the recovery of the captured guns, and the consequent termination of our difficulties with the Bhutan Government, were chiefly to be attributed." Later, again, Lord Lawrence wrote to much the same effect; but these views were not officially recorded, probably for the reason before quoted from the *Pioneer*, that

the Government and the public were alike sick of the whole Bhutan business. Perhaps, too, the military authorities were little better pleased with me than was the force whose campaign I had cut short. Well, I also should have enjoyed its continuance. To march on Tongso meant military experience and some fighting—much pleasanter than returning to district routine; also some months more of high allowances and an important position; and the Viceroy's telegrams would have justified my acquiescence. No doubt my action saved a long and fruitless campaign and very great expenditure, but perhaps I took too much on myself—I was a subaltern!

I remained so for twelve years; indeed, but for the mutiny, it might have been twenty. When I joined, there were cornets and ensigns of ten years' standing; subalterns were breveted captain after fifteen years, but without the pay; is it wonderful that debt was common? The banks were accommodating forty years ago. A. B. and C. would apply for Rs. 1000 each by triangular arrangement; A. and B. standing security for C., and so all round. The banks insured their lives, or at any rate charged them premiums, and these, with the interest and instalments, were cut from their pay. I remember a youth who owed Rs. 20,000. He got no pay of course, and existed, as many did, on his troop allowances, which the Court of Requests (the Military Court for debt) could not touch. Such men were debarred from running mess-bills, and lived how they could. His was a desperate case, and



there was nothing for him but to die, which he did. It was a happy release, but poisoned by the thought of an old widow pinching at home ; “ a short life and a merry one ” only applies if your hat covers your family.

## CHAPTER XIII

### LIFE, CLIMATE, AND SURROUNDINGS

Heat—Eye-hunger—The Doons—Bravest of all Animals—Famine in the Jungle—Pig-sticking—Rough Quarters—Ice

I DID not see Lord Lawrence during my stay in Calcutta, up to June 1866. I had previously applied for transfer to the Punjab, and he sent me back to the frontier. He must also have recommended me to the Punjab Government, for I shortly regained my old standing, of December 1859, in the Punjab Commission. Thus I lost nothing by my five years' absence, of which I had enjoyed three and a half years in the army. As I have said, we both longed to return to our own province, to a dry climate and a manly people. The sun-baked Punjab, with all its defects, is at any rate "*arida nutrix leonum*" (*Singh*, the Sikh surname, means lion), whereas the Assamese are but a feeble folk; the Bengali, in 1865, was regarded on the Bramaputra as a terrible being, much as Hindustan in my day regarded the Moghal. There "*Türk á gaya*" (the Turk—*Moghal*—has arrived) was the warning of any official arrival in a village; it might be only a harmless Hindu clerk, but, being official, he was terrible, by the memories of *Moghal* rule in Hindustan.

In India, position and pay are less to be considered than a tolerable climate and a congenial people. A Punjab officer, whom I once advised against Burma, replied that he would take promotion in Hell ; but he was unwise. I have never regretted excusing myself from the Consul-Generalship at Astrabad (Persia), to which, when I was at home in 1879, the Foreign Minister intended sending me ; nor, later, from the Chief Commissionership of the Andaman Islands. The Indian climate, of course, is pretty bad everywhere. New York can be unpleasant ; Texas is torrid ; the salty plains of Dakota are trying ; but nowhere do I know heat so sickening as in India. Still, for a livelihood India is well enough if you stick to dry parts and pleasant people. I have been a good deal in Calcutta—in the Civil Engineering College in 1859, as Private Secretary to the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal in 1869, as Examiner in Oriental Languages in 1882 (he is called Secretary to the Board of Examiners, but I never discovered the Board) ; now Calcutta claims to be civilised, and one wears a frock-coat and silk hat in all seasons, but I would sooner inhabit the remotest station among the men of the Punjab and the drought which breeds them.

But why India at all ? Englishmen here, says a recent native writer (S. M. Mitra's *Indian Problems*), "work with the precision of machines and the enthusiasm of Crusaders," but it is a soul-crushing grind, and very many fall by the way. The earnings are small compared with the expenses ; if reckoned by

what you can save, Indian service is very poor, if reckoned against what you lose in all that makes life pleasant, then it is wretched indeed. Never leave the white men's countries if you can help it. One thing that used to make Indian life tolerable was the forest. The Englishman, bred in beauty, suffers from eye-hunger ; I have fled in desperation from brown plains weary as the prairie, to a week of greenery in the Doons. These are the sub-montane valleys and foothills, called Dooars under Bhutan and Sikkim, Terai under Nipal, Doons under the western Himalaya. In the prodigious growth of the Dooars, as in West African forests, there is little life ;—little bird-life even, except the hornbills flitting like rainbows in the tree-tops very far above. But the Doons are alive, and the sights and sounds of a moonlight night are wonderful. Painful too, for there is " Nature red in tooth and claw with ravin." Most painful of all is the long screaming of the boar, when you know that the tiger, who seldom dares look him in the face, is on his back by surprise.

The boar is the bravest of God's creatures. See him after you have pushed him painfully through heavy tamarisk growth trying to tear you from your saddle. You reach an open glade and ride. Piggy is savage already at being hunted, and he certainly is not going to be hustled ; round he comes, a picture of wrath and courage. And he will charge again and again with wound after wound, even with spears fast in his body, till he gives up the ghost without a sound, game to the last. Conceive, then, the despair, the agony of

helplessness, which will make him cry for what has seemed to my keen sympathy a long hour. It is rage, not fear; the tiger on his back clings and tears, and he has not a chance. But let the old grey boar *meet* a tiger, or any living creature, face to face, and it is quite another story. To shoot a boar in India is like shooting a fox in England, but I have had to do it. I met him by chance on a path and he trotted straight down on me; *I* was to make way! My father-in-law had a similar experience, unarmed; being active and powerful, he jumped so high that the boar passed underneath. In my frontier days boars abounded in summer on the islands of the Indus. But they would not run in the flooded ground, only stuck their sterns into bushes and gnashed defiance. I recall the narrow escape of a noted mutiny man, Nawab Gholam Hasan. He was a big man, and would use a sword; once he slashed so vigorously that he overbalanced and fell on the boar. The cut, or the fourteen stone, disinclined the boar for further intercourse, or it would have been bad for the Nawab; death by a boar would have rendered him *najis* (unclean). Returning from one of these islands a duffadar (serjeant) of my regiment preferred to swim his horse down to Dera—fifteen miles even by land!

Not only does death stalk the forest, but famine also sometimes. I have seen squashed jackals, flattened by a tiger's paw, and the protruding intestines contained *tamarisk fronds*. Think of it, *tamarisk!* which even no herbivorous animal will touch except the

camel. The jackal starves everywhere; they will quarrel over an empty egg shell; no wonder that they sometimes tempt fate near a tiger's kill. A frontier friend sitting once above a kill (a mistake; you should always sit on the ground to get the carcass against the light) watched the jackals licking their lips in a circle. A herdsman's kraal was not far off and a dog arrived. The starving cur could not wait like the jackals. Presently he rushed in, snatched a bite, and fled. He returned and did it again; and again. Emboldened by impunity, he tarried a little. Then he threw up his head and fled as if possessed, and through the gloom my friend Suliman saw a shape go bounding, and then came a yell. But the disgusted tiger returned no more to the kill. I think I told you that the tiger always makes a cast around to detect intruders, and that is why I never got one by sitting at night.

I speak of pig-sticking, as boar-hunting is called, but I have had very little. It is expensive. As adjutant, I could only afford the three chargers I had to keep up, and these I could not risk laming in the vile ground of the Punjab rivers. Afterwards, as civil officer, I was too busy for sport. Similarly, I had to give up polo when men took to riding ponies costlier and costlier. After pig the very horses are keen; indeed there is an authenticated story of a baggage mule which joined in once, got up to the boar, was charged and met the charge with a staggering kick. Recently a native gentleman is reported to have ridden a pig without spear, trusting to his horse

to do as the mule did. The sows are sometimes as awkward customers as the boars, and bite savagely. Indeed I remember several tiny piglings caught and brought to my wife in Durrung (Assam); when let loose the little things, no bigger than kittens, attacked her gallantly. It was at a shooting party she gave once on the frontier that I got a boar single-handed, a thing rarely possible in close ground. The scrub was pronounced too thick to be ridable, but I hovered behind the guns till a boar broke through, and I managed to get on terms with him; a cur at his heels made him indisposed to run.

The whole station had dropped down the river with us in boats (the flat-bottomed scows before mentioned, with mat shelters); we took tents, food, and drink for the party, and made a week of it. The shooting was done by beating strips of jungle up to the guns. We sat on platforms, so as to see over the scrub, and it was my wife's sharp eyes that gave me two "record" heads of the "hog-deer." In Assam, too, she always went with me whenever I took elephants. I remember once, when we were looking for buffaloes at night in the rice clearings, that the people turned out against us, supposing us to be wild elephants.

Entertaining was rough on Indian hostesses in those days. They faced their difficulties like ladies out West, where I have seen a hostess and her sister, in a domestic crisis, cook and serve the entire meal for a party, and entertain us as if they had not a care. But the Indian climate, and the lack of appliances here

forty years ago, precluded feats which are possible in other rough quarters; though I have seen them attempted in Assam, where, in my day, service was hardly to be got. In our case, on the frontier there was no lack of servants, only of sense and skill to cook and serve decently. And my wife had to see to everything and to do most herself: the puddings, the sweets, the heating, skimming, and whipping of the cream, the ices—all except the actual labour of revolving the cylinder in the freezing mixture. I, after my day's work, would help as far as I was able, attending to cooling the beer and wines, or mixing the salad dressing. Deficiencies were eked out with tinned provisions; the tinned salmon, the Europe ham, the truffled pâtés or sausages, the tart fruits in bottles. The meat used to be good if the cook did not spoil it, for people kept their own sheep and poultry. The vegetables were the insipid country varieties, and potatoes were unknown, but the tins provided peas, carrots, and asparagus; soup, too, generally came out of tins. So much were tinned things esteemed as delicacies, that an old India-bred lady has achieved fame by opining that the Queen always lived on them! They have been known as "Queen's food" ever since. With all shortcomings of culinary failures and waiters' blunders, entertainments were much cheerier then than now. Hostesses took pride in nice table appointments, notwithstanding the destructiveness of Indian servants and the difficulty of replacement; with plenty to eat and drink, and much merriment,



everything used to go well at the meal, and afterwards till very late over the piano.

I speak above of ices, but it must not be supposed that we had ice in the ordinary sense. Ice-machines were not yet, and it was only the coast-towns which obtained the great blocks of ice from Wenham lake, which, with the American apples preserved therein, were sea-borne luxuries. Elsewhere in India, ice was a jail punishment. Shallow pans of water were put out on winter nights, in the morning the convicts removed the skins of ice and rammed them in a pit. They hated this worse than any other form of punitive labour. This dirty stuff served only cooling purposes ; and when even this was not available we used salt-petre.

I have read often of Indian luxury, but never saw it except among Viceroy and Governors. For our class India was squalor. Women fresh from home wept to see the barns they had to make decent, and their efforts at decoration were pathetic. Sanitary arrangements were such I knew, in remote parts of England, in the 'forties. At any rate, here we could bathe ; whereas I remember this a business in England ; and I was a month in a small French country town, as late as 1873 (after pilgrimage to our ancestral ruin on the Seine), and I could not hire or even buy a tub. At last a washerwoman lent me one.

## CHAPTER XIV

### NICHOLSON AND THE AFGHANS

A Favourite Story—Nikkalsén—Afghan Women—Shot for dates  
—Jackals—The Stupidity of Afghans

THE frontier in my day teemed with memories of John Nicholson. Others had done as much there, Edwardes, Taylor, Van Cortlandt, but the personality of Nicholson had specially impressed the wild people, whom he cowed. One story in particular I remember as always eliciting shouts of applause. There was a dispute over a piece of land between two villages, and disputes meant swords; so one morning a well-known grey mare was found straying near one of them. Following her tracks back, the horrified Afghans found Nicholson tied to a tree in the disputed tract. They hurried to release him. "No," thundered Nicholson, "first I will know who are responsible. *Whose land is this?*" "Not ours, my lord, it is the other fellows'; they are responsible." The case was over! Of course the land really belonged to no one, nor had any one cared till British peace brought land hunger. In the old days it was constantly so. Edwardes describes how he started two priests with Korans on their heads (the Koran is the Mahomedan Bible, and it is a very solemn oath), to walk the boundaries they claimed

for their respective flocks in a "bloody land." Each holy man walked his round far into the other's claim; and the tract thus enclosed was divided by Edwardes half and half. Who then troubled about "facts"? There were none that mattered. Once I wandered on mountain tops for a fortnight with an officer from Hindustan arbitrating boundary disputes between Punjab hill chiefs and our Dehra Doon. Neither side in any of the cases had any idea of the merits—indeed merits there were none; but the disputants surged and raved.

One of the stories which I heard of Nicholson I could not credit:—a notorious robber heard one night a horse at his door and his name called out. He stepped forth. "Who is there?" "Nikkalsén," was the answer; the robber was shot dead, and Nicholson rode out of the hills by morning. Such legends grow up and are thought very fine by Pathans, but Nicholson was not a man for midnight murder! Another legend current amongst ourselves was that Nicholson always tore up orders from his superiors. He *may* have done this once, or twice, but it could not have gone on. Still his methods were only suitable for those times, and there would probably have been trouble had he survived to return to the Punjab civil life.

The Pathans are queer fellows. A Waziri shot a British lady by mistake for a man. Shame overwhelmed him. Women are absolutely immune in tribal warfare; they carry food and water to the combatants, even to leaguered men, who would other-

wise be lost, and no one may molest them. In their homes it is different. When I was judge at Peshawar, a man (A.) cut off his wife's nose for suspected lightness, and sent her back to her brother (B.), who was married to A.'s sister. "My dear," said B., "I am sorry, but tit for tat; I must do the same to you." "After dinner," said B.'s wife, "let me finish cooking." But when his back was turned she fled, not to her brother, who would have made peace by sending her back, but to another branch of the clan, who were thus bound to defend her.

It was the sex that caused the Waziri's shame: otherwise murder is honourable. Another man had been more lucky a little earlier, with a British officer. When he made his vow to slay an infidel, he went first to a shrine, and threw the rag he wore to the priest. "*Kabul*" (accepted), said the holy man, which applied alike to the offering and the unspoken vow, and the devotee went in peace to set his ambush. You will think the offering small, but nothing comes amiss. A relation of mine who was surveying in Persia knew of a man being shot for merely the dates he carried. Now, dates in Persia are as common as blackberries with us, but it was less trouble, I suppose, to shoot the man than to gather dates. I knew a wandering *fakir* (beggar) murdered, who had nothing but his breeches! When I had it out with the tribe (Sheoranis), they admitted that it was mean, "*partug de para*" (for only breeches); but I got no satisfaction, for I had no battalions of military police behind me, as Nicholson

had when he held my district. He sacked and burned Drazand, the chief place of these Sheoranis; but there was no Nikkalsén now, and they were bumptious again. Think of the awe of that man when a sect (the *Nikkalseni Fakirs*) arose to worship him! He soon stopped their devotions; but they got an old hat of his and worshipped that!

The Sheoranis troubled me much with raids and murders, though the tribe was not strong enough for raids in force. I got hold of the worst of their leaders, one Baz Khan, by buying his "jackals." These are the miserable creatures who guide the Pathan beasts of prey and share their leavings—as the *Pheedl* is supposed to do for the tiger, of which more later. To manage a *coup*, the hillmen need jackals in the plains; to tell them of chances, guide them, hide and feed them till the time is favourable. If, therefore, you can detect and buy the jackals you can sometimes not only catch a party, but also sow distrust, which is even more effectual. I once got six Waziris in this way, whom a jackal had hidden in a ravine, and that gave a great blow to the trade. But with the Sheoranis, whose chief place, Drazand, is only six miles within the passes, I thought something more might be done by judicious bluff. So I made a tryst with neighbouring tribes at the military post opposite the main Sheorani pass, and we rode to Drazand by surprise one morning.

An officer of my regiment happened to be at the post and went with me, but could not of course take his troop without orders. Soon we were interviewing

the startled head-men of Drazand, who thought the days of Nicholson had come again! They saw that we were strong enough to burn the place as he did, and fight our way back before help could come from the other Sheorani towns, and, being stupid Afghans, they did not know that times were changed, and that to do so would cost us our commissions. But we were only complimentary, and hungry, and to feed us was an honour by the Pathan code. What slaughtering of sheep there was and cooking of girdle cakes! But while we fed the tribe was gathering, and I was glad to thank them for their hospitality and be off. The feeding of eighty hungry Afghans and their horses (the rest were holding the defile behind), and the hint that I could reach them when I chose, were wholesome lessons; and the joke upon the Sheoranis was the delight of the border for long after. While my friend and I were breakfasting, a fanatic with drawn sword wanted to get at us. Our hosts headed him off with apologies, but he kept popping up again like a jack-in-the-box.

I speak of the stupidity of Afghans: it is proverbial. But there are degrees, and all other Afghans laugh at the Afridis. It is not stupidity, however, but gullibility which appeals most to the Indian sense of humour. The folk-lore is full of stories of the foolish Raja and his astute Wazir. *Tota-kahanis* they are called, parrot-stories; the Wazir interprets to the Raja what some parrot, or other wayside bird, is saying; always, of course, to the Wazir's advantage.

The Englishman is regarded as pre-eminently gullible, and the hero of the puppet-shows is often a rascal named Páte Khan, who fools the *Hákim* (ruler) amid roars of laughter.

The Afghans do not lack fun. In my day a *jirga* (tribal deputation) would laugh disconcertingly at blunders in Pashtu, so one spoke as briefly as possible. I dare say the Pathans are politer now ; still I fancy a Baboo tickles them as of yore, not his Pashtu only, but his appearance in winter. Mr. Punch has described him :—

“ L’hiver quand tombaient la neige, le verglas,  
Je soufflais dans mes doigts, saintement, jamais las  
D’attendre le printemps.”

Certainly the frontier cold is trying. We wore *poshtlins* (fur coats) in uniform, and often have I envied those not in uniform who could bind their stirrups in haybands.

## CHAPTER XV

### FRONTIER CHANCES

Watchers by the Dam—Crossing the River—East and West—  
Wary Markhór—Lammergeyers—A Fall in a Chimney—A  
Wounded Ibex

THE various torrents which traverse the Derajat plain between the hills and the Indus were wasted through tribal disputes ; every attempted dam was known as *Khuni band* (bloody dam). To picture the scenes, read “Chevy Chase” in Bishop Percy’s *Reliques*. The Pathan Douglasses and Elliots hear that their rivals are damming the torrent, which runs unused through both territories. They appear with their merry men and forbid the work. The local Percies, Greys, Widdringtons, vow that they will do it in their teeth. Alarms and excursions. The Border bard writes Witherington for Widdrington—

“ For Witherington my heart is woe, as one in doleful dumps ;  
For when his legs were smitten off, he fought upon his stumps.”

During my tenure (1866–67–68), I regulated this waste of good water, but at cost of great labour and excessive “mud-larking.” I had them all out ; I asked nothing which I would not do myself ; and sun-blisters and lumbago were solaced by laughter as I saw long-bearded chiefs in spotless white, sticking with me



in quagmires or rolling, horse and man, in mud holes. Anyway, I managed to get thousands of acres irrigated, but with many disappointments.

Once I was watching a huge dam. Reports galloped in, of the rising stream, from my watchers along the twenty miles' course between the dam and the hills. As these reports thickened, the drums beat louder, and the dam swarmed like an ant-hill. Round a bend came the first wave ; only a foot or so, but right across the half-mile of dry bed. Presently the second, a little higher ; and a third ; and a fourth. A vast body of water was rising against the dam and overflowing into the channels as desired. Victory and hand-shaking ! But then I saw a small jet, as from a hose ; and presently another ; and yet another. " Back every one ! " And in one great ruin the work of three hundred pairs of bullocks with earth scrapers, of hundreds of men, for two long months, melted away ; and I and my chiefs were galloping headlong, turbans streaming, men and horses rolling in the dust, to the next dam six miles below. That stood, and my friend the Nawab of Dera was a prosperous man, while the Gundapurs (whose dam had given) were left lamenting. It served them right, some one had scamped his job ! When the Nawab had got his share, we cut his dam and passed the water on to the next, and so on. In former days each dam would have been red before it was cut.

Next day I saw to it that the Gundapur dam stood ; and the water spread like a sheet. After miles of mudlarking in supervising its distribution, I arrived

one day, exhausted, on the banks of another stream, which I had not yet tackled. My three companions wanted to stop at a village on the bank, but my goal was a town on the far side. "Who can swim?" I asked. "Not I." "Not I." "Not I." So I tied up the swords in a bundle and took them across; and then each horse, with the owner bobbing dolefully at its tail. Just as I was mounting, an old man, who had been holding my horse while I went to and fro, said, "I have bought this grain in the town and the flood has cut me off" (from the village we had just left). "My children are hungry; put me across." "No." "In God's name!" So I took the grain; forty pounds, tied in the end of his long sheet. It sank me, but then I held on to the end of the sheet. It dragged like an anchor, and the waves washed over me, but the furious current forced me across. Then luckily the old man found that he could get over with little help.

The Nawabs of Dera, referred to above, were the former rulers of the country, ousted by the Sikhs. All the Dera Pathans were friends of mine; one of them was specially notable, Nawab Faujdar Khan. Edwardes fought the battle of Kineyri on Waterloo day, and, like Waterloo, it was a junction on the field. He was still on the wrong side of the Chenab when he heard the guns. He pushed across with the Dera Pathans, leaving my wife's father<sup>1</sup> to follow with a Mahomedan brigade of regulars and guns. Arriving

<sup>1</sup> General H. C. van Cortlandt, C.B.

on the field, Edwardes found the Bahawalpur general telling his beads under a bush, and the troops all anyhow. Presently, as always and everywhere, the Scotchman appeared—one Macpherson, in the Bahawalpur service, who died gallantly in the next fight. “Sir,” said he, “our army is demoralised!” However, Edwardes held on till the Sikhs advanced. Faujdar was Edwardes’s adjutant-general for the Dera lot, and to him Edwardes said that he *must* stop the Sikhs till the regulars could arrive. “*Bachashm*” (on my eyes be it), replied Faujdar. Edwardes describes the Dera men forming line with hands upraised to heaven; then, after the *Fatiha* (invocation), drawing their swords, raising their bridle hands, and charging home. The crisis was averted till Van Cortlandt brought victory; and he and Edwardes, and all their successors, could not do enough for Faujdar. “East is East and West is West”; the East takes off its shoes where the West removes its hat; the East beckons overhand, instead of underhand; the East chirrup to stop a horse, and raises the bridle hand for speed; numerous are these small differences of custom.

My wife found the frontier exciting. The Waziris frequently raided, and to this she was inured, but one day she was upset by a rush of men upon my tent with brasiers on their heads. She did not know that it was merely the symbol (in that day) of grief and wrong. Another trouble was when I left her, to ride the passes. That was forbidden, but a responsible officer *must* see

what is in front of him, so I used to patrol with tribal horsemen. There was game too ; grand *Ooryal* drives (the mountain sheep) in the Sheorani passes ; fabulous *Markhór* heads (a mountain goat) on the Girni Block of the Waziri border. The Girni was debatable ground, like Chevy Chase, but I resolved to hunt there *malgré* any Waziri Douglas. So my friend the Nawab of Tank threw out matchlock men along the spurs, his horsemen patrolled the ravines, and no one interfered with me.

There were good heads on Shaikh Budin too, our summer resort carefully preserved by myself and my neighbour of Bunnoo, which district shares that hill ; but they were wary beyond belief from much hunting. My wife helped me to one which was supposed to bear a charmed life. He was a patriarch of the hill, and always stuck to ridges with look-out on both sides. We were going down the road along a spur when I saw him, three spurs off ; he watched my wife's litter while I dropped into the ravine and wormed myself over the next spur. Then the job was to get up to the last intervening spur. Inch by inch I did it, rushed the last steps, and sniped him across the ravine as he threw himself the other side of the spur. His fate had come, said the Afghans.

It was a dangerous hill, it was so rotten. Going along a ledge once, we turned upwards to gain another ledge. My hunter hauled himself up by a projecting rock. I seized it to follow, and the great rock came away. It grazed slowly past me (perched insecurely

on my ledge) and thundered into the abyss. There were other dangers also. Crawling once along a fault in a cliff, the Lammergeyers became audacious. "That's how my father died," said my hunter, "and so, I suppose, shall I die." They knock goats and sheep off ledges, and they would doubtless try a single man. Holding on with one hand you might shoot one bird with the other; perhaps the second; but the third would get you.

Another risk is that of slip; a hunter saved my life once in the Himalaya after Ibex. I slipped in a chimney, and, press as I would with elbows and knees, I could not check the slide. He had got footing on a small ledge below, braced himself and received me on his shoulders; it was bold, for he could have evaded me. I never shall forget one Ibex. He was working up a funnel, and I shot him from a projection on the side of the funnel below. It was a bad shot (indeed it was hard enough to shoot at all), and on tolerable ground he would have got away with the wound. But the shock made him slide, and he came past me with the rocks and stones he brought down. He did not struggle, knowing it useless, and it seemed to my remorse that resignation was depicted on the calm face above the venerable beard. However, he had to be put out of his misery if alive, so after a long and break-neck climb we got down to him. He stood up to receive his *quietus*, but his skull was fractured, we found, right across above the eyes. The horns were  $44\frac{1}{2}$  inches, not a very great head.

I before spoke of the pathos of sudden transition from vigorous life to death in stricken bird or beast. That is when killed clean, but we are not all artists ; what gradually became too much for me, what really stopped my shooting rather than press of work, was the wounded. Even when mortally hurt the vitality of the wild creatures is incredible, and when you reach them the terror in their eyes is intolerable. I remember a gazelle which we put up again and again. It struggled for miles over a rocky waste, we tracking it, till my very Pathan hunter wanted to give in. We were perishing of thirst : what must its case have been ! An Ibex once rolled stiffly over. He was dead to all seeming, but when I went to him he had strength to rise and stagger over a precipice such that, even had we tried, there could have been nothing to retrieve.

## CHAPTER XVI

### AMONG AFGHANS

The Saint—Afghan Greed—"My Wife's Parrot"—The Nawab of Tank—Hindus and Ransom—Sacrificed to an Afghan

I HAVE wandered very far from Shaikh Budin—as far as the borders of Ladakh ; but I will now hark back to that shrine. I took a great friend to shoot there, one Mihr Shah, the *Pír* or spiritual guide of the northern Biluch tribes. The *Pír* (saint) used to give me partridge shooting in the plains, and wipe my eye to the delight and exultation of the throngs of disciples who were beating ; and he thought to do the same thing with the *Markhór*. But in the hills he collapsed, and a nice job my hunter and I had with him. He drank up our water bag ; then we got him to a tiny pot-hole we knew of, which held a few gallons, and he tried to drink up that. However, we filled the bag first, gave him a long rest, and then set out to haul and push him up again to the station above. Shaikh Budin is a shrine, like most notable peaks in India, and the holy *Shaikh* there was quite a character. I fear that his meditations were chiefly of votive offerings, but in moments of relaxation he used to make wonderful honey-cakes. Thither my hunter and I supported our very limp saint, who left next day abjuring *Markhór* but blessing me.

We got up water on mules from a spring miles below, where grow the most wonderful dates I ever knew; hung up in a basket overnight there would be a pool of sugar below in the morning. At Shaikh Budin were tanks to collect rain-water; but on the roads up, nine miles on the one side, thirteen miles on the other, men fainted by the way from thirst. So I established sheds, whither men brought water from pot-holes far below, and sold it at a farthing a cup; of course they had small salaries besides what they thus earned. To one of these men came a fellow-villager, and stopped the day. He saw the coppers roll in, and Afghan greed awoke. So at evening prayer, while his friend prostrated himself, he from behind jumped on his back, bound him with his own turban, and went off with the spoil. Next day a strapping and very angry Afghan came to me (having been released by the first traveller of the morning), to resign his post. I kept my countenance and dissuaded him, saying that he would never catch his friend. "I will follow him to the ends of the earth," was his answer as he went off.

Greedy, treacherous, suspicious, cruel, stupid (like our own Borderers five hundred years ago), yet one got to love Afghans! The Japanese laughed at this British characteristic, to Sir Ian Hamilton. They say that each Englishman thinks the people he works among perfect. I have written before of the officer with a very sketchy lot of horse, in 1858, who risked reopening his recent wound sooner than let me take his men into action! I myself still have a feeling that



there are no cavalry like the Punjab cavalry. In 1857, each of us swore by his "Pandy" regiment till it mutinied (Mangal Pandey was the first mutineer, hence the name); many were the lives sacrificed to this obstinate belief. Of course, those who work with Afghans will not admit the qualities I have stated above, except the stupidity, which Afghans themselves admit; "*Afghán haiwán*," they say, "the Afghan is an animal," intellectually.

They tell a story of the political officer in the hard Ambeyla fighting of 1863, who wanted to break up the combination against us. So he sent for the leading man of one of the combined tribes. The chief came, was greeted with warmth, and then taken apart for private discussion. After the usual compliments, the commissioner inquired after his wife's parrot. "My wife's parrot!" cried the astonished chief, but the commissioner waved off all protest and descanted at length on the ailments of parrots and methods of treatment. The great man could not be interrupted, of course, and the chief waited his chance, when suddenly the commissioner pleaded business and bowed his visitor out. He went back to the allied chiefs, who were eagerly awaiting the result of this long private interview: "What did the Big Man say?" "Why, he said nothing; he only asked about my wife's parrot." When nothing more could be got out of the chief, it was evident that he had been bought—that he had made some treacherous compact; his protests were in vain; the conference dispersed, each

chief bent on being beforehand in getting out of the snare that was evidently devised. The combination was broken up, and the Afghans used to roar with laughter over the story.

I before mentioned the Nawab of Tank. His grandfather Sarwar was a prosperous ruler till conquered by the Sikhs. Sarwar’s unhappy successor fled to the Waziris and made Tank hot for the usurpers till he died. Then his son, my friend, heard of the British and went to Edwardes in Cashmere. Edwardes came to Dera later and put the Nawab in charge of Tank again. In a report of 1867, I said that “The Nawab’s position was that of a farmer; the sum assessed on him” (by Edwardes for the Sikh Government) “was too heavy and he fell deeply in arrears. Then the late General Nicholson made the present arrangement with him; his balances were remitted; the farm was taken out of his hands; a money assessment was put on Tank, calculated at 50 per cent. on the gross produce, to include all claims; and one-third of this was assigned to the Nawab.” But that was insufficient, and, instead of redeveloping the country devastated by his father, he had to screw it. My report continues: “Similarly as regards police and border arrangements: every department of his administration being starved, these are as inefficient as they can be. His intelligence department, his arrangements for defence, pursuit, and watch and ward, are all miserably defective. The whole of the environs of the city, and many portions of the area within the walls, are so infested

after nightfall, that none dare go abroad. Hindus have been occasionally carried off from the very heart of the city. Seldom or never does the Nawab's intelligence department give warning of a raid ; seldom or never do his pursuing parties recover the spoil." What I wanted for the Nawab was Sarwar Khan's position : "he might with our support achieve all that chief did, and more, and Tank be as flourishing and the border more quiet than even in his days." But it was decided otherwise.

