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TORONTO

POLITICAL FRONTIERS
AND
BOUNDARY MAKING

BY

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INTRODUCTION

AMONGST the very scanty literature which exists on the subject of international boundaries I can find no authoritative opinion based on practical experience. Certain eminent writers have set forth an academic ideal which is usually resting on the assumption that the civilised world has already attained to a cultured eminence which admits of a purely artificial line of separation as sufficient for nations, who are, or should be, anxious to assimilate one with another and to dwell in bonds of mutual goodwill and international brotherhood. Thus Professor Lyde, of the London University, dealing with types of political frontiers in Europe, lays it down that three points are of vital importance in deciding on the position of a frontier :

(1) The racial unit should as far as possible coincide with the geographical unit, especially if that racial unit has proved incapable of assimilation.

(2) That in choosing a new political owner of any inhabited area, first consideration should be given to the capacity of the new owner to assimilate others.

(3) That the features used for a frontier should be those where men naturally meet—"which is not on water partings or mountain crests."

Another geographical writer, Miss Semple, in an interesting work on the "Influence of geographical environment," says: "A race boundary involves almost inevitably a cultural boundary, often, too, a linguistic and religious, occasionally a political boundary. The last three are subject to wild fluctuation, frequently overstepping all barriers of race and contracted civilisations . . . we may lay down the rule that the greater, more permanent, and deep-seated the contrast on the two sides of a border, the greater is its significance; and that on this basis boundaries rank in importance, with few exceptions, in the following order: racial, cultural, linguistic, political. The less marked the contrasts in general, the more rapid and complete the process of assimilation on the belt of the borderland."

Having been called on to give practical consideration to this problem of boundary settlement in many parts of the world far removed from each other, I may perhaps venture to assert that these theories of the principles which should govern the adoption of an international boundary by no means accord with the exigencies of a practical delimitation. Believing that the first and greatest object of a national frontier is to ensure peace and goodwill between contiguous peoples by putting a definite edge to the national political horizon, so as to limit unauthorised expansion and trespass, I have endeavoured to show (I fear but crudely) what is the nature of a frontier that best fulfils these conditions in practice.

The discussion of such an important subject as

international frontiers and their boundaries might well exercise the literary skill of a profound thinker and great writer. It would expand into material for many volumes if historical references were fully consulted. All that can be done within the compass of such an elementary work as this is to show how much at variance with the theory of idealists are the hard facts of practical necessity which invariably govern the demarcation of a scientific boundary ; and to suggest methods for dealing with them when they arise. I am indebted to the *Nineteenth Century* for permission to republish an article which is to be found in Chapter VII, and to the *Contemporary Review* for Chapter XIV. The chapter on "Geographical Problems" formed the subject of a lecture at the Royal Geographical Society, which is here reproduced with but slight alterations.

POLITICAL FRONTIERS AND BOUNDARY MAKING

CHAPTER I

EVOLUTION OF THE FRONTIER

As the habitable world becomes more and more packed with humanity, and its civilised nationalities and communities become concentrated with an ever-increasing population seeking not merely food but the means for existence in higher phases of social comfort and environment, boundaries become more and more important in the partitioning of its economically useful areas. This is, indeed, the natural and inevitable result of the growth of population and of intellectual energy. Thus it happens that in the recent history of the world most of the important wars, and of international quarrels to which war seemed to be the inevitable sequel, have arisen over disputed boundaries. Wars based on religious differences, or on personal ambition and intrigue, are giving place to those caused by the natural impulse of expansion, which may be directed by individuals and may lead to a *rôle* of personal advancement, but which fundamentally are as much a natural cause for

explosion as are the gases generated in a confined space. This difficulty of increasing population and the resulting expansion of nations may well give grave cause for anxiety to the civilised world in future, for it shows no signs of diminishing ; on the contrary, the necessity for the most careful separation of spheres of national activity will continue to increase until such time as the balance of power shall be so entirely under control that it will be possible to dictate to nationalities the physical limits of their existence.

Boundaries are the inevitable product of advancing civilisation ; they are human inventions not necessarily supported by nature's dispositions, and as such they are only of solid value so long as they can be made strong enough and secure enough to prevent their violation and infringement.

Nature knows no boundary lines. Nature has her frontiers truly, but lines, especially straight lines, are abhorrent to her.

We may say that the coast line is a definite natural boundary between sea and land, but the word " coast line " is only an abstract term. It has no real existence in nature. There is, indeed, a frontier or zone caused by the fluctuations of tide, which narrows or broadens according to the geographical disposition of the coast in its relation to the land, but in the whole wide world there is probably no definite coast line. The distinction between the frontier zone and the boundary line is one that is somewhat similar, and it is not always recognised fully by those whose business it is to frame political boundary delimitations. The analogy offered us by the junction of

sea and land is fairly sound so far as it illustrates the difficulty which arises when the political question involves an admixture of races or communities across an indeterminate area of frontier. Just as a sea margin, or that of a lake, maintains a zone alternately covered or left by the water according to tide or wind, with a variable fluctuation, so may a land frontier be subject to the ebb and flow of a mixed population. On flat coasts we may have an extension of salt marshes over a width of many miles where the rise and fall of the tide is quite inconsiderable. At the head of an inlet, or amid the islands of a coastal archipelago (as, for instance, on the Southern Alaskan coast, the coast of Norway, or that of the Chilian Patagonia) the rise of tide may amount to fifty or sixty feet and yet the width of the zone may be measured in yards. The ebb and flow of racial territorial occupation is often just as difficult to gauge, especially amongst uncivilised or semi-barbarian communities. As a rule, the more civilised adjoining peoples may be, the more they intermix on the frontier, and they thus present an even more complicated problem when it becomes necessary to separate their interests. In the early days of human existence, when men were by an infinitely slow process of development exchanging the impulses of instinct for those of intelligence and reason, when they had left behind them the animal habits of hunting in packs, but had retained the principle of combination for purposes of defence, and had begun to recognise the value of personality in the selection of leaders and chiefs, they knew no boundaries at all. The

nomadic instincts bred in the woods and forests and fostered by the width of untraversed steppes and deserts remained deeply implanted in the heart of man. It is quite necessary to remember that these instincts are there still. Man is even yet a nomadic animal. It is not merely the impulse of necessity guiding him to extend the area of his activities for the provision of means of living that leads him to trespass on his neighbour's property ; it is the desire for change, which lives in the heart of the city clerk equally with the Bedouin, which drives both to take a wider outlook on the world of civilisation in the one case and the primitive world of rocks and sand in the other. In early days there were no boundaries, and men desired none. In these later days the world is full of boundaries, but there are men still who have but little respect for them. It is, indeed, well to reflect what an immensely wide area of the world is still under nomadic influences. There are, indeed, vast areas where men have hitherto been untrammelled by the conventions of civilisation, where they still wander from valley to valley or from the hills to the plains, from one direct point to another, with no thought of boundary limitations even when such limitations exist. All Northern Africa (except Egypt), most of Central Asia, and all Central Arabia are still in the grip of nomadic influence. The days of the Patriarchal Socialist are not over yet. There are lands still free to the wanderer where the wide horizon shows no sign of the creeping innovations of civilised invention ; where railways, motors, and flying machines are not ; where the air is free from the

abominations of commerce, and the wide, wide world, sweet as incense, is all untortured with "progress."