I speak here of the carrying off of Hindus for ransom ; that was a constant worry. On one occasion the Waziris got fifty-four at one *coup*. This had absolutely to be stopped, so I held on tight to prevent ransom. The families howled, but I was obdurate, and eventually, after many months, the Waziris found it a bad bargain, and returned the last of the survivors. This was a heavy check to the trade ; for not only had the Waziris got nothing and been at trouble and expense, but, as the men carried off were pilgrims to a hill shrine under highly paid Waziri safe guard, that profitable business was lost by their treachery. Sometimes, however, I rather sympathised with the hillmen in this matter, for the astute Hindu robs the dull Afghan shamefully. A Gundapur friend of mine was getting greatly involved before I left Dera in 1868. Next year I was riding down the frontier on political business, and as I passed through Dera I inquired about him. "Oh, he had to take to the hills ; and on his very first raid he met his chief creditor !" No

more, but the aposiopesis conveyed everything. I pictured the scene; the Hindu on his donkey, debt-collecting in fancied security. From a ravine emerges the absconding debtor with a few hill friends. "Oh, well met, my lord, please take the trouble to come along with me." Gagged and bound, the Hindu is kept in the ravine till night; and off to the hills ere morning.

The Nawab's shyness and timidity were proverbial in Dera; thereby perished a governor of the Punjab. The governor, a very big man, was with the Nawab on an elephant; after inspecting the city of Tank, they proceeded to the fort. "We cannot enter by this gate," said the Nawab in low tones of respect. The governor was hard of hearing. "We cannot enter here," ventured the Nawab again. No reply. So the Nawab's modesty supposed that the great man knew best. The gate, imposing outside, led up by a vaulted ramp to an entrance too low for a howdah. Elephants are stupid and timid. The driver, too late, saw the trap and tried to back the beast; it got flurried and rushed forward. The howdah was swept off. The Nawab, thin and light, was not seriously hurt, but Sir Henry Durand broke his back. He had blown open the gates of Ghazni in 1840. He held fast the States of Central India in 1857, with mutiny and revolt flaming around him. He was a warrior and a diplomatist of renown. And he was sacrificed to the dulness of an Afghan!

## CHAPTER XVII

### KOWRA KHAN

Blood-money—Expensive War—Arresting Kowra Khan—The  
Arrester taken Prisoner—The Plan

IN 1866 four merchants from Sind visited the Ush-  
teraneh hills under safe guard. They were murdered,  
and I demanded £50 each blood-money ;—to no pur-  
pose, of course. The Ushteranehs hold land in the  
plains, so I waited for the ripening of next year's spring  
crop, and then made a tryst. Success in making trysts  
means keeping one's own counsel. I could always gal-  
lop forty miles comfortably with two horses, leading  
and changing, but the distance in this case being greater,  
I dropped down the river at night with my nags, by  
boat, to a convenient point, and rode across betimes  
to the astonishment of the Ushteranehs, who had  
come down to attend to their crops. Delighted to  
see me, of course ; our difference had long been for-  
gotten. While I was breakfasting, there was a great  
to-do ; a chief arrived with his "tail." Hospitable  
preparations. Presently another, and more hospit-  
able preparations. Then another ; and so on through  
the day. The Ushteranehs became all Marthas.  
However, we were fed at last, and then, thanking them  
for their hospitality, I asked about my little bill long

outstanding. "No hurry, of course; we are your guests, and will look after your crops while we wait." All saw the joke; we should eat them out of house and home, and it was cheaper to pay up and get rid of us, and be allowed to reap their crop. So the Ushteranehs gave drafts on their Hindus, an accommodation which doubtless cost them even more than our day's food; which in itself was no small tax in addition to the £200.

The hillmen are desperately poor, and therein lies the prospect of eventual peace on the border. With match- or flint-locks fighting was cheap; even percussion rifles and their ammunition were not ruinous. A Pathan could exchange shots with his uncle all day and the bill was small; while fighting the British was pure enjoyment at really trifling cost. But when the British set up Sniders, the Afghans had to do so too; and if your relatives have breech-loading rifles, you must find one or go under, for a man's foes are those of his own household. Then there was no finality. Sniders were followed by Martinis, they by something else; the poor Afghan has to keep up to date. With smuggled rifles at £60 and £70 for the latest patterns, and cartridges at two shillings each, it really is not "good enough" to fight the British; and even a cousin comes expensive.

The Waziris specially feel this now; in the old cheap days they had high times, and our expeditions found them very tough. In that of 1860, while Chamberlain was away on a diversion, the Waziris, with swords in their teeth, crawled up to and rushed the pickets of the

standing camp at night, and poured down on to the troops in the river bed. A terrified servant rushed into an officer's tent crying "*Waziri log agaye*" (the Waziris "have come," the formula which is used in announcing a visitor). "*Bolo darwaza band hai*" (say I am "not at home"), replied the subaltern, reckless as that young Russian whom the Japs saw quietly shaving while they poured volleys into a surprised camp; Sir Ian Hamilton tells both stories in his book on the late war. Colonel Taylor, of whom I have written before as political officer at the Ambeyla, was then on the Waziri frontier. He had gone with Chamberlain's force, and was riding ahead of the point, when five Waziris set on him. He could make his sword cover himself, but his horse was badly slashed. His two orderlies galloped up, and between them they killed three Waziris; the others fled.

The chiefs in my time had learned to assist in punishing crime. As early as 1861, being sent with a troop to support a magistrate in hanging two murderers, my presence was found needless; the chief held his clan. But when the offender was the chief himself, or his near relative, the case was different; moreover, the hills were near for escape. In such cases I arrested by surprise, taking with me any chief and his followers who happened to be handy. Once it did not come off: here is the story of my bungle in September 1867. Says my report: "I took Kaloo Khan *Bahadur*" ("the gallant," a Government title of honour) "and his horsemen as escort in a separate boat. The boat

containing Kaloo and his horsemen fell behind during the night ” (a horse jumped overboard), “ and towards morning I moored to await it. When it appeared in sight I started again. But the river there branches, dividing upon a long island which at that season was just hidden under water, and by some mistake Kaloo’s boat followed the east channel. . . . Consequently, while I supposed them immediately behind me, and expected them every moment throughout that morning, they did not arrive till late that night.” The time was early September, when the Indus is an angry sea, a mile wide ; to retrace their course was a difficult and very long business.

Let the Punjab Government continue the tale : “ It appears that Lieutenant Grey had grounds for suspecting that Kowra Khan was, with his son, implicated in the murder of a Syud, . . . hushed up for a time through the influence of the chief. With his usual energy, Lieutenant Grey determined to proceed in person, . . . but unfortunately the boat in which his horsemen were conveyed took a wrong channel. . . . Lieutenant Grey, without waiting for the arrival of the horsemen, summoned the chief and his son into his presence. In obedience to the summons, the chief and his son appeared, but the former, who seems to have received some previous warning, came attended by a large following of horse and footmen. With more determination than prudence, Lieutenant Grey placed both the chief and his son in arrest on the charge of murder and abetment of murder. After



waiting a considerable time, but to no purpose, for his mounted orderlies" (meaning Kaloo and his horsemen), "Lieutenant Grey proceeded to despatch his prisoners to the boat in charge of his *chaprasis* (court ushers), the only guard he had at his command. No resistance was offered at the time, and Lieutenant Grey remained behind, intending to follow shortly. After proceeding a short distance, the escorting party were pursued and surrounded by a rabble of horse and footmen; the prisoners refused to proceed; and Kowra Khan, placing himself at the head of his followers, hastened back to Tibbee; *en route* the party surprised Lieutenant Grey and took him prisoner, and marched into the hills. Meanwhile pursuing parties were organised by the adjoining tribes; . . . came up with Kowra Khan; the chief, seeing resistance hopeless, released his prisoner unconditionally. Neither at the time of his capture nor during the march was any violence or indignity offered to Lieutenant Grey, and though repeatedly pressed to guarantee terms of release for himself, he refused to do so. The Government has thus been in no way compromised."

My plan, says my defence, "was an easily feasible one. The river ran within a mile of the scene of the murder. My plan was to land by surprise and immediately put into the boat and send across the river the heads of the tribe, Yakub and Kowra, the father of the murderer. Once on the river, they were powerless, and without them the *Kasranis*" (Kowra's tribe)

“ were powerless also. It was essential to the surprise that I should reach very early in the morning ; . . . I pushed on, and the other boat should have been but half-an-hour behind ” (at dawn I had seen it within two miles) ; ” . . . for the same reason, the moment I landed I made the arrests without waiting for the escort ; half-an-hour’s delay would have spoilt the whole thing. I might, no doubt, have then and there sent Kowra and Yakub across the river successfully, but, expecting my escort every moment, it would have been unwise to risk it before their arrival ; and every hour, of course, rendered it less advisable. . . . Again, when it became evening, and it was evident that the guard was not coming, that the tribe was rising, and that retaining my prisoners through the night would result in mischief, I had no alternative but the desperate expedient of trying at that late hour to carry my point by personal prestige, and the result shows how nearly I succeeded. No Englishman will tell me that I could have withdrawn.”

## CHAPTER XVIII

### A FRONTIER WARDENSHIP

A Good Fighting Man—The Fiery Saint—Censured, Commended, and Warned—Action before Report—The Risk

THE story of the Kowra business perhaps leaves points which should be explained. Why did Kaloo fail? His enemies of course had their own opinion, which I did not share. He may have suspected where I was going; the Government letter says that Kowra “seems to have received some previous warning.” But a man’s nerve does not fail in a good cause; it is only “conscience doth make cowards of us all,” like Kowra, whose nerve failed when I arrested him. It was a plucky cousin who rescued him later, and then, being committed to resistance, Kowra hardened his heart. But Kaloo was a good fighting man, and, as I said in my defence, it was perhaps fortunate that he “did not arrive any time within the last three hours” (when the tribe had gathered), “for probably the attempt at rescue would have been made all the same; it would have come to swords, and we should have been overpowered.”

Again, why did not Kowra go straight off instead of turning aside to surprise me? This he explained to me at the time. It would take him all night to pack

up and get to the hills, and I should have gathered up people and followed; "*Larso, bhirso*," he expressed it (you would quarrel and fight), which was certainly probable. My report says: "Their demeanour was at first threatening, but Kowra maintained a tone of respect, merely insisting on the necessity for his own safety's sake, of my accompanying him to the hills." It was then evening; the day had passed in my investigation. My report says that on arrival I had "sent to collect the various witnesses to the murder from the villages around. Meanwhile the day wore on, and my guard not arriving, I was unable to send off Kowra, Yakub, and Musa, and they also were emboldened by seeing me unprotected; and as evening drew on I saw matters were coming to a crisis, . . . so I ordered Kowra and the others to mount, retaining Jehangir" (Kowra's son, the actual murderer), "before whom the inquiry must be conducted, and I sent them to the boat under charge of the clerks and orderlies (court ushers) that were with me, to whom I gave such arms as I had. I remained with a clerk and Jehangir and proceeded with the investigation."

It was an immense relief when I got Kowra and the others fairly started about 5 P.M.; and I was thinking of some dinner, when I found myself in a ring of matchlocks. It was cleverly done, and my report says: "There was no help for it, so I mounted and we marched through that night, reaching the foot of the hills at moon-set, about 3 A.M. There Nur Mahomed Khetran was occupying the Bhate pass with a strong

gathering, but unfortunately, another pursuer attacked us near the mouth of the pass and turned us off from it, so we slipped in by a small pass which joined it (the Bhate pass) further up, beyond where Nur Mahomed was posted." Other pursuers "arrived about this time, and the pursuit was hot; but Kowra, whose arrangements were commendable, kept me in advance and covered the retreat; threatening if brought to bay to kill me first and then sell his life dearly. Meanwhile, Mir Shah *Moorshed*" (spiritual guide) "of the Biluchis sent to the Bozdars to close the exits from the Kasrani country." That settled it. With the Bozdars in front and my people behind, "Kowra Khan was brought to bay some thirteen miles beyond Bhate, a town three miles within the pass."

When Kowra learned that the Bozdars had cut him off in front, he took up a position. I was being taken to the rear when I sent for Kowra. He came, subdued but courageous. I offered to draw off my people and leave him alone for Government to settle with later as they thought fit. He agreed, so I sent my signet ring to the *Pír* (Mihr Shah) to stop the attack. He came with the other chiefs, peace was made, and I returned with them, while Kowra remained with the hill Kasranis. Now, where had all this pursuit sprung from? It was the energy of my friend the saint, of whom I before told you at Shaikh Budin. He it was who raised the tribes (all of them his disciples, as indeed were the Kasranis also). He sent the fiery cross to the Bozdars (the tribe beyond the Kasranis):

“ If I am your *Pír* close the Kasrani passes ; ” he it was gave fire and energy to the pursuit while the delays of packing and moving kept Kowra ten hours over the ten miles to the hills.

Finally, what was the end of the business ? The Bozdars shut in the Kasranis on one side ; the Usteranehs did the same on another side. Government ordered that Kowra should stand his trial, so Sandeman, a famous frontier warden, brought up the Biluch tribes and blockaded the hill Kasranis. These could not of course give Kowra up, but they made him pass on ; he took refuge with the Afghan Musa Kheyl, but the Afghan Ushteranehs pressed them. Though the Pathan code forbade the Musa Kheyl to surrender Kowra, still that code has loopholes. Says the commissioner’s report : “ A party of eleven Musa Kheyls had been seized, . . . whose clan now demanded that Kowra should be given up in exchange.” I had heard of these Musa Kheyls in my district and captured them. My contemporary note says : “ My belief is that the tribe, not knowing how to get rid of Kowra otherwise, sent these men to be captured and arranged that I should hear of them. Pathan guile is beyond fathoming. Any way, I got news of and seized them, and then, by the Pathan code, Kowra had either—(1) to release them ; or (2) to capture an equivalent number of hostages from me ; or (3) to give himself up to procure their release.” This last he was forced to do ; and he was convicted, with his son, by the commissioner, of culpable homicide and abetment, apart from the

offence of resisting arrest. Of the 120 other prisoners, only small sentences were passed on a few, but a post was established at Tibbee at the Kasranis' cost. Also they had to pay the expenses of the tribal forces, the rewards, &c., a total of £2500. I was censured by the Secretary of State for India for rashness, commended for firmness, and warned to be more cautious.

In conclusion, it may be mentioned, says the commissioner's report, "that the lands of the criminals have not been touched, so that the relatives and dependents of the criminals, and the criminals themselves after their release from prison, can at once settle down again as peaceful subjects." Moreover, when in 1869 I was held to have rendered some service, I based thereon a request for Kowra's release, which was allowed, and, when I rode down the frontier later in that year, he came to see me very gratefully. Indeed, our relations had never been strained: he knew that I was only doing my duty; I knew that he was doing only what was necessary to his safety. During the night march I saw little of him; he was busy collecting his people and goods, I was getting what sleep I could in the saddle and in dismounted intervals. But during the day in the hills we conversed from time to time. As my report says: "I was hard pressed for terms, but succeeded in turning the matter off by expressing my conviction that the commissioner would ratify no conditions I made." I remember clinching it by saying, "what's an officer more or less to the

Government ? ” He saw the force of that, and let me alone.

The position was such as I should not have been placed in. The banter was all very well—“ that I had arrested a powerful chief with a couple of orderlies ; ” no doubt, at the last, it came to something like that, but whose was the fault ? There were plenty of troops in Dera, and my old regiment was there. With a very few trained troopers and trained horses in my own boat, I would have had the Kasrani heads across the river before breakfast ; but a score or more of raw Pathans and their fighting, kicking mounts in a separate boat was quite another matter ; no wonder one horse went overboard. Nicholson had two fine regiments at his disposal, while I had not authority to obtain a half-section. Yet I must needs make my bricks, straw or no straw ; Government would not have approved Dogberry’s “ most peaceable way ” with an offender ; it would not do to “ take no note of him, but let him go.”

The Punjab Government later wrote of my frontier wardenship that “ he has evinced many admirable qualities for such a post.” The chief quality needed, in my day, was readiness to risk ruin, as in Bhutan, or as at Ferozepore later ; not that any of us really looked at it in that light, for youth is confident. *Kudos*, certainly, we did not think of. I remember that the Ushteraneh business, before mentioned, came to the commissioner’s ears, and he asked me why I would not report such successes ; but one had one’s



hands full without writing reports after things were done, and to mention them beforehand would probably prevent their being done. The only chance was to act, and then if unavoidable to report afterwards.

Of course, all such latitude is over now, and it was risky then. Competent men have said that had not Nicholson been killed, he would certainly later have been dismissed. I once heard an officer of his type threatened with degradation for adopting, for his people's benefit, measures which Government, years later, itself enacted. Government reasonably objects to having its hand forced, however praiseworthy the object ; when one feels bound to do this, one accepts the risk.

When should one feel bound to do so ? When there have been years of correspondence : when huge piles of papers have accumulated, without result, on a matter of acknowledged importance. The Ferozepore settlement report of 1852, said that "all these considerations sink into insignificance when compared with the advantages that would result from introducing canal irrigation into the district." When I took charge in 1874, I found the immense correspondence which had grown up around this question. I then said that "the ensuing season," in which the irrigational capabilities of the district were to be examined, "has never yet arrived" (in twenty-two years!), "so I determined to see what I could do." But I had a very narrow escape from ruin. Again, in 1886, on taking charge of the Delhi Division, I found an accu-

mulation of papers, extending over many years, on the subject of forest protection. Meanwhile, the vast forests of the Simla hills had been going from bad to worse, and, if they were to be saved at all, prompt action was needed with the eighteen hill states. I took that action, with infinite wear and tear of body and mind, and was severely rebuked. It is just a matter for each man's discretion—is the public gain worth the private risk ?

## CHAPTER XIX

### MEN, BIRDS, AND BEASTS

Wisdom and Illegality—Perjury made Simple—Alligators—  
Adjutant Cranes—The Karait in the Desk—Hamadryads—  
Wild Bees

I HAVE already written of catching marauders by means of their jackals. No laws applied to such foreigners, but fortunately, in my early days, none were needed. Whenever raids occurred, we made inquiries in the hills; there was no occasion for concealment, and they gloried in their deeds. So in the raid register the score was entered against A. B. C., &c., and gradually the entries mounted up against each. At last perhaps some of these were caught, and I committed them to the sessions. The commissioner accepted my register as evidence, and they were duly transported. Legally, of course, this register, though really the best of proof, was no evidence at all. So when a chief court sitting at Lahore began to exercise jurisdiction on the frontier, our arrangements for the peace of the border collapsed. For instance, the practice was to punish complicity, and to enforce co-operation by fining all villages near the track of a raid which did not turn out to resist or pursue. The fines formed a fund for reward of loyalty and energy.

This, too, was quite illegal, as in fact was most of our defensive procedure. The native Indian writer, Mr. Mitra, in his book, *Indian Problems*, refers to the Indians' charge "against the Government, that it is a *Vakil ka Raj*" (Lawyers' rule) "a Government in which the lawyers have the upper hand to the detriment of strong administration." Though a lawyer himself, he discusses the evil of this, and indeed the country generally is not fit for our refined legal system, much less the frontier.

In July 1868, I lost my district for saying so, and my commissioner, who held the same view, was transferred to the Punjab shortly after. A Kasrani, who had evaded Kowra Khan's surrender and remained in the hills, heard that a great power had arisen in Lahore to subdue the local officers. He made a rush across my district and reached Lahore, hotly pursued by a smart police officer with a warrant from the local magistrate. The policeman got this warrant endorsed in Lahore and actually seized his man in the precincts of the chief court. These are sacred, and the man's friends ran to a sitting judge, who ordered his release. The policeman ambushed outside, caught the outlaw again, and brought him clear away to Dera. I knew nothing of all this till I heard from the chief court, but of course I assumed the responsibility, and I fear that I questioned the wisdom of the honourable judges. This was insubordination, for which the Government properly removed me on their complaint.

When I was at Peshawar, in 1881, murder cases

there were sometimes a mere contest of perjury. There was a tariff for murder by professional assassins of a hill tribe ; the charge for a British officer was said to be Rs. 10,000 (\$3300). Having done their work and gone home to their hills, the assassins of course made no difficulty about revealing the facts. Every detail, therefore, was known to the judge and assessors, while solemnly recording the false statements of the prosecution and the accused. For instance, A. hires two assassins. On a night that B. is at his threshing floor, A. takes his men there, indicates B. by light sufficient for the assassins to distinguish him, leaves them among the sheaves and gallops off to a marriage miles away. Thus, while the prosecution brings numerous witnesses to A.'s personal commission of the deed, A. has as many to an *alibi*. Of course, the assessors and I, knowing the man's guilt, were ready to convict if the prosecution made its case strong enough to stand the appeal to the chief court. I dare say that all this has been remedied ; but certainly, for some years, the reign of law introduced on the frontier had unfortunate results. Elsewhere it is not quite so mischievous ; still I was thankful, in 1884, to close my connection with the civil and criminal courts ; and in doing so I told the chief court a story which I will repeat later.

I lost my Persian tutor, as I have said before, at Dera—I think by an alligator. These, and tigers and snakes, are supposed to fill Indian experience ; but one does not meet them daily, to speak of. With alligators the reason perhaps is that one feels them before one sees

them. I do not know how else to account for sudden disappearances : under-current, we say, but I doubt its being so always. Turtles are sometimes responsible—kick a turtle under water and the strong beak is apt to take hold. Certainly the under-currents are more surprising than pleasant, and therefore one swims very flat in an Indian river. A horse once over-jumped into a boat from the bank and went out beyond ; he never reappeared ; was it under-tow or alligator ?

I remember a flock of cranes on a sand spit ; up shot a long snout (of *gavialis*, not *crocodilus*) and seized a leg. He did not trouble to pull back and drown the crane (as *crocodilus*, the snub-nosed kind, does with buffalo, tiger, or even rhinoceros, seized by the head when drinking) ; he slowly chewed it up there and then with all the cranes jumping on his head and swearing and stabbing. A crane *can* stab, too, with the long sharp bill and the leverage of the long neck ; I was nearly spitted once by a demoiselle crane which I had winged. There are various cranes. The adjutant is a ghastly grim and ancient fowl, six feet high when erect, whose bald head and neck are really indecent. Adjutants used to be the scavengers of Calcutta, and thoughtless subalterns delighted to throw two meat-bones connected by a stout string. Two adjutants would swallow the bones and the fun commenced ! Before Calcutta was sanitated as now, adjutants abounded there. They crowded the dome of the Viceroy's residence, and the picture I recall of their shanks against the light reminds me of a Calcutta

crowd at a bathing-ghat with legs silhouetted on the evening sky. Tennyson must have thought of Bengalis and their adjutants when he wrote—

“ Callest thou that thing a leg?  
Which is thinnest, thine or mine?”

To return for a moment to alligators: never pass between a log and the bank of a pool or stream. The log is apt to come to life and its rush is surprising. If the jaws miss you, the tail will sweep you into the water. An unhappy boatman was taken, hopping along on one leg, over many yards of shoal, with his friends hammering the crocodile; not one of them thought of bestriding it and gouging the eyes. Once in the Rapti river (on the Nipal border, in 1859), I struck something scaly under water; could I always have swum as I swam then, I should have won prizes; I suppose that the brute was as frightened as I was.

Of tigers I have written already, and will return to them; snakes I have had little to do with. One chilly morning I saw a viper curled up for warmth at the foot of my neighbour's bed. I removed it gently before awaking him; he was my canal engineer in Bahawalpur, and valuable. Another time I was pushing one off the path into a ravine, lest he should harm other passengers; he squared up at me the whole time most ungratefully. Snakes are as reluctant for intercourse as we are, and, excepting vipers, which are very slow and sluggish, they will always get out of the way; they bite only in self-defence. I went into the bathroom of a rest-house one dark winter's morning, and a

snake was there unseen the whole time. My servant went in afterwards, when it was lighter, to pack up, and he came back like a flash. Another time I rummaged my desk for something in the dark ; not finding it, I sent my orderly with a light to look, and a *Kerait* (very small and very deadly) squared up at him from among the papers. Either the snake guessed that I meant him no harm, and avoided my fingers, or else he got into the desk after I left ; I believe the former. Picking up a heavy *ghara* (water-pot) one night, to bathe, I grasped a snake coiled round its neck ; but the snake thought only of escape. Fresh-water snakes bite savagely if you approach their nests, but they are harmless ; still, their heads popping up as you swim are unpleasant. There is one land-snake which attacks on sight, the Hamadryad (very large and swift) ; luckily he generally devotes his attention to other snakes ; hence Fayrer's *Thanatophidia* calls him *Ophiophagus*, which seems more appropriate than " Wood-nymph." When knocking about in the Nipal Terai after mutineers in 1859, our men were frequently bitten. They were promptly thrown down, excised, cauterised and filled with grog, and they were all right. Only one fatal case have I personally known. A groom was bitten in the stable. Instead of running to me, he set off headlong for the hospital, a mile away. Of course, he reached there only to collapse.

Wild bees are more dangerous than snakes. They are very aggressive. Your only chance is absolute stillness and rigidity, unless you have wherewithal to



wrap yourself up. We had some honey once, which a wild bee discovered and called his friends. We had to get out of the tent, and promptly too, till they finished the pot. It took long, and you may fancy how disconsolately we sat outside; it was in the Himalaya, and the rainy season!

## CHAPTER XX

### FAMINES

Famines under Native Rule—Railways and Roads—Labour  
Famines—Starved Cattle—Irrigation—Malaria—The Value  
of Poppies—Camel's Milk

MY readers may wonder why I do not refer to famines. India without famines is like an Oriental scene without palm trees. Is that story a chestnut? An officer sent home to an illustrated paper a scene of upper India, dreary as such scenes are. When it reached him, he found it enlivened with palm trees; in reply to his remonstrance, he was told that "the British public *will* have palm trees." Well, I similarly cannot put famines into my picture because there are none. "Famines," Webster tells you, mean "General scarcity of food"; whereas in India there is always plenty of food. No doubt in former days there were terrible famines. Mr. Mitra says that "it has been shown from Mahomedan histories that Indian famines, before the advent of the British, affected all classes, because then famine meant want of grain, whereas now it means want of money to buy grain." He quotes Mahomedan historians to show that "in olden times it (the price of grain) rose 120 times higher than normal rates," whereas "now, in extreme case, price

of grain rises about 6 times.” Nowadays drought does “not affect even the agricultural classes deeply. At all large relief works it has been found that the great majority of those seeking relief were not *ryots* (farmers) but labourers.” The *ryots* are the holders of land, whether yeomen or tenants; if a fair day’s work is required for the wage, then these will not generally come on to relief work; but of course, when drought suspends agriculture, they cannot give work to the labourers and these go to the Government works.

The terrible famines under native rule were due to the lack of communications. One province might abound, while the next starved. Even in the “Golden age” of Akbar, writes Mr. Mitra in his chronicle, “the *Ayin-i-Akbari* (Institution of Akbar) admits at the time of famine and distress parents were allowed to sell their children.” Now 30,000 miles of rail and a network of good roads distribute the successful harvests to the tracts of failure. Even in the inconceivable case of failure throughout this continent of India, grain would pour in everywhere by the sea-ports and the railways. British administration has rendered lack of food impossible, and the public works provide the wages wherewith to buy food.

Fifty years ago roads, even, were few, and, after the disorder of the mutiny in Hindustan proper, there was severe famine in that part of India, in 1860-61, which its neighbouring provinces could not relieve. The distress, even at that date, was largely due to the

inertness of the people. Nowadays they expect to have nominal work provided at their homes, and will not go where well-paid (but real) labour waits them on the great State works. Similarly, in the 1860 famine, a district officer was asked by "a tea-planter in the Dehra Doon if I could send him labourers. The distance was about seventy miles, and good terms were offered, but out of the starving people under my charge not one could be persuaded to accept my friend's offered employment" (Keene's *A Servant of John Company*).

I passed through Hindustan to the Punjab in December 1859, and the 1860 trouble was then threatening; the Indian name for the upheaval of 1857 is "The great perfidy" (ghadr), and this famine was then regarded as its punishment. Later a friend of mine had a painful adventure with the distressed villagers, who infested the roads. He was asleep in his horse-van, travelling up to the Punjab in the manner I have before described, when crashing blows on the van aroused him. Starting from sleep, he put a bullet through a head thrust in at the door; it was the driver's! The assailants fled, and there this boy was (he was a youth just arrived in the country) miles from anywhere, at night, with his van and dead coachman! No doubt the unhappy man had jumped down in terror to seek his help. He put the body inside and drove on until he came to a police post, where he made his statement.

I have seen nothing of the modern "labour"

famines, or of Government relief works. I have always found plenty of work on canals to give to refugees from drought-smitten native states who poured into my jurisdiction. Their subjects are not coddled like ours, and will go any distance for work. But what I *have* seen is the distress of cattle. For them food cannot be brought, fodder is too bulky; nor can they flee to where food is to be found. It is too pitiful! I have seen the trees of a whole district standing like pollard willows, stripped for the cattle. I have seen the land turned over as if rooted by pigs, by the people digging up for their beasts the long spreading roots of the perished wild grasses. I have seen the date palms, in parts where these grow, looking as if they were girdled with birds' nests. As high as cattle could reach, the dry hard fronds had been chewed into bunches of fibre! To see the miserable beasts tottering about, awaiting their funerals at the beaks of the attendant vultures and crows, makes one rage at one's impotence.

*Tin-Kal* (fodder-famine), not *an-kal* (dearth of human food), is the curse of India; for drought in some part or other of this great continent there must always be, at intervals. The remedy is irrigation, and for this in my small way I have done my best. The report of the Royal Commission on Irrigation (1901) speaks of me as "the father of both the Ferozepore and the Bahawalpur systems" of irrigation, by which, it says, about a million of acres are annually irrigated. I have mentioned my irrigation work on the frontier, and will

refer hereafter to the Bahawalpur canals, and to the system of canals in Ferozepore which are officially styled by my name; and I have had thousands of irrigation wells constructed in both places. But all that is mere make-shift work. Real irrigation is that which scientifically uses water so as to get the utmost possible "duty" (irrigated area) for each "cusec" (cubic foot of discharge per second) of the infinitely precious flow of the Indian rivers which still, to a lamentable extent, escape unused to the ocean.

The irrigation works of the British Government, originated by Colonel Cautly in upper India and by Colonel Cotton in Madras, are a wonder of the world! Weirs cost up to  $1\frac{1}{2}$  millions sterling, so progress is slow; but the time will presently come when every drop, even of the summer floods, will have been caught for cultivation; and even so the supply of the rivers is all too little for our vast areas. When that time comes, and when fodder can be cured, machine-pressed and baled, and stored, at a cost within the people's means, then will the beasts as well as the humans of India have been finally delivered from the famines which, says Mr. Mitra, "literally desolated the country before the British conquest of India." Still nature will insist on thinning congested areas, and much of India is overpopulated. Sword and famine are debarred by British administration, but pestilence continues, though much checked now compared with the old days of native rule, when no one cared. What, however, are cholera, small-pox, or plague, compared

with malarial fever? The former may count their thousands occasionally, but the last is *always* here and slays its ten thousands. Not only so, but it leaves weakness and apathy, and it sterilises man and beast. Good rains mean good harvests, but villages prostrated with fever. I have seen fine crops rot for lack of hands in populous districts. From time immemorial the poppy was a prophylactic; this, however, we forbid; though Lincolnshire fens and Mississippi swamps know the value of its juice in the form of laudanum.

When first I knew the Punjab, in the spring of 1857, every one grew his own little patch of poppy for home consumption, but that is all stopped now. The infusion was to them what beer is to us, and, as shown by the reports of the Royal Commissions on Opium in India and in the Straits Settlements, it was wholesome and beneficial, and has been used in Asia from time immemorial. The great increase of drinking in the Punjab is perhaps due to our closing this household cultivation, and thus depriving the people of a beverage which was not only as harmless as beer in moderation, but was also prophylactic against malaria. In its concentrated form of opium, poppy juice is still beneficial, though not so harmless as the infusion; but we tax opium out of use, while we *cannot* prevent illicit spirit-stills and cheap drunkenness. A great jar used to stand, in those days, in the corner of every yeoman's house, with poppy heads in soak, and it was discourtesy to refuse a drink. Englishmen were excused, being unaccountable creatures, but what I was

never excused was a great bowl of camel's milk when my fate took me past a Lisharis' encampment (Lisharis are a tribe of camel breeders). Protest was useless, and I went on my way bloated but polite. It is thick, salty stuff. All the same a milch-camel, caught by my tracker and myself once in the desert, saved our lives, I believe. We had finished our water-skin, but had just strength to run her down and milk her into the skin.



## CHAPTER XXI

### SHER ALI

At Ambala—"Masterly Inactivity" and its Consequences—  
Sher Ali's Hope—The Amir Disappointed—Lord Mayo's  
Gift of a Sword—A Broken Heart

"I ESTEEM myself fortunate in having on so important an occasion been so ably assisted, and I have now only to convey to you my sincere thanks." The private letter from Lord Mayo, of which the above is the conclusion, gave me more pleasure than anything in my official life; except when, seven years before, General Chamberlain called me up in front of my regiment and brought me to the notice of the commander-in-chief, Sir Hugh Rose (afterwards Lord Strathnairn), who was then inspecting the Punjab force, which in those days did not belong to the Indian army. But I was embarrassed later by a letter from the chief's military secretary, promoting me into one of his regiments "in mark of approbation of your services." My new colonel naturally asked what those services were! However, it had pleased my general to allege them.

Of the heroes whom I knew in those earlier days none impressed me like Edwardes, Chamberlain, and Reynell Taylor, frontier warriors and administrators such as

only similar times can produce. And yet Edwardes and Taylor retired as mere commissioners of divisions ! Truly, in India, the race is not always to the swift. Think of Edwardes, a subaltern, beleaguering Mulraj in Multan after two battles ! Read of Taylor in Bannu, as described in Edwardes's *Two Years on the Punjab Frontier* ! Edwardes, in 1856, against John Lawrence's opposition, obtained Dalhousie's sanction to his negotiating with Dost Mahomed, Amir of Cabul, that treaty which saved the Punjab from invasion in 1857. Corbett's disarmament saved the Punjab, and thus India, from the Sepoys, but what would that have availed had the Afghans poured in ? And Chamberlain's sword it was that inclined the Amir to that treaty. The sound of his exploits, in his successive frontier campaigns, echoed through Afghanistan and led Dost Mahomed to prefer easier conquests to the north and west.

Lord Mayo's letter is of May 1869, and the occasion referred to was the historic meeting at Ambala with the King of Afghanistan. I was in Calcutta to take my degree, and the Foreign Office in March 1869, sent me in advance to Ambala, to see the Amir's prime minister. Two years previously I had rendered that minister some service. I was patrolling my border in February 1867, when I heard of an Afghan noble in distress in the Waziri hills. With the aid of the Nawab of Tank, whom I have before mentioned, I got the Afghan out of the Waziris' hands, entertained him, and brought his case to the notice of Government—who treated

him honourably and passed him back to his master by Karachi and Persia. He was Syud Nur Mahomed Shah, the right-hand man of the Amir Sher Ali Khan, who had got separated from the Amir in a lost battle near Candahar. From that time, 1867, I began to urge, in the Press, that we should abandon a policy (styled "Masterly Inactivity") which left Afghanistan a prey to civil war. In 1868 I wrote a pamphlet on which the lieutenant-governor of the Punjab complimented me. This pamphlet, *The Kabul Question*, reviewed the entire subject of Afghan politics, the Russian advance in Asia, and the risk which we incurred in neglecting Afghanistan.

The course of events in that country, since the death of our ally Dost Mahomed in 1863, had been kaleidoscopic. Dost Mahomed left the throne to Amir Sher Ali Khan, with whom we renewed our treaty of 1856, above mentioned; but unfortunately, the other sons of the Dost were left by him in possession of the subordinate governments. Soon, of course, they all fell out. At first Sher Ali was victorious, but in 1866 he was defeated, lost Kabul, and fell back on Candahar. He then applied for assistance to Lord Lawrence, which was refused, so in January 1867 there followed the utter rout above referred to, when Sher Ali's prime minister fled east and fell into Waziri hands, while the Amir fled west to his son Yakub in Herat. Again beaten in the following winter, Sher Ali's cause seemed finally lost, when Yakub, with Russian support, gained an astonishing victory. After Sher Ali's defeat

in 1866, we had acknowledged his rival, to whom, after Sher Ali's second defeat in January 1867, we deputed an envoy. So when Sher Ali reoccupied Kabul in September 1868, after Yakub's victory, the envoy had to transfer his credentials! Sher Ali's position was, however, still most insecure, for want of funds; and therefore my pamphlet was written to urge that this waiting on events should be abandoned, and that we should at last make up our minds to support one or other Amir.

This was done in December 1868, and money and arms were sent to Sher Ali. His rival, the late Abdur Rahman Khan (whom we appointed Amir in 1880 after expelling Sher Ali and deporting Yakub to India), had by this time led a new army to within four marches of Kabul. But, as I then wrote, our "assistance, arriving in the very crisis of his fate, confirmed Sher Ali's adherents and led to defection of those of his rival; and he was thus, when most his power was tottering, placed by our means in possession of his throne." Abdur Rahman Khan fled to the Russians, and therefore more was yet needed to render Sher Ali's position sure; so he came to India to obtain if possible a new treaty, with guarantee of support, from Lord Mayo.

My treatment of Syed Nur Mahomed Shah in 1867 was, he said at Ambala, the more gratifying to Amir Sher Ali as being evidence of my sympathy at a time when his cause appeared hopeless, and his rival had been acknowledged by our Government as

Amir of Afghanistan. Hence when I met them at Ambala, before Lord Mayo's arrival, they were cordially disposed to me. But they were bitter about our hitherto barren friendship, while saying that there was nothing the Amir would not agree to if we even now undertook to support him and the heir he would nominate. It was my business to obtain and lay before the Viceroy the views of the Amir, and *vice versa* ; and a stormy time I had of it, for the Amir's ideas were large. He sought a defensive alliance, but the ministry which reversed the policy of "masterly inactivity," and sent out Lord Mayo, had a very short life. With its fall fell the hopes of the Amir ; all he got was money, artillery, and small arms ; and a letter saying that the British Government "will view with severe displeasure any attempts on the part of your rivals to disturb your position, . . . and it will further endeavour from time to time, by such means as circumstances may require, to strengthen," &c. &c.

My trouble in accommodating the Amir's expectations to this meagre result, may be concerned especially as regards the sentence "such means as circumstances may require." This the Amir regarded with great suspicion ; "it was not till after a long and somewhat stormy argument," says my report, "and impressing him rather forcibly with the conviction that we (the British) considered a great deal had been done for him, that we (Wazeer and self) succeeded" in bringing the Amir to reason. But I felt we were wrong, and that the Amir's suspicions were right ; to

Abdur Rahman, indeed, we afterwards conceded all that we refused to Sher Ali, but a calamitous war intervened. However, I did my duty and, as Lord Mayo wrote in his letter above quoted, "all the information with which you furnished me was distinguished by such clearness and accuracy that it enabled me to form, without difficulty, a most correct appreciation of the feelings and wishes of the Amir." The whole thing was most interesting, and, apart from official violence, the Amir was very pleasant to me personally. He soothed disputes with successive cups of such tea as I have never tasted before or since, the famous "Kiachta" (overland by Kiachta) special growth of China, whose aroma will not bear sea travel. One should not approach a king empty-handed, and I trenched on the modest revenues of a captain (my rank just attained after twelve years' service) in presents; to serve Lord Mayo thus was a pleasure, and I was full of hope for the future of Afghanistan.

The great Durbar of the 27th March 1869 was a historical occasion. Lord Mayo, a king of men, was magnificent as he towered benignly over Sher Ali, welcomed him in the Queen's name, and said through me: "I trust that this visit may be the commencement of many years of amity between Her Majesty and yourself, and of mutual confidence and good-will between the nations which Her Majesty rules in India and all the subjects of your Highness." Alas! it was not so, and all then achieved was later undone. At the close of the Durbar, Lord Mayo gave the Amir a

sword, with the words : “ I present you with this sword as a token of my desire that you may be ever victorious over your enemies in defence of your just and lawful rights ” ; to which the Amir replied : “ I will use it against your enemies.”

It was a great sight ; Governors of Provinces, Commanders-in-Chief, Members of the Supreme Council, great Feudatory Chiefs, were ranged around. There amongst others was the famous Ruler of Jhind, who, first of all the Punjab chiefs, took our side in 1857, and rode at the head of his troops, driving his own elephant, seated on its neck in glittering armour. Few of us in that tent but looked with reverence on the noble old Sikh with his venerable flowing beard. There, too, sat Lord Napier of Magdala, Commander-in-Chief of Bombay, an august figure fresh from his Abyssinian successes, crowning his other achievements in the mutiny and in China. All are gone, the two leading figures very sadly : Lord Mayo by an assassin’s hand, Sher Ali of a broken heart fleeing before our arms.

## CHAPTER XXII

### INTELLIGENCE PARTIES ON THE FRONTIER

A Fifty-eight Mile Ride—"English Saddles"—From Simla to Murree—Dilawar Khan—The Sole Survivor—The Problem of India's Defence

NOWADAYS you journey to Simla reclining at ease in a railway carriage ; or, if train-sick, you gallop there in a tonga (two-horse cart). In my time, however, the fifty-eight miles from the foot of the hills had to be ridden, either by stages or through. In 1869 Government placed relays of riding horses on the road, at ten shillings a stage. They were very skittish when first put on the road, well fed up, and the saddles were country made, which at that day meant impossible to sit on. I took my own, but a man I rode with was not so provident. We were the first to use these relays, and they gave trouble ; my companion's mount kicked him over its head and started back to the stage, dragging him. On a mountain road, cliff above and cliff below, there was no chance of heading the horse, even had I ventured to gallop at the risk of setting it off. Conceive my relief as they were disappearing round a corner to see the stirrup come away ! Troubles continued, and I had to leave my companion at the foot of the final ten miles' rise to Simla ; the last I saw



of him was, very red in the face, leading a jibber. Next spring I rode up with Lord Mayo. He was a huge man and his weary horse came down on the first stage. Notwithstanding the heavy fall, he reached Simla quite fresh after the fifty-eight miles in a hot sun.

My companion above mentioned was a nobleman of note in the shires, but any one might have been thrown from the "English saddle" as then understood by Indian leather-workers. Of size for a child, cut straight up and down, hard and slippery as a polished board, I remember my own helplessness in one of them, many years later. I had arrived by train, trusting to some local mount, which, out of compliment, was provided with an "English saddle," unused but very ancient. The horse had been well fed up, and pranced as he had been trained to do; when I checked him, some part of the rust-eaten bit gave way. Off he went, and never had I such a four-mile gallop—against an icy wind too! When the horse reached the village he was bound for, he turned in sharp, twisted through the narrow lanes, finally into a courtyard, and almost fell over an old woman sitting on a cot ginning cotton. She did not turn a hair, but bade me welcome! Could I have sat down in the tiny saddle, I might have guided the nag with the snaffle and escaped this indignity; but it was all I could do to stay there at all; and whenever I tried to handle the horse, he put on a fresh spurt. Returning, I met my following, with the district officer; he was sarcastic about my showing off, but seemed

rather white about the gills. An elderly commissioner is a responsibility.

In June 1869, I submitted proposals for procuring accurate information of current events in Central Asia, by despatch of intelligence-parties, and other suggestions regarding the frontier. I was instructed to carry out some of my proposals by personally visiting the frontier, and, with regard to the others, to take the views of the lieutenant-governor of the Punjab at Murree. Simla to Murree in July was in those days no joke of a journey—by mail-cart chiefly; but it was nothing to my subsequent ride down the frontier in the appalling heat. First, however, I rode from Murree through the lovely “gullies,” forty miles to Abbottabad; not finding the commissioner of Peshawar there, I sought him in Thandiani (8000 feet). Thence down to the furnace of Hoti Mardan, the headquarters of the famous Guides, whence I sent my “Party No. 1” to Khokand; and then on to Peshawar to send another party to Badakshan. These two parties fell into the hands of the ferocious ruler of Chitral.

The head of Party No. 1 was Dilawar Khan, of whom the Church Missionary Society published an account in 1870:—“He was bred a robber, in a country where children are dedicated by their mothers to plunder and murder from their earliest infancy. . . . He used to keep his watch, . . . and whenever a rich shopkeeper appeared he carried him off to the hills. If the ransom were long delayed, he has been known to send in one

of his captive's fingers." "Pathans are all alike," continues the pamphlet—" 'Whist,' said one of them when he had shot a poor Hindu and found nothing on him worth carrying away, 'I have gone and lost a charge of powder and ball.' . . . As a price was set on his (Dilawar's) head, he determined to apply for it, thinking he might as well have it himself as some one else." I never found any of my Waziri robbers so accommodating, or I would have done what the Peshawar Warden did—" offered him service, and he enlisted as a soldier in the Guide corps, and soon rose to native officer." This missionary pamphlet quotes a remark of Dilawar's which is worth remembering : " 'There are many good people in England who think it wrong to wage war. What would you say to them ?' 'I would put them up to stand in my place on the Crag Picket,' was the answer." The Crag Picket was taken and retaken during the desperate Ambeyla fighting of 1863. Many distinguished themselves there, among them the man whom I have mentioned as being afterwards assistant political agent with me in the Bahawalpur state. One noted Piffer, Captain Davidson, died sooner than leave the picket. He set his back to a rock, and the Pathans afterwards said they found him hard to kill.

This missionary account says of Dilawar that "he was sent by Government on a secret mission into Central Asia, and died in the snow on the mountains a victim to the treachery of the King of Chitral"; and that he "has left a will behind him in which he has bequeathed his savings to the British Government.

When the officers remonstrated with him, he replied : ' The *Sircar* (Government) has been father and mother to me.' ” Dilawar was a native captain in the Guides. He had been a robber and murderer of note, and he was the simplest, straightest, most sterling Pathan I have known. When my plan of sending intelligence-parties into Central Asia was approved, I had wealth of good men of my acquaintance to choose from, but I found no better than Dilawar.

The Chitral ruler drew the line at killing guests himself, but he sent Dilawar's and my other party together over the Hindu Kush with guides under orders to desert them. Here is the account given to me by the sole survivor :—“ We reached the summit by evening after a terrific climb and camped under a rock. . . . The guides said they would bring fuel. We waited in expectation of their return, but they did not come back. Snow continued to fall throughout the night. When it was morning we could not make up our minds whether to stop or go onwards. We had lost all courage. At last it was settled that we should proceed onwards. . . . We travelled with much difficulty, and the time approached for the noon prayers. We had no strength to walk . . . it was intensely cold . . . we sat under a rock . . . Ahmed Khan breathed his last when three-fourths of the night had elapsed. . . . On the approach of morning, we started and travelled till midday. Again we sat under a rock and evening approached, when Dilawar commenced complaining. He ordered that if any of us should

survive, he should give information that Aman ul Mulk, ruler of Chitral caused Dilawar to die in the snow . . . at midnight Dilawar departed this life. In the morning we three surviving persons started, and at noon we descended into a pass. We had no strength to proceed, and sat under a rock. At night Shazadeh Mahomed Yahya" (head of Party No. 2) "paid the tribute of nature; when day broke we found him dead. I proceeded with Lal Khan," who later fell by the way and never returned to me, whereas Mahomed Akbar, whom I here quote, performed a most useful journey.

From Peshawar I rode to Kohat and Bunnoo, and despatched another party. This party accomplished its tour through the Hazareh mountains to Meshed and back by Seistan, emerging safely in Sind, where the head of the party mysteriously disappeared. His last letters to me were from our cantonment of Jacobabad, and I never again heard of him or could trace him. I rode on to Shaikh Budin, where I despatched a fourth party, borrowed a rifle, and had a day with the *Markhór*; and then to Dera Ismail Khan and Dera Ghazi Khan, despatching two more parties. Then I rode across to Multan to strike the mail-cart, which carried me again to the Punjab Government at Murree; and so back to Simla. The distances, the heat of the frontier in July, the lack of kit beyond what could be carried in saddle bags, the sudden changes to rain and cold in the hills, were very trying, and I was glad of a short rest in Simla before starting in October to meet the

Maharaja of Kashmir and the lieutenant-governor of the Punjab at Jammu for negotiations of which I will tell you hereafter.

While engaged with the Amir of Afghanistan at Ambala, in March 1869, a native state official of my acquaintance desired me to bring to Lord Mayo's notice the desire of one of the great Indian chiefs to be honoured with the defence of Peshawar. His well-equipped army was fully competent, and the proposal, though novel to us, meant only a renewal of the policy of the Moghal emperors, whose frontiers were thus held by feudatories of the empire. I considered and wrote much on the subject, and eventually I laid my proposals before Lord Lytton when he became Viceroy in 1875. Now, after some forty years, I have again brought forward the proposals in my *India of the Future and its Defence*. My belief is that the future of our Indian empire lies in a commonwealth of Indian states. As Lord Canning wrote in his despatch of the 30th April 1860, after suppression of the mutiny, the native governments had in 1857 "served as breakwaters to the storm which would otherwise have swept over us in one great wave. . . . Should the day come when India shall be threatened by an external enemy, or when the interests of England elsewhere may require that her Eastern empire shall incur more than ordinary risk, one of our best mainstays will be found in these native states."

Evidently some provision is needed for India's defence at such a time, and who in India can provide

it? It is certain that the masses there will not follow the Baboos, the politicians and *literati*, and it is certain that they would follow their chiefs. I once asked an educated Punjabi, "Who would follow the Maharaja of Patiala in a crisis?" "All the Sikhs," was his reply. "And who would follow X?" (naming the most prominent Indian politician). "No one," he confessed; and repeated—"No one." Of course, without us the chiefs could not combine for defence; throughout history India has fallen easy prey to invasion for lack of union under a common head. But under the British Crown, with their forces organised and supported by Britain, a commonwealth of Indian states could certainly provide a defence so strong as to deter attack.

## CHAPTER XXIII

### BACK TO ORDINARY WORK

Successful Negotiations—An Investiture—Bombardment for Arrears—The End of a Usurer—"The Ants!"—A Docile Elephant

"His Excellency in Council desires me to express his satisfaction at the manner in which these important negotiations have been conducted by Captain Grey under the immediate directions of the lieutenant-governor." So wrote the Government of India to that of the Punjab, in February 1870, regarding my work in Kashmir; and two months earlier I had received a telegram: "Proceedings cordially approved, come down at once." These negotiations concerned Yarkand and Kashgar, in which countries Yakub Kushbegi had thrown off the Chinese yoke, and was disposed to be cordial to us. I had to induce the Kashmir Government to facilitate the relations with Yarkand, to relieve the nascent trade of transit dues and other hindrances, and to open up the trade routes through Ladakh. Kashmir was not very amenable, but in time I succeeded in my negotiations and took down the results to Calcutta, where the arrival of the Duke of Edinburgh gave me a welcome respite for sport in the Raj Mahal Hills. Some years later China



reconquered these provinces and the Kushbegi's envoy with our Government was left stranded at Simla. In 1877 he amused me at one of Lord Lytton's dinners. The Kabul agent was also dining there, and refused every dish but potatoes, whereas the Yarkandi Mahomedan enjoyed all the good things. When, however, the champagne went round, the Afghan not only refused it himself, but instigated the Mahomedan butler to deprive the Yarkandi also. The latter's impotent wrath was delightful.

During the duke's visit I attended the most interesting ceremony of my experience, namely, a Chapter of the Star of India, for the investiture of the prince with that Order. It was like Ashby de la Zouch, in *Ivanhoe*. There, on the green expanse of the Calcutta *Maidan* (park) were the pavilions of the knights, with their banners planted in front and watched by their esquires. And then, at the investiture, these knights, the great princes of India, sat around in their robes and collars, while His Royal Highness knelt before the Grand Master on the Dais, and his squire, the paladin Neville Chamberlain, waved the prince's banner over the bowed royal head, and the Viceroy bestowed the accolade.

I went off for a while to the frontier, and then I returned to Kashmir in March 1870, with Sir Douglas Forsyth, the special envoy deputed for the ratification of the treaty which I had negotiated. We held high state and ceremonial there, but I had again to return to the frontier to meet my parties, so I hurried from

Jammu without awaiting the end. I did, however, attend the great State shoot, but I had not the heart to fire at the carefully preserved beasts which walked up to my gun so confidently. Not so, however, a foreign nobleman of our party, who did much execution. He, too, was in a hurry, so we excused ourselves that night and started. Such a gallop we had! I carried a torch, but presently there was a crash and a doleful cry behind; the orderly with the flask of oil had come to grief. The road was execrable, and pace was the only chance; so we did not stop to inquire. I threw away the torch, and we floundered on through the dark. The baron, "full of strange oaths," stuck to my girths manfully, and we did the trip without a fall and in very good time, caught the mail we were riding for, and jolted into Lahore by noon next day.

By direction of Lord Mayo, I had kept up a correspondence on Afghan matters with the Amir's prime minister. This closed in October 1870, when the Amir insisted on breaking with his son Yakub, to whom he owed his throne, and making a youthful son of a favourite wife the heir of Afghanistan. Yakub of course rebelled, but was overcome and imprisoned. On this and other matters I continued to furnish papers up to the assassination of Lord Mayo by an Afghan convict in the Andaman Islands. I then completed and closed the records of my employment and returned to ordinary work. In June 1872, I received "the thanks of the Governor-General in Council." Years later I had the pleasure of seeing myself referred to,

in an extract of Lord Mayo's official correspondence, as "steady and wise and entirely in our confidence." In the winter of 1870, a subordinate sent to say that a certain village was defying him to collect arrears of land revenue. I rode out that night, and at dawn I was attaching and selling the cattle as they issued from the village to the pastures. Before many had been sold, the money was put down. At breakfast I heard guns, and I learned that the sister village (of same stock and caste), just across the border of a native state, was equally recusant, and that the raja was getting in his arrears by bombardment! The Indian peasant is a spendthrift. I remember a man mortgaging his entire holding in order to beat the record in some domestic ceremony, and, as his neighbours sneered, the whole thing was mismanaged and the money wasted! However, he achieved his object—notoriety—and ruined himself and his posterity. Such being the case of Indian peasants, it will be understood that the money paid up to me was advanced by the village banker. Here in India, as everywhere, these are Shylocks.

There were four brothers I knew, against whom their creditor got an execution. After the order, they met him outside the court, and said "You have won, but forbear and do not dishonour us." He answered that they had led him a pretty dance through all the courts, and now he would have his pound of flesh; the execution gave him power to sell the very beds from under them and their children. So they all went back

to their village. At dawn they met him again near the village pond. The eldest fell at his feet, an inconceivable thing on the part of a proud *Jat* landholder towards a Bania :—"Will you forbear?" "No." The words were hardly out of his mouth when the youngest brother was on his back. There, in the midst of the women coming and going for water, and the men going forth to their fields, the usurer was slain. All approved, all went their ways with averted faces.

How do I know all this? I was out there by evening. I extracted a reward of £100 from the murdered man's son, for approvers. He wept, he protested, "If I let it go I shall get in my father's debts; they will pay up; but if I give trouble I'm lost." But I extorted it from the trembling wretch—and then not one man would take it! With me privately there was no reserve; the whole story was told, indeed dramatically acted. But give evidence! No. In the eyes of the country-side, justice had been done, and after three vain days I rode empty away.

We took that Christmas in the Doon (Himalaya foot-hills and forest), and we had a party of young native nobles with us. Many is the happy day I have spent at different times, with my tracker and a bag of water, after deer (the *axis* or spotted deer, carrying noble heads, the little four-horned deer, and others) in the valleys, or the great *Sambhar* (elk) and the *chamois* (a small woolly kind) on the ridges. Occasionally we would smell a tiger, but to see the

wary cat in such forest is beyond the cleverest. This time my young friends were too noisy for any real sport; they bagged pigs and peacocks and one of their own servants (he was not greatly damaged), and then they insisted on sitting up for a tiger. It was absurd, of course, but I humoured them, and put two of the more timid up a tree. Hardly had night fallen, when perhaps strict quiet might have given us a chance, when one began to chatter. "Silence, what's the matter?" "The ants!" The red wood-ants (most venomous) had found him out on his branch, and say what I would, down he came, but with a crash, for tree-scrambling in the dark is not easy; and then the lament was for his bones! So there was an end of everything for that night.

I have said hard things of elephants, but once in the Doon I owed a happy escape to an elephant's docility. I was returning in the dark, seated on a pad, when one of the malicious thorns, formidable as the African "wait-a-bit" thorn, bent down and hooked me in the nostril. As I went over backwards, I just gasped out "*Dhutt*" (back), and the elephant stopped dead, while I clutched the pad rope and saved myself from a probable broken back or neck. I had been sitting over a kill. The tiger had only just killed the cow, slunk away, and I naturally expected him back. But come he would not; in spite of all my forest craft he found me out. Baker, in *Wild Beasts and their Ways*, says that one should sit high up to avoid giving scent; but how can one see looking down, against the dark

ground? The only chance I know of is to cuddle up to the carcass (which ought to cover your scent, and then you can see against the sky. However, I never succeeded. The cunning of tigers is diabolical.

## CHAPTER XXIV

### A VARIETY OF TASKS

From Regulars to Police—Opium and Malaria—A Horse in a Quicksand—Educating a Minor—A Million and a Half—A Spendthrift—Ruin

THE Bahawalpur state extends for some 300 miles along the Indus and its confluents. Its river-side jungles had given me fine sport in my frontier days, and I hoped for the same when I took charge of the state; but I soon found that I had too much work. Bahawalpur was an ancient ally of Britain; I have written before of its demoralised troops at Edwardes's battle of Kineyri, in 1849. At any rate, they made some show against the Sikhs there until, first, Edwardes arrived with the Dera Pathans, and then Van Cortlandt brought the regulars and guns. But when I handled the Bahawalpur troops, in 1871, they were such a comical lot that I turned them into police, and had their funny old guns worked up into brass fittings for the state steam-yacht.

Before going to Bahawalpur, I had declined the Foreign Office. We could not afford the life in Simla and Calcutta; moreover, I perhaps thought it "better to reign in hell than serve in heaven." Under-secretaries in the Foreign Office are not by any means in

heaven, but certainly Bahawalpur was not unlike the other place. The state was a very hard job, and work in that malarious climate was killing. The very water was bad ; by doctor's orders we all took salts of sorrel with our meals, as precaution against scurvy ! Handling native states is generally hard work, because in most of them it is a case of mere eye-service ; the word is largely taken for the deed by Orientals, but Bahawalpur surpassed all my experience, when a man had replied to an order "*Awal, Sain, Hazir,*" which means instant compliance, he dismissed the matter from his mind. For instance, in two successive years a local officer was ordered to protect a town by an embankment. On the first occasion that the annual overflow of the Indus was excessive, and flooded the town, the officer gave the above usual reply (literally "First and foremost, sir, I am ready"), and then thought no more of the order, supposing that the accident would not happen again in his time. But the set of the river was that way and again the town was flooded. The officer then promised that the neglect should not recur ; when it did so, the excuse was : " You only told me twice."

In Bahawalpur, as in Assam, opium was largely used, and, like most Englishmen, I then confounded symptoms with counteractive, the phenomenal indifference and apathy which accompany malarial poisoning with the opium which mitigates it. However, the result was the same, whether attributed to the malaria or its remedy, namely, incessant toil in seeing



to everything oneself. I remember a breach at the head of an important canal. The local officer vowed it could not be closed. I rode out and found him smiling and pleasant—on the wrong bank of the canal; during the whole time he had never crossed to the breach! Now Indians will do anything if only one sets example. So I swam across, directing that he should follow; you should have seen him bobbing and gasping between two strong swimmers! The lesson was sufficient, and once on the spot he soon had the breach closed. Canals are the life-blood of Bahawalpur; on this one depended some 80,000 acres. It had splayed to nearly 100 yards wide at the mouth, and was running furiously, but the officer's duty was to get across somehow. "Opium-eating" was my verdict at the time, but it was really the apathy of malaria.

Getting across an irrigated country is stiff work. The spoil-banks of the irrigation cuts look dry (spoil is excavated earth) but are treacherous; it is a case of rotten take-off and rotten landing, and sometimes an inverted horse. The larger channels you slip into and scramble out of; I was nearly spitted once by an orderly charging up a precipitous bank after me with his lance at the "carry"; this was in early days when the State officials insisted on orderlies following me. Once before, with my regiment, I had a similar escape; a horse bolted out of the ranks, and the man put his sword-hand to the rein; his point caught my pouch, which saved me. An officer in front of wild riders

takes chances. I remember once in a pursuit ; it was a narrow ledge, and the impatient horse behind me knocked my nag's quarters off ; we hung for a while, and then turned over into the stream below. Somehow the horse got cast, and her head was on my chest ; my elbows kept us above water (luckily very shallow) till help arrived. It was a good drop, on to stones, but not even my saddle was injured. I nearly lost that nag later, again in a pursuit ; we were plunging across quicksand and a horse in front, checking on the far bank, made me stick fast. I had to go on, and fancy my surprise in finding her afterwards in camp. The Rifle Brigade, coming along behind, got her out somehow when only her head remained. Quicksand appals elephants, horses—even man ; you cannot throw yourself flat, for there is generally water. There is an authenticated story of an elephant lost in the quicksand of a river feeder, and emerging hours later in the river itself. The point of his trunk had remained above to breathe by till the sliding sand slowly discharged him into the river.

One of my first jobs as political agent in Bahawalpur was to get hold of the little chief for education. He was forty miles off, where the ladies lived, and they would not surrender him. So the assistant political agent, before mentioned as a Piffer of renown in the Mutiny and Ambeyla campaigns, took out a troop of the escort and brought the boy away. He took kindly to school, with some boy cousins, under an English tutor. Only the lady mother and her people lived at

Dera in the desert, forty miles from Bahawalpur ; the mass of the ladies were in a fort far deeper in the wilderness. The house of Bahawalpur considers itself too great to give its daughters in marriage, and its widows, lawful or unlawful, cannot remarry nor return to their families. So in this desert fort at that time were between six and seven hundred unhappy women confined, of all ages, crones and children. Under their feet was  $1\frac{1}{2}$  million pounds sterling of bullion in the vaults, but for them the merest pittances ! Besides the bullion were heaps of jewels and ornaments, barbaric but most valuable ; gold, silver, precious stones, all accumulated by generations of chiefs, only to be dissipated later by this one. In 1879 I left the boy, of whom I speak, as a most promising youth of eighteen years ; but fearing his character, I had asked Government's permission to take possession of the treasure and make a railway. It would have been well, for in a few years he squandered the whole, besides his very large yearly revenue ; and in 1899, I had to pay off his debts from the estate—not from the State, for I refused to burden the tax-payers. For this immense expenditure I found really nothing to show.

I had great hopes of that chief. Kindly he was, and generous, with nice instincts—plucky, moreover, and a fine rider and shot. He was idle, certainly, and indifferent to the State business, which I tried to teach him, but I hoped that responsibility might cure that. Drink was his ruin, and that, I believe, from lack of

congenial society when the English all left. I went three times to help him, at his earnest request, in the course of the next twenty years. He wept, he vowed amendment, he would attend to business and follow the rules I laid down. I took infinite pains to straighten matters up and start him afresh; but to no purpose. It was every one's interest to lead him astray; and while he drank and amused himself, they could rob. But for one great man, the revenue minister, who, as Wazir, was afterwards my right-hand in 1899-1903, the State would have gone utterly to pieces, and Government must have interfered.