High up in the region of Afghan Turkestan and the adjoining Pamirs, where the roof of the world is swept by clouds, it was once necessary to lay down a definite boundary which should part the Russian Empire from the kingdom of Afghanistan. There is much to be said about that boundary later. At present we are regarding it from the point of view of the nomad. It is in the Pamir region that the Kirghiz patriarch takes up his abode whenever the exigencies of pasturage and open season admit. It is here that he pitches his felt-covered kibitka, and distributing his camels and flocks over the hills, he leaves domestic affairs to his wife and daughters. He is not a raider. The delights of the "alamán," so irresistible to the Turkoman further west, do not attract him. Moreover, his sturdy, thick-coated ponies, or his riding yaks, with blanket-like hair trailing to the ground, are not quite of the class necessary for rapid and effective movement. So he just wanders, adjusting himself to conditions of weather, and his life appears to be the ideal of simple contented ease. The time comes when the black clouds circling about the Nicolas peaks promise something more than the usual diurnal rainstorm, and there is speedy prospect that the deep lush grass of the Pamirs will shortly be snow-covered. Then he looks at the sky, sends his handsome sons and daughters skirmishing over the hills after the flocks and the camels, takes down his kibitka and loads it (or his wife does) on his hairy Baktrian camel (surely the most majestic animal in existence), and,

smoking peacefully, he leads the way from the Great to the Little Pamir, and from the Little Pamir to the Tagdumbash, caring nothing for the boundaries which have been drawn about his hills, and possibly wondering why, some years ago, a company of Englishmen should seek to meet a company of Russians (whom he knows, and against whom he has no prejudices) in regions which he regards as his own. Like the desert-bred Bedouin the Kirghiz nomad illustrates the principle that primitive man, like nature, abhors a boundary. The less primitive nomad of the plains of Afghanistan in no way permits boundary limitations to affect his life conditions and practices, but he knows what the boundary means, and he furnishes the only example with which I am acquainted, of the effective use that may be made of a boundary as an assistance to commercial enterprise. Possibly similar conditions may exist in Africa, but I am not aware of them.

The Ghilzai nomad, like the Kirghiz, is impelled to travel by the necessity for seeking a warmer habitat than can be found in his snow-covered plains during the winter months. But he seeks no fresh pasturage. His nomadic instincts are in the directions of commerce. He is beyond the Kirghiz in intellectual strength, and he has much of the business capacity of the Jew. The Ghilzai, when he packs his family on his camels and joins the great gang of Powindahs on their picturesque annual migration eastwards through the Gomal Pass to the plains of the Indus, knows very well that he may have to fight his way past bands of raiding Waziris, and he regards the British boundary as a

kind of sanctuary affording him security from his foes. As soon as he reaches the plains and is within reach of British administration he plants his family and his belongings, together with his arms, under local British jurisdiction, and fits himself out for an extensive commercial campaign into the remote parts of India, occasionally even passing beyond India over the seas to our Colonies. Of recent years, however, his generally truculent behaviour has debarred him from journeys quite so extensive. He is only just tolerable in India, and has proved to be quite intolerable by the time he reached the Colonies. Consequently he has been suppressed; but the nomadic instinct which through all time has taught him to ignore political boundary limitations, is still in force as it is with the Bedouin and the Kirghiz, and the boundary to him is merely a fortunate incident in his life's employment which enables him to attain security for his family and possessions whilst his back is turned to the enemy.

The necessity for a frontier and lines of partition only arose when men turned from the lordly enjoyment of wide pastoral domains to the relatively humble pursuit of agriculture and the tillage of the soil. All over the yet unredeemed soil of the uncivilised world does it appear that the cattle owner, the herdsman and shepherd, is the recognised lord of the soil, and the agriculturist regarded as the serf. In Asia it is so from the Russian frontiers to the Indian Ocean. In Africa the distinction seems to be universal. In India I have often tried to ascertain why an insignificant tribe (called Todas) in the southern hills

should assume a position of social superiority over the Badagas, Kotas and other tribes of mountaineers who inhabit the Nilgiris. Their origin is lost in misty tradition. Politically they are not of the least importance, but traditionally they are the lords of the soil; they are herdsmen and the owners of the great grey buffaloes which wander with ponderous footsteps through the swamps and "sholas" of the hills. The picturesque accessories which surround this small but interesting tribe (who are themselves the lineal successors of a yet anterior race of cromlech builders), the wild free hills and the sweet grass-covered valleys which lie amidst their folds, the quaintness of their villages or "mands," nestling on the lee of primeval jungle, together with their fantastic rights and ceremonies, together combine to make them ethnographically attractive. They owe their social superiority to the fact that as herdsmen they hold priority of claim to these hills over the tribes that are mere agriculturists; as relics of the pastoral and nomadic races of mankind, they decline to be bound by the limitations of boundaries and reservations. There is yet another people to be found in Central India, of an origin not so uncertain as that of the Todas, and of a lineage that most probably takes them back to pre-Aryan days, when all Northern India was peopled by races analogous to the Bhots and Tibetans (the demons of Brahmanic scripture) and possibly anterior to the Dravidian irruption into the Western and Central Provinces. These are the Bhils. They too rank as primeval lords of the soil. Hunters and herdsmen and cattle lifters they are vastly more

handy with the bow than with the plough, although they are learning something of agriculture. They proudly claim to be thieves by Divine right, as part of the curse pronounced on Bhil progenitors by the great god Mahadeo when he slew the sacred bull. The valley of the Narbada in the midst of the hills is the home of the Bhil. For the shrines and temples that Brahmanism has erected by the banks and overhanging spurs of the sacred river the Bhil cares not one cent, but the river itself he regards with veneration and terror. The Bhils are held by the Hindus in profound contempt. The Brahmanical creed nurtures contempt towards all aliens, and this is the real cause of estrangement between English and Indians ; but “ whilst the attitude of the Hindu towards the English is that of the Pharisees of Jerusalem towards Pilate and the Roman legions—a contempt mingled with a very strong proportion of respect and fear—it is towards the Bhil, the slave of slaves, the outcast of centuries, the very refuse and waste of the Old World before the Aryans arose and gave it the rudiments of civilisation, a sentiment of unmitigated scorn.” And yet the original proprietary rights of the Bhil over the soil is recognised in a singular custom. The coronation ceremony of any Rajput chief in a State where there are Bhils is not complete until the Tika—or mark of kingship—is impressed upon the forehead of the new chief by the head of the Bhil family to which this hereditary privilege belongs. The Maharana of Udaipur is the highest in rank and descent of all the princes of India, tracing his lineage to the sun, yet on the day of his installation it is the

despised Bhil who places the sign of Kingship on his forehead.

The records of the West tell us the same story as those of the East. The earliest historical lords of the American soil are those who claimed the right to wander freely across the face of it unhindered by conventional boundaries, seeking new hunting grounds and pasture lands whenever the old were abandoned, and fighting their way if necessary to secure possession. The red-skinned tribes were hunters and soil owners from the beginning. They are hunters still, in the limited reservations which have been set apart for the remnants of them. Boundaries are none of their making, and it would be interesting to know in what light they regarded them.

It was the man with the spade—the agriculturist—who first found the necessity for definite boundaries, and century after century must have rolled by before the nomadic herdsman—the Biblical patriarch with his flocks and his herds—developed into the tiller of the soil permeated with an earnest desire to maintain his fields and his crops, and, whilst adding to them, to make his home in their midst. The development of the tribe or community with a common ancestry and a common language—the racial development which is prehistorical—by no means indicated a definite habitat. The migratory, desert-hardened race of Israel, for instance, possessed no territory of their own and were free to wander in the Sinaitic peninsula as the Bedouin is to-day, till they descended upon the civilised communities of Canaan and took possession of their land. Canaan was theirs by right

of conquest—conquest over a superior, but probably an effete civilisation. Once established in the land of promise, the Israelites proceed to parcel it out into tribal reservations (indicating boundaries), and it was then that they took to cultivating wheat and barley, the vine, the olive and the fig tree, which did not exist in the desert. Migratory and predatory tribes before them swarmed through all Cana, forming distinct racial communities governed by hereditary chiefs acknowledging no political boundaries, but, accepting the doctrine that might was right, they took whatever they had the power to take and kept what they could. When such communities in the course of ages developed the capacities of great builders, as well as agriculturists, definite frontiers began to come into existence. It was then that cities sprung up in Mesopotamia and in high Asia, where they became the nucleus of communities developing a national character, and as nations they claimed the right to free their land from trespass and to set up frontiers. Such frontiers were not necessarily defined by boundaries. They were of wider significance both physically and politically than boundaries, and were suited to ages when a certain elasticity in the perimeter of the land of occupation did not necessarily lead to dispute and war.