## CHAPTER XXV

### WATERWAY AND RAILWAY

*Corvée* and *Kúrbásh*—Irrigation—Diving in the Indus—Salving Rails—"Sowar" and "Soor"—Porcupine-hunting—Desk-work and Leisure

IN the Southern Punjab rainfall is insufficient, and the overflow of the rivers has always been utilised. Some seventy years ago, Sawan Mal, before mentioned as Governor of the Southern Punjab under Ranjit Singh, reduced irrigation to a system which, like that of Egypt, was all *corvée* and *kúrbásh*. This forced labour and whip was still the method when I went to Bahawalpur in March 1871. Oriental rulers, whether in Egypt or in India, care little about the individual; there is the work to be done and every one is hauled out to do it, whether concerned or not, unless he can buy himself off. And the water has to be utilised, or where would the revenue be, so every one must be driven to sow and plough. These evils I corrected in Bahawalpur. The Royal Commission on Irrigation, before quoted, was only so far correctly informed in calling me the father of irrigation in Bahawalpur, as well as in Ferozepore, in that I evolved a system in Bahawalpur which rendered irrigation possible without that oppression and injustice which could not

have endured ; in Ferozepore, however, irrigation was unknown till I began it there in 1874. The system which I introduced in both places is contained in my *Manual of Canal Construction and Management*, published by the Punjab Government in 1884. In Ferozepore my canals were not State works, but co-operative, and could not have been made otherwise than on a system which contented the people.

Similarly as regards cultivation. Native land revenue systems either actually divide the crop, or appraise it, and take the State share by estimate, or else they roughly measure the fields and levy cash rates every harvest on each kind of produce. In any case, the State requires the utmost cultivation possible, whereas if the share of the State in kind, or the money rates, are excessive, or the method of collection is oppressive, the people desire to cultivate only enough for bare maintenance. Hence the Egyptian *Kúrbásh* or the Indian Danda (stick). In 1871 I tried reducing the crop-rates, and exhausted myself in supervising the methods of collection. But the task was too much for me and those who were disposed loyally to help me ; so in 1877 I introduced "contract" on the British system. This means survey of the lands, record of the rights therein, careful estimate of yields and prices, and then the assessment of the State claim in cash at such amounts in each village as the people will accept on contract for periods of years. The effort is prodigious, but it means comfort and security of profits to the people during those

periods of ten to twenty years ; and consequent extension of cultivation, as their waste land is not assessed, or only at a nominal rate. Thus when I started a new settlement in 1899, I found the area for assessment very highly increased since my settlement of 1877.

In those years, 1877-79, I had also to prepare for handing over the State to the young chief, whose majority was in November 1879, so I framed a constitution, which staggered on afterwards through twenty years of mismanagement. It is not possible for any constitution-maker to provide, in the words of Longfellow, " a vessel, which shall laugh at all disaster and with wind and whirlwind wrestle " ; but mine stood a good deal of weather, and I left it, in May 1903, patched up for another bout.

In 1871-72 a railway was being surveyed from Multan to Karachi. Through 150 miles of its course in the Bahawalpur state it needed much waterway ; but that means expense, and the Government engineers resisted my demands. I had an amusing ride over that length with our State engineer ; desperate were the struggles between him and the railwaymen, at short intervals, I laughing and pacifying ; but they took their own way generally, with the result that their embankment was washed away in the first year of good flood. In my wanderings I found one of their youngsters in a tent, in July, measuring water discharges. He would certainly have died, so I built thatched shelters for him and billed the railway. They

paid me without a murmur—and cut it out of the boy's salary! Fine fellows those young engineers were! In 1878 two of them were shipping engines in lighters. One got away from them and jumped the boat. Did they tear their hair and ask help? Not a word did they say, but they ran down to Karachi and borrowed a diving suit from the harbour works. Neither had ever dived, but they went into the raging summer Indus, got tackle round their engine (already deep in sand), and raised it. The engines were duly embarked and removed, with so little delay that nothing was known of the matter "officially."

The staff of a new railway are sometimes peculiar. A ballast train of this line was met by a "materials" train. "Back out," said the latter. Not a bit of it; so the "materials" driver jumped off to report. Instead, however, he hid in the jungle, and presently returned hoping to catch his opponent napping; his stoker having meanwhile kept up steam. But the other fellow had done the same and the locked engines strained and butted without advantage to either. Once a drunken driver could not be dislodged from his footplate, but started off and careered cheerfully till sober. Another, pistol in hand, cleared the railway settlement, and all had to take refuge in the jungle till he cooled.

I knew a wonderful man, ex-trooper of a British regiment, who made a large fortune by salving rails. When the Punjab lines were under construction, and rails came up from Karachi by boat, these were fre-



quently lost. He bought the lost cargoes cheap and retrieved them by exertions as wonderful as his profits. On those profits he built himself at Ferozepore a real palace, and lived royally. But a European state did something which ruined my friend, who held its bonds. He strove manfully, up to past eighty years of age, to retrieve himself; and he died recently in indigence in a native bazaar.

In my earlier days it was not all work and no play with an executive officer; but to enjoy yourself you needed to know the language. Many neglect this, and India abounds in funny stories. The Foreign Secretary to Government was rendering to a great chief some remarks of Lord Canning after the mutiny. "There have been in your Highness's life," said the Viceroy, "certain passages, &c., &c." "Passages" was rendered *pagdandi* (alleys) by the foreign secretary! A distinguished cavalry general once addressed a native cavalry regiment thus:—"Pigs! I am a pig, and you are pigs." There is some similarity of sound between *Sowar* (cavalry man) and *soor* (pig). I once heard the governor of a province say, in all innocence, such things to a chief under my political charge that the chief and I did not know which way to look.

Of course yokels in India, as elsewhere, talk dialects, but these differ so much from district to district that British officers, who shift frequently, soon lose them. Indeed, one loses one's own dialect. Landing at Liverpool in 1873, after 16½ years' exile, I could not understand the street boys, though myself a northerner.

But without the Indian dialects I should never have had the fun which I have enjoyed. Take, for instance, porcupine-hunting with the hardy men of the Salt Range. "It is their delight of a shiny night" to bolt the porcupines from their fields with dogs. The dogs cannot close, of course, but they keep you informed, and, with good condition, the runs in the moonlight over boulders and ravines are rare fun. So is fox-and hare-coursing on foot with the mongrel greyhounds of those sportsmen. Hares are confiding creatures, often caught with the *Kúch na ákh* (never mind). A man walks round the form, looking away, and calling out "never mind." Accordingly, if you do not meet its eye, the hare does not mind, and, circling nearer and nearer, the man presently throws himself on the top of it. Another device (I should be ashamed to mention it were not hares so destructive) is to stick bits of reed along the edge of a field. "Ah," says the hare, "a trap," and hops on, and so from one to the other, far too clever to be caught. Presently, they come to an end. You, seated behind your bush, see him stroke his face and reflect. "Quite sure there are no more?" Then a sharp clap of the hands and a startled jump forwards into the open space—and into the net beyond!

It is a great administrative mistake to tie down district officers to their desks, as is the custom now. In pursuit of game, in sharing the people's sports, you get to know and like them, and this needs leisure: not idleness, for you are learning and are serving

Government the whole time, but leisure for what is really more important than most of the paper work. For relations with the gentry, too, you need leisure. Why should they visit you if you have to deny yourself, or if, when admitted, you show your visitor that you have no time to spare? This is not the district officer's fault. His report has to be finished, or his "judgment" written, or the statistics gone into which he has been called upon to produce; it is simply impossible for him to turn round for an hour's chat, though much may be lost by not doing so. "Set aside a fixed portion of the day for visitors," says the Government. Yes, but if that two hours has to be taken out of needed rest and recreation, stolen from the wife and children, made good somehow in order to escape censure for arrears—who will set it aside! As it is, were it not for Sundays and native holidays, in which to bring up work, the district officer would sink hopelessly into arrears.

## CHAPTER XXVI

### OFFICIALDOM AND THE BRITISH IDEA

A Shoot for the Viceroy—Alligator and Tiger—Persuasion by Hanging—Hogs and Men—Antelope—*Tamkin* and *Shokat*—The Fate of the Governors—A Change

IN 1872 a Viceroy came our way. We met him in Multan and took him thence for a shoot on his way to Sind ; it was a big job, for the shoot was some 200 miles by land from Multan, so I chartered two steamers in addition to that belonging to the State. Of course, river boats can only steam by day, and, even so, may run on to shoals ; when that happened, the captains, they say, used to throw the pilots overboard ; I myself have only seen the pilot jump overboard when the captain went for him. However, His Excellency was brought without such accident to the half-way camp, and, equally important, so was the catering firm that we had engaged. That night, after the State dinner, I started ; it was only fifty or sixty miles' ride by land to the next camp (though twice that by river), so I got the whole day there for final arrangements before the party arrived. These two camps, half-way and at the shoot, had needed much labour and arrangement during the worst of the malarial season, when the floods were falling. Every one was more or less ill,

but I vowed that no one should turn up his toes till we Englishmen did, and they stuck to us like heroes. I was very bad myself, but not till we had seen the last of the great man did I give the word, and then all went on their backs. We got one tiger right in front of the Viceroy, but unfortunately, it had heard him talking to his private secretary, and nothing would induce it to go up ; finally it broke back, but after the Viceroy left we squared accounts with that disrespectful beast. I do not remember that His Excellency got anything at all, not even a bout of fever, like all his hosts.

I mentioned before that crocodiles, and even *Gavials* (the long-nosed alligator), will attack any creature. When swimming, of course, the largest beast is an easy prey, but not so always when on the bank, drinking ; there was a famous cow at Dufilé, on the upper Nile, which dragged a crocodile on to land, where it was clubbed. Generally, however, the rush and sudden pull gets the animal into the water, and there the crocodile is master. Here is an account, by a Madras sportsman, of a struggle in shallow water :—“ A monstrous alligator, making a rush at the tiger, seized him in its jaws. Then commenced the tug-of-war. The monsters grappled each other, causing the water to fly about as though worked by the paddle of a steamer. Down they both went, again they rose. Again they sank, then again they rose ; but the tiger was now evidently half-drowned and greatly weakened by loss of blood ; he had no chance, for his claws

seemed to make no impression on the mailed carcase of the alligator. The tiger was at length quite powerless, and the alligator partially raised himself out of the water to take his dying enemy down, but in so doing laid his side well open to a shot from my rifle." So the writer bagged both.

Cowardly, slinking, cruel, one cannot regret tigers sometimes finding their master in the water. Their stealthiness is wonderful. I have watched one slipping like a shadow, without a sound, and making himself incredibly small; it is no wonder that they escape the sportsman, and surprise the wariest game. When concealment fails, they break like a flash, stretched out along the ground, ears back, tail up, but I have seen them rolled over like rabbits by artists. My belief is that, unless wounded or very startled, a tiger will not attack; but my Biluch friends thought differently. I well remember once, when the scent was hot, Baroo's hands uplifted in prayer before our final stealthy advance. He had shot many tigers, but that was over "kills"; whereas we were tracking to the lair. However, the tiger was too clever for us then, as always.

Where British ideas have not extended, native administration is somewhat rough and ready. For instance, in an old book on Sind under its Amirs, I find their maxim quoted: "*Sindi sāt*—with a Sindi, *Pahlé lát*—kick him first, *Pichhé bát*—order him afterwards." The writer of that work came across "some public contractors who professed inability to pay the

full amount of the revenue in consequence of a large portion of the grain having been destroyed by wild hogs." Persuasion was necessary, so he saw "a respectable looking Hindu suspended by one leg with the head downwards." I have had to interfere with similar methods, both of extracting revenue and of investigating crime. I once gave a police deputy inspector three years for treating a prisoner's wife in such a way that the man broke loose, fettered as he was, and jumped into a well. The policeman appealed, and the sentence was enhanced to seven years. I would have given him that myself, but that I made allowance for native ideas and methods. He only acted as the people expected and desired, but he went too far and they turned against him. A native gentleman recently protested to me against our softness. "How is crime to be detected," he said, "unless we allow the village headmen and the police to deal with it after the manner of the country? Who will confess, who will indicate the hidden booty, without pressure? Of course, this pressure must be used with judgment;" and so forth. *Est modus in rebus*. Perhaps he was right, India cannot be administered on British principles.

To explain the hogs' damage, I quote again: "Mir Ali Murad has been heard to say that he valued the life of a hog more than that of a man." I saw him at the Imperial Assemblage (the proclamation of the Queen as Empress of India, on 1st January 1877), a fine specimen of the old frontier chief, devoted to

sport. Another quotation about him will serve equally to explain the course of affairs in Bahawalpur during my twenty years' absence after 1879. "Day after day, month after month, does the Mir not only waste his own time and incur enormous expense in the gratification of his absorbing passion for sport, but equally wastes the time and means of his unwilling subjects, who are compelled to leave their agricultural pursuits, often when their labours are most needed on their lands, without the smallest remuneration. They were needed to beat for game. Not only this, but the unhappy cultivators are even prohibited from scaring away wild hogs when they commit night ravages in their fields. And, moreover, the followers of the Mir's camp, generally some hundred persons, quarter themselves on the villagers without paying for anything." No wonder the Bahawalpuris were glad to see me back again in 1899. I had retired from the Punjab Commission, after thirty-three years' service, in 1894, but was re-employed, in 1899, to reorganise Bahawalpur.

My Nawab, however, was never quite so keen on sport to his own loss as was one of the Sind Mirs, who, says the above writer, "sacrificed revenue to the amount of between three and four lakhs of rupees annually" (in those days £30,000 to £40,000) "by depopulating a most fertile tract of country" as a game preserve; nor was my Nawab quite such a miracle with rifle and gun as Mir Ali Murad. The sporting methods of both were the same, for instance,



as regards antelope :—“ An inclosure having been hedged in, to the extent of five or six miles, in the form of a triangle, . . . the villagers are assembled and the antelope driven in flocks towards an opening at the small end of the inclosure where the Mir is stationed . . . he killed above 1200 antelopes.” Or else at night “ His Highness has a pool of water made near where the hog and deer abound . . . they soon find it out ” (in dry weather), and near it there is an erection “ sufficiently raised to be out of danger and large enough to contain a cot.” There the Mir “ after his evening meal . . . composing himself to his slumbers has a string fastened to his toe, which when game appears is pulled by a *Shikari* (hunter) outside.”

As may be supposed, the Bahawalpur Nawab did not interest himself in the canals on which all cultivation depends, or in the revenue administration. But, as before said, I had introduced a system of canal management, and had made a revenue settlement, and had established a simple constitution ; and these staggered along during the twenty years of my absence. Such chiefs are by no means unpopular. The writer above quoted says : “ Mir Ali Murad is a humane and kind-hearted man,” to whom his people “ appear much attached ; it is a mistake to judge of a native prince ” by our standards. All this applies equally to my first Nawab of Bahawalpur (his successor, who also passed through my hands and was a youth of

great promise, has also since deceased), who was in many respects a very fine fellow and liked by his people. But I have had only disappointment in chief after chief (eight of them) whose states have been under my control. I almost despair of the problem of training Indian chiefs on English methods.

The change in them during the last fifty years is more remarkable than it is acceptable to old men like myself, whether British or Indian. We are somewhat shocked to see the modern Indian noble emulating the British subaltern. Contrast the stately raja in his flowing robes, as described in old days by Sir Ali Baba, with his modern representative, short-coated, breeched and booted, flying after a ball; or in flannels at the wicket. A great ruling chief in swallow-tails, as I have seen squalling at a piano, is enough to make his grandsire turn in his grave.

*Tamkin* (deportment) used to be as important to Indians as to Mr. Turveydrop, but that and *Shokat* (pomp and state) are now generally neglected. In old days British magnates copied Indians in this regard. Sir Herbert Maddock, when governor in the 'forties, would not take his morning stroll without a caparisoned elephant behind him. I have since seen viceroys walking unattended on the Simla Mall; but, according to ideas which still prevail in India, the governor was right. However, such ideas of keeping up dignity

have now to be dropped, if for no other reason, because officials can no longer afford them. Still the dignity should not be altogether dropped; you may walk, but the horse must be there. A certain amount of style can never, I believe, be dispensed with in India; the people will always expect it. The French pay their chief officials separately for this—so much for his labour, so much for his pomp. How thankful should we be for a similar arrangement; then we should not see, as I have, ex-governors economising sadly in French towns.

The change in Indians is not confined to chiefs, but has gone all through the classes affected by contact with the British; and for the better in some respects. For instance, that important district official the *Tahsildar* is no longer as I knew him before the mutiny, a bundle of shawls in a bullock carriage, but a smart man with a good seat on a wiry nag. It is no longer *infra dig.* to put foot to the ground, and even a native State dignitary will walk miles if needful by your side. Similarly the police are greatly improved; they are not yet, perhaps, immaculate, nor are they skilled detectives, but certainly they are no longer the inefficient protectors and venal oppressors of yore. Their position is very difficult, as described by Sir Edmund Cox (himself once of the force), “handicapped by the law on one side and the passive resistance of all concerned on the other, and censured by Government if results were

not successful ;” but on the whole they do very well. In short, there is growing up, under British example, throughout the Indian services a better spirit—some sense of duty, some reprobation of dishonesty.

## CHAPTER XXVII

### SOME QUESTIONS OF EXPENSE

Salaries and Expenses—The Cost of Living—Agricultural Prices  
—Gold and the Soil—Safety in Burial—The Money-lender—  
Gambling in Law—A Wounded Tiger

IN my day it needed time and attention to bring native princes and their states into line with modern requirements. In Europe a ruler dismisses his prime minister if displeased; in a state which I knew the prime minister's house was bombarded for three days till he sallied forth with his retainers and died sword in hand. Methods of courtship, too, were peculiar. Two woodcutters quarrelled; one of them had a very handsome wife. His enemy straightway reported this fact to the chief, whereon the husband fled for his life! The latter was, when I knew of him, in receipt of a small pension, in his exile, from his exalted spouse. A young chief under training manifested a sudden interest in the jail, to visit which was one of the duties assigned to him. His diligence in this particular respect became quite gratifying, as reported by the native governor of the jail. Presently the chief's mother paid commutation (according to the State law) for the balance of the term of a convict, a woman under sentence for burglary with violence. The chief added

her to his wives and the jail governor reaped reward when the chief got powers.

The enormous increase in the value of Indian produce is good for the agriculturists, but is hardly a change for the better in the opinion of those with small incomes. The case of Indian military officers was discussed in a recent leading article of the *Pioneer*. Few people realise that the present pay is practically that fixed by the East India Company; now compare the expenses :—

	1861.	1911.
	Rs.	Rs.
Bearer (a valet indispensable for uniform and who does also housemaid's work) .	9	18
Table attendant (necessary at mess and in camp) . . . . .	7	16
Water carrier (to supply house and stables)	5	8
Sweeper (for sanitary work) . . . . .	5	8
Washerman . . . . .	6	12
Grooms (each) . . . . .	5	8
Horse-feed in pounds per rupee—		
Grain . . . . .	80	38
Bran . . . . .	80	34
Barley . . . . .	100	36
Meat, per seer of two pounds . . . . .	3d.	7d.
Chickens . . . . .	4½d.	1s. 4d.
Eggs, per dozen . . . . .	3d.	8d.
Horse for charger . . . . .	£45	£80
Pony . . . . .	£15	£45
Trained polo pony . . . . .		£80 to £300

Fifty years ago the cost of living was half that of the present day and the cost of ordinary amusements was about one-fifth. The movements of regiments were

rarer and shorter, and manœuvres were hardly known. Both are now frequent and the moves are long—to new stations or to manœuvres.

Take the case of any unit moving from Quetta to Meerut, or Rawalpindi to Lucknow, marches of two and a half to three and a half months ;—sending the heavy mess property by rail, the ordinary marching expenses, the damages of the move, will cost a mess anything up to £100. In the following year come manœuvres, a month's march distant, with similar expenses, somewhat less.

There are many officers in India who in the last, say, eight years, have never been more than two years in one place, generally only six months. It is common to hear of unhappy couples who have had twelve moves in six years, apart from the yearly necessity of the family going to the hills. Now, if they belong to native cavalry, a move of 700 miles (a not uncommon journey) may well cost £30 above the Government allowance ; some baggage and some furniture *must* be taken, besides the horses and a vehicle.

No doubt, moves and manœuvres mean efficiency. To gain that efficiency the officers are harder worked, and are proud to be so, but it is hard for them to pay for it in cash out of the more hardly earned pay. And all the above applies, in their degree, to the native ranks also.

For the landowners and agriculturists it is all the other way. In 1858, the deputy collector of customs in Sind quoted the price of wheat in the Punjab “ at

two maunds of 80 lbs. each per rupee"; to-day very inferior grass is selling at two rupees a maund, or four times the price fetched by wheat fifty years ago! I remember, in a good year, a farmer whose idea of ostentation was to nail rupees all over his *rath* (bullock carriage), so that no wood should be seen! I have entered a peasant's courtyard over, as I was assured, ten thousand rupees' worth of grain buried under his gateway awaiting rise of prices; and yet that man would never save a penny. A landholder of my acquaintance was, I was told, overheard cursing the bags of money in his hoard because he could not find room for them. His sons, I know, are now in poverty. And, when not dissipated, wealth is unproductive: "Every year we import," wrote a native Indian judge of a high court, "gold and silver twelve crores' worth" (eight millions sterling), "three crores of gold and nine crores of silver. The whole of the gold disappears and is absorbed by the soil, and of the silver seven crores are sent by us to the mint" (but mostly buried after coinage) "and the rest is absorbed like the gold. Since 1834 this absorbing process has secured the virtual destruction of nearly 450 crores of wealth" (300 millions sterling). This was written in 1890. Mr. S. M. Mitra gives the figures for 1907, viz., 533 millions sterling. "If that huge sum were taken out of the ground," says Mr. Mitra, and productively employed, there would be none of the so-called "famines"—really unemployment caused by failures of rain which stop agricultural work.



To bury is the people's idea of securing their money. In the manœuvres of 1885 the two armies fought over the country between Delhi and Ambala, the battle-field on which India has often been lost and won. The people thought it was real war again, and promptly buried their goods! Capital buried and capital wasted in follies, are not the only causes retarding the prosperity of the agriculturists. There are millions of fertile acres lying waste, but the people will not move, and the custom of equal inheritance causes subdivision of holdings down to below subsistence point. This, and extravagance, and litigation, lead to the money-lender. A case was once appealed to me when on tour, in which a native judge had rejected a money-lender's claim. In strict law perhaps the claim was good, but law is not always justice. In dismissing the appeal, I said to the claimant: "Be thankful, I have saved your life"; and the sinister hum which went round the assemblage convinced Shylock that I was right.

The power of these money-lenders is tremendous, till it is stretched to the point that brings their murder. There is a story which I told to the High Court in 1884, when thankfully ending my time as judge. It was of a great cattle fair, ending in sports for which the stewards could not clear the course. "I'll help you," said a money-lender, and he pulled out account book and ink horn. "Whoever crosses that line," he cried, "will go into my book"; and all shrank away. You can draw the grim inference. It was a sad day for the Indian people that brought among them the

legal systems of Europe. Yet they delight in it; litigation is their recreation. "At the bottom of every case of ruin," said a large landholder to me once, "if you inquire far enough, you will find a lawsuit or a marriage." M. Chailley's great work, *L'Inde Britannique*, must convince all readers that the introduction of an advanced legal system into India has been a misfortune. Take the following case, quoted in a recent issue of the *Indian Law Reports*:—A Bengal policeman, on B.'s complaint, arrested A. in the act of carrying off in a cart banana plants from B.'s garden. A. was duly convicted, but the High Court quashed the conviction, holding the arrest to have been illegal. Says the judgment: "It is clear that the theft" (*i.e.* the digging up of the plants) "had been completed before he (the policeman) came up; therefore the policeman had no right to arrest A.!" Similar refinements render civil cases a gamble in which, as above said, the people delight, to their ruin.

I had little time for sport in Bahawalpur during any of my tenures of that state. On camel-back in dry country, on horseback over irrigated lands, in the state steamer to reach canal mouths hardly otherwise accessible, I was always on the move. The steamer was the worst. When under weigh a fan worked by the shaft gave some comfort in the saloon, but when stuck on a shoal, or tied up to the bank, I have been nearer apoplexy than ever on shore. But give me desert land and a flying camel and I thrive. They *can* fly, keeping a horse at a hand gallop; but they cannot jump. I

had my wife once in front of me, and as a joke I put our mount at a fence. She gave herself up for lost, but at the hedge the camel stopped short and put yards of fore-leg over it, followed by the other three legs in succession, rocking us like a surf-boat.

My wife never went out again after the death of two beaters, really from their own rashness, but we accounted for six tigers in my first winter at Bahawalpur. One of these might have had me, could it have hardened its heart, for I could not see it as it was growling in a bush in front of my muzzle till my arms ached. It was an impromptu beat, and only three trees were available, so a native gentleman and myself were afoot on the flank. I had particularly insisted on no firing till the tiger showed in the little glade in front of the trees, but unfortunately an excited gun in the furthest tree was able to see the beast slinking about the edge of the jungle. His shot sent the tiger roaring down into the thicket opposite me. Never before have I heard of a wounded tiger not attacking, but he delayed, and my native friend and I drew together with rifles levelled and every muscle tense, for there was only some five yards' width to stop him in. Presently the elephants and beaters approached and I shouted to them. As they closed in to me the tiger charged, but back! He killed a beater close under an elephant, sprang on the elephant clawing it, and the driver's leg, badly, and got through.

Then we mounted to look for it. As a rash hunter peered into a clump the tiger sprang; he ducked but

was wounded with the back kick, and it got into another clump. Thence it again charged and climbed the quarters of the young Nawab's elephant, but the assistant political agent, in the back seat, knocked it off with a bullet which only grazed its skull. Finally my elephant came upon it in another clump and kicked it to death. It was no doubt dying already of the original wound—the only one. How it survived so fearful a wound as that was, and fought so long, is a marvel; it shows the vitality of tigers and the need of caution. One dead man, two men wounded, and two damaged elephants, were the result of neglect of my orders, for, had the tiger been allowed to come out in the glade, it must have fallen to the six guns in the trees.

## CHAPTER XXVIII

### BAHAWALPUR

A Thief caught with Wasps—The “Snub-nosed Doctor”—A Toothless Man-Eater—Walking side by side with a Tiger—The Boy Chief—Native and British Systems

It is evil to be old and ugly and defenceless in India in these days, as it was in England 300 years ago. The strong British hand has repressed the more sickening cruelties of superstition; still, a witch has hard measure even now. There is cattle-sickness round here at present, and they are looking for the offenders. They beat an old man recently in an adjacent state till he promised that he would leave the village and the cow should get well—which it did on his departure. Another poor dotard passed a byre and a cow then being milked ran dry. “Ah,” said a bystander, “he did that to me some days ago.” They haled him before the raja, who fined him. Conjurers are called in to detect witches and thieves, and generally fix on somebody, but the most successful thief-catching I have read of was by a layman’s wit. Sugar used to disappear out of the jar, so the owner, “having caught a dozen or so of wasps, clipped off their wings and dropped them into the jar.” Presently he sent the suspected servant into the store-room for something,

and then "was heard a fearful yell . . . with a handful of sugar he had grasped some half-dozen wasps!"

The funniest superstition is that of the *Núkta-Wala Sahib*, really *Nák Katwa*, snub-nosed, or cut-nosed, British doctor, who lies in wait after dark to catch natives. These are hung by the heels over a slow fire and their brains are distilled as an elixir. Of the purpose of the elixir there are various accounts, the commonest being that it is used to give strength to the British soldiers. All will pretend to laugh at the story, but when the rumour is about, from time to time, that the *Núkta-Wala* has been seen in some cantonment, no native there will stir after dark. Another superstition is of the *Pheeál*, a ghostly creature, howling and guiding the tiger to its prey. I have heard the *Pheeál* (the cry) at night, and knew the tiger afoot, but what gives the cry I never found out; anyway it saved a man once who was sitting for a man-eater. He looked round just in time for the brute which, instead of going to the corpse, was creeping on him from behind.

Man-eating, happily, is not a common propensity. The worst case I ever heard of was a few years ago in the Doon. Some wood-cutters lay up for the night in a hut. They awoke to find one of their number being dragged out by the feet. They followed, but, whenever too close, the tigress let go for a moment and threatened to charge. Near by were its cubs, to which, after chasing the other men up trees, the tigress made

over her victim. The cubs played with him till, collecting his scattered faculties, he threw them off and made a rush. The tigress bounded after him and brought him back. And this game went on in the moonlight, under the eyes of his horrified comrades, for what seemed to them hours, till at last the tigress threw a paw over and began to devour him, and the cubs joined the feast. Later two British forest apprentices went after her. One was in the bed, the other on the bank of a ravine, when the former saw the latter on his face, with the tigress upon him. He fired hurriedly and Providence willed that the beast died to the shot. She had seized his comrade by the back of the head but was so toothless that she had not killed him.

A missionary lady describes, in some book—which, I forget—how an artillery officer was carried off by a lioness near Beira (Portuguese East Africa). It doubtless had cubs and played the game of the tigress with the wood-cutter, above mentioned, as the officer's cries for help were heard for long. Who would not in such a case cry for help if there were hope of it? If one could keep one's wits, however, there seems just a chance of resistance, even though weaponless, in trying to gouge the eyes while held in the creature's mouth. Not long ago, a forest officer in the Transvaal, when dragged along the ground by one arm by a lion, contrived to draw his knife with the other hand, and to stab upwards so strongly that the lion dropped him. He still had strength and nerve left to climb a tree,

and the lion presently died at its foot. A famous Indian officer, similarly seized, actually walked by the tiger's side with his arm in its mouth for some distance! I forget the details of his rescue, but the mauled arm had to be amputated.

I do not recall anything more worth mention in my various periods of charge of the Bahawalpur state. The Punjab Government wrote on different occasions of my work that "he made his influence felt in every branch of the administration, not by making the high officials of the state the mere executants of his orders, but by the example of his own devotion to duty"; and that my services were "of the greatest value to the Bahawalpur state"; and the Secretary of State for India twice commended those services. In my second tour of duty, 1877 to 1879, my time was entirely taken up, says my report of May 1878, "with two matters: (1) Retrenchment of expenditure; (2) Transfer of all departments into the hands of state officials" who had been gradually trained to the work. I also had on hand a settlement of land revenue, on the contract system, as explained in a former letter. I see, too, from my report, that the canals again required attention, some of which "have been greatly neglected, and the thorough clearance and restoration of the canals has been a very heavy task."

To show what had to be done in making over the state to native hands, I quote again from the above report: "The state establishments have been re-organised, all departments handed over to the state



officials, and the European officers reduced to five—political agent” (myself), “assistant political agent” (he was required with the state forces then engaged in the Afghan war), “financial assistant, consulting engineer, superintendent court of wards” (who was also the Nawab’s tutor). Thirteen European officers and subordinates were dispensed with. Ordinarily, a large European staff would not be introduced into any state, even during the longest minority; when I returned to the state in 1899, I declined any assistance except that of a tutor for the boy chief. But when first called in to put down anarchy, we had found Bahawalpur absolutely destitute of competent officials; the former chief had effectually cleared off all men of any capacity in the state. The five British officials retained by me in 1878 were only so till the chief’s majority; within eighteen months of my report all had gone, and the chief was left to his own devices. Such was then the mistaken rule; but now the supervision of a political agent is found advisable after young chiefs have been placed in power. Had I then been left in Bahawalpur to guide the chief for a few years, I should not have spent four years there, twenty years later, in repairing his mischief.