Thus nations, or rather nationalities, were in existence before boundaries, because it was not the evolution of agricultural settlements that formed the nationality but the gradual consolidation of communities into one self-governed whole. The great fact to be realised in this connection is that inasmuch

as the modern world consists, not only of humanity in its primitive forms of existence, but of the most advanced and cultured form of human life, we have the same problems as regards frontiers and boundaries before us as have exercised the world from the very beginning. Humanity is fundamentally the same, with the same emotions and passions, the same craving for material advancement, the same springs and wheels of action that it ever possessed. Scratch the Russian (so it is said) and you will find the Tartar. Certainly if you scratch the German apostle of Kultur you will find the primeval savage. Consequently history has a real political teaching of its own. It is the experience of the history of mankind to which we must still turn to acquire the guiding lessons of the present, and inasmuch as it was the dividing of mankind into nationalities that led to the dividing of the world of their occupation into political parcels and territories, it is quite worth while to consider how nationalities were evolved.

CHAPTER II

THE CONSTITUTION OF A NATIONALITY

WHAT is a nationality ? and what are those principles of national existence which must be taken into account in the partitioning of territories ? Originally, no doubt, the nation began with the tribe, and a common ancestry started the principle of combination amongst peoples talking a common language, and by grace of heritage of physical environment as well as of ancestry were moulded into one community with common characteristics and similar ambitions. Environment shaped national character. People in the mountains grew hardy, free in their bearing, and physically strong. The security afforded by their mountain homes led to independence of national existence, whilst hard conditions of life gave them fighting strength. This is a truism all the world over, from the Hindu Kush and the Indian frontier to Switzerland and the Caucasus. Environment has equally shaped the man of the plains, and it is almost a truism to say that temperature influences and moulds national character almost as much as physical environment. The indolent, sun-loving people of Southern latitudes have ever proved more easy to

dominate than those who have been nurtured in a colder atmosphere. We can rule the millions of Hindu and Muhamadan agriculturists of the Indian plains with far less violent effort than the thousands in the hills and uplands of the frontier. Indeed, the great mass of India's toilers in the plains have never struck against British rule—not even in the Mutiny—nor do they care one jot for the small voice of sedition now; and one great reason for this is that the thermometer habitually registers 100° F. in the shade. But because self-defence is the first law of Nature, the law which led to the development of claws and clubs, which evolved a higher intelligence than mere instinct in primeval man and probably laid the foundations of reason; and because it has provided the man of the open plains, liable to attack, with a primary object for invention and subterfuge and strategy, it has very largely initiated that activity of the human mind which in its highest form is indicated by culture.

Does culture frame a nationality? Because culture may be said to owe its existence to the necessity for self-defence in the first instance, we find culture rather the characteristic of the plains than of the mountains, and undoubtedly a consolidating or cementing agent in the construction of a nationality. It is, however, not mere intellectual culture, but the powerful initiative of military invention and method, the recognition of the value of combination in the field of action, the power of the sword, in fact, which has made the great nations and empires of the world, and rendered the evolution of intellectual culture

within their borders a possibility. Culture is but the sequel of conquest. War has been in the world's history the first and greatest civilising agent, for it is when a people waxing fat and indolent, living in the lap of luxury and fighting amongst themselves for precedence, have dropped by a slow process of fatuous self indulgence to a physically lower level than the outer barbarian, that the barbarian has stepped in, sword in hand, and the physical strength of the new man has swept clean the cultivated sloth of the old. The lesson is an old one, and the world has learnt it long ago ; and it may well be doubted whether the uncultivated barbarian will ever again assert such physical superiority as that of the Shepherd Kings over Egypt, or the Goths over the Roman Empire. If culture is not the leading factor in the building of a nationality, neither can it safely be asserted that sentiment is. Sentiment, whether religious or patriotic, or derived from ethnical affinity, is undoubtedly exceedingly powerful. It has at times, and for a time, held scattered units of a people together, enabling them to present a solid front to a common enemy ; giving them vitality and strength which lifted them to a high fighting level. Truly a nation without sentiment is at any time a poor apology for a nation, but it cannot be said that in times of war sheer sentiment alone will take the place of military readiness and resource, or that in times of peace its binding power has always proved sufficient. Religious sentiment has played a greater *rôle* in the world's past history than it is ever likely to play in the future. Religious sentiment, often weak, but

never lost, was the guiding star of the Israelites to Canaan ; and if the scattered remnants of Judah can be called a nation, it is the same common faith which entitles and enables them to be so distinguished. This is by far the most striking example of the power of religious sentiment to sustain a people separate and apart, uncontaminated by alien nationalities and unsupported by military strength, that exists at the present time, and it fully justifies the Jews in maintaining their title of a Peculiar people. When that ungainly dwarf, Peter the Hermit, set out on his tour through Teutonic lands and, mounted on an ass, with bare head and a gigantic crucifix in his hand, aroused the uncontrolled indignation of the Christian world against the Saracen who persecuted pilgrims to the Holy Sepulchre at Jerusalem, he raised as vehement a religious protest against the infidel as the world has ever witnessed. Then followed successive crusades to Palestine with the avowed object of delivering Jerusalem from the power of the Turk. It was the persecution of the Christian pilgrims that aroused this fury of religious zeal, just as it was persecution that first consolidated the Christian faith in Rome, but the effect in the days of the Crusades was altogether cosmopolitan and ephemeral. It bound together for a time men and women of different nationalities in one common cause, but it had no effect whatever in binding men of one common faith into one common nationality.

Muhamad was perhaps more successful. The ethics of his earlier exhortations were almost beyond reproach. It was only when the new creed spreading

outwards from Arabia invoked the agency of fire and sword and awarded everlasting hell to the infidel and everlasting paradise to his destroyer, that Muhamad succeeded in arousing that fury of fanatical frenzy and zeal which took shape in an unexampled military efficiency and carried the creed of Islam over half the world. Religious fervour undoubtedly nerved the arm of his warriors and helped them to victory, but it was superiority in the art of war and efficiency in the ranks of the Arab legions that maintained the rule of the Caliphs. Material advantage rather than the promise of an ethereal paradise kept the Arab tribespeople together and fashioned them for a time into the ruling nation of the world by land and sea. Religious creeds are not a monopoly, and it would be absurd to admit articles of faith as an important factor in the determination of a dividing line between contiguous nations. Patriotism and the power of assimilation (which is largely based on sentiment) are far more distinctive qualifications than either culture or religion for national entity. Patriotism is, however, a highly complicated sentiment, and the basis of self-interest is so largely existent in its foundations that it is difficult indeed to say where self-interest ends and the genuine spirit of love of country begins. The pure, high-souled love of country which affects men of all conditions of life and of strong sentiment is no doubt due to the influence of environment in the first instance, and is seldom an abstract virtue. It is not born in a man—it is educated into him. It gradually permeates his existence as he grows, and like the religious creed also instilled into his mind by

early education it is hard for him to change in later life. Where patriotism is inculcated as a primary principle, like honour and virtue, and is fostered by the often unrecognised influence of environment, it becomes the leading guide of a man's living aspirations and spiritual efforts, and sometimes blazes into almost fanatical fury. The education of environment alone will produce this attachment to country in the heart of the wildest savage. There is a country of dreary sand wastes and stones, where the long sweep of the drifting sand waves are split here and there by lines of narrow rock-built ridges, serrated as to their summits like an upturned saw, burnt black by the unwinking sun, but still holding concealed here and there in gorges and gullies green spots with narrow ribbons of grass binding the edges of a scanty rivulet. This country is just possible for human life and that is about all. It is said of it by the dwellers in that wilderness, that when God made the earth He dumped all the rubbish into that one stretch of the Indian frontier. And yet would you wean a Baluch warrior from his rocks and sand and give him all the grace of green pastures and comfortable dwelling places and expect him to be content? Like the Bedouin of the Arabian sands (from whom perhaps he is not absolutely removed ethnologically) his wilderness is all that the world holds dear to him, and he would kiss his red hot rocks with all the fervour of a devout lover. He has not to be taught anything about patriotism. Or again, that lofty soul-stirring sentiment amongst the Japanese called "Bushido" is a form of patriotism that lends strength to the arm of the individual and

leads armies to victory. We have lived to see its effects and we know the power of it. It is the spiritual light, the guiding star, the pillar of fire to the Jap, who accepts it in a measure and a way which we can hardly understand, because the power and the strength of it are strange to us in England.

The spirit of self-sacrifice, the soul of patriotism, so keenly alive in Germany, Japan and Russia, permeating so far as one can see the whole national community and binding peoples of all degrees of culture and education and of many religious opinions into one common bond of sympathy for a common object, is a most powerful factor in cementing together a nationality, and in the determination of frontiers and boundaries it is a factor to be reckoned with.

Germany, like England, has been forced by pressure from within to scatter widely beyond her political boundaries. Recognised German colonies under German administration do not contain one half of the German population which is scattered almost broadcast over the world. And wherever isolated knots and alien colonies exist they remain German in thought, in language, in physical character and sentiment, just as if they were part and parcel of Germany. They neither amalgamate, nor absorb, nor assimilate. This adherence to the German type is no doubt fostered by a devout faith in Germany's future, and it strikes the traveller with peculiar force when in some remote corner of a world as yet unredeemed by civilising influences he hears the harsh intonation of the German tongue.

There is, for instance, a colony of Germans occupy-

ing several flourishing villages in the south of the Chilian Republic, not far from the great lake Llanquihue leading to a pass of the southern Andes which may well hereafter become a tourist-travelled route. Here snow-capped peaks of volcanic origin look down on a series of most lovely lakes embosomed in a fantastic wilderness of foot hills where runs a rough pass over the divide to the Argentine lake system of Nahuel Huapi. There is a German colony here, within a ring fence, so to speak, which, unmindful of the glorious mysteries of surrounding valleys and mountains, is contented with local farming and a social intercourse which appears to be limited to fierce religious controversy. They too are waiting for that day to dawn which shall make them the ruling people of South America and impress the mysteries of Kultur upon the southern States. From the Straits of Magellan to the southern provinces of Brazil it is the same. The Germans are a people apart—even as the Jews—and industrious and able as the German undoubtedly is in the prosecution of business relations with the people of the South American republics, he makes no progress towards identifying himself with their national ideas and aspirations. The German of the United States, again, is clearly German still, ready and willing to sell the country of his adoption in any way that may assist the Fatherland. But is this the divine afflatus of lofty patriotism? Can patriotism be reconciled with a spirit of treachery?

Britain, like Germany, spreads out widely beyond her borders; like Germany, too, she is apt to remain British wherever she spreads. There is seldom social

amalgamation between the British colonist and the native population of the land of his temporary adoption. Partly, no doubt, it is because that adoption is usually temporary. Largely it is because the Briton, too, believes in the destiny of his Motherland, and is just as confident that it is not worth his while to belong to any other land as is the German. Like the German, he suffers from home sickness, which may take the form of dreams of the evening lights of Piccadilly or of green fields and moorland, but this is not to be confused with patriotism. There the parallel between Briton and Teuton ends, for though the spirit of individual self-sacrifice is nobly apparent in patches throughout the length and breadth of Britain, the broad prevalence of that spirit affecting all classes of the community alike is not so visible. It is true that we can put into the fighting field a million or two of volunteers who are ready to take their share of the trials and risks of a most unpicturesque and unattractive war with a cheery, but doubtful sense of what is to happen if they live to see the end of it. It is much to be proud of, and no words can do justice to the splendid patriotism of those who sacrifice the pleasure and the interests of the life of an English nobleman or gentleman to take their turn in the mud filled trenches of France.

Nevertheless "Business as usual" (with strikes also as usual) has been an apparent principle of national action. There is no strong feeling aroused sufficient to break down our national apathy. Patriotism (*i.e.*, self-sacrifice) does not appear to weigh sufficiently against self-interest and is certainly not an

important factor in British nationality. Chiefly this is due to a lamentable deficiency in national education. Patriotism is not seriously inculcated as a virtue in this country.

Luckily Britain wants no boundaries but such as are to be found in the surrounding sea. Where she becomes "Britain beyond the seas," there indeed may a revision of frontiers at any time take place, and thus it is only with "Britain beyond the seas" that we are immediately concerned. Then again must an essential quality of British national character be noted as directly affecting new considerations of frontier making. It is true that the Englishman and the Scotsman remain true to type wherever they may be, as does the German; but unlike the German they possess an important asset which enables them to dispense with social amalgamation, which we can only describe as the force of personality. Socially we do not amalgamate with alien people beyond the seas, nor do we allow ourselves to be absorbed by them. As the ruling race in India and in Africa we strictly retain our nationality, and the social gulf between ourselves and the natives rather widens as time progresses. No social equality is possible in India, where respect for our position as overlords, or rulers, is underlain by the official Brahmanic contempt for us as an inferior and outcast race. With Muhamadans a certain amount of social intercourse (which seldom or never arrives at intimacy) does really exist. English officers of Muhamadan regiments meet their native officers on terms of mutual recognition which often ripens into respect

and, perhaps, into affection, but never into intimacy. It is well that it should be so. Familiarity between English residents in India and natives, even if the latter are Christians, would inevitably weaken our prestige. But there is a certain quality of attraction possessed by the British and French peoples (incomprehensible to the Russian and German) which as a national characteristic tends to assimilate the alien, and as a personal quality endues the British officer with a power of organising and leading men of alien race which it is not easy to explain. It can hardly be attributed to his gentlemanly instincts (as Lord Salisbury seemed to think) or his capacity as a sportsman, so much as to an inherent personal magnetism which occasionally secures for him almost the dignity of worship. Indeed, there have been British officers in India who have been and are still objects of worship, and whose shrines are sacred to this day. It is one of the most subtle of the secrets of our hold upon India that Indians, who will follow the very youngest and most inexperienced of British officers to the death, would often decline to stir a foot in support of a leader of their own race. With the Russian officer of the Asiatic borderland there is not the same power of attraction or assimilation. It may be that of late years Russians have learned to talk to their frontier troops in their own language, and they may have learned to win the respect of frontier tribespeople by themselves respecting the people instead of cultivating a false and dangerous intimacy by forming domestic alliances on a system which was sometimes apt to arouse a fury of indig-

nation. If so, I would willingly concede to the Russian officer all the admiration that is due to a most attractive personality, most distinguished courtesy and great accomplishments. In good truth the Russian officer can be a most fascinating representative of the military type, but he has (or I should rather say he *had*) little power on his own borderland to win the trust and confidence of the native. The power of assimilation possessed by the French people is set down by Professor Lyde to general attractive personality and the insinuating character of the French tongue. In Lorraine, he says, "The post-reformation acquisition of three bishoprics by France only converted people who were Germans by race and by speech into worshippers of France; in Alsace the barefaced robberies of Louis XIV did not change the speech or the creed of Protestants who traced down an unbroken descent from the deadliest enemies of Rome, but it made them French to the core in sentiment. Does anyone need more proof of the power of France to assimilate?" If the proof is sufficient, Professor Lyde thinks that the return of Alsace and Lorraine to France should cause no permanent sore. Certainly I know of no other instance of the assimilation of Germans by the French or by any other nationality. As a rule they can neither be assimilated nor can they assimilate. The self-conscious isolation of the German, his unbending belief in his own high destiny, added to a certain want of the magnetic attraction due to perfect tact and manners, militates against his success as a colonist as much as his tactless appreciation of the worst

form of Prussian militarism foredoomed the failure of peaceful administration in Alsace and Lorraine, and rendered the annexation of these two provinces a great blunder. For careful cultivation of the art of assimilation and its most effective application we must turn to the younger republics of the world—say in South America. Indeed, nationality with them depends on successful assimilation. Every nationality in Europe may be represented in Argentina, but when the edges of national character get worn thin and the inevitable influence of environment, of common work, common aspirations, and the broad, wholesome surrounding of boundless space and pure free air all work together with the subtle methods of a Spanish-speaking Government, they transform with a marvellous rapidity the usually aloof Anglo-Saxon equally with the smooth, soft-tongued son of Italy into the Argentine. The fine frenzy of Argentine, or Chilian, patriotism in face of a national menace from outside is most instructive to those accustomed to the flabby demonstrations of our northern islands. Assimilation here leads directly to patriotism, and patriotism is inculcated in the very cradle of the young Argentine. It is, in fact, his religion. I have spoken to a most unmistakable son of Erin in the ranks of the Argentine cavalry, being struck by his enthusiasm and his smartness as a trooper of only a few months' training. I asked him what was his nationality. He replied promptly, "My father was Irish and my mother was Scotch and I am Argentine, and so are we all." It was true of the whole of that grey division of cavalry sweeping over the plain