Twice did I leave Bahawalpur broken down—in 1873 and 1879. In 1899 I passed two months in hospital at Simla after my summer’s work; and when I finally left, in 1903, it took me two years to fully recover. The labour in native states is thus severe only when the machine is out of gear. Once in order it works

smoothly enough. By "order" I do not mean the British idea of order. A chief asked me once, on his accession, to advise on his administration. I took much pains, and prepared a scheme which I thought suitable to the circumstances of the state. But of course it included decent pay for the officials. After some months' deliberation, he said that he would go on as before; "if my officials live on the people, it is immemorial custom."

How, then, do I prefer the native state system to our own, for India? Because it is "native." Because, even when bad it suits the people, and when good it is the best possible for Orientals. It is "good" when it is supervised. Having abolished the ancient remedy of revolt, which kept bad rulers in check, we must substitute supervision. By this I do not mean meddlesome interference, but just that acquaintance with what goes on which, with the emperor's authority behind it, is ample check. Thus checked, the native states' system is preferable for, and preferred by, the masses to our own. Of course, the Baboo does not admire it, but read Sir Ali Baba's seventh day, "With the raja," and you will understand the people's preference. After long experience, I agree with Sir Ali Baba's advice on native state administration: "Do not turn this beautiful temple of ancient days into a mere mill for decrees and budgets; but sweep it and purify it, and render it a fitting shrine for the homage and tribute of antique loyalty. With tail-coat and cocked-hat government 'the unbought grace

of life, the cheap defence of nations, the nurse of manly sentiment and heroic enterprise is gone.' ”

I have spoken of meddlesome interference. In 1871 I wrote that the political agent, in most native states “is too much in evidence. . . . Either he does interfere or he does not ; if he does, how galling to the chief and his advisers ; if he does not, then what does he which a native agent could not do as well ? ” I advocated replacing British political agents generally by native agents reporting to the local governments. But during a minority a political agent is needed—either to administer the state directly, as I did in my first two periods at Bahawalpur, or to supervise the native administration, as I did in my last period of charge there. Moreover, even after a young chief obtains his powers, the guidance of a political agent is still desirable for a while.

## CHAPTER XXIX

### HINDOO AND BRAHMIN

The High-caste Hindoo—"Milk and Sugar"—Official Presents—  
Struggles of Courtesy—Dances and Sports—Wrestling—  
Riding down a Partridge

AN educated American recently affirmed that all Indians are Mahomedans. Hindu, he said, merely means native of Hindustan, as Briton of Britain; but the religion of Hindus is Mahomedan, as that of Britons is Christian. Such being your state of knowledge regarding this country, a little information may be useful.

Hinduism is a religion, of endless varieties. Out of 300 million Indians there are, roughly, 215 million Hindus, 65 million Mahomedans and 20 million of various persuasions, including Buddhists. *Islam*, the Mahomedan religion, is Judaism with Mahomed as the last and greatest prophet. Hinduism is beyond description, even by its votaries, in all its vast ramifications. The high-caste Hindu is, in his own esteem, of special sanctity. Our Pandies (Sepoys of the Company's army) would throw away their food if even an officer's shadow crossed it. In the Bhutan expedition we left our Hindu regiment at the base on grounds of "supply." We had only use for men who would eat

tinned provisions without questions and drink as best they could. A Hindu must draw water for himself or be supplied by a *Brahmin*! These *Brahmins* not only arrogate spiritual superiority, but, with the *Kayasths*, they formerly monopolised all learning and all administration. British rule has altered this, and hence, I believe, the present sedition, entirely the work of those two castes.

A friend of mine was converted to Christianity. His caste-men beat the native missionary and sent my friend to the Ganges to be purged—a process which, in Martin Chuzzlewit's words, would "sicken a scavenger." But my friend remained restless. He told me that he could no longer stomach the Brahmins, much less the water which he had to drink after washing therein his *Parohit's* (family priest's) feet. So he became pervert again and his people gave him up to his fate. His wife, of course, abjured him; eventually I gave her a year's notice under the Converts' Act, and at its end I granted a divorce. My friend allotted her an estate for her livelihood, and, being childless, she adopted a *Pipal* (*Ficus religiosa*, the sacred fig), planted, watered, and raised it to a considerable tree before her death. He married two successive Christian wives, had a family of eleven, and died recently. He told me that his mother, when she came to see him, would never go nearer than the edge of the carpet, and threw him sweetmeats from thence.

Hindus and Mahomedans love an occasional fight, as do the rival Mahomedan sects, *Sunni* and *Shiah*,

like Christian sects in Ulster. Generally, however, they are, as they say, *Shir wo Shakr* (milk and sugar) in their relations. Kine slaughter is the only trouble. The *Kuka* fanatics once attacked Maler Kotla (a Mahomedan state) for this, and several were blown away from guns. A British officer was dismissed for allowing it, but it prevented a serious outbreak. He did his duty at his peril, like Governor Eyre in Jamaica ; as I have before said, this is the chief risk that officials run in India. The Kukas, who were gathering in strength, dispersed on hearing of the failure and prompt punishment of the premature attack ; so the British officer had that comfort to set against his professional disaster. This kine fanaticism is none the less strong for being opposed to the *Vedas*. It is used successfully as engine of sedition ; everywhere it is preached that the shortage and high price of plough oxen is due to the slaughter of “ young cows ” for the British troops :—that is a better cry than “ store fodder ! ” Such storage of fodder, however, is the only remedy, now that the high profits of cultivation are bringing all the pastures under plough. But fanaticism has no room for reason ; Hindus will exercise any cruelty on cattle ; in fodder famines they sell them to the butchers ; but for Mahomedans to slaughter them at the *Bakr Id* (cattle-sacrifice festival) means a riot.

In old days an inferior, in India, could not approach a superior empty-handed. The soldier proffered his sword ; the husbandman his produce (a few ears of

corn, a lump of raw sugar from his press, or what-not); the Sikh chief presented a bow; the rajput of the hills a pod of musk; other nobles a muslin turban; and so forth. An official presents money. In early Punjab days, when currency was very scarce, the village headmen met you with, perhaps, the only rupee of the village, kept for the purpose; and each offered it in turn. The British officer touches and remits the offering (except in the case of chiefs, when you accept the bow, musk, pod, or turban), but Indians used to retain it. A former ruler of Kashmir thought it a bad day when he returned from his morning ride without a score of rupees. He even beckoned up any one who was coy, and the poor fellow ran, fumbling in his girdle for the coin. However, all this is past, and presently you will be more likely to receive a brick-bat than a *nazr* (offering).

The custom was a nuisance. I remember once, greatly worried in appraising crops and distracted by headmen running at me with rupees, I gravely pocketed them. You should have seen the faces! When I had done with that estate, in dismissing the headmen I refunded, and told them I would take the custom for granted in future; and the countryside took the hint.

Another struggle of courtesy is "dismounting." A stout gentleman who has achieved his saddle with difficulty insists, in spite of your protests, in rolling off when he meets you. I cured this in my fatter friends by dismounting myself to hoist them up again. Their etiquette also used to be for an inferior to shut his

umbrella as he passed, if he had one up. That custom also is disappearing, though foolish Britons still sometimes demand it. What is the value of enforced courtesy? If a man is a boor, it is not our business to teach him manners. Lord Lawrence as Viceroy raised the great "shoe question," but he did not achieve much beyond a great demand for side-spring boots, which men could not be asked to shed. I smile at the boor who keeps his shoes on, but a man recently walked by my side conversing, with his turban in his hand! That no doubt was what Bon Gaultier calls "an affectation of a bright-eyed ease." This "I'm-as-good-as-you" attitude is acceptable only when unconscious. In the prairie states, once, we ran over a cow. The driver said he might as well have the meat, so stopped the train while he and the stoker butchered it. When we reached the farmhouse appointed for breakfast, they came as they were and sat by me to look after "the stranger's" comfort. That was nice, but a Baboo contrives to render his "equality" offensive. *Istiqbal* (going to meet) I gradually got rid of in my successive jurisdictions. The judge leaves his court, the magistrate his camp, the police officer his station; the very *patwari* (village surveyor and accountant) leaves his field inspection and stands on his boundary with his bundle of records. All these in their degree used to come out various distances to meet the *Hakim* (ruler, *lit.* "giver of orders"). But in time I persuaded one and all to stick to their business; I wanted work, not compliments, and in native states I could



reward work. For the unhappy patwaris, for instance, I always carried a pocketful of rupees ; for superior officers I had superior gifts, up to gold bangles.

A big camp is also a custom for the "big man," very troublesome to the people and to oneself. In 1872 I took the young chief of Bahawalpur round his state for *mûlk-gîri* (taking possession). This had to be a very large camp and the arrangements and watchfulness entailed on me were onerous, to prevent the tour from being a veritable curse to the country. Sometimes, on the frontier, for instance, you must have a "tail," and so long as it is mainly of landed gentry and their followers it does not matter. Those they live on will live on them in turn. But such servants, orderlies, clerks, and understrappers generally, as you cannot dispense with, you must look after most carefully.

This touring is all very well when you are strong and hearty. I used to zigzag. The day halt was in a rest-house, or a tent under a tree ; then in the afternoon the main camp went on to the next such shelter, while I diverged to a night bivouac, or perhaps a small tent, somewhere whence I could reach the main camp in the morning ; thus always doing two marches to the main camp's one. This was in summer ; in winter one can be out most of the day. Thus I covered much ground in the hottest weather. A big tent under a good tree is well enough, with the aid of wet grass screens in the doors to cool the air.

Indian entertainments of the dancing and singing

class (the *Nautch*) I always escaped if I could. A British officer seems to me out of place in watching dancing girls. These generally follow dinners, and somehow I felt out of place, too, at an Indian dinner (old style I mean). Garden parties and the like are very well, but only if the Briton can talk polite Urdu decently. The Indian sports, however, a wise official will always take part in. Good wrestling, or sword-play, is interesting. I went in for sword and buckler myself, also for tent-pegging and lime-cutting. At Bahawalpur I got up a polo team; when I went to Ferozepore, I invited it to meet our station team, playing myself first in the latter, and then for Bahawalpur in the return match.

Nothing so delights Indians as wrestling. They collect to see it in thousands. The wrestlers are very beefy according to our ideas of condition, but I have noticed the same in Cumberland and Westmoreland matches. A hateful amusement is boar-baiting. I admire the boar, and to see him tied by one leg and worried by a pack is grief. My first Nawab of Bahawalpur was a good man to pig, but after he grew too lazy to ride he built an amphitheatre with dens full of boars for baiting. Ram fights are popular. They rush and meet with a crash which makes one's head ache in sympathy. Fights of elephants, buffaloes, &c., I have never seen; my first Bahawalpur chief slipped a tiger into a lion's den, but it was soon over, with the loss of several thousand rupees' worth of lion. Hawking has much gone out. I never cared for the

hawking of partridges, there is no run ; but the partridge can be ridden in fairly open ground without hawks, and that really means galloping. Push him in each flight so that he has not time to hide when he settles, and you can generally pick him up exhausted after the third flight. Similarly peafowl, which here are not “barn-door” but very wild, and are strong fliers and runners. In default of hog-hunting, I have often ridden dogs ; not the real wild dogs which are only met in packs, in the forest, but those, nearly as wild, which prowl round villages. Fine runs they give, often much harder than boars which, in my experience, prefer to fight. In old Indian days bears and leopards were speared, but of course neither give runs.

I have spoken already of the anglicising of the well-to-do classes ; even in some advanced native states this is remarkable. An official of the old style has just been speaking to me of a neighbouring state over-run with the “Europe-returned,” men quite out of touch or sympathy with the people. Some I have known actually talk the language with British incorrectness, and have even been heard to speak of “d——d niggers !”

Another marvellous change is at the other end of the social scale. A man of those lower castes on which India depends for scavenging, disposal of dead beasts and offal, and such like services, has only to obtain a certificate of baptism and blooms at once in white clothes and a watch-chain. He becomes cook or other servant in the poorer European families, or oftener

perhaps lives on the missions ; and there is arising a dearth of menials which village headmen have often lamented to me as “ the revolt of the *Kamin* ” (low class). Readiness to risk ruin is a necessary official quality ; some day the officer responsible for the sanitation of a great community will have to display that quality in facing a scavengers’ strike. Such have already occurred, partially, in Bombay and elsewhere, and have been tided over. But when a determined strike occurs, say at Simla, such an officer, unable to leave the place unscavenged for even a day, will use measures which may be his ruin.

## CHAPTER XXX

### TO LONDON AND BACK AGAIN

The Shah—Teheraun and Buckingham Palace—The Shah at Hanwell—Earthquake—A Brigadier stuck in a Window—What is a Baboo?—Landslip

IN 1873 was the Russian expedition to Khiva. The Government of India approved my proposal to accompany it, an American friend undertook to get me the special correspondence for a New York paper, and I hoped for the same on account of a London daily; but ere I reached home the opposition had heckled the Government into declaring that no British officer should go. Meanwhile the Shah of Persia was visiting the European courts. This was Nasiruddin Shah, the grandfather of the potentate who recently dissolved his parliament by means of artillery. I was one of a Foreign Office Deputation which met him at Brussels. There the King of Belgium—King Leopold of Congo fame—was most gracious to us. In Brussels, at a State representation for the Shah, I for the first time heard Patti. We crossed from Ostend on a perfect day, luckily for the Persians; they were not so fortunate three weeks later, when we saw them off at Portsmouth for Cherbourg, where they arrived, we heard, limp as rags. On the voyage the *Devastation*,

the great ironclad of that day, treated us to manoeuvres and artillery-fire. Dover was wonderful, all yachts and bunting; and the arrival in London was also a sight.

I made friends with two of the party; one was the *Hissam-us-Sultanat* (sword of the empire), the Shah's uncle and a warrior of repute. I was allowed to sleep at home, and hurrying one morning early to Buckingham Palace I found the *Hissam* wandering through the reception rooms and murmuring "*Teheraun Kujau, Teheraun Kujau*" (What is Teheraun (the Persian capital) to this!) The other was the *Ilkhani* of Fars, the chief of the *Ils* or nomad tribes of the province of Fars, then a position of much importance though its power has since been broken. Both were old-fashioned Persians, knowing no language and approving no customs but their own; whereas the others were very modern, French in tongue and ideas. The *Ilkhani*, who had been brought along because too powerful to be safely left behind, desired to keep aloof from the entertainments and ceremonies, and approved little of the Shah's facile manners.

The occurrences which I chiefly remember were a State ball at Buckingham Palace and visits to the Mint, the Post Office, and Hanwell. Also the, to my mind, unpleasant inspection of the Shah's jewellery and clothes by the great ladies of London society. The Mint, I think, struck the *Hissam* as uncanny, and certainly some of the conjuring feats of the machinery there savour of magic. At the Post Office

the Shah wanted one of his pages delivered as a parcel, through the pneumatic parcel tube, but fear overcame Oriental submissiveness in the page. To Hanwell only the Shah's brother went, with some of the suite, and I was deputed to accompany them. The wonders of the place soon palled, and the Persians could not believe the busy inmates, all soberly engaged in the various duties of the establishment, to be really insane. So they demanded to see something more exciting, and the governors reluctantly consented to show them the dangerous ward. It was unwise, as the event proved. When we were half-way through a sudden wave of excitement passed over the patients, and some seventy apparently reasonable men were transformed into wild maniacs. The warders closed round and we were hurried on, but the Persians clung to me appalled, supposing apparently that these mad Englishmen would respect an English officer! Luncheon, champagne and speeches soothed their nerves. The superb souvenir of his visit, which His Majesty of Persia gave me before he left London, may be presently rendered valueless by diamond makers like M. Lemoine, but the memory of that time will always be interesting because, thanks to the Shah, I saw much which a private person cannot hope to see.

On our way back to India we drove through the hill country from Alessandria to Genoa, a most interesting trip. We had some tins of condensed milk for the children, and the octroi officials at Genoa charged for these as *conserves*! Octroi is a necessary tax, and in

India it would be hard to provide for municipal expenses without it, but in Italy in those days it was made very vexatious. Many years later, strolling about Ancona, I saw octroi levied on an old woman's basket of vegetables! Now octroi tax on the chief food staples and other articles of common use imported in large quantities, and on all luxuries, is reasonable; but a farthing exacted on a basket of greens seems absurd.

We are thankful in India not to have Italy's volcanoes, and even our earthquakes seldom equal hers. At Peshawar once the garrison fled out of church, a stout brigadier sticking fast in a window, but the clergyman merely suspended his sermon till they returned, looking all rather foolish. Bolting is really a mistake, and may lead to a fatal crush; earthquakes are like lightning, the danger is past before you can do anything. I was once in a great town-hall at midnight; there was a boxing tournament, and the place, galleries and all, was crowded. Suddenly the ring was empty, the judge at my side had disappeared, there was a roar and a rush; I supposed it an alarm of fire, and the emergency exits were all locked! So I joined the referee in shouting "Order"; and presently the audience came back. Then I learned that it was an earthquake! The dulness of age, I suppose, prevented my noticing the movement. There certainly was some excuse, though the panic might have been very fatal, for shortly before had occurred the terrible calamity in Kangra, which cost 2000 lives.



It had extended to Simla, whence a horrified Baboo wired to a friend :—“ Here earth is quak, how there ? ”

What is a Baboo? The term now connotes, in English and French, the “ pen ”-man as distinguished from the “ work ”-man; M. Chailley, Member of the French Parliament and author of great distinction, speaks of himself as a Baboo in his *L'Inde Britannique*. In India the word now applies specially to the politicians, journalists, and lawyers, who claim to represent all the various peoples of this huge country. But in my early days “ Baboo ” included only the half-baked product of our schools: “ A Baboo,” wrote Sir Ali Baba in 1880, “ is a subject for tears. . . . It is by the Baboo's words you know the Baboo. The true Baboo is full of words and phrases. . . . You may turn on a Baboo at any moment and be sure that words and phrases will come gurgling forth without reference to the subject or to the occasion.” And then with wonderful prescience, he turns from jest to add: “ It is the future of Baboodom that I tremble for. When they wax fat, . . . they may kick until we shall have to think that they are something more than a joke. . . . The fear is that their tendencies may infect others . . . the ten-thousand-horse-power English words and phrases, and the loose shadows of English thought which are now for all the world to fling a jeer at might ” arrive at what we in Bengal and the French in Cochin China are now experiencing.

The Simla earthquake, just mentioned, gave ample employment to the masons. Most of the chimneys

came down, and their din on the iron roofs awoke sleepers, whom the shaking merely lulled. In the Viceregal palace a massive tower fell on the vaulted roof, which was fortunately stanch and saved the Vicereine underneath from all but fright. At one of the hotels a lady descended, bed and all, into the room below, which was luckily untenanted. Her first inquiry was for her boxes ! Roofs and floors are thus let down by the opening out of waving walls ; so those who could procure tents slept in them, and others, less fortunate, in the open air ; it was like the deck of a steamer in the Red Sea.

Another trouble in the hills is landslip. I was once half way up to Kasauli when I found the hillside trickling across the road in front of me. I could only have passed by abandoning my horse and climbing high over the head of the slip. A cliff-fall once stove in our dressing- and bath-rooms in a hotel. The other inmates left, but we remained on, in other rooms, after I had cut down the pines, which nodded threateningly on the edge above. Life is sometimes lost in these slips ; I once sub-let our house, and presently the hillside slipped on to the stable, crushing one of our tenant's horses and a groom. In the interior of the Himalaya I have seen prodigious avalanches of mud and rocks ; but a very small one suffices if you are caught in it, like a fly in treacle.

## CHAPTER XXXI

### WEAR AND TEAR

The new British Soldier—Hogmanays Past—The Greybeards—*Badmásh*—The Wear and Tear of Work—Exposure—Separation

WHAT with boxing tournaments, which are held all over India, and the frequent tournaments of football and hockey, and daily cricket, and the gymnasium, the British soldier is a new man. I remember when he lay smoking on his cot all day and strolled to the bazaar in the evening. But now athletics, extra pay for capacity to run a mile over obstacles, and heavy hospital stoppages for preventible complaints, have transformed an army which, not very many years ago, had at times up to 36 per cent. of inefficient. When I rode from Murree across the hills in 1869, to start intelligence parties into Central Asia, I met two regiments road-making through the "Gullies." Finer Englishmen one would not wish to see, in prime condition through hard work and forced abstention from liquor and bazaars. It was costly, but the difference between their working pay and coolies' wages, after allowance for the better tale of work, was a very small price to pay for their splendid efficiency. However, the men did not like it, and the Public Works Depart-

ment would not afford the swollen estimates ; and now, as above said, the object has been attained otherwise. The native soldier, too, is taking kindly to British athletics. In the old Company's army the men always did go in for wrestling, but it led to ill blood. Two regiments remained stanch in the mutiny owing to old wrestling feuds with other regiments which mutinied in their respective cantonments ! They were tremendous fellows in our old Pandy army ; the officers used to feed them up for their matches, and sometimes even entered the ring. The first brigadier of our famous Punjab force threw clean out of the ring a mighty man who challenged him. One favourite form of athletics in hill stations now is the *Khad* race, up and down hillsides (*Khad* means cliff) like our races in Cumberland and Westmoreland. In this the Ghúrkas excel, but the Briton is coming on.

All this means abstinence ; no more Christmas Eves and Hogmanays ! I remember a Christmas Eve when an unhappy police officer found a huge gunner in his bed, who threatened extermination when disturbed. One Hogmanay a Scotch lad tried to go to bed in our garden. We wrapped him up in a quilt and sent him to his barracks in a cab, and his clothes after him next morning—retrieved from all over the place ! I remember Christmas 1857 ; I was going my rounds late at night on the rampart of a fort and heard doleful cries from a native sentry over rum stores below. A British soldier was playfully punching him for admission to the liquor, and the good fellow put up with it.

from a drunken man. Indeed the officers themselves were not all Rechabites ; I remember a mess frolic in which some youngsters put two tipsy guests into a cab, tied up the reins and started off the horse at a gallop ! Drink in John Company's army was responsible for most of the duels—that, and any slight to our Jacks. The Queen's officers despised them and the Company's men were quick to resent it.

According to Mr. Mitra, Indians always drank more heavily than we, and they still continue a vice which we are dropping. Hence, chiefly, that section of Indian society known, if unconvicted, as *Badmáshes* (*badmáshi*—bad livelihood), or, if convicted, as *Bichous* (*lit.* scorpion), a corruption of “habituals.” From these the law demands security for good behaviour, but, as this provision affords great opportunities to the police, it is rendered practically a dead letter by the courts, which insist on impossible proof.

Nevertheless, this law is most useful if not abused, and as district officer I worked it as follows :—At each police centre I appointed a date for the adjacent villages ; it was a regular outing and the attendance very great. All those whose names appeared in the “Previous Conviction,” or the “*Badmásh*” registers were called on to clear themselves. Up came a stalwart cattle-thief surrounded by his friends. The greybeards (headmen of his village) were loud in his praise. “The police ? Oh, every one knows the police !” But cries of “you liar !” come from behind ; there are present representatives of distant

villages, and these tell a different tale. Our friend has spared his neighbours, he has been liberal to his own greybeards, but retribution comes from sufferers further afield. So my order is two securities in £20 each; they would be easily produced but for the condition "not of his own village." He is given a week to find them; either he does so, paying them heavily, or he disappears, and you "thank God you are rid of a knave." To your neighbours' protests you reply "do likewise." The next man is a thief of a different calibre, low caste and pettifogging. No voices rise in his favour, there is no chance of security, and imprisonment in default means a burden on the taxpayer. So I ask the greybeards of his village to undertake him for a year. "Very well," they say, "now so-and-so, none of your games, remember." "Take his arms, then," and they lead him off by the arms, a symbol of responsibility, and he is their bondsman for a year. And so the inquiry goes on, amid laughter and recriminations, till the whole lot are disposed of—and for a year there is peace from their depredations. Numbers of them I employed on my canal works, "to wash off their stains!"

That is the *Badmásh* hunt; another constant occupation was patwari-hunting. The patwari is the village surveyor and accountant, performing most arduous and responsible duties on from twelve to twenty shillings a month, on which to keep himself and pony—and no pension! He is as honest and industrious as you can expect under such conditions, or

as you can make him by constant pursuit. Often have I pitied the shivering wretch, dragging his Gunter's chain through wet young wheat on a bitter winter's morning, but none the less have I checked his field-book and his crop entries to expose and punish his delinquencies. It is weary work. I have been so tired that I have dozed in my saddle cantering from one man's circle to the next ; my horse following the chuckling greybeard who gloats over the coming discomfiture of the patwari who has fleeced him (I have known £4 toll taken, first and last, on a £20 treasury loan to a farmer) when I reached that official fudging his entries in the fields. Of course, all this has to be done by surprise, which requires all sorts of dodges and much hard riding. A device of mine used to be to send my tent and traps in one direction, and then go off elsewhere ; but this meant considerable discomfort. In native states I carried rupees to reward good work. The British Government is not wise enough to allow its officers money for this purpose.

What entailed the most continual and excessive wear and tear on me for very many years (1866 to 1903, with intervals) was irrigation. Every attack of illness, and I have had some which nearly finished me, was due to exposure, to fierce sun and wet clothes. One needs to cross canals, and bridges are only on roads, or perhaps a foot-bridge at a village far off. At any rate, there are swamped fields to cross, the distributaries to fall into if your horse blunders, the branch canals to ford.

This however, was my special trade, and does not concern administrative officers generally. Their life, nevertheless, is always hard, and the surroundings often most depressing to the Briton ; as before mentioned, I have been compelled, on pain of breakdown, to flee for a week to the greenery of the Doons. No salary can compensate for this and the exile and the years of separation from wife and children. Nor are the salaries given only for the worker's benefit, but to maintain the dignity of the Government. The payment which remains over to the Indian official *for his labour* is very modest, and few are those who take any savings out of the country. The separations are the hardest part of our lot in India ; in old days I have known them of ten or a dozen years without a break. It was my good fortune to be in a position to afford a certain amount of leave, and of one period to have Simla as summer headquarters which enabled my family to rejoin me, otherwise the separation in my case might have been like those of fifty years ago. With others I fear that it often is so still.



## CHAPTER XXXII

### FEROZEPORE

Irrigation—The Cash Value—Personal Responsibility—Creating Machinery—Teaching the A B C—The Canals

IN 1884 the Punjab Government wrote as follows regarding my irrigation work in Ferozepore:—"The people have reaped the money's worth of their labour over and over again. . . . This work has been accomplished without costing Government a single rupee. . . . The result of the work is that, without entailing any cost whatever upon Government, an extensive stretch of country has been secured against drought and restored to prosperity, and a net addition will hereafter be made to the Government revenue demand which, at the most moderate computation, may be put at one lakh of rupees" (it is really one and a half lakhs). "This is a result of which, in the opinion of Sir Charles Aitchison, any officer in India might well be proud." In 1901 the native superintendent of this system of canals furnished to the irrigation commission a "Statement showing the cost and results" of the canals from 1874 to 1900. From a note summarising those figures, it appears that the total gain to the people in that period was £745,434, against a total outlay, in cash and labour, of £168,134; that the

actual gain to the Government, which, as above quoted, did not contribute a single rupee, is now above £10,000 yearly, and to the people it is from £35,000 to £45,000 a year according to the area irrigated. That area for 1900 is shown in the statement as being 278,823 acres.

The *Revue Générale des Sciences* commented on these figures, in 1903, as follows (translated):—"The irrigated area was 43,330 acres in 1875-76, 93,213 acres in 1882-83. Now it averages 175,000 acres, comprising 80,000 acres of culturable land turned from 'dry' into 'irrigated,' and 95,000 acres of valueless 'unculturable' land rendered culturable and valuable by silt deposit. According to a note laid before the Commission of Irrigation, the profits to date aggregate seventy lakhs of rupees" (these were, really, the figures for 1895), "and the minimum annual profit is rupees five lakhs to the irrigators, and one and a half lakhs (£10,000) to the Government. In his evidence before the Commission of Irrigation, in 1901, Colonel Grey stated that no enterprise could have been more difficult to start and to render successful. Its supporters were opposed by a party hostile to all progress, who resisted the work, protested against Captain Grey's action, and petitioned the Government against him. The lieutenant-governor proceeded to the spot; . . . at that time (February 1876), the season's work to be done comprised forty-five millions of cubic feet of excavation and six millions of cubic feet of dams and embankments, at an estimated cost of

Rs. 93,366. The lieutenant-governor's decision ended immediately all supply of money and labour for this work, and Captain Grey had to obtain funds on his own credit for its completion. Had rain fallen in that June and July, the cause of irrigation would have been lost and the Captain ruined. But drought brought the recusants to terms; they paid up their shares for readmission, and the obligations incurred were thus paid off, with a balance which was funded as a Canal Fund" (I made each recusant pay 50 per cent. extra, for readmission, and that afforded the balance). "It was the remembrance of all these troubles that led Colonel Grey to say in 1901, to the Commission of Irrigation: 'My painful experience must deter any district officer from such an undertaking in the future.'"

It was indeed a "painful experience." Government was then unfavourable; though ten years later, as above seen, it became most cordial—thanks to the man who in 1875 was my right hand in the work, and who in 1884 had become a secretary to the Government. In 1875, I was ordered by wire to stop proceedings, but replied that I had gone too far. So a few months later the governor came over, *malgré* the efforts of my commissioner and the financial commissioner (the chief revenue authority of the province) to support me. From the point where the governor crossed the Sutlej into my jurisdiction, and up to his camp, for five long miles we passed through waving arms and cries of *Dahai*, help (against me!). At the camp my friends came forward in my favour, but the recusants

had it all their own way. After the governor had left, however, my friends rallied. Some lent me money without interest and without bond, others undertook portions of the work. In favour of the latter I obtained from the recusants stamped resignations of their interests, and those recusants have ever since paid them, yearly, nearly as much as the cost, once for all, of the work they refused. In 1891, when I passed through on inspection as financial commissioner, they lamented to me their folly; they were paying two rupees an acre for water which their neighbours (who regained their shares as above mentioned by M. Chailley in the *Revue Générale*) were enjoying free! Later the Government taxed it.

How was the work done? That is a long story, told at the time in a report by my invaluable assistant<sup>1</sup> (who later was one of my successors as commissioner of the Delhi Division), and by Sir Clements Markham in the *Geographical Magazine* of March 1876. "The old battlefields (of Ferozepore) re-echoed once more with busy sounds. The object was to convert those battlefields into gardens. All the villages were turning out to the sound of music, under perfect discipline, and digging steadily and with cheerful zeal. The smallest boys caught the enthusiasm and busily carried small baskets of earth, while the oldest men, who were in their prime when the battles of our Sikh wars were fought, came out to smoke and compare the old times with the new. Streams of women were seen converging

<sup>1</sup> Mr. H. C. Fanshawe, C.S.I.

to the canals bringing food, and the whole district was astir." Such was the aspect in 1874 and 1875: how did it change? A native correspondent told this in the Lahore paper, in 1876:—"In 1875 the zemindars had displayed extraordinary energy, but unfortunately, got hold of the impression that work was finished that year, which was an evident impossibility in the case of such large operations. When it was found that the next year was as much or more, the less intelligent ran away with the idea that this would be a yearly burden. The rainfall of 1875, too, had led many of the more foolish to imagine that artificial irrigation would never again be necessary. Moreover, in 1875, the landlords had made the tenants to make all the works, but had omitted to compensate them in any way. These causes led to a revolution of feeling in 1876, the tenants generally refused to work, and many of the pettier landowners and inferior Lamberdars made common cause with them. The lieutenant-governor, then passing through, was petitioned to stop such operations. The superior zemindars, however, assembled and begged that the whole country might not be prejudiced by the folly of the ignorant mass."