with the regularity and smartness of the best European troops, although but a small percentage of the men spoke Spanish as their mother tongue. I doubt if there were Germans amongst them, although on the other side of the Andes German officers were busy hammering Chilian horsemen into a German cavalry mould. Granting this power of assimilation and its effect in consolidating a community, we might perhaps expect that it would extend its most powerful influence, and reach out its most insinuating tentacles along the lines of least resistance such as those afforded by community of race, religion or culture. If this were so, there would be much to be said for a theory of a boundary which recognised such conditions as important factors in frontier making, where perhaps social amenities might be interchanged across a dividing hedge which should be no physical obstacle, and men would naturally mix and grow together in unity. Unfortunately, it is not the case. The bitterest enmities often arise between those of common origin and language; and religion has little influence on a boundary dispute. On either side the Andes are great republics, speaking a common tongue and recalling an ancestry which, if not absolutely common to both, at least belonged to one national unit—Spain. The only difference in origin is that which lies between the northern provinces of Spain and the southern. It is now many years ago since the leading administrators of both republics met to decide what should be the frontier between them. They decided then and there on the strongest, the most inaccessible and unapproachable boundary that they could select,

i.e., the main ranges of the Andean Cordillera ; and it would have been a sound practical decision but for the unfortunate additional provision in the treaty that these ranges should divide the waters of the Atlantic from the Pacific. The main ranges do not so divide the waters, and there are spaces on the divide where the Chilian settler might meet the Argentine and these two of common race, ancestry, religion and culture could shake hands and unite in a common bond of sympathy to promote that final assimilation which some regard as the ultimate ideal. But the idea of the adoption of this divide was repudiated with scorn by the side which wanted the ranges, and if it was supported with perfervid frenzy by the other it was because of the gain in culturable land which might thereby accrue, and certainly not from any heartfelt desire for assimilation. In the end the wise foresight of the original treaty makers was upheld, and a natural barrier was adopted as a boundary which left little to be desired as a permanent and almost unapproachable obstacle to intercourse and interference. Thus will it always be until human nature is regenerated and uplifted.

In the actual, practical and troublesome business of a boundary settlement what is it that has proved to be the deciding influence on the adoption of its position apart from considerations as to its physical nature ? The very first and greatest necessity is a careful and tactful inquiry as to the wishes of the people concerned. This inquiry must be local. It is not for high personages sitting in solemn political conclave to decide on evidence which is always

contradictory and uncertain what the people, whether nomads of the Asiatic steppes, tribesmen on the African plains, settlers on a disputed American frontier, French patriots or German apostles of Kultur, may consider to be the fulfilment of their desires on a matter which means life or death to them, whilst it is only a question of political exigency and bargain to the Government concerned.

To annex a province, or a property, directly against the will of the inhabitants has proved so often in history to be a fatal political blunder, weakening rather than strengthening the power of the central administration, and it appears to be so obvious a blunder that examples may be left out of the argument at present, whilst we insist on the necessity for local inquiry, without which it is impossible to determine what it is that affects the will of the people, *i.e.*, on what basis is that will founded? Here we are again faced with the stock arguments of culture, religion, race, power of assimilation, etc. Practically, in these tolerant days, religion hardly enters into the question at all, great as may have been its influence in the past. Race affinities and community of language may be strong here and there (witness the Rumanians in Hungary), but they often are as much a source of divisions as of communion; culture has become so discredited through its doubtful relationship to Kultur that it will never again be quoted as adding to the claims of either of two rival nationalities within any European area, and there remains that spirit of patriotism which leads to the consolidating of units from within, but not to the assimilation of those outside,

the fence. Real patriotism, when it is sound and true and untainted, the patriotism that yearns for the stones and the wilderness rather than accept the flesh-pots of Egypt—this is indeed by far the most important motive which demands consideration when judging of the right of a people to claim their land. But it so often happens that the strong heart of a community or nation pulses but feebly at its extremities, and patriotism gives place to self-interest. The outlying edges bordering a disputed area are often occupied by those whose business in life it is to keep well out of reach of the law; squatters and rough uncultured settlers to whom patriotism is an abstract virtue that they hardly reckon with, and yet self-interest may be extremely strong amongst them, and a fierce determination that their status on one side or other of the undetermined boundary shall be maintained. It does not really matter greatly on what the will of the people may be based in such a case, but there is nothing to be gained in any country by annexing bands of malcontents. Sometimes political considerations are suggested as the guiding light in boundary settlement as if political considerations could possibly be dispensed with. A boundary arbitration is always a political function, but there can be no such thing as a sound political boundary which is independent of the wishes of the people to be divided, unless indeed there is no such will. That indeed may happen when the boundary or frontier is determined by mutual agreement by two European States in, say, an African desert, or on the Asiatic highlands, when the only question to settle is what

shape the boundary shall take. Practically it is difficult to conceive of a case where the wishes of the people chiefly concerned are in favour of a boundary of assimilation—not even where the distribution of races is really mixed, as, for instance, on the western frontier of Poland. What is almost invariably found necessary in practice is a hedge or barrier—and a very definite one at that. From time immemorial, the very beginning of the separation of communities (not necessarily races), have barriers been set up. It is barriers that are wanted still, and it is with the nature of these barriers, and the means of attaining them, that we are chiefly concerned.

CHAPTER III

THE EXPANSION OF NATIONS

THE territorial limit, or frontier, of any community, State or nationality which has established a constitutional government is usually a fair indication of the distance from the central seat of control that the arm of the law can reach. In old and well-established countries existing alongside each other with definite boundaries parting their respective land interests, the effective strength of this control represented by the law is not much less on the outlying fringes than it is immediately around the capital, although probably there is no country in the world in which weak spots may not be found somewhere about its frontier periphery, spots where law and order are at a considerable discount. It is this power of the central control which determines the extent as well as the permanence and strength of a country, and it is a melancholy reflection that during the present stage in the evolution of human civilisation that central power should still be a physical rather than a moral power. A civil government actuated by the highest principles of humanity and justice would never be driven to the last expedient of armed force in support of its decrees

were the most elementary principles of Christianity fully recognised by both governors and governed. But alas ! for poor unregenerate humanity, there is no such thing as a Government actuated solely by Christian motives ; no phase of humanity from highest to lowest in which self-interest is not still the first and greatest law of existence. There are doubtless many of our legislators who live in confidence that the army is but the machine by means of which the Government can enforce its decrees. This is not exactly the case unless the Government and the army are in agreement as to the object for which the services of the latter are utilised. In case of violent civil disagreement indicating the preliminary phases of civil war, for instance, it is the army that must decide the issue—nor can any appeal reverse its decision. Even when bound by the King's Regulations the soldier preserves a conscience of his own. The King's enemies are his enemies, doubtless, but occasions also may arise when it is for him to decide who are the King's enemies. Such occasions have arisen within the history of almost every civilised nation in the world. In India the civil administrator is rightly busy in inculcating the doctrine of civil government for India, but from the Himalayas to Cape Comorin every soul of India's teeming millions, even to the thickest-headed and slowest-thinking ryot, knows well enough that it is the khaki-clad soldier who holds India, and not the pale-faced judge of the High Court and his army of scarlet-clad "chuprassies." If every civilian in India were removed to-morrow there would follow much confusion

and outcry no doubt ; but in a few months the wheels of administration would run, if not smoothly, quite effectually, and the sedition monger and agitator would possibly retire discreetly under cover. But if the military element in the European population were withdrawn it would be high time for all the rest to follow. It is the same for the government of the European as it is for that of the Oriental, and there can be no exception to the rule until the wicked cease from troubling and the nations are at rest in a sense which they have not yet even approached. It is the same for republics as it is for monarchies—the era of peace and goodwill, equality and fraternity, which were to be heralded by the disappearance of autocratic forms of government and the rise of democracy, has not yet fallen from heaven to take birth below ; and in the New World as in the very very Old, peace and security rest mainly on a basis of fleets and armaments and soldiers. We have lately found something to think about in the necessity which besets the United States of America to revive the old martial spirit which has slumbered since the days when her great liberal administration was carved out for her with the sword. Does she recognise that without the effective backing which the mere existence of a standing army and a readiness to fight entail, her admonitions and paternal chidings of the turbulent people that disturb her neighbourhood are apt to fall exceedingly flat ? Has America visions of a far-off future when a bid on the part of some well-armed competitor for universal empire having finished with the Old World will turn to the New,

and she may be found with the sword too well rusted in the scabbard to be easily withdrawn? Anyhow, it would appear that she is busy now, and will be busy for some time yet, in securing for herself the maintenance of a navy and an army worthy of her position as the greatest and most peace-loving democracy in the world.

This doctrine of world government by the sword is a very necessary doctrine to remember in relation to the transgression of frontiers and boundaries, and the trespassing of one nation into the lands and properties of another. Personal ambition backed by military strength, and the possession for the time being of the greatest military efficiency, has led to a vast multitude of wars in the past; and even where the primary motive has not been of a personal or political nature, and the expansion of a people has been the result of a too crowded increase of the population creating a necessity for new fields of national development, it is always the military capacity of the people which has decided the success of the movement, and the life and the strength of the nation when at rest. Perhaps the most notable instance in history of the spread of a people from a narrow and insufficient cradle over a world-wide domain is offered by the Mongols. The extraordinary swiftness of their movements and the vast distances covered proved their readiness for war; the extent of their final occupation of territories in Asia and in Europe is sufficient evidence of the multitude of their hosts. Nothing exists in the shape of really trustworthy statistics, but there must have been

millions even in the first floods of emigration—millions in which there was no age limit nor, probably, sex limit either. The earliest Chinese records which touch upon the Mongols place their original habitat in the Kerulun valley and about the Argun and upper Nonni rivers. This is about the meeting place of Mongolia, Siberia and Manchuria. The great Kinghan mountain chain separates the Argun from the upper Nonni, and the Kerulun runs eastward through high steppe land to the Kulun or Dalai lake, from the northern extremity of which the Argun river takes off to flow northward into the Amur. It would appear that the Kerulun and the Argun are one and the same affluent of the Amur, and that the lake is an incident in its course. The latitude is about that of England, but the altitude is comparatively high, and the cold in the winter months intense. The sheltered valleys of the Kinghan on both sides of the range may well afford a certain limited amount of pasture; but it is difficult to conceive that there could have been at any time (even under the more favourable conditions of climate which might have obtained in the seventh century of our era) room for the expansion of a people so prolific as the Mongols. They must have filled those valleys to bursting. The leader of the great Mongol expansion was Chenghiz Khan, direct descendant from that Budantsir whose craft and energy made him ruler of a comparatively small highland clan in the bleak Central Asian uplands. The early years of Chenghiz were spent in unnecessary conflict with neighbouring tribes, and it was not till 1206 that he started empire building.

This commenced with the successful violation of China's great defensive frontier wall, and by 1213 he had overrun China. In another year he had conquered Kuarezm, and there are indications that at that time he thought he had expanded his frontier far enough, for he sent envoys to the Shah of Kuarezm with a message of peace in which occurred these words: "Thou knowest that I have conquered China and all the Turkish nations north of it and my country is a magazine of warriors, a mine of silver, and I have no need of other lands." Unfortunately, a party of Mongol raiders were put to death by mistake for spies; from this incident there commenced that extraordinary career of earth grabbing by the Mongols which did not terminate until, under the sons of Chinghiz, a great part of Europe was conquered and occupied by them. By 1227 the empire of the Mongol extended from China to the Dnieper. The world has never recovered from the Mongol conquests. It was the Mongol who first drove the Turks from High Asia—a movement which only terminated with their entry into Europe under Amurath I. Ethnographically the trail of the Mongol is still to be traced in the steppes of Russia and the plains of Hungary. There are many instructive features about this great human overflow. It is incredible that a small highland tribe should have carried it through. No such source of human activity could within one generation, and after much hard fighting, swell into the number which were included in the Mongol hordes set loose by Chinghiz Khan. That terrific "steam roller" could only have been evolved from a large and wide-

spread population of fighting proclivities. Granting that the original object of this human tide of destruction was the extension of territorial limits within which a tribal population was confined, it is clear from historical evidence that once set in motion it became a movement of sheer ungovernable lust of conquest on the part of many tribes. As it rolled forward, all the primeval forces of barbaric passion were unloosed. We read that pillage and wholesale murder, torture and destruction marked the blood-stained footsteps of the Mongol hosts, who spared neither age nor sex, nor hesitated to call on the god of battles to support them. Seven centuries of development and culture have not done much to modify either cause or effect in the world's great contests for national expansion, and we have the same forces to deal with still. The nomad hates a boundary; and the Mongols ignored all frontier partitions; but it should be noted that the great wall of China nearly held them; they broke through that wall with difficulty. It might well have turned the tide of history, only that as a barrier it was found insufficient. No other of equal strength subsequently stopped the career of the Central Asian destroyers.

We must turn from the East of the middle ages to the West of modern days for a parallel to this expansion of a people from a comparatively small centre. Rather more than a century ago (1800), the distribution of the white man in North America, in the east of that continent, consisted of isolated patches and groups of English, Dutch, French and Swedish settlers dispersed at intervals amidst an Indian forest,

whilst a long arm stretched out here and there beyond the limits of continuous settlement indicating the road to the west to be followed subsequently by thousands of white settlers. This was the outcome of two centuries of occupation, for the earliest English settlement in Virginia was founded in 1607. The first English colony in New England started with the historical arrival of the *Mayflower* in 1620. By 1733 Georgia was colonised and the New York English colonies fairly consolidated, but the barrier of the Alleghenies, or Appalachian, Mountains confronted them on the west, and they were further confined to the coast regions of the Atlantic by the activity of the Iroquois tribes who resented settlements in the Mohawk valley. Beyond the Alleghenies the French were far ahead of the English. A line of well-constructed forts at intervals from New Orleans to Quebec assured them the possession of the valley of the Mississippi, and their opportunity for expansion at the expense of the Indians was certainly greater at that time than it was for the English, whose geographical environment was not promising. Here, however, the French genius for assimilation proved disastrous rather than useful. Instead of preserving their national homogeneity they were quite content to coalesce with the Indians, and to form with them a social rather than a national alliance against encroachment from the east. Nor were the French nation more inclined to emigration than in later times. The Frenchman carries the atmosphere of France with him still, as a colonist. Like the Russian, his surroundings on the far foreign frontier

must be gratefully and sweetly reminiscent of his country. The Parisian atmosphere of an Algerian town, which is always carefully cultivated, is to the Frenchman what the introduction of clubs and droshkies and Petrograd institutions is to the Russian in the wild borders of Turkestan. So the Frenchman failed as a colonist in spite of the great military value of his defensive frontier, and after a century and a half of occupation the whole population of New France amounted to about 100,000, whilst a million and a quarter of English had established themselves east of the Alleghenies. The line of forts was weakest about Detroit, where there was a bend as it stretched either way to Quebec and New Orleans, and this weakest link in the chain was right athwart the straight line of advance from the east. The united efforts of French and Indians failed to hold it, and with the fall of Quebec in 1759 the way lay open for American expansion. Thus disappeared a frontier of over 2,000 miles in length, not so much from any inherent weakness in its alignment as from the fatal facilities it afforded for international assimilation.

But the expansion of the United States, which in 1776 was roughly limited by the meridian of the Mississippi (the first pioneers to the west having looked over the Allegheny hedge in 1747), was advanced no further for some time.

Although this delay has no direct bearing on the question of gradually shifting frontiers, it is as well to remember that the reason for it was to be found chiefly in the struggle for independence which succeeded the Colonial wars, and that the success of

America in this struggle which ended in 1782 was the natural sequel, from the military point of view, of the training which the colonists acquired during the intercolonial wars, no less than to the ineptitude and half-hearted tactics of British commanders. The war had the effect of welding thirteen colonies into one people, a people homogeneous in race and now united in support of a principle. The passion of patriotism had seized upon them, and with that impulse united to the experience gained in the actual field they were almost bound to succeed.

When the northern boundaries of the United States were finally settled as far west as the Mississippi, the States joined the great family of nations with recognised boundaries.