The main trouble was "establishment." As said by the *Madras Mail*, "the method of these operations, which covered some ten years, is described by Colonel Grey in a manual. Of course, the manual postulates the existence of a trained staff. It supposes a complete machinery for design and construction, not of the excavated earth-work only, but of vast dams,

miles of embankments, and of masonry such as sluices and aqueducts. In 1874, Captain Grey had none of this machinery, nor had he money wherewith to provide it. He had to create it gradually, training the men himself, and to find the funds wherewith to maintain such staff as is necessary for the management of a system of canals to irrigate 200,000 acres. . . . In 1874, the establishment consisted only of Captain Grey himself and two surveyors borrowed from the neighbouring Bahawalpur state. His whole district staff and the headmen of his villages were zealous, but Captain Grey had of course to teach the A B C of the business to such selected men as, after trial, were found to possess aptitude. And these men, like Captain Grey himself, had all their own revenue and judicial business to do.”

The above extract mentions two surveyors obtained from Bahawalpur, but that was not all the debt of Ferozepore to Bahawalpur. I brought my knowledge from there, learnt from the State engineer, whom, moreover, I induced to go with me over my proposed works in 1874. This was not only for his advice, but to obtain such endorsement of my plans by a professional engineer of repute and Member of the Institute, as should reconcile the Government Department of Public Works to a layman's intrusion on their domain.

Further, I brought from Bahawalpur the system of co-operative labour which, as before mentioned, I had there evolved, in supersession of the *Corvée* and

stick method. The latter was of course out of the question in Ferozepore, where, as above seen, even persuasion failed after a year's work. Much though we owed to Bahawalpur, it was, after all, Ferozepore itself that made Ferozepore. The *Madras Mail*, above quoted, speaks of the district officials and village headmen as "zealous"; that is a weak word. My assistant's report of 1875 describes "their really splendid work." "For the last six months," he wrote, "every official engaged on the canals has had to 'scorn delights and live laborious days' in a fashion they never dreamt of before; and they have gone through these laborious days with unflagging persistency and without a murmur."

## CHAPTER XXXIII

### THE GREY CANALS

Off at Dawn again—Intrigue—The Stress of Field Work—Mastering the Breach—Raw Sugar—Bangles for Reward—A Weir across the Sutlej

AN administrative officer's work in India is multifarious, and it never ends. There is no hour of the day (nor of the night if you allowed it), when the people do not claim your time ; every evening you feel that much is left undone that pressingly needs doing. Notwithstanding 150 years of teaching and example, it is still eye-service even in British India ! what you see to yourself is done : the rest is scamped. That is why our men break down. Up to forty the work is pleasure ; up to even fifty years many have the needful elasticity—some of my very hardest forest inspection (hill walking), and settlement work (hard riding), was done about fifty—but afterwards it is painful effort. When turned of sixty it is not pleasant to feel, night after night, that you must pull on breeches and boots and gallop off somewhere at dawn.

How native states get along is a mystery, but the people are satisfied. As has been said of Egypt by an expert :—“ Their ideas are not our ideas, their ways are not our ways ; ” there, and equally in



British India, "even amidst the classes which have benefited the most by our reforms, there are often regrets for the bygone days." Still, the mystery remains as to how business is carried on so successfully; for instance, an Indian friend has just been telling me about his state: the prime minister was the chief's tutor, the minister of justice has never seen a court; the revenue minister does understand revenue, but the finance minister understands nothing, nor could he cast up a column; and the financial secretary, an ex-correspondence clerk, is equally innocent of accounts; the head of the Public Works Department and the commander-in-chief were both school teachers of the chief; the former "does not know a red brick from a yellow one" (*i.e.* well-burnt from refuse, an expression for the nadir of professional ignorance), and the latter is the laughing-stock of his forces. The executive officers are mostly sons and nephews of the above!

Generally native states are the constant scene of internecine intrigue and struggle. An old letter illustrates this:—"A., although he was my friend in 1902, became my greatest foe after 1905. B. only follows C." (the chief enemy), "B. had also a grudge on account of D. always back-biting me as I did not allow D. a free hand in all matters. E. was a creature of C. F. was a chief member of C.'s clique, so was G., who is a relative of C. The same was the case with H. and K., who are also C.'s relatives. In 1906 C. came to blows with me in the open bazaar, in the presence of more than forty state officials,"—and so on. The

writer speaks of "the British angels: I always called them by this dear name;" but let it not be inferred that we are wanted! They much prefer their own methods, and doubtless my correspondent had always the hope of getting on the top. It is, as Lord Morley once said, "a path of folly to regard Indian matters as if they were in Britain."

An extract from my note recorded when leaving Ferozepore will give some idea of a district officer's work:—"When I took charge of the district in March 1874, I proposed to myself four tasks, as follows:—(1) To afford irrigation to some 300,000 acres, which only in exceptional years yield crops; (2) to afford facilities to producers for conveying their produce to markets from which large tracts are cut off by impassable sand; (3) to diminish cattle-theft and offences against property, which are very rife; (4) to restore to efficiency the revenue administration, which had fallen into a lax state. To those four tasks, the death of the Nawab of Mamdot, in 1875, added a fifth—the restoration of the Mamdot state." I have told you something of how I dealt with irrigation, with patwaris' revenue work, with theft and bad characters; of Mamdot I will speak later. As to roads, the note says "619 miles have been dealt with. These, which for the most part existed as mere tracks through sand, have been embanked and put in order for carts, and have been provided with timber bridges. . . . Tree planting on all roads has been pushed on." All this was a heavy job. "Facilities for wheel traffic practically

did not exist ; . . . a four-bullock cart on a metalled road can carry a load of forty maunds (one and a half tons) for a succession of long stages ; in the condition of the district roads, it was frequently with difficulty that twenty maunds could be carried four or five miles a day. It may be conceived how this affected the prosperity of a great grain-producing tract. . . . The sand was the great difficulty . . . a native *mistri* (mason) induced me to try a plan of laying embankments of clay (found some feet below the sand) on the surface of the sand, and three years' experience has proved the soundness of his advice." Of offences against property, the note says that "there were only 1927 cases in 1876 against 3000 in 1874 ;" of revenue work, that I "got rid of inefficient men, and have, in fact, renewed that entire staff by promotion of able patwaris. The patwaris' circles have been remodelled, their pay increased, their work supervised, themselves trained." Some ten years later, similar measures were adopted throughout the Punjab.

The extract from the *Revue Générale des Sciences*, already quoted, told how the lieutenant-governor stopped my irrigation work in 1876. My report for 1876 says that "when the lieutenant-governor's orders were bruited, with exaggerations, throughout the district, I found my hold on the people completely gone. . . . I was then in the following position :— I had on my hands a system of incomplete canals ; for the credit of the British administration, I was

bound to complete them, and I had neither funds nor labour with which to do so." The Punjab Government resolution of 1884, before referred to, "hopes that the success which has been obtained in Ferozepore will encourage officers in other districts." But those officers had seen how the Government dealt with me in 1875-76, and they knew something of the labour and risk I had incurred!

The labour indeed was great. I had in the district some pillars of the Grand Trigonometrical Survey, with calculated levels more or less reliable; also a line of accurate spirit-levelled benchmarks referred to mean sea-level at Karachi (some 800 miles distant). I made my borrowed surveyors start from and end on these benchmarks, tie on to them at intervals, and run check lines to each others' surveys. The *data* I kept secret, so I had the men well in hand, detected errors, and prevented fudging. The lines to be surveyed I had picked out myself, and what a job it was! But the real stress of fieldwork came after I had taken the sections, as finally approved by me, had designed the canals thereon, and prepared specifications and estimates. For the calculations of the latter, I got *patwaris*; but though quick at ciphering, they knew only the four rules, and their vast masses of figures were appalling—always, however, correct. I checked their results with logarithm tables, and seldom found errors. In design calculations, too, I got their help. They easily learned square root (required for velocities),

and, checked as above, they rarely went wrong. But then, having got out my specifications for excavation, for embankments, and for dams, I had to teach the laying out of the work. The miles my assistant and I have toiled with chain and tape! But my helpers were bright and willing, and lightened the long grinds with joke and laughter over the many blunders. They gradually learned the work; but for safety we always closely checked it, as a mistake in excavation means at least subsequent silt to be cleared out; in dams or embankments mistakes mean disaster.

Do what we would, we had plenty of these disasters in the first years, from scamped ramming work or from neglected rat-holes. My assistant before mentioned, Mr. Fanshawe, who, wrote Sir C. Markham, "a young and very able civilian, had already won his first laurels gloriously in the great silent battle with the Bengal famine"—lost much cuticle—burnt off by the terrific sun as he wrestled desperately with torrents roaring through breaches. I, also, was at this once for eighteen hours. I rode out twenty-eight miles in the morning, the villages mustered during the day, the materials were prepared, and we got to work at sunset. All night we were toiling in the moonlight, swimming and guiding gabions, diving to fit the butts of poles; daylight came and we were nearly spent; I was voiceless and the men wanted to give in. But "dogged does it," and to help us the flood fell a little. By noon of that fierce

August day the breach was mastered, and I crept out on to the bank; some one tapped my shoulder, I turned, and there was a good fellow with a dish of food! Refreshed, I galloped some miles to the nearest rest house, and slept far into the next day.

“It is wonderful,” says the conclusion of my manual, “how labour is sweetened by *gúr*.” This is unrefined sugar, nasty stuff to British tastes, but very supporting; and among the materials to be provided for tussles my manual elsewhere prescribes “a few drums for encouragement and a sack of *gúr* for refreshment.” My paragraph above quoted continues: “and the effect of cheap turbans, distributed with a little *éclat*—a small *darbar* and a few fireworks, is very great with the agriculturists.” Example, soft words, raw sugar, turbans—I had no money, so I got work done with these in British districts. But in native states I was master of funds, so I used gold bangles as motive power.

In the end of 1876 I got my commissioner to hold a big *Durbar* and distribute rewards. Says the Lahore paper: “Captain Grey opened the proceedings by a speech in *Urdu* with a touch of Persian poetry.” Generally I used stock quotations, but a couplet from the “Abyssinian war,” in Nizami’s *Alexander*, brought the learned down upon me for authority! The fact is that few Orientals read so far in that weary epic, just as most Englishmen drop the *Faërie Queen* before they reach the “Blatant Beast.” Of this *Durbar*,

I said, in my report for 1876, that it ended for me a task of "much thankless labour, much annoyance and disappointment, much anxiety." But I was mistaken; says the *Revue Générale des Sciences* before quoted: "The troubles of the author of the enterprise were not over. The constant movement of officials sent him elsewhere" (to Bahawalpur); "for two years no mischief arose from this, but in 1880 the river deserted the heads of two canals. No one knew how to repair the disaster, but Captain Grey returned, restored matters, and a competent representative trained by him has ever since carried on the permanent irrigation department which Captain Grey then created."

Again I left, in 1882, to examine in Oriental languages at Calcutta, but in 1883-84, as commissioner, I extended the system of canals by construction of three new ones. Finally, in 1891, as officiating financial commissioner, I increased and remodelled the irrigation department above mentioned, and reported that the above "competent representative," a Ferozepore landholder named Rai Bahadur Maya Das, "had achieved great results, and had exactly maintained the system of my manual." He died lately, and the Ferozepore system of canals which, in 1900, the Government named after me, is now administered by a British officer of irrigation. The report of the Irrigation Commission, in 1901, quotes my opinion that "the days of inundation irrigation are passed. The

method was, after all, but a makeshift ; it has had its day." I advised that the Grey canals should be merged in a new scientific system of irrigation depending on a mighty weir across the Sutlej, which will presently be constructed.



## CHAPTER XXXIV

### A PASSING INDIA

The dull Afridi—Suicide by Fireworks—A Song to cure Nettle-rash—Borrow-pits—The Sahib's Joke—A Blunder in Idiom

EVEN among other Pathans, the Afridi is a by-word for dulness. There are many stories of this; one especially is recorded in the *Pashtu* primer (*Pashtu* or *Pakhtu* is the language of the Pathans). An Afridi sought instruction. "Copy me," said the *mulla* (learned man); "Copy me," said the dutiful Afridi. "No, no, you are to do as I do;" the Afridi did so literally. "You fool!" cried the tutor; "You fool!" repeated the Afridi; and at once received a cuff, which was duly copied. Arising breathless from the ensuing tussle, the Afridi bowed his thanks and suggested bringing his sword for the next lesson.

Bahawalpuris run Afridis close. My first ward there had a son soon after I ended my second period of administration, in 1879, and great were the rejoicings over the heir. As always, the boy was spoiled; young nobles in India have no chance, for flattery and submissiveness surround them from their earliest years. When four or five years of age, the young heir, roaming with his attendant, found a basket of fireworks prepared for some festival. "I will set them off." "Oh,

no, my lord, you should not do that." The child, never restrained, grew more determined from opposition. Who was the attendant that he should oppose a prince's will! So he merely protested feebly while the child blew them both up! That queen never had another son, so the succession passed to my second ward, the son of a hated rival. He was a youth of great ability, and I left him, in 1903, with great hopes of his success. He drank, however, like his father, and died four years later on pilgrimage to Mecca.

Indian doctoring in old days was weird. My friend Gholam Sarwar Khakwani had his arm shattered in the charge at Edwardes's battle of Kineyri. A native surgeon took out the broken bone and substituted a piece from a goat's leg; so Gholam Sarwar lost his arm. Chronic dyspepsia, known as *náf béjá* (navel out of place), was treated with the actual cautery! For dislocation of the hip, the patient was mounted on a thirsty bullock, with his ankles tied fast beneath it. Then the bullock was allowed to drink. I suffered once from nettle-rash. Other remedies failing, a Ferozepore Jat begged permission to sing me "the song of the *chapákhi*." *Chapákhi* is a rash, and, by universal consent, this song is an unfailing cure.

The India which I describe is passing, indeed has passed, away. In certain respects this may be well; but I doubt whether we are now on the same intimate terms with the people that we were while old customs survived. No doubt some of these were onerous; for instance, in the same manner as I was entertained

at a chief's headquarters, so did I, too, send *doombas* (fat-tailed sheep) and flour, and *ghi* (clarified butter) for the chiefs and their followers who came to Dera. You may suppose that my monthly entertainment bill was pretty heavy. Other of the old customs I remember with affection; for instance, the *Sarwáneh* (*lit.* round the head). When I returned to Dera Ismail after the Kowra Khan adventure, before described, the Nawab of Dera and the other Pathan chiefs surged round me swinging handkerchiefs full of rupees over my head, and scattering them to the crowd—thank-offerings to God's poor for my safety. The Japanese may laugh at our partiality for those we live and work among, but how can it be otherwise!

Virtues, of course, have corresponding defects. A very able Indian warned me once against my trustfulness. He himself had no faith in a "record"; believing with Sir Henry Lawrence, whom he greatly admired, that "there is none so dangerous as a *khidmatguzár* (man who has rendered service)." This means that the rewards of good service create an appetite which must be appeased—if not otherwise, then, by stirring trouble in order to profit either by the trouble or by allaying it. He regarded his countrymen as opportunists, reliable only while they see advantage in straight dealing. I admit this to some extent; indeed I have had painful experience; nevertheless, I am certain that, on the whole, confidence does pay; the suspicious man is never well served.

The same applies to the occasional nervousness of

Government about *Kukas*, about *Wahabis* (respectively Sikh and Mahomedan fanatics), about signs and rumours. As district officer I have always stood out against worrying my people or letting them be worried. I remember a funny scare. The "borrow-pits" along roads fill with water after rain and buffaloes roll in the mud, afterwards rubbing themselves against the roadside trees. Some one noticing these marks, started the idea that they were of the nature of the pre-mutiny *chapati* (girdle-cake); and Government took the matter up! No doubt that observer had often seen such marks before without noticing them; "No eyes" are still more common than "Eyes," as in the time of Sandford and Merton.

I doubt the "chapati" myself, or at any rate its esoteric significance; I believe that if to-day I made one, disguised myself, and took it to the next village, desiring with much mystery that it should be passed on, it would go far.

The mutiny is spoken of as a rising of the people against the British. This is a mistake even as regards the only areas of disturbance, viz., Hindustan (the country between Bengal and the Punjab), Oudh, and Central India. The Company's native army certainly mutinied, as pampered troops will. The decline of empires generally follows on military domination; after the death of Ranjit Singh, King of the Punjab, the Sikh army practically took charge of affairs, and ruled through the regimental *Pancháyets* (councils of leaders)—an example which the Company's army

would fain have followed. Also, as the restraining British hand was removed, the people rose against each other, and the scum of the towns, and the rabble of the villages, were ready to kill any one, whether Briton or plunder-laden Sepoy, for profit, or from mere lust of blood. The respectable classes, on the contrary, were generally on our side, and the cases of kindness and protection of fugitives were very numerous; the loyalty of our servants, too, was generally most remarkable. I knew a fine old railway contractor—ex-navvy and pugilist—who had a native wife. When fleeing for his life in 1857, this village woman hid him for many days and fed him, a very Rahab, and he afterwards married her in gratitude.

I have mentioned the need of dialects for sport; in court, too, they come useful. A British mechanic was brought before me for manslaughter. He was working on a bridge with a gang, and, when coming and going over the girders, he used to lark with the men. One day a man, in getting out of his way, fell and was drowned. The charge was that he had thrown the man in. Most clear was the evidence of witness after witness—"the Sahib used often to say that he would throw the deceased into the river, and on this occasion he did so"—giving all the details in absolute accord. Now, such accord is always suspicious, and I seem now to remember that I caught a dialect remark which gave me a hint. Presently, therefore, I took the witnesses into my private room for informal converse. Then I soon arrived at their

object. "The Sahib used to joke and pretend he would throw us in; the deceased fell when getting out of his way; why did not the Sahib follow and save him? At any rate, he should be made to compensate the family." That was all they wanted; and yet in their ignorance they sought it by exaggeration, and were cheerfully swearing away the life or liberty of the accused! Of course, could the Briton have swum he would have gone after the drowning man. He was too horrified, and too ignorant of the people and the language, to disarm their anger by at once undertaking the care of the widow and orphans. Or perhaps the blind rage of those ignorant men gave him no opportunity.

I remember a wandering Hindustan *Fakir* being beaten in Assam for a linguistic blunder. In all innocence he said something very impolite. I told him that it served him right for not learning the dialect of those he lived upon, and declining correction. If we English were beaten for all our blunders, our shoulders would be chronically sore, but the politeness, and the rapid apprehension of Indians is wonderful. We ourselves also hear some queer English without smiling, indeed with both races habit soon renders the ear tolerant. The worst is when one cannot catch the meaning; one feels a fool when addressed in what purports to be one's own tongue, and unable to understand.

## CHAPTER XXXV

### THE INDIA OF THE FUTURE

Wahji Garri Sahib—Indian Finance—“The Precision of Machines and the Enthusiasm of Crusaders”—Indian Defence

I HAVE said more than enough of Ferozepore, but an article in the Lahore paper, entitled “A Study in the Art of Local Irrigation, by a Native Correspondent,” has reminded me pleasantly of those days. Elsmie’s *Thirty-five Years in the Punjab* mentions that the Jats of Ferozepore claim me as having been, in a former life, one of their ancestors. Otherwise why should a *Sahib* have taken so much trouble for their benefit! This may account for my work being remembered by this native correspondent after thirty years; the ballad from which he quotes is, I believe, still sung at Ferozepore gatherings. “In contrast with the above single canal (which will take ten years to complete), if one looks back to the ’seventies, when Captain Grey constructed his thirteen canals (now irrigating over two lakhs of *ghumaos* per annum) from 1874 to 1881, the question that puzzles one is: ‘How did *he* make them without means, and even without the previous sanction of the Government?’ The simple answer is that the thews and sinews of a willing and admiring population formed practically

the only capital, and Captain Grey was the sole administrator and leader. But in these days of red tape (there was a good deal even then), the fact that the thirteen canals (now worth some forty lakhs) were constructed within a few years without funds and even sanction, sounds like a miracle.

“There was one thing in favour of projects in those times; the local authorities in the 'seventies had a much freer hand in matters of local importance. But even then hardly any deputy commissioner would have ventured to undertake all this, when his own commissioner (a Royal Engineer) was opposed to such a 'wild idea.' It was only after a prolonged discussion and correspondence that both the Punjab and the Imperial Governments at last recognised the Grey canals some years after they were in thorough working order, and that the Government of India sanctioned a special establishment to supervise the irrigation and the canal works—in 1881.

“What means and materials had Captain Grey at his disposal, and how did he utilise them? He had practically no engineering skill at his command beyond his own experience gained in the Bahawalpur state, where he had constructed, with the aid of ample funds and a skilled establishment, several inundation canals. Here at Ferozepore he had neither the funds nor the establishment. So he summoned the *tahsildars* and their *naiibs* and other intelligent officials, and used to hold a regular school daily in camp, giving the *tahsildars* and others regular practical lessons on alignment and



canal digging, and while the lessons thus learnt were yet fresh in the minds of the officials, he took them out on their respective earthworks and *saw them do it!*

“Side by side with the canals, he took two important matters of local administration thoroughly in hand—namely, the patwaris’ records and the *badmáshes* of the district. The discrepancies and misstatements in the former that were detected on the spot by Captain Grey won the gratitude of many a landholder, and as to the latter (*badmáshes*), many a scoundrel was given a chance to redeem his character by performing his quota of canal work: indeed, once upon a time there were so many *badmáshes* digging on one of the canal branches, that for a while it was called ‘the *Badmásh-wah!*’”

I have written before of these “*Badmásh-hunts*,” of my pursuit of the patwari, of my reforms in the revenue system; it is surprising to see these remembered thirty years later. The native correspondent continues:—

“Before leaving the district, Major Grey made the way of the canal establishment smooth, and prepared a canal manual for their guidance (since approved by Government). Hardly any further trouble was afterwards experienced by the men left by him in charge of his canals, which have hitherto irrigated some forty-five lakhs of *ghumaos* during the past twenty-eight years or so. The zamindar has thus received more than his due reward, viz., he has had to pay only four

annas per *ghumao* for the establishment rate beyond the silt clearance, which he usually does himself. But since the last settlement, Government charge a royalty or water-advantage rate of from seven to thirteen annas per *ghumao*. Even all these charges put together cost the cultivator less than two rupees per *ghumao* of *matured* crops. . . . No wonder, then, that the people sing songs in remembrance of their benefactor—

“ ‘ *Wah ji Garri Sahib ji, wah!  
Tere jiha koi na jammega!* ’

(‘ Well done, Grey Sahib, best of men,  
None like thee will rise again.’ )”

Before going to Ferozepore in 1874, I had thrown together, in pamphlet form, articles which I had been writing since 1869. These were published as *The Use of Indian Chiefs* and *Indian Finance*. They advocated military service by the forces of the native states, as under the Moghal empire; consultation of the ruling chiefs in the administrations of India; employment in the army, and other services, of the aristocracy; and, generally, reliance upon and advancement of these, the real leaders of the Indian peoples. Also, in *Indian Finance*, the greater independence of Provincial Governments; and real financial decentralisation, whereby those Governments should possess their own revenues for their own administration, and should contribute quotas of the cost of imperial defence in the actual proportion of their resources: a measure

which will lead up to and facilitate devolution of the direct administration of India upon her chiefs. These pamphlets I submitted to Lord Lytton when he came out as Viceroy, and when, in 1876, he summoned me in connection with Afghan affairs, he discussed the proposals with me.

This question of the administration and defence of India by means of her chiefs and aristocracy is of the first importance. Devolution is in the air, upon whom should it be? On the chiefs, surely, who already administer more than one-third of India; the politicians and demagogues, the Baboos in fact, cannot administer the country, much less defend it. The English have done very much for India: Mr. Mitra denounces those in Britain who "through sheer ignorance make mischief between the English and the Indians"; it is on account of these "self-appointed and ill-equipped guardians of my mother-land India, that I have thought fit to bring a few salient facts of British administration in India to the notice of the British public": but the Baboos would undo it all.

Is it Mr. Mitra's generous exaggeration, or is it truth, that we in India "work with the precision of machines and the enthusiasm of crusaders"? I have followed the tracks of India's invaders through the deserts that they made, now again flourishing under our care; I have studied the internecine strife and chaos which preceded our advent; I have witnessed its renewal in 1857; reflecting on these things, and

contrasting that India with this, I agree with Mr. Mitra, and deplore the blindness of our detractors at home.

But are we providing against return of these calamities? Is the *India of the Future*, which we are endeavouring to create, an India that can stand alone? In my preface to a book of that title, I venture an opinion as follows :—

“(1) The existing means of India’s defence are inadequate.

“(2) The British taxpayer is unlikely to accept any increase of his burden already borne for that defence.

“(3) India’s lack of means is due to surrender, by the British administration, of the State’s claim on the produce.

“(4) This mistake is irretrievable by the British, and it will not be retrieved, but aggravated (as will be the accessory administrative errors indicated in M. Chailley’s *L’Inde Britannique*), by devolution of power to Indians on the present democratic lines.

“(5) These democratic lines are unsuitable to India, inconsistent with her traditions, and uncongenial to her people ; whereas the native state system is adapted to the country, and does already afford that Home Rule at which we aim to 43 per cent. of the area and above one-fifth of the population of India.

“(6) The extension of the native state system would retrieve our administrative, and especially our financial, mistakes, and would provide adequate funds and troops for the defence of India.”

## CHAPTER XXXVI

### A DIGRESSION

A Rat Army—*Corvus splendens*—A Clever Pheasant—"The Dirty Bird"—Adjutant Cranes—Bats—Locusts

NATURALISTS are familiar with the migrations of Norwegian Lemmings, ending sometimes in steep places down into the sea ; in India we have sometimes migrations of the field-rat. It is not a rat, and it does not generally inhabit fields, but waste lands ; in 1876, however, when my Ferozepore canals had created large areas of new cultivation, these creatures came from afar to devour it. We sowed our gram (a kind of pea) three times over that year. The farmers fought the plague with mattocks and smoke, digging out the rats or stifling them, but we should have been beaten without the aid of birds, chiefly adjutants, which arrived in crowds. Eventually the rat army passed on ; I heard of them next year in Candahar, a year or two later in Siberia ; they had come to us out of the deserts of Bikanir, and ended, doubtless, in the Arctic Ocean.

Another subject made familiar by our natural history books is the winter or summer trance of certain animals. Even complete suspension of animation is possible in

the lower organisms, and the same has been asserted of human beings. Doctor Martin Honigberger, Court Physician to Maharaja Ranjit Singh of the Punjab, left a bulky book, recounting his experiences, among which was the voluntary burial, and the resuscitation, of that king's famous *Fakir*.

Well, I have seen the like in fish. As the Indus floods go down, they leave pools swarming with fish. I remember the air poisoned in the Bahawalpur jungles by the rotting fish of which the epicure fish-hawks had eaten only the eyes, so plentiful were the fish. As these pools gradually dried, up to December, I have seen the liquid mud swelling and rolling with the motion of the fish till it became too thick, and finally hardened. The fish then hybernated in the caked mud till the floods of autumn again liquefied it and finally released them. Similarly, in the dry water-courses which seam the desert, I have seen the dust come to life as I tubbed and splashed over it, with water brought from afar in bags on camels. The last trickle down that watercourse may have been months, even years, before, as the rainfall is very scant, but the dried-up creatures left there retained life till water came again!

Indian birds are often amusing, oftener annoying, sometimes dangerous, like the Lammergeyers—against whom I have had to carry a pistol for my dog's protection. "*Corvus splendens*, the splendid crow, splendid in boldness, cunning and depravity," is ever with us. In Calcutta verandahs you take your morn-

ing tea and toast with one eye on the plate and the other eye watching these birds sitting on the railing, ready to pounce. One of my children opened a full mouth in protest, and a crow promptly perched on his shoulder, inserted its beak, and took out the mouthful. Kites are nearly as bad ; I remember a swoop and a cry and an indignant child gazing tearfully after its ravished morsel. See a kite settle to enjoy a tit-bit. One crow will pull his tail, and as he turns to retaliate another seizes the morsel. They are by no means friends, for kites devour the baby crows. Doubtless the crows take turn about at the above game, so that they profit in turn ; but to that I cannot testify. They will even try it with a dog, and get the bone. Both kites and crows have their master ; “ the king crow,” says a naturalist author, “ is the Black Prince of the bird kingdom.” He is absurdly small compared with the above giants, but “ the thing in feathers of which he is afraid has yet to be evolved.” It is some solace to one’s impotent wrath to see the kite screaming and wheeling to get away, or the crow cowering on a branch and ducking with feeble caws to each dart and peck of its pigmy assailant.

Sparrow-hawks can be trained to strike both kites, double their own size, and crows. I remember once a crow struck down in a farm yard ; a cock immediately challenged the hawk, and had the best of the tussle. We have in India the extremes of beauty and ugliness. A *Monál* cock pheasant sailing across a glacier in the sunlight is a dazzling vision of azure and gold ; and



he is as tough in the killing as in the eating. The argus pheasant is less gaudy but more beautiful. He is rare and very cunning; two in a rhododendron clump once actually pushed out a musk deer to draw my fire. Then they rose and sailed past my empty gun whistling derisively. Partridges in the same way will start a hare. Unbelievers may say that it is only a case of the more timid creature starting first, while the birds run and dodge and cling to the covert; but I believe in the malice prepense. "At the other extreme stands the ugliest bird in the world—*Neophzon ginginianus*," known to us as "the dirty bird." He is a scavenger, and looks it; "the bill, the naked face, and the legs of this creature are a sickly yellow. Its plumage is dirty white, the ends of the wing feathers are shabby black. Its shape is displeasing and its gait an ungainly waddle."

He is not our only scavenger; there is the vulture for carrion; the village pig, as foul a feeder as the hogs I saw, years ago, being unspeakably fattened in the States for the Chicago market; the grey partridge and the quasi-wild-duck of village environs and ponds, both creatures to beware of, for the table; the adjutant, whose vast pouch holds anything his beak can catch, from a live rat or kitten to a filched leg of mutton; finally the jackal. To this starving creature nothing comes amiss that bolder beasts and birds will let him take. To his misery, natives attribute the frequent rabies which sends him snapping among the shrouded forms in the sleeping village. Sad used to

be the sufferings of the bitten, mercifully ended with a wet sheet. Now, however, the sophisticated peasant seeks the Kasauli Pasteur Institute ; the mountain is pervaded all the year round by such patients, of whom the English ones are the mainstay of the club, and are ungratefully known there as " Barkers."

A note on bats : I have seen trees so loaded with the great fruit-eaters, hanging head downwards, that there was actually no room for the late comers ; and the fighting and squabbling for places every morning lasted far into daylight (they are nocturnal marauders). As to the smaller insect-eating bats, I had once in Assam to take down the ceiling cloth and hold a battue before we could occupy a house ; we killed more than 300. I have been in caves and galleries where the whirl and rush were as thick as a locust storm. Now a locust storm will make your horse turn tail, but then locusts have no manners ; bats, on the contrary, will avoid you as much as they can, still you must cover your head and hold your lantern tight. I have seen locusts banging in hundreds against a man and his horse, followed by the hungry birds. Another pest is the white ant, swarming and shedding wings into your soup and everywhere till the room is carpeted with the films. Truly, India is somewhat too fecund of life.

Bats remind me of a gallery through the ridge at Delhi, the bolt-hole from some ancient palace on that famous hill. Such were generally provided in Indian palaces, for very uneasy lay the heads that wore

crowns. Indians forget, and Britons do not know, what India was and from what we rescued her. Syed Sirdar Ali Khan of Hyderabad, in his *The Unrest in India*, has drawn the picture as it would again be if we withdrew. For a short while, he writes, the government of the country might proceed in the hands of those Indian politicians whom the British would leave in power—"provided the sedition-mongers did not create a diversion by claiming those seats for themselves." But soon these would insist "on a National Assembly, and then without doubt everything would go wrong in India." He vividly describes the revival of caste prejudices, of Mahomedan and Mahrata ambitions, of Sikh fanaticism against Islam, and the inrush of Afghans eager for plunder. What I saw in 1857 I have before attempted to describe; withdraw our protection and so it will be again—unless we have gradually introduced the chiefs and aristocracy in our place.

## CHAPTER XXXVII

### SOME NATIVE STATE QUESTIONS

Jellaluddin—Waste and Robbery—Restoration—A Rowboat in a Desert—The Value of Wells—Fairs—Plundering the Pilgrims

THE Mamdot state, wrote the Punjab Government in 1884, "came under the Court of Wards in 1875. Its condition was then such that the income was barely sufficient to meet current liabilities." The Government letter describes its altered condition in 1884, and adds that this result is due "to the well-considered measures and unremitting efforts of Captain Grey to advance the interests of his charge"; and it requests that "the cordial acknowledgments of the lieutenant-governor may be conveyed to Captain Grey for his excellent services in retrieving the fallen condition of the Mamdot family." Some years later the *Madras Mail* gave the history of this case as follows:—"In 1845 Jamaluddin, Chief of Mamdot, was confirmed in the possessions held by him under the Sikhs, for service rendered to the British in the Sutlej campaign. In 1848 his brother Jellaluddin led a Mamdot contingent against Multan, for which service Jamaluddin was made a Nawab and received sovereign powers, which he had not enjoyed under

the Sikhs. In 1856, however, Jamaluddin was deprived of those powers on account of gross oppression, and was removed from Mamdot. The state was offered to Jellaluddin, but that noble Pathan preferred to share his brother's exile, and would not even accept the separate maintenance assigned to him. The sons of Jamaluddin, however, whose misconduct was the real cause of their father's fall, sued their father for, and obtained, a separate maintenance. In 1863 Jamaluddin died, after formally disinheriting his sons and leaving the succession to his brother Jellaluddin. The state, which meanwhile had been under sequestration, was now conferred by the Government upon Jellaluddin, but without sovereign powers; he returned to the *status* which Jamaluddin had held under the Sikhs."

During sequestration, the great areas of waste land being of little value, "the revenue officials in charge were glad to see any one take possession of them and pay some revenue. Over 70,000 acres of land thus passed away, of which some 20,000 were taken by the Government Forest Department and the rest by squatters. When, however, Jellaluddin returned to Mamdot as Nawab, he succeeded eventually in recovering, by process or by repurchase, some 23,000 acres of land. But the rainfall of the tract is only 13 inches per annum on an average. Springs for wells are very deep, and the Nawab had no money wherewith to make such and bring land under occupation; indeed 28,000 acres which were actually in his undisputed possession

in 1863, yielded him only nominal rents. Being therefore unable to do anything with the land, he was unwilling to spend any money in efforts to recover it. Early in 1874, however, there came to the district, as collector, a soldier, who naturally fraternised with the old Pathan warrior. They became fast friends, and the Nawab, who was then breaking up, gave the collector his seal and authority to borrow money and act as he thought fit. In May 1875 the Nawab died, committing to his friend the interests of his son. Meanwhile his friend had gone ahead. He took loans from Government and from a neighbouring chief. He recovered the 20,523 acres held by the Forest Department, and instituted suits against the holders of the rest, finally recovering nearly 11,000 acres from the squatters. Having thus altogether 54,000 acres of waste land, including the 23,000 that Jellaluddin had before recovered, the collector constructed four canals to irrigate both this waste area and the other 28,000 acres of nominal cultivation which yielded the Nawab so little. Then, having divided this 83,000 acres of land into convenient estates, carefully valued, the collector let them out on progressive leases (*i.e.* on rents yearly increasing). Moreover, as the canals gradually raised the spring level, he sank wells to supplement the canal irrigation. Finally, as there were no towns in Mamdot, and a great agricultural area (the state comprises 226,513 acres, including the Nawab's own 83,000 acres) needs a market, the collector founded a town in 1875, named Jellalabad

in memory of his friend. In 1880, as the town was not progressing fast enough, he established there a horse and cattle fair, which is now widely known, and Jellalabad is fast rising into a place of importance. In the spring of 1884 Jellaluddin's son came of age, and at the same time the last of the canal works were finished" (these were three new canals which I made in 1883) "and the progressive leases ran out. His father's friend then obtained for him a commission in a Punjab cavalry regiment, and the young chief was left to his own devices."

Then ensued ruin, "but fortunately, the end came early, after a desperate bout of dissipation. Of course, all was soon restored; the mortgages have been paid off, the estates recovered, the leases were renewed by the lessees gladly at an increase of 50 per cent. on the top rents reached by progress, as the canal irrigation was restored. In 1891, for the last time, the friend of Jellaluddin looked into the affairs of his grandson, and now, in the hands of a first-rate manager, the landed estate is yearly increasing in prosperity." This refers to the private estate, which, in 1900, was yielding sixty-four times what it yielded to Jellaluddin in 1874, the year in which I took it in hand.

There is nothing like a minority for the restoration of a native state. What I reported of Mamdot in 1875 applies equally to all the states I have handled—namely, that "it would be hard adequately to describe the hopeless state of confusion that I found. . . . I have certainly seldom seen such mismanagement,

waste and robbery as I found existing in Mamdot." Such is the picture when charge is taken; that of British achievement is as follows:—"The Nawab, whose uncle left the state a chaos—roads untraversable, people robbers by profession, property insecure, land valueless, will return to find land worth Rs. 20 an acre, the people orderly and good agriculturists, the country irrigated in every direction, a flourishing centre of commerce dealing with its produce by secure and good lines of communication."

But all this means hard labour. For instance, the division into estates and appraisal above mentioned, of the waste lands, meant long days of wandering over thirsty tracts where we had to carry water in skins on camels. "When I got the canals running into these lands, I gave an object lesson by travelling down them in a row boat; and fish abounded in parts where, as the natives said, 'birds used to fall overcome with thirst'!" The settlement of immigrants on waste land was nothing new in the Punjab: I myself established, in 1871, a large settlement of Sikhs on such lands in Bahawalpur. But, till I did it in Mamdot, no agricultural colony had been created by irrigation, allotment of farms, and foundation of a market-town. This, of course, was on a comparatively small scale as regards its antitypes, the important colonies which the Government has since founded elsewhere on the same method.

The *Revue Générale des Sciences*, commenting on the proceedings of the Irrigation Commission, says (trans-



lated): "The colonel advocated wells even where agriculturists have permanent canal irrigation. His reason was that they waste canal water, over-saturate the soil, and thus produce malaria. Give the peasant but little canal water, and then he will use wells, and the above evils will disappear, while the canal water thus economised will go further." Thus in Mamdot I applied savings to the construction of wells; elsewhere, as in Bahawalpur, I was liberal in loans to the farmers for well-sinking. I said to the Irrigation Commission that "the ideal canal irrigation, to my mind, is that which creates and extends well-irrigation, and is supplemented by the latter when river-water fails" in years of bad rainfall. I gave the Commission my Bahawalpur figures, showing that Rs. 300 invested at  $3\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. is worth, in twelve years, Rs. 453, 5, whereas on loan, without interest, recovered in instalments in twelve years, the instalments being invested as above, it is worth only Rs. 351, 15 (by compound interest in both cases). The difference, Rs. 101, 6, is the actual cost of the loan. But with that loan a well has been constructed in the first year, which is not charged revenue for the twelve years, but which thereafter yields Rs. 20 yearly revenue to the State, or about 20 per cent. on the Rs. 101, 6 which the loan has cost the State. I added: "There are indeed few investments which yield so large a return as 20 per cent."

The Jellalabad Fair, above mentioned, had a queer origin. On my return from Bahawalpur in 1880, I was wandering round the town which I had founded

in 1875, disappointed with its progress, when I saw a little tomb with a few marigolds on it. "That's a wandering *Fakir*," they said, "who died here, and women strew flowers." "His name?" "Lakkar Shah." "Oh, call him Golab Shah, and advertise *Golab Shah ka mela*" (Golab Shah's fair). They roared with laughter; no sooner said than done; and before long it was a flourishing shrine and still more flourishing fair.

Fairs are numerous and important in India; religious ceremonial and mercantile business are happily combined in most of them. In 1861 I attended the *Sakhi Sarwar* fair in the frontier hills. My servant went to pay his respects to the shrine, and presently returned running and pursued with shouts and laughter. The attendants had taken all his garments but his pants, and wanted them also! There were 1600 *mujawars* (attendants) who throughout the year wandered begging, and preaching the April pilgrimage to the shrine. Thousands used to come, and much business was done at the fair. So far as concerns the religious aspect of fairs, it is really the women that bring their menfolk; anything for an outing to vary their monotonous lives. Now *Sakhi Sarwar* was a saint of repute, but any excuse is good enough for a gathering, so when we canonised the poor mendicant Lakkar (dry stick) as Golab Shah (blooming rose king), it caught on wonderfully. Of course, the Pathans themselves did it, I only threw out the suggestion. A Pathan is not particular how he establishes a shrine, which is always

useful as sanctuary. One of the frontier tales is of a tribe which had none, so they killed for the purpose a holy man who had wandered there to preach!

Pilgrims are always shamefully plundered. The *Brahmins* at Hurdwar (where the Ganges leaves the hills) will knock the purse out of a man's hand as he is fumbling for a fee to give them. Picture the poor wretch, already nearly skinned, feeling for a fee in his lean purse which shall leave him at least something to get home with; and then the priest scatters his few coins and they are grabbed! Nevertheless, the gatherings are sometimes prodigious, as at Thanesar's sacred pool on the occasion of a solar eclipse. Immense efforts have to be made by our officers to prevent the outbreak of epidemics and the spread of infection. Cholera and plague, as well as sanctity, result from these pilgrimages.

## CHAPTER XXXVIII

### SPORT AND SHOOTING

Ducks and Geese—Ibex—Monkeys—Streams in Spate—Quail-shooting—A Screen to Catch Partridges—Traps for Crows and Monkeys

THE pursuit of ducks and geese in India, as in our Fens, means risk of rheumatic fever. For the latter a good method used to be to lie, before dawn, in the wild rice, which is sown broadcast over the mud as rivers fall. The geese from the river fly low on their way to pools inland, and you get shots at them coming over you. As on the river, so on the pools, they keep out of shot from the banks, and are unapproachable in a boat, but there is a mode of circumventing them, though still more risky in winter (they go to the hills in summer) than even lying in wet wild rice. You take a cot, tie under its legs inverted *gharas* (large earthen water-pots), pile on some brushwood to cover your body and your gun, and urge it gently towards the geese with your swimming legs. They are used to seeing rubbish floating on the rivers, and will thus allow you within range. For ducks in shallow water you may wade, similarly disguised, but not barefoot, as I once did and picked up an acacia thorn, which lamed me for long, till it worked up through the instep

and out at the arch. In the lakes of Bengal, covered with reed clumps, I have had great sport in the trunks of date palms. The native fishermen stand balanced on these in some miraculous way, poling with one hand and striking fish with the other by a bundle of short barb-tipped reeds tied to a handle. These spread out of course, when thrown. Well, if you neither cough nor sneeze, you may sit in the bulb of the palm-root and stalk the ducks round the reed clumps. But you fire at the risk of a swim, and still more so while loading a muzzle-loader.

All my shooting has been with these antiques. As I before mentioned, my old sixteen-bore two-groove's charge was  $1\frac{1}{2}$  drachms, which charge bombarded buffaloes to no purpose except provocation, while doubling it produced bad shooting. You really need, for safety, much heavier metal than I could afford, and it is a wonder to me how I got out of scrapes. Even for safe game the old weapons were unsatisfactory, with their point-blank range of 100 to 120 yards and high trajectory within that. But their inefficiency taught stalking, and at my best I could stalk very well in the hills. That means not only wind and sinews, but a sixth sense of locality and of currents of air. There is no sporting pleasure equal to a contest of wits with the various tribes of hill goats and sheep—especially on Shaikh Budin, where, as I told you, a seventh sense is needed for rotten ground. After ibex in the Himalaya I used to sleep out, sometimes for two nights running, to circumvent the herds of

does and young bucks, which seem always to be between you and the majestic greybeard you want. This meant no fire, cold food, and no water from the frost of 4 P.M. till the sun of 10 A.M. enabled you to melt a little snow in a tin pot on a rock. And, with all this, you might still fail! I never shall forget one failure. After an arduous stalk, I drew my bead within 80 yards, staring right into the vacant eyes (I was well hidden and his focus was on something far behind me) of the very patriarch of my dreams. "Snap," and, as he turned, again "snap"! When I unscrewed my nipples I found snow! My gun carrier had fallen in the dark of the early start, and the stoppers were in his pocket instead of in the muzzles. He slyly shook out the snow and put the stoppers in, and, when I took them out to load before the last of the stalk, he said not a word. It took me half-an-hour to get those charges off, and the sound of course cleared the hill, so I returned to my tent and marched elsewhere.

This was a sad loss of time out of the three weeks which, as before explained, were all that one could get on the ibex ground in two months' leave, owing to the difficulties of travelling in those days. Apart from those difficulties were the delays on the passes. I always took "first leave," and some passes are barely open in April; I have been detained for two days in a cave by avalanches roaring at short intervals. Time being scant, I would not look at other game, as firing would alarm the hill. I remember once seeing six brown bears, dotted about the hill feeding, when

I left my bivouac, but ibex was my sole object in my limit. Moreover, except the ferocious smooth bear of the plains, bears are too good-natured and human.

Some people can shoot monkeys, but the death of one I saw shot by accident was painful to witness. However, I might not think so were I a farmer. To see a troop of monkeys come out of sugar-cane, each with a cane in its jaws, another in one hand, and a third dragged by one foot, justly enrages the peasant, and villages turn out to hunt them down. This was most amusing once, along a branch canal. The monkeys sprang from tree to tree; they dived across the canal when hard pressed; but one by one they were caught, bound, and carted. The carts, when full, were sent by night to the lands of a distant village and the chattering occupants turned loose there! I say "they dived"—they simply plunged and presently reappeared crawling up the opposite bank; I have never seen a monkey swim.

Ibex ground is generally fairly easy, whereas *tahr* (a goat with a very poor head) *markhór*, chamois, and two of the smaller kinds of wild sheep (I have never had leave long enough to reach the land of the giants *Ovis ammon* and *Ovis poli*) require skilled climbing. Nor is the ground the only risk in hill shooting; I once barely evaded a boulder bounding down from above; it smashed my gun stock as I pushed myself out of the way. This, however, is everywhere a danger when snow is melting, or after heavy rain. I have been stopped by rock-falls in the mail-cart on

the road to Simla ; and I remember once some Italian minstrels in a bullock cart being crushed, cart and all, by a huge rock which slipped just as they passed under it. Ground thus loosened causes the fall of even experienced hill cows and ponies grazing on cliff edges.

Animals from the plains will fall anywhere, from inexperience. A horse was being led up the path from my hotel ; the path curved round a small bay, in which was the kitchen. The horse backed his hind legs over, rolled down, and crashed through the kitchen roof on to a table where the cook was at work. The children saw cookie come out of the door with every hair on end, but the horse was little the worse. For months a horse hung in a tree below a cliff on the Tibet road ; I am not sure whether they ever got at him even to save the saddle. Indeed the Simla-Tibet road is dotted with the sites of accidents. Hill streams, too, take many lives. When not in spate one can generally get across, slanting downstream and springing—never dwelling enough on a foot for the water to take hold and turn you over. I was swept away once, when inexperienced, but there was a line of men further down, to help the porters, and I was caught there.

Plains shooting (except of big game) is not to be compared with sport in the hills, except as regards diet. For economy of porters in the Himalaya I carried only absolute necessaries—salt, tea, &c., and flour for myself and the men. The latter enjoyed the rank ibex or other bucks I shot, but I kept them to leeward !



I bought a sheep when I could from shepherds ; but generally for myself there were only francolins. Now it was no joke, on return to my tent after two or three days' hard stalking, to hunt the wily francolin for the larder. I needed several for the next few days' supply, and I followed the exasperating " cluck cluck," each cluck farther off at the end of the stalk—till I got them. For greens I had wild rhubarb and nettles (which make excellent spinach), and an occasional edible fungus. This was monotonous and hard gotten diet, whereas in the plains you fare luxuriously on hares, ducks, quail, and sometimes snipe. Snipe in drying rice-fields mean fever, but quails are clean shooting. Some people use call-birds to collect quails in certain fields. Another device is that of boys with kites at the farther end of the field you beat ; the quails suspect a hawk and lie close. The object in both cases is to have " hot corners."

Besides smooth-bore shooting on the plains, there are the antelopes and the gazelles, but stalking either over bare ground is weary work, and I prefer horse-back. For this there are two methods : one is to walk your horse as near as the herd will allow, then gallop in before they get fairly going, and shoot from the saddle with slugs. My own way is to go up at a walk till the herd moves ; then parallel, edging in, till they trot ; then still parallel and edging till they gallop. Finally, mark a mound or bush far ahead and near their line, race for it and jump off. Antelope are not readily diverted from their line ; if you have

judged well, the herd will sweep past within easy rifle-shot, and you pick your buck. But you need an after-rider to take your reins; otherwise your horse may spoil your shot, or, if you let go, may give you a weary chase. Some people stalk deer behind ploughs or carts, making believe to be agriculturists or herdsmen; whatever the method, it is risky work, and I never went after deer in cultivated country. There are always people somewhere around, and if you do hit or even frighten one, you will immediately be mobbed, and may reckon on a good hammering, apart from heavy compensation to be paid, and your own remorse. This, indeed, applies also to small-game shooting.

The method of deceit above referred to is not to my taste, save for circumventing the beautiful demoiselle crane (*Anthropoides virgo*), wariest of the farmers' plagues. I cannot pretend to be a sporting Pharisee, but the black buck is too noble a quarry for poaching methods. Birds are different, and a quaint dodge for them is the screen made of leaves and inscribed with devices in bright colours. Pushing this before him, the fowler approaches a covey of partridges or a bevy of quail. The indignant cocks spur at the painted enemies till a long pole with limed twigs entangles their feet.

The net of course is largely used, and toll is thus taken of the migrants (sand-grouse, snipe, and the various geese and ducks); but it is also employed for nobler game. The wandering tribe of *Mahtams* loves

pork, and I have grieved to see whole sounders of pig in their meshes. I have seen a hyena, too, objecting strongly, and a nice job they had with him. I have heard of tigers thus caught (embraced unawares in the Mahtams' surround), and that in such case the nets are left to their fate! As the Persian proverb says: "*Takat-i-mahman na dasht : Khaneh ba mahman guzasht*" (the guest was too much for him and he abandoned his house to the guest).

There is a clever device for crows: you make a paper funnel, lime the sides, drop in some grain and stick the funnel in the ground. The inquisitive crow hops up, looks in, hops away, returns, and presently inserts his beak. Then you have a hooded crow rolling about in absurd contortions; and bad boys threatening to wring its neck unless bought off by some pious Hindu. Monkeys, they say, are similarly caught with grain at the bottom of a tight-mouthed pot. The monkey has not the sense to open its fist, which it cannot withdraw closed. That fun I have never seen, but I saw, in 1858, bold climbers of the Rifle Brigade hunt down a family of *Langurs* (*Presbytis priamus*) in an isolated clump of trees in Oudh. Such gymnastics you can hardly picture!

## CHAPTER XXXIX

### THE AFGHAN WAR

Sher Ali—Committed to Russia—The Cost of a Mistake—A  
Needless War—The Duke of Argyll—A Reply Never  
Published—Three Viceroys

I HAVE mentioned the Russian expedition to Khiva in 1873, which I was not allowed to accompany. That, and Russian aggression generally, alarmed the ruler of Afghanistan into requiring definition of Lord Mayo's general promises, made in 1869. Lord Mayo had undertaken to strengthen the Amir "by such means as circumstances may require," and, as I have said before, I had a long and stormy argument before the Amir could be reconciled to this reservation. Now in 1873 Russia's action necessitated some more definite understanding, so the Amir sent his prime minister, my friend Nur Mahomed Shah before mentioned, to Lord Mayo's successor, to ask for "a promise to assist that country (Afghanistan) with money and arms in the event of invasion, and, if the Amir should prefer a request for troops, the British Government should promise to despatch troops to his aid." I was at home in 1873, but all my quotations above and below, are from my *Afghan Question and the Duke of Argyll*, written in 1880 by request of authority, and they are

to be found in the Afghan papers of 1878, published for general information in a Blue Book.

“Now even such cautious assurances as he gave” (Lord Mayo in 1869) “were regarded by the Duke of Argyll with ‘some concern,’ and pronounced to be capable of causing ‘some embarrassment.’ Compliance with the Amir’s requests for support against an invader with money, arms, and troops was certainly impossible for Lord Northbrook” (successor to Lord Mayo), “when warned by the Duke of Argyll that ‘great caution is necessary in assuring the Amir of material assistance; he already shows symptoms of claiming more than we may wish to give.’ The Amir at Ambala regarded with much doubt Lord Mayo’s reservation above quoted. Lord Northbrook wrote of him that ‘he cannot be expected to comprehend the language of European diplomacy,’ and Lord Mayo found him at first ‘suspicious that our expression meant more than appeared or than he understood.’” My article continues: “The British native envoy, in detailing to Lord Lytton in 1876 the causes of the Amir’s estrangement, mentioned that he had ‘come to question our consistency and good faith, while his counsellors are habitually seeking hidden meanings in our communications.’ Thus the minister tried to fix Lord Northbrook to something definite regarding our attitude in the case of Afghanistan being invaded. The Afghans dreaded provisos, reservations, and conditions, which appeared to nullify the assurances offered them. They had ‘come to suspect a second

meaning in all we utter.' The result of all this evasion in 1873, was stated to Sir F. Roberts by the Amir Sher Ali's son on the 22nd of October 1879:—'In 1869 my father was fully prepared to throw his lot with you. He had suffered many reverses before making himself secure on the throne; and he had come to the conclusion that his best chance of holding what he had won lay in an alliance with the British Government. He returned to Cabul from Ambala in 1869 fairly satisfied, and so he remained until the visit of Nur Mahomed Shah (his prime minister) to India in 1873. This visit brought matters to a head, . . . convinced my father that he could no longer hope, . . . and from that time he began to turn his attention to the thoughts of a Russian alliance. You know how this ended.'"

It ended in war. It cost us sixteen millions sterling. And then—after all the expense, the bloodshed, the ruin and death of the Amir, who had trusted us—we did finally give to the ruler whom we set up in his place, all and more than the guarantees which we refused to Sher Ali! Lord Northbrook was not responsible for the refusal; in 1873 he telegraphed: "Amir of Cabul alarmed at Russian progress, dissatisfied with general assurance, and anxious to know how far he can rely upon our help if invaded. I propose assuring him that if he unreservedly accepts and acts on our advice in all external relations, we will help him with money, arms, and troops if necessary, to expel unprovoked invasion." But the Duke of

Argyll's reply was : " Cabinet thinks you should inform Amir that we do not at all share his alarm, and consider there is no cause for it." Thus to Sher Ali the Cabinet denied hope of support against even invasion. Ten years later occurred what the ruler of that day (whom we had set up in Sher Ali's place) regarded as a mere petty aggression, not worth fighting about, at Panjdeh. Then the same premier of England was ready to go to war with Russia, but for this Amir's refusal of assistance ! In the interval we had bound ourselves by treaty to defend Afghanistan. Such a treaty granted in 1873 would have saved two years of war with Afghanistan at a cost of sixteen millions, and also the ruin and death of a loyal ally.

In 1875 a new ministry sent out Lord Lytton to retrieve the situation. But it was then too late ; Sher Ali was committed to Russia, and had framed a treaty with her for the event of hostilities with India. Possibly patience might have put this right. A proud monarch is not a hawk to be recalled to the lure, his just resentment had to be appeased. Lord Lytton, I wrote, " learnt from the British native agent at the court of Cabul ' that the results of the mission of Syud Nur Mahomed Shah in 1873 had offended the Amir ; ' that he was ' under the impression that, after all that had occurred in 1873 and since that time, no practical result would follow the mission ' (proposed by Lord Lytton), ' and that he entertained no hope of an improvement in our mutual relations. Nevertheless, the Viceroy (Lord Lytton) hoped, by a frank

statement of our intentions to win back the Amir from his estrangement, and he therefore invited him to depute a plenipotentiary to Peshawar to negotiate a treaty granting him the concessions he had throughout required. The Amir was, however, distinctly told to do this only if prepared to accept the indispensable condition of those concessions, viz., the location of British agents on the frontier of Afghanistan." This condition, evidently, is not "indispensable," for it does not appear in the existing treaty with Abdur Rahman. But it did exist in that of 1856 with Sher Ali's father, *and in 1869 Sher Ali expressed his willingness to accept it.* On this point the Duke of Argyll, in his book, *The Eastern Question*, threw doubt upon my statements.

The Duke of Argyll was referring to my reply, in 1875, to an inquiry by the Government of India, whether in my opinion the Amir would consent to the appointment of British residents at Herat or Candahar. Times had changed, and I did not care to commit myself to an opinion, but I said that, at Ambala, in 1869, the Amir did freely consent to them anywhere but in Cabul City itself. I referred, as authority, to my own official note of 31st March 1869, recorded in the Foreign Office. That was really conclusive, but I supported it from my private memoranda recorded at the time. Moreover, in an official note of the 26th January 1874, I had written: "At the Durbar the Amir cheerfully agreed that we should place agents, whenever we desired, at any place in Afghanistan except



Cabul itself. Indeed, Nur Mahomed" (the Amir's prime minister) "proposed this to me himself." Therefore, in writing to Nur Mahomed Shah in 1876 a letter which is recorded in the Blue Book, I wrote: "You know that in Ambala you said that, when affairs in Afghanistan had somewhat settled down, there would be no objection to the residence of British officers anywhere save at Cabul." The duke did not of course really suppose that I had concocted all this, years before, for the benefit of the Conservative Government of 1875-80! But unfortunately, for party purposes, on the eve of a general election, statesmen are not particular how they try to damage opponents, and the duke's object was to convict the Conservative Government of false statements. My evidence interfered, so he again attacked me with others in the *Contemporary Review*, and I was then invited to answer him by the article of 1880, from which I have been quoting. Previous to that, a correspondence had arisen in the *Times*, in which I was supported by Sir Henry Rawlinson, with quotations from Lord Mayo's letters to himself, and by Sir Owen Burne, who was Lord Mayo's private secretary in 1869.

Although, but for his reference to myself, I might not have written my reply to the Duke of Argyll, my chief concern in writing it was with his whole lamentable treatment of Amir Sher Ali of Afghanistan. In the *Contemporary Review* of March 1880, the duke asserted that the Amir was the victim of Lord Lytton; of "attempts to deceive," of "charges trumped up,"

of “elaborate artifices,” of “insincere professions,” of “unjust accusations,” in short, of conduct that had “compromised the political honour of the British Crown.” I have shown that Amir Sher Ali was, in fact, the victim of the duke himself, who thwarted Lord Mayo in 1869 and Lord Northbrook in 1873. But all that it became me to say was “the Amir may have been a victim, but he was the victim of circumstances, of his position between aggressive Russia on one side and indifferent England on the other.”

My qualification, and my reasons, for speaking on the subject, I stated as follows:—“As an officer employed in the frontier province of India, I took an interest in Central Asian politics from the time when the Russian advance on the Jaxartes, and the struggle between the aspirants to the Afghan throne subsequent to the death of Amir Dost Mahomed in 1863, rendered it probable that India would soon be concerned in those politics. . . . When Amir Sher Ali met the Viceroy at Ambala, in March 1869, I accompanied Lord Mayo in a confidential capacity. . . . The Government of India, in July 1869, in reporting the results of the Ambala negotiations, stated that my ‘communications with the Amir and his minister were of a most confidential character’; and in October of that year Lord Mayo wrote to the Duke of Argyll that I was entirely in the confidence of the Government of India, and that I kept up ‘an useful correspondence with the minister of the Amir.’” “When,

in 1876, the present Viceroy desired to renew with the Amir the intimate relations which had existed between him and Lord Mayo, I was again employed, and the confidence reposed in me by Lord Mayo has been continued to me by Lord Lytton. Thus the circumstances of the whole period embraced in the strictures of the Duke of Argyll are well known to me. . . . My motive for answering these charges is that I am mentioned therein by name as one of those concerned in an attempt which has 'compromised the political honour of the British Crown.' "

Then I took the charges *seriatim*. A high official wrote to me saying that two eminent statesmen, whom he named, "agree that it is a masterly paper, and I have sent copies to the Cabinet." In fact, it was easy enough to dispose of the statements of the Duke of Argyll; to justify Lord Lytton's policy was more difficult. The duke's treatment of Sher Ali was bad, but Lord Lytton's method of remedy was not perhaps the most suitable. The fact is that the Amir was so incensed, and so deeply committed to Russia, that it was very difficult to recall him to our side. That needed infinite patience and conciliation. "The treaty," I wrote in October 1876, "as now offered to the Amir, will not be accepted by him; . . . it is better to modify the treaty as regards the obnoxious demands." After discussing the result of pressing him to a probable refusal, and deprecating the various courses proposed for adoption in that case, I advocated contenting ourselves with "a treaty affording

him what he asks" (*i.e.* what he asked of Lord Northbrook in 1873), "and containing merely the stipulation of his subjection to our guidance in his foreign affairs, a subjection which he has accepted from the first, since April 1869, and the reception of occasional missions. I would leave the attainment of our further objects to the action of time." This, indeed, was the course eventually adopted with the ruler whom we set up, in 1880, in Sher Ali's place. Again, eight months later, after we broke off negotiations, I deprecated strong measures. "The only measure necessary appears to me to be to leave open to him the renewal of negotiations, letting him know distinctly the *sine qua non* terms and leaving him to propose his own conditions *per contra*."

However, it was not to be. Perhaps Sher Ali was too far committed to Russia, and could not return to us; anyway, in October 1878, he received a Russian envoy and would not receive ours. In those two years we had been too imperious, I think, and Sher Ali consequently grew obstinate. I knew and admired that monarch, and I regret his fate. I still believe that gentler methods would have succeeded, and that, in the frame of mind which the Amir had reached in 1878, it was a mistake to force a mission upon him. That this mission, even though headed by the famous Neville Chamberlain, would be turned back by force, was a foregone conclusion; and war necessarily followed. Possibly that was the inevitable consequence of the action of Mr. Gladstone and the Duke

of Argyll in 1869-73, but I thought then, and still think, that it was evitable by Lord Lytton.

I had asked in one of my notes : " Are we prepared to render the Afghans hostile ? " to adopt a new policy " which greatly resembles annexation ? " Holding these views, I necessarily fell out of the running ; for my own interests, silence would have been better. But our name is really, I believe, De Grès (grit-rock), and stubbornness, therefore, is in-grès-ned in us ; my uncle in council (later Sir William Grey, Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal) told me that his lot was to be " a drag." Perhaps by my perversity I escaped the fate of the envoy whom we eventually forced upon Afghanistan, slain there with his entire staff and escort. Lord Lytton always remained most cordial, and in other matters he was favourably disposed towards the views which I put forward. But the eventual fate of my *Afghan Question and the Duke of Argyll* was this. The duke's attack having appeared in the *Contemporary Review*, one of the statesmen whom I before mentioned arranged with the editor for publication of my reply. Meanwhile occurred the general election, resulting in the defeat of his party. Thereon the editor wrote to him that " the new political departure, owing to the elections, takes off much of the interest of the topic of Major Grey's paper," and he returned it. I wrote then to Lord Salisbury that I thought no more could be done. He replied that he was inclined to agree with me, though " some such answer was greatly needed," because, he said, etiquette prevented

the out-going ministry from defending itself in the press.