From the beginning of the last century the American population increased by about $33\frac{1}{2}$ millions in seventy years. The line of the Alleghenies once left behind, the flood of western expansion set in with a rapidity and force unexampled in the world's history. The purchase from France of Louisiana in 1803, and the acquirement of Texas from Mexico in 1836 and of the Western States from Spain, all opened the way for that process of extending the frontier westward which only ended when it reached the ocean barrier of the Pacific. An attempt was made to respect the national entity of the Red Indian, and his title to his own happy hunting grounds, by the Proclamation issued in 1763 by King George III that no settlements were to be made beyond the sources of the rivers draining into the Atlantic. This was indeed the theoretical adoption of a mountain divide as a barrier between the

White man and the Red which in itself might have constituted a sound geographical division for some period of time. That it could have been absolutely permanent, history shows to be impossible. But the further attempts to construct a "buffer" frontier between the Indians and European colonists by the purchase of a strip of intermediate territory was immediately fatal. "The Alleghenies were passed almost before the ink on the Proclamation was dry," and the attempt to stay the tide by a Royal Edict "thus far and no further" suffered the fate of the similar edicts—including more than one that was to limit the advance of the British in India. With no other sound physical barrier west of the Alleghenies until the Rockies temporarily barred the way, that futile frontier was pushed further and further westward until, in order to save the Red Indian from extermination, it became necessary to set up a ring fence round certain scraps of his own land, and to appoint reservations. If we are to accept the law of Nature that the white man is to take all he can get of this world's surface—all, that is, that supplies an environment in which he can live—by right of his superior might and culture, then the expansion of the extraordinarily mixed population which is called American must be reckoned as one of the most magnificent links in the chain of the world's development that has yet been forged. There is not a nation in Europe, at any rate, that can afford to criticise American action or methods. The lessons we learn from the triumphal march westward as regards frontier and boundaries are fairly obvious. The

comparative usefulness of a mountain barrier, which, far more than native resistance, held up our own colonists and confined them to narrow limits for two centuries whilst at first it protected them from active invasion and probable destruction, is plain. Plain also is the futility of a long weak line of frontier in low country unless it is artificially constructed so as to serve the purpose of a barrier (like the wall of China) and protected by a sufficiently numerous and absolutely homogeneous people.

There will be something more to be said about American boundaries hereafter.

As the expansion of a people progresses further and further outwards from the centre of control the strength and vitality of that control inevitably weaken, and there comes a time when it almost ceases to exist. Then local laws for the sake of the safe existence of the majority of settlers become necessary and they are framed and carried out by local communities. There is always an unsettled minority in every land ready to set every law of God and man at defiance, and the indeterminate frontier with its wilderness, its forests and its wastes, is to them the opportunity for realising their ideas of a free and happy life—the freedom to rob what they want from others and the happiness of perpetual riot and terrorism. When such outbreaks occur on a frontier lynch law springs into existence as the only law that can be made rapidly effective, and as a substitute for more constitutional methods of which the wheels grind too slowly to be immediately useful. North America, Australia, New Zealand and South America have all

witnessed phases of this rough-and-ready form of tribunal which is by no means in defiance of constitutional law, but is adopted as a stern necessity to take its place in those irregular and ill-defined frontiers which mark the edge of progression. In North America there are still districts which would be terrorised by the American negro were it not for his fear of a speedy and hot reprisal administered by Judge Lynch. Fifty years ago the social conditions of the pioneer camps of the West were often such as to demand a ready weapon in the breeches pocket, and a well-trained hand to use it. As an example of the necessity for adapting unauthorised law to special conditions I may refer to South America, where the almost limitless expanse of pampas country can only be traversed by those who know the secrets of the water supply and who must trust to the staying powers of the horses they ride to compass the long and rough distances which connect them. There, horse stealing is the one unforgivable and deadly sin. A man's life may depend on his horse absolutely. It is consequently an unwritten law of the land that the horse stealer shall be hunted down without remorse and shot at sight. All the settlers and wayfarers of the countryside will join in the hunt and it is rarely that the thief escapes. It is under such conditions that the professional outlaw comes into existence. It is, as a rule, the outlaw who makes the first squatter, and it is the first squatter who makes the first boundary difficulties. The easy acquisition of the means of subsistence and the chance of great wealth are the primary inducements

to colonial expansion. It is very much easier to exploit the possibilities of a widely extended waste area than it is to develop the productiveness of a small district. The hereditary nomadic instincts of a man, unbalanced by too much education, tend to increase his inclination to listen to the "call of the wild," so that to civilised man equally with the savage that call is apt to become insistent, and until some natural geographical feature intervenes to bar outward progress, the expansion of a frontier people, unrestricted by powerful human opposition, is inevitable. The rapidity with which fortunes may be realised by gold seekers is responsible for a large proportion of the colonial expansions of the last century, and to the gold seekers not even the natural barriers of sea and mountain are unsurmountable obstacles. The limits of such expansion are only set where the interests of other peoples owning allegiance to other Governments are at stake. Then, indeed, it may happen that the pioneers and economic explorers of two countries may meet on a possibly wide borderland to which neither of them has any original right or title whatsoever, and disputes culminating in an appeal to arms arise. No question of religion or culture or powers of assimilation is involved here. The class of squatters involved in the dispute is usually one which recognises nothing short of force, and the settlement of the rival claims is one involving careful consideration of the sort of boundary best adapted to the geographical distribution of the country and fulfilling the imperative condition of an effective barrier. Not always does it happen that

the intermingling edges of two nationalities expanding from opposite directions are guiltless of any recognition of the highest forms of civilised culture and procedure. They may possess the religious fervour of the first Puritan settlers in North America, and there may be ethnical and racial affinity between the colliding stream of humanity flowing in from either side. This has been frequently the case in Europe, and it is perhaps the rule rather than the exception in those districts of the world which claim a general subservience to civilised institutions. The unfortunate fact, however, remains that neither religious feeling nor ethnical connection—nor, indeed, the influence of culture—in the least tend to modify the necessity for a barrier boundary. Indeed, it almost seems as if in the history of the world, religious fervour, degenerating into fanaticism, were the one most potent agent in developing war. As for ethnical connection and racial brotherhood, we hardly need to be reminded that family disputes, whether local or international, are often the bitterest, and that a man's worst foes are those of his own household. It has remained, however, for modern civilised development in the history of nations to teach us that a form of culture (spelt with a "K") should be claimed as the justification for a world-wide spread of military despotism—the origin of the greatest war, probably, that the world has ever seen. The limits that will have hereafter to be set in order to provide against such a form of military expansion in future will demand the most careful consideration of our most advanced military and political experts. It is too

soon yet to dilate upon details, but the general principle must surely be recognised that the old order has *not* changed in dealing with the ambitions and arrogance of humanity.

Boundaries must be barriers—if not geographical and natural, then they must be artificial, and strong as military device can make them.

In this matter of disputed frontier zones, I admit the danger in generalising, or in laying down fixed rules for boundary delimitation based on the experience of the past. But even the past, with all its comparatively recent boundary incidents and the almost infinite variety of geographical conditions which have surrounded them, can be accepted as furnishing sufficient data for the formulating of specific rules in special cases. The geographical dispositions of nature are infinite, and the human element involved in these disputes is as much subject to variation in form as is the environment enclosing it. Every dividing line between contending peoples, or frontier determined as a restriction to undue expansion, must be considered on its own merits, for no two can possibly be alike. Religious faith and feeling, for instance, as well as racial affinity, whilst they appear never to modify the necessity for a strong boundary line, may nevertheless be factors demanding careful consideration. As a case in point, I may quote certain incidents in connection with the Patagonian Andes boundary settlement between the Argentine and Chili. The Southern Andes, south of 41° North Latitude, do not maintain the consistent mountain formations of the Northern Andes. They are far

more broken, more rugged, more picturesque, and the altitude generally is lower. The lakes interspersed between the gigantic sierras lend a character to the scenery which is altogether new, changing the sterile grandeur of the North to the enchantment of Switzerland. The blaze of scarlet and gold presented by the encompassing hills, clothed with Patagonian beech, melting into the misty purple of the shadowed lake, effect a colour scheme which is hardly equalled in Canada. But as a rule these lake regions are unproductive, unless the lakes are set in wide spaces transverse to the general strike of the sierras composing the Cordillera. Then, indeed, there is a prospect of excellent, if limited, pasturage around them. Embedded in the mountains there are a few valleys here and there where the central streams curl round the foot of rounded slopes, grass-covered and culturable and reaching up in a series of terraces to the snow-capped ridges of the outer hills. Into such a valley I descended in the autumn (English spring) of 1902 after a somewhat hot and weary struggle by insufficient paths and byways through beech forest and swamp from the north. As I crested a gentle rise and prepared to descend into the valley of the 16th October (horrible name!) before ever the valley itself opened up to view, and whilst just emerging from a tangled surrounding of primeval forest and stony outcrop, I chanced suddenly on a sight which I shall never forget. There before me was a neat little country cottage of quite familiar type, with an efficient fence rounding off the pretty garden in which it stood. There was a familiar