This was in May 1880. Two months earlier Lord Salisbury had proposed to me to go as consul-general to Astrabad. Before leaving Bahawalpur in 1879, I had furnished two thousand camels for the Afghan war, and the assistant political agent had taken the State troops thither. I hoped for employment in Afghanistan, and when Persia was proposed to me it was a disappointment. I could make a sacrifice for the sake of active service, but not for the mere purpose of being a thorn in the side of Russia at Astrabad. So ended my twelve years' connection with Afghan affairs, or rather it had ended two years before, with my unfortunate stubbornness in 1877-78.

Three viceroys have at different times been disposed to take me by the hand, but with all I have been unfortunate. Lord Lawrence, I fear, was annoyed by my disregard of his telegrams in Bhutan, though the result which I attained was, as he afterwards wired, "extremely satisfactory." Lord Mayo was assassinated. Lord Lytton naturally could not employ an officer who was opposed to his policy. They were three great men. Lord Mayo was great in soul as in form, powerful in intellect as in physique, a noble man indeed. Lord Lawrence we regarded with mixed feelings. He was one of ourselves, had been through our mill, and we admired him. But regiments object to a "ranker" colonel: he looks too close. Our John Lawrence was a "driver," too: he never spared

himself or others. Moreover, he had prepossessions ; but for the firmness in council of Durand and Grey, the aristocracy of Oudh would have suffered like that of the North-West, now United Provinces, where Lawrence had his training and whence he brought his traditions. Great he was, still not perhaps altogether a successful Viceroy.

“ One should never prophesy unless one knows ; ” nevertheless I think that what I wrote in a memorandum of November 1879, may some day come to be fulfilled. After we had deposed Sher Ali’s son and successor for complicity in the destruction of our mission above referred to, I stated in that note for Lord Lytton the four possible courses of action : (1) annexation ; (2) a regency in the name of the deposed Amir’s son ; to both of these there were strong objections, chiefly of expense ; (3) to place on the throne another of Dost Mahomed’s descendants ; (4) to break up the Afghan kingdom into small states, directly dependent on ourselves—like the protected Sikh states which, for thirty-five years, interposed between India and a formidable neighbour. The third course, if practicable, would be advisable. . . . The grounds on which Lord Mayo desired to interpose a strong independent state between Russia and ourselves are as valid now as in 1869. This, however, does not now seem feasible, as no competent ruler can be found to manage such a kingdom. I regard it therefore as no longer possible to maintain that united Afghanistan. . . . That kingdom was created by

Dost Mahomed Khan out of the fragments of the Durani empire. . . . He possessed originally Cabul and Ghazni, and added thereto Candahar (in 1855); Sabzawar, Farah, and Lash (in 1857); Maimana and other states north of Hazaristan (in 1858); Kunduz and Badakshan (in 1860); and finally Herat (in 1863). The tribes of Hazaristan, the mountain tract enclosed by the above states, were never practically reduced to subjection. I consider, under the circumstances, the fourth course to be the wisest and easiest." Lord Lytton approved this view at the time; but in 1880 the competent ruler, whose existence I doubted, was at last found. A terrible man he was, who held his own ruthlessly; his son, less terrible, now occupies a precarious throne. For two reasons I doubt the permanence of the kingdom: (1) the traditional policy of Russia in Asia; (2) the instability of Oriental despotisms, dependent on personal capacity, which is not hereditary, and threatened by rivals when the ruler is not capable. The sons of Dost Mahomed were strong men, but none had his commanding capacity. They fought, therefore, for four years, and Sher Ali at last established himself by our support. The case may probably arise again, and, when it does, solution number four will, I think, be the result.



## CHAPTER XL

### OUR RULE IN INDIA

Indian Finance—The Use of Indian Chiefs—Lord Lytton and Lord Dufferin—A Prophecy

“THE Viceroy said that he had read my pamphlets with great interest. He had just said in a letter to Lord Salisbury that I was the only officer, civil or military, in India who had taken these large views. He said that to carry them out would have the immense political advantage of showing to all who hope otherwise, that the feudatory chiefs are embarked with us. At present we are a great feudal power, with, however, none of the advantages of feudalism. He said that he had met with nothing but opposition in discussing my views. The military would not hear of them.” The above is an extract from my notes of “My first conversation with Lord Lytton” on the 20th September 1876. That conversation was mainly on Afghan affairs, regarding which Lord Lytton said that, before leaving England, “he had asked Lord Lawrence whether, if he were still out here, he would maintain the same policy, and Lord Lawrence had said he would never change.” This was the policy of “Masterly Inactivity,” which worked all the mischief shown in previous letters.

To return to my pamphlets spoken of by Lord Lytton. These were the *Use of Indian Chiefs*, and *Indian Finance*. They summarised proposals regarding the use of ruling chiefs, both in defence and in counsel, and regarding administrative and financial decentralisation and devolution, which I had urged in the press ever since, in 1869, I was asked on the part of the ruler to Gwalior to bring to Lord Mayo's notice that chief's desire to be honoured with the defence of Peshawar. These proposals have been recently republished in book form, as *The India of the Future and its Defence*.

As regards the use of Indian chiefs in defence, Lord Lytton was unsuccessful at the time; a strong committee of military and political officers condemned the measure. For their use in counsel, Lord Lytton's attempt was recently said by the Secretary of State for India to have been "utter failure"; the reason being, as stated by Lord Lytton's biographer, that "the Government at home had not sanctioned Lord Lytton's proposals to establish an Indian Privy Council and native peerage." He did, nevertheless, at the Imperial Assemblage, on the 1st of January 1877, announce that Her Majesty, "being desirous of seeking from time to time, in matters of importance, the counsel and advice of the princes and chiefs of India," had authorised him to appoint certain "Counsellors of the Empress." They were never consulted, however, and have died out, but there is now some prospect of the establishment of such an

Indian House of Lords. The use of Indian chiefs in defence was later commenced by Lord Dufferin, on the initiative taken in 1885 by the Nizam of Hyderabad, the premier prince of India, but it still remains a tentative and incomplete measure. Both measures are again in hand ; but even now I am told that “ the opposition and the difficulties are great.”

After the failure of these schemes, Lord Lytton permitted me to continue the discussion in the press. In 1879, from Algiers, I sent to the United Service Institution of India a small tentative scheme, to begin with, for native states' contingents to be placed in some of our garrisons. This the council of the institution published with a table and map of the proposed arrangements. At home I discussed the measure, in 1880, in the *Contemporary Review*, and afterwards in the *Indian Daily Press*, till, on the Nizam's initiative, the matter was taken up in 1888, when I reported thereon in reply to the Punjab Government. So far as regards the use of the chiefs in defence, it was useless to press their use in counsel while England listened only to those of whom Lord Lytton wrote, in 1877 : “ The only political representatives of native opinion are the *Baboos*, whom we have educated to write semi-seditious articles in the native press, and who really represent nothing but the social anomaly of their own position.” Of them Lord Salisbury had said, in 1876, that “ the literary class are politically alive enough, but, under the most favourable circumstances, they never give any political strength to a

state. . . . In India they cannot be anything else than opposition in quiet times, rebels in time of trouble." These, however, had the ear of England till recently they showed themselves in their true light, as predicted by the above statesman. This was the opportunity for renewing my proposals in favour of the aristocracy.

The *Madras Mail* summarised my book as follows :—  
“ Colonel Grey has expounded the scheme as a counterpoise to the agitation for autonomy of the educated classes, whose main object he believes to be self-aggrandisement, and not the promotion of a prosperous India under an indigenous rule. This suspicion is evidently shared by Sir Edmund Elles, the late Military Member of the Viceroy’s Council, who has written a commendatory preface to the monograph. Colonel Grey bases his proposals on the assumption that at some remote period it may be possible to concede the autonomy asked for, but under different conditions from those of present-day agitators. He considers that any scheme for the gradual substitution of more popular institutions, for the existing forms of government, should recognise the princes of India as our legitimate successors in its general administration. With this object, he would expand their territories and enlarge their forces, supplementing them by strong garrisons from home at strategical points which would aid in the general defence. For obvious reasons the coast districts would remain under our direct control, as well as the frontier tracts, but the rest of

the country would be divided among the ruling princes, and they would govern it subject to such limitations as might be desirable to impose.”

For the acceptance of novel ideas occasion is needed. This Russia afforded thirty years ago, when the Nizam of Hyderabad offered his sword and his purse to the Indian Government, and the use of Indian chiefs in defence was then commenced by Lord Dufferin. Next, the hostility of a large proportion of the educated class in India furnished occasion for Lord Lytton's second measure, and Lord Minto proposed to use the aristocracy in counsel. Similarly, for the commencement of devolution of the internal administration on the Indian chiefs (which was the third of my proposed measures), occasion is required, and that will arise presently.

In India, as in Egypt, rule has been forced upon us by anarchy. Our reluctance is shown beyond cavil by constant protests, in both cases. In successive despatches (the last, of 1834) the East India Company declared its desire to devolve its administration upon Indians when fit. The progress made between 1867 and 1903, in fulfilment of the Queen's Proclamation of 1858, has been shown by Lord Curzon. He gave the figures, and he added that “whatever standard we apply, the results are the same; there has been a progressive increase in native employment and a progressive decline in European employment.” But unfortunately, this progress of native employment, in the high offices, was in the wrong

direction ; the aristocracy, the leaders whom alone the Indian people regard, have been postponed to the *Baboos*. As I have written in my book : “ It is no gratification to the nobility and landed gentry, the men, be it remembered, to whom the masses alone look, that the *Baboos* are judges of the High Courts, Members of the Legislative Council, and other high officials. Or the contrary, it is this aristocracy who resent that state of things.”

I hazard the assertion that this generation will see a commencement of the reforms which I have advocated for the last forty years. One third of the Indian continent is already ruled by native princes as feudatories of the empire ; the gradual extension, during the present century, of this method of self-government, so suitable and congenial to Indians, is the best solution of the Indian problem as regards internal administration, and is the only solution as regards imperial defence. Without contingents aggregating some 200,000 troops, to be maintained by the Indian states, on the same principles as in the case of states of the German empire, India cannot be defended : England will not bear alone the burden of her defence. This idea may shock those who know native states' troops as they now are. But of course, native states' troops *can* be made efficient. Already contingents aggregating 20,000 men, which are supplied by a few of the states, have been fairly well trained. Indian material is good ; the failure of Asiatic armies has been due to lack of confidence in Asiatic officers. These

hitherto have lacked both zeal and honesty, and are justly mistrusted by their troops. As yet Indian soldiers rely only upon British officers for their pay and welfare ; to do the best for them in quarters and in the field, and to set them example in action. But train young Indian aristocrats (not Baboos), as now done in the Imperial Cadet Corps, associate them with British officers in a probation of two years in Indian regiments, and *then* post them to the Indian army : then shall we see indigenous officers of India as good as those of Japan.

## CHAPTER XLI

### POLICY AND PAGEANT

Lord Lytton—A Brilliant Viceroy—The Imperial Assemblage of 1877—Warden of the Marches—Proclamation Day—The Great Durbars

LORD LYTTON was the most brilliant Viceroy I have known. His measures failed only because he was before his time. Those for the use of Indian chiefs in defence and in counsel, thwarted in 1876-77, are now in hand. Another measure, similarly thwarted at that time, but since carried out, was the creation of a frontier province. My memoranda of 1869 show that this was first discussed in the time of Lord Mayo. Before Sir Henry Durand governed the Punjab, he advised Lord Mayo in foreign policy. To him I was told, in 1869, to take my proposals on an Intelligence Department for Central Asia. He "pronounced the scheme generally good, and doubtless requisite; an alteration in the present conduct of frontier relations he has long deemed necessary, being carried on as they are under two Governments. . . . The frontier policy must in future be conducted by the Viceroy directly, or through a special department of the Punjab Government; in either case entirely separate from the administrative departments;" the details follow in my



memorandum. Nothing was done till, in 1877, Lord Lytton took up the matter; I was then allowed to prepare a detailed scheme for the new province, but Lord Lytton's draft measure was meanwhile so mutilated at home that he dropped it. When the papers published in the 1877 *Gazette* are compared with what has since been done, they show Lord Lytton's foresight.

So do his measures (promptly reversed after his resignation) for restraining the license of the native press. *Nasr*, Governor of Khorassan, wrote in A.D. 748 to the Caliph of the day for support in repressing sedition:—"As wood nurses fire to flame, so do incendiary speeches precipitate war." Similarly, Lord Lytton sought to prevent incendiary writing. Now, thirty years after a hostile Home Government repealed his press legislation, Lord Minto has stated the need for its renewal! Mr. Mitra, in the *Nineteenth Century Review*, quotes a very great lawyer to the effect that the question here is not of "freedom of the press," but of freedom of the press for sedition. He shows that Lord Lytton's Act was so effective that it never had to be used. In the three years of its currency there was not a single prosecution under the Act, because sedition ceased. It was repealed and sedition recommenced, gradually reaching the present pass.

One great measure Lord Lytton was able to carry out. The Imperial Assemblage of 1877 was not a mere pageant; it was an event which marked an

epoch. Therein it differed from the Delhi Durbar of 1902. The latter celebrated an accession to the throne, which must often recur ; the former proclaimed the Queen of England as Empress of India, a fact unique in history. " Princes, Chiefs, and Nobles," said the Viceroy to the brilliant assemblage at the Delhi Railway Station, on the 23rd December 1876, " It is with feelings of unusual pleasure that I find you assembled from all parts of India, to take part in a ceremonial which I trust will be the means of drawing still closer the bonds of union between the Government of Her Majesty and the great allies and feudatories of the empire." Sixty-three were there, many of whom I knew, and it was with pleasure and astonishment that I marked the mutual cordiality of great princes who had never before met, and who hitherto had been divided by rivalries and jealousies, in some cases by memory of ancient wrongs and armed contests.

The 24th was Sunday. On Christmas Day the only ceremony was the deputation of officers by the Viceroy to inquire after the health of the ruling princes. Such deputations, and the receipt and return of formal visits, are preliminaries absolutely required by Oriental etiquette. These visits took from the 26th December to the 30th, and to each chief was presented a " Banner as a personal gift from Her Majesty the Queen in commemoration of her assumption of the title of Empress of India. Her Majesty trusts that it may never be unfurled without reminding you, not only

of the close union between the throne of England and your loyal and princely house, but also of the earnest desire of the paramount power to see your dynasty strong, prosperous, and permanent.”

I was present on deputation by the Punjab Government, but I had previously been permitted to offer suggestions for the Assemblage. One of these referred to the scheme I had put forward for the use of the chiefs in defence ; it was the creation, on the precedent of the Moghal empire, of a great office of State, namely, *Sipar-i-Hind*, or “Warden of the Marches.”

“*Duties.*—To furnish contingents for frontier defence. *Privileges.*—(1) Absorption of existing local forces in the above ; (2) remission of tribute or subsidy.” (The maintenance of special local forces of our army, or the payment of tribute, had been in many cases the condition of survival of conquered states.)

Unhappily Lord Lytton, though allowed to create counsellors from among the Indian chiefs, had not been able to carry that second measure, of associating the chiefs in the defence of the empire, the announcement of which would have so befitted this historical occasion. Even the measure of associating them in the councils of the empire could only be announced in the form to which it had been cut down at home—namely, that eight ruling chiefs were included with the governors of provinces and the members of the Supreme Council as “Counsellors of the Empress”—an empty title of which the holders have died out.

Monday, the 1st of January 1877, was the Proclamation day. I have witnessed many Durbars: I saw the historical Ambala Durbar, held by Lord Mayo for the Amir of Afghanistan; also the wonderful Chapter of the Star of India for investiture of Prince Alfred in 1870; I was present at the Great Durbar, and Chapters of Indian Orders, held at Delhi in 1902; but nothing ever "came off" as did the Imperial Assemblage.<sup>1</sup> It went with a will from the first; I was there a month and never heard a grumble. One remarkable feature of the proceedings was a march past of native states' troops. It was unique. Even the drilled impassiveness of our native soldiers could not stand it. The British troops were stolid, but along the blocks of dark faces opposite (there were 10,000 troops in line of close columns facing the saluting flag) I saw run gleams of white. As in Tennyson's *Princess*, "The huge bush-bearded barons heaved and blew, and smart young captains flashed their glittering teeth." I believe that day settled the question of trained states' contingents as no amount of verbal persuasion could have done. Each chief recognised the futility of his own forces, while he laughed at the absurdity of those of his neighbour. It was an object lesson, mortifying but wholesome, and to the spectators amusing beyond words.

Who could hide a smile as mock Highlanders shambled past much embarrassed by their kilts and bonnets, or black-faced "British artillerymen" in

<sup>1</sup> This was written before the Durbar celebrations of 1911.

white drill jackets and trousers and disreputable helmets, or *cent-gardes* of the second empire rattling like peas inside their huge cuirasses and lost in their horse-hair plumes! The indigenous types were little less absurd; some like sausages in garments stuffed with cotton-wool till sword proof; others in chain mail and weird steel casques; some strutting with the infinite pomposity of the *gajpati* (elephant-gait), some gambolling on foot, or caracoling their horses, turning towards the four quarters in defiance with waving spear or brandished sword! However, no words can do justice to it, and no one will ever see the like again unless at a Covent Garden pantomime, or the Hippodrome.

I have spoken above of Lord Lytton's attempt to remodel our frontier system, which was frustrated at home. In the course of the discussions at Simla our punitive methods were considered—namely, retaliatory expeditions and blockade. The former, it was said, increase the hostility of the tribesmen, the latter aggravate the poverty which is the cause of their raids. While they are hungry, plunder they must, either in the hills or the plains. The hills yield little, whereas the plains are rich. As said by Thomas Love Peacock,—

“The mountain sheep are sweeter,  
But the valley sheep are fatter;  
We therefore deemed it meet  
To carry off the latter.”

What was the remedy? Not, certainly, to supply them with the fat sheep; to pay blackmail.

Moreover, the frontier was our only school of fighting. Regiments without tradition of battle are apt to afford the spectacle of Tofrek (McNeil's *Zariba*, near Suakin, in 1885), where the flight of one such regiment imperilled the whole force. Again, we depend largely on the martial spirit of the frontier tribes for our own service. Lack of opportunity has weakened this spirit in our Indian subjects, and we look abroad for fighting men. Now, a Pathan "fat and scant of breath" through long peace is of no use. Therefore the measure which finally commended itself, in principle, was employment in our service of the young bloods, who would otherwise be spoiling for a fight in their villages. True, our teaching may be turned against us, but a Pathan already knows all about fighting as an individual. It is combination and discipline that they lack, brains and conduct; whence our superiority. Now, no amount of service in our army will give a Pathan brains.

## CHAPTER XLII

### PAST AND FUTURE

Judicial Work—Punishment and its Consequences—The Way with the Native—Forest Inspection—Work and its Result—The Task of Indian Officers—The Future Hour

My life as commissioner of division was not congenial. Instead of “doing,” it was mostly seeing to others doing their work. As I had been supported and protected by my own superiors, so I endeavoured to do by my subordinates. In concluding my “charge-note” of the Delhi division for my successor’s instruction I said: “It is a safe assumption that one’s juniors are at least as honest as oneself, at least as zealous, at least as capable if less experienced. Therefore I always take it that a deputy-commissioner is right unless it is very clear that he is actually wrong—not merely that his view differs from mine; that, even if wrong, he meant for the best, and can only be disheartened and rendered less zealous and efficient by censure; that while doing his utmost for the public welfare, he is entitled to all the support, and the protection in case of mistakes, which the commissioner can afford.” Then I said of native officials that “I am certain that confidence pays. One may get let in occasionally, but the hearty co-operation which is the

general result of confidence, fully compensates for the deception sometimes experienced." Right loyally indeed, during forty odd years of hard driving, did natives of India work with me.

During my commissionership befell that clashing of Hindu rejoicing and Mahomedan mourning, and consequent rioting, which is the periodical outcome of the diverse revolutions of the Hindu solar and the Mahomedan lunar calendars. In any reasonable proportion of numbers the Mahomedan is master of the Hindu in towns, but the rural Hindu is a sturdy man. I have written previously of the great power of the money-lenders; one of the riots in my division showed this especially. The town Hindus summoned their rural debtors; rustics are not generally bigoted, but the debtors had to go. A native magistrate described to me the scene as he saw it before he fled and hid himself; the rush of brawny yokels "swinging their staves and leaping like deer." But they broke like deer when a police sergeant had the moral courage to fire a volley of buck-shot, without orders. Illiterate, common, dull; in time of trouble that sergeant was worth all the B.A.s in my division. So the inspector-general of police and I stood by him, and after his trial he was promoted as rapidly as possible.

How much more merciful is it to act promptly and sternly than to let disorder grow. I have elsewhere related the attack of the Kuka kine-fanatics on the Mahomedan state of Maler Kotla, which they had prefaced by murder of butchers elsewhere. They



were gathering to renew that attack when the State authorities checked them by blowing away from guns some Kukas taken in the first attack. These men were "guilty of death," and blowing away from guns is the most instantaneous and merciful form of execution that I have seen. It makes an immense impression, as we saw in the mutiny, and as was shown by the immediate break-up of the Kuka gathering. The British officer present allowed the execution, it had the full approval of Indian opinion, and it saved much bloodshed. But the British officer was dismissed.

The judicial part of my business was distressing. In 1884 I had thankfully made my bow as civil and sessions judge: but even when commissioners were relieved of those duties, they remained appellate courts for land cases. Now I have just seen in the papers the end of a land case, between a man and his step-mother, after thirty years. And there still remains the suit for mesne profits! Such ruin by our imported European judicial system of appeal on appeal, and revision, and reference of new issues, &c., &c., *ad infinitum*, is sad to witness. M. Chailley has fully described the evil in *L'Inde Britannique*, the ruin caused by our judicial system; my connection with that system is the one regret of my official life. Every one knows the remedies, viz., to limit the present license of appeal and to debar advocacy except in the high and divisional courts. Many Indian states, Bahawalpur for instance, debar advocacy altogether, and with great benefit to their people. But the real

saving of the people lies in a measure adopted in my division, some twenty-five years ago, by a most devoted district officer—namely, boards of conciliators, whose business it was to prevent litigation in the courts. I myself, when district officer, often called upon some of the greybeards sitting round my tent to “take these fools away and save them if you can,” and they generally settled the cases.

*L'Inde Britannique* shows evils on the “criminal side” as great as on the “civil side.” I am coming round in my old age to the Indian view that, in India, we British regard the individual too much, the public welfare not enough. Very timidly did I recently suggest to an officer of great experience, the view that it is *not* “better that ten guilty should escape than that one innocent should suffer.” Instead of rebuke I found agreement! Moreover, he quoted the similar opinion of a retired man of mark, a man of even stronger religious views than ours. Occasional undeserved punishment *must* be better than the sad failure of our criminal administration as described by M. Chailley.

Is it not possible, too, that “club-law” may sometimes be less harmful than our law? On the frontier a feud in which some hot blood is let, which can be well spared, is settled by giving so many girls in marriage as are equal to the excess of lives lost on one side, after striking a balance. No great harm has been done and peace is ensured. Compare this with the methods of wreaking a grudge described in Sir Edmund Cox’s “Police” books; or with a recent

Punjab case in which a man killed his own daughter to involve an enemy! I remember a feud fought out to ruin in the courts. It was over a too friendly dog, *déra áshná spai*. The new possessor declared his intention of keeping the dog. In old days it would have been as described in the Bon Gaultier ballads—

“ I am fery glad to learn what you mention  
 Since I can prevent any such intention.  
 So Mhic-Mac Methusaleh gave some warlike howls,  
 Trew his skhian-dhu an' stuck it in his powels.”

Very dreadful, no doubt; but are years of false cases, criminal and civil, with endless lying, forgery, perjury, and eventual ruin of all concerned: are these better? Indians, I believe, say No.

What an Indian official chiefly needs, after the necessary equipment of great toughness, moral as well as physical, are—(1) the language; (2) a liking for, and frequent association with, the people, especially in their sports. Freedom from “side,” give and take, courtesy and good-will, as surely bring return as superior airs and meddling interference are hindrance to success. Familiarity is not necessary or desired; what is needed is comradeship such as exists between the British officers and the Indians in the native regiments. In business give way gracefully (or seem to) as far as possible. I remember a blunt native state official, whom I admired, but whom I had often to thwart. He would burst into my room raging—“*teri tajwiz bilkul nakis hai*” (thy idea is quite rotten); “indeed, *Shah Sahib*” (king master, the respectful

address to a descendant of the prophet), "please to explain how." Then we would have it out, and the old gentleman would depart; not perhaps content, but mollified. I remember with gratification being once told that I was always *Khandeh pësháni* (debonair). Not always, I fear, as my nerve gradually failed from advancing years, overwork, worry, and anxiety. An Indian official has many anxious moments, and it is only the very exceptional men who can retain equanimity after long years of killing grind in this awful climate and these depressing surroundings. "Is it wonderful," remarked one old officer to another, "that we are rude to natives, when we are so rude to each other!" Alas for human weakness; the spirit inclines to courtesy, but the exhausted flesh to irritability.

Indeed, too much is required of us. The example set is that of Naushérwán, a Persian king, who is said to have had a night-bell for the seekers of his justice. I wonder what sort of day's work he did after answering it all night! "Listen to every one," was the order of the John Lawrence days in the Punjab—an order which broke down those who were not as tough as our famous John. You ride out to do a job. A man stops you with a petition. "Come and see, and then you will do justice; only come." So you go, miles perhaps, only to find at last that the matter was settled years ago, after appeals right up to the Privy Council! Your time has been lost and your job postponed. I remember, in 1860, seeing a district officer start for his

office, only a few hundred yards from his house. He never got there! First one old woman, then some importunate man, then this, then that. How about the suitors who were waiting in his court? In fact, the ideas of that day were as impracticable as those recorded of Naushérwán.

Revenue or forest settlements took up much of my time as commissioner (December 1882 to December 1894, with an interval at home), as indeed they did in Bahawalpur, both before and after that period. There were four districts under settlement out of the seven in my division, and I effected revenue settlements in four native states then under ward. Of course my work was only supervision, whether in Bahawalpur or in the Delhi division and its native states. Indeed, in the British districts this should have been quite light, but for the fact that, in those days, a wave of benevolence was passing over our settlement officers. Now, Her Majesty's Government had to be carried on, so I, as settlement commissioner, struggled against undue remission of the State dues. This entailed personal appraisal of a considerable percentage of the British villages; in the native states, where I had not British officers for the work, that percentage was still larger; so first and last I had some years of trying labour added to my regular duties as commissioner.

Why, you may ask, did I bother myself with this in the native states? Well, I quote from the above mentioned "charge note" regarding one of them—

“ What has been effected in Kotla can only be judged by contrasting the state of things before 1886, as appears from the files, with the peace and comfort now existing. I found that state of things quite intolerable, so I undertook the remedy : but, as regards my own comfort, it was almost worse than the disease.” The struggles of the Pathan conquerors, both among themselves and with their Sikh subjects, had been the despair of successive commissioners. When I went there, in 1886, on taking charge of the state, I found, from the frontier to the capital, one whirl of shouting men. The only cure was a revenue settlement and record of rights, and similarly in three other states—one of them in the Himalaya. Then, in the Himalaya, there were the forests of eighteen states in rapid course of destruction. The files were enormous, but it needed walking, not writing, to mend matters. If the short-sighted chiefs were allowed to go on selling off timber, and the people to go on wasting and destroying it, then denudation was in sight, with all its attendant evils to climate and rivers in the plains below, and desiccation and erosion of the hills above.

In these hills both my settlement supervision in the Bashahr state and my forest inspection in all states from the Doons up to Tibet were severe work for an elderly man. Where riding was possible, the states lent me hill ponies, after I had run serious risks with my own nags. Once, being exhausted, I mounted a horse already very nervous from the perils he had passed in hand. I put up my umbrella and he went

crazy. The narrow path had crumbled to nothing a little further on; he rushed so far and then tried to turn back, fortunately outwards. A forefoot slipped, but his powerful quarters saved him. Plains horses are most dangerous in the mountains. I shudder to think now of the risks into which I have led my children, and the escapes they have had. I saw one of my daughters once, on a frightened horse, by her perfect "hands" rear him up against the hillside, on a narrow path, and pivot him round on his hind feet to rush away from the terrifying object! But hill ponies can do anything a goat can. I have seen them, with the children up, climbing a slippery bank with their knees and chins. When on field inspection, I have been carried along the coping of a terrace wall clutching nervously at the crevices above to keep the pony up!

All this was supervision of settlement. Forest inspection, of course, was quite beyond even hill ponies. Apart from other troubles therein, I was twice struck down by sun in the oven-like lower hills. This had happened to me before, in Oudh in 1858, at the rushing of a small fort; very violent effort in the Indian sun is risky, but otherwise a temperate man can stand great exposure. Then there was the ground, not so easy to me as in my youth. Once I lost the regent of a state, who followed me against my strict orders and fell. My wanderings took me over glaciers again, after many years, and I renewed the pleasures of glissading. That needs experience. A friend once told me of how he could not stop himself, and his life

was saved by a snag which transfixed his thigh and anchored him, with most of his clothes and much of his skin burnt off! A noted climber used to accompany me. He enjoyed a high salary in the Public Works Department, for which he had pioneered a wooden gallery across the face of the stupendous *Rogi* cliffs. Only this man Bhalku, or a monkey, could have done it. Most of his salary went for years in reimbursing the treasure-chest which he had thrown to appease the Sutlej river once, when a great flood threatened the Wangtú bridge! He never could understand why his pay was cut. Had not the sacrifice saved the bridge?

But I must wind up with my forest work, which of all my services I remember with most pleasure. Regarding these exertions, a subsequent superintendent of hill states wrote that they were “the *punctum saliens* of the new departure, whereby the whole of the Simla hill states has been brought under a system of conservancy;” and that the measures were “in time, and only just in time, to save the hill forests from destruction.” It is gratifying now to receive visits from those states with reports of the results achieved. These results equal in profit—indirect (as regards erosion and desiccation) as well as direct—those of my irrigation efforts in Dera, Bahawalpur and Ferozepore; in economy (checking appreciation of timber and fuel) they equal the curtailment of the Bhutan campaign; and they were attained under great difficulties. There was the usual Governmental inertia.



There was the sturdy claim of the people to destroy the forest at their will; the ignorant opposition of the chiefs, restricted to living on income instead of capital. One of these recently said to me: "The hills would soon have been bare and our elephants sold" (*i.e.* extravagance ended). Finally, there was my own failing capacity for the long physical effort, and the ceaseless discussion, argument, persuasion, which finally obtained consent of the chiefs and acquiescence of the people. Both at last took my word for the benefits to come.

The Punjab Government wrote to the Government of India in 1894 (prompted, as in 1884, by my wonderful assistant of 1875 in Ferozepore,<sup>1</sup> who in 1884 was a secretary to Government and in 1894 chief secretary, and, later, one of my successors in Delhi)—"The lieutenant-governor desires to place on record his appreciation of the special services rendered by Colonel Grey to the states under his control. A land revenue settlement has been effected in the Kotla state . . . also in Kalsia, and in Patandi. . . . The present successful administration of the Bashahr state and the settlement of land revenue were inaugurated by Colonel Grey, as was the scheme for forest conservancy in the Simla hill states. . . . His Honour does not doubt that Colonel Grey's name will be long remembered by all these states" (five in the plains, eighteen in the hills) "with gratitude and affection." Also perhaps, for a while, in Ferozepore, and in Mamdot,

<sup>1</sup> See Chapter XXXII.

and in Bahawalpur, to which last-named state, as before mentioned, I was sent for a third period of four years, some five years after my retirement from Punjab service.

Looking back over fifty years, though we must all admit, with Hamlet, that "use every man after his desert and who shall 'scape whipping," yet I am satisfied that, on the whole, we Indian officers do our very best. It is not much, still—

"Enough if something from our hand have power  
To live and move, and serve the future hour."

THE END