scent of violets from the garden, and in the garden was an astonishing vision of a clothes line decorated with garments which, if not familiar, were at least to be recognised as old acquaintances, flapping in the breeze. To complete the picture there was quite a suitable subject for romance hanging out those clothes. This was the first corner of that most interesting Welsh settlement with which I was afterwards to become so much better acquainted. Nearly fifty years ago Professor Michael Jones of Bala, and the Rev. Lewis Jones of Festiniog, led a little party of Welsh malcontents from Wales into the remote regions of Patagonia, where, in the hidden and unexplored valley of Chubut, they might live free in the enjoyment of home rule and of their own peculiar religious institutions, and be relieved from the pressure of taxation. It was a movement for civil and religious liberty after the example set by the Pilgrim Fathers. But the leaders of that party were not practical explorers. They failed altogether to grasp the essential differences between the conditions of life in new countries and in old, and they either lacked the foresight to advise, or the influence to induce, their followers to spread themselves sufficiently far for the purpose of exploring the most likely districts for development. They did not perceive that Patagonia was suitable for sheep farming quite as much as for agriculture, and they confined themselves to the narrow Chubut valley, where they failed to make the best of the opportunities with which Nature had provided them. They raised magnificent crops of wheat, but had not the engineer-

ing knowledge necessary to deal with the overflow of the river in times of flood. Thus periodically they were reduced to great straits. They had, in the early years of their settlement after 1865, the Indians to contend with, but they held their own valiantly, and developed into a hard and physically well-developed community, retaining their own language and their own forms of religious worship. By degrees the narrow valley of the Chubut, separated on the north from the Rio Negro by a barren stretch of desolate country which was exposed to severe climatic influences, without a tree and with no agricultural promise, became too narrow for their needs, and the usual demand for expansion arose. The line of least resistance in this case led to the hill-enclosed valley of the 16th October, and here they had been for some years in possession at the time of my visit. Flourishing homesteads, well-fenced fields, and a well-attended village school were evidences of a sound colonial vitality; and although I was welcomed by the local bard in the Welsh language and discovered that he (or rather she) could speak no English, there was no evidence of inattention to the necessity for educating the children of the colony to be at least bi-lingual. Most of the children could talk English, Welsh and Spanish. As yet these people did not know to which republic they belonged—whether they were Argentine subjects or Chilian. Here was a case in which the will of the people themselves was bound to prove the prevailing factor in deciding on the final position of the boundary between the two republics, and naturally they held to their

co-religionists and race affinity in the Chubut valley of the Argentine. To have separated them under the ambiguous terms of the original treaty would have been a fatal blunder and an eventual injury to both the Governments concerned.

The expansion of young communities is but a recognition of the universal law of Nature which bids all young things expand, from buds and babies to nascent colonies—so long as there are light and room and air sufficient. And if to this great natural law we add another, *i.e.*, that the race superiority of the white man, which includes his capacity to replace terrorism and misrule by a civilised and progressive administration, entitles him to displace the red, the yellow, the brown and the black man, and to expand at his expense in countries suitable for a white man's living, we find ample justification for the spread of the European in America, Africa or Australia and no insistent occasion for frontiers or boundaries so far as the inferior races alone are concerned. In Asia, as we shall see, some modification of this universal doctrine becomes necessary where the quasi-brown man becomes useful as a "buffer" to prevent direct collision between white races. In the huge continent of Africa we of the present generation are witnesses of a newer form of white expansion, one which requires not only frontiers but boundaries of a very definite character. Forty years ago at least three-fourths of the African continent were under native rule, and the remaining fourth was in the hands of Great Britain, France, Portugal and Spain. The colonies of Great Britain, of which Cape Colony, Griqualand West,

and Natal were the three most important, included about 242,000 square miles of territory. France with Algeria, Senegambia and the Guinea Coast claimed about 170,000, Portugal rather more than 34,000, and Spain less than 1,000 square miles. At present there is but one really independent kingdom in Africa, viz. Abyssinia, all the rest (excepting only the little negro State of Liberia) being partitioned between rival European States and demarcated, or else under some distinct sphere of influence that forbids the notion of independence. In 1875 there was not a German or Italian colony in Africa. There were in the interior of Africa (then mostly unexplored) native kingdoms of large dimensions, but their limits were indefinite, and on the subsequent partitioning of Africa such limits were for the most part ignored. Beyond question Britain then held the largest interest in the African continent, and those interests spread far beyond her territorial rights. Missionaries and traders had opened the way to an expanding "sphere of influence" (the phrase was not invented then), and the efforts of the British Government were directed rather to the control of such progress and to its limitations than to any active appropriation of fresh territorial fields. It was the sudden scramble subsequently for African possessions on the part of European nationalities that obliged Britain to defend her own and secure her predominant position. It was not only the necessity for expansion caused by the overflow of population that brought Germany into the field. Expansion of that sort was an old necessity, for

Germany has always had too many mouths to feed, if we are to trust the ancient legend inscribed on a map published in 1350, illustrating an ancient history called the Polychronon—a copy of which exists in the British Museum. It was the ambition to figure amongst the nations as a great commercial and colonial light, born (not illegitimately) of her late military success, combined perhaps with the fear of a differential tariff in favour of the British Empire, which obliged Germany to secure her own field for raw material and commercial venture.

England had led the way in Africa by exploration, by missionary enterprise and by tentative commercial transactions, and it was left to others to imitate her methods. Belgium was in the field before Germany. But Belgium was indebted to a British explorer (Stanley) for the geographical knowledge which led that astute commercial monarch, King Leopold, to summon the Brussels Conference in 1876 to deliberate on the best methods of opening up the interior of the continent to commerce and industry in the interests of civilisation. Great Britain, France, Germany, Austria, Hungary, Italy and Russia took part in the Conference, which was unofficial and ended by the establishment of international committees to collect funds and appoint delegates to an "International African Association." But the national committees were soon working independently of the International Association, and the scheme finally developed into the Congo Free State under the personal sovereignty of King Leopold. The results we know. There can be but little doubt that this

scheme originated in the restless energy and ambition of the monarch himself rather than the necessity caused by stress of over-population.

French rivalry on the African field seems to have been initiated by the National Committee of the International Association, who sent out agents to secure French interests in the Congo regions in anticipation, if possible, of Belgian proceedings. The result was the foundation of certain settlements north of the Congo. The activity of French and Belgian agents had not passed unnoticed at Lisbon. The Portuguese found it advisable to assert their old claims to the whole West African Coast from $5^{\circ}12'$ to 8° South Latitude and negotiations were entered into with Britain for British recognition of their rights. The result was not a happy one, for the resulting treaty, giving the Portuguese absolute control over the mouth of the Congo, raised such a storm of protest (it was here that Germany came in) that it had to be abandoned. Meanwhile the British influence in South Africa had steadily extended, and during the year 1884 commenced that stage of advance which finally carried British interests from the Cape to Lake Tanganyika. In 1882 the first German factory was established on the S.W. coast between the Orange River and the Fish River, and by 1884 the German Government was able to announce to the British Government that the "West Coast of Africa from 26° South Latitude to Cape Frio (except Walfisch Bay) had been placed under the protection of the German Emperor." Thus were laid the foundations of Germany's Colonial Empire. Then

followed the Berlin Conference of 1884-85, which decided the partitioning of a great part of the African Continent, and being totally ignorant of the geography of the countries in question, made treaty definitions of boundaries that were subsequently found to be absurd. Thus it came about that within the space of half a century the white man found himself face to face with a new proposition in race expansion. He was no longer up against the black or brown man; it was not the Red Indian of the prairie, or the active Maori, or the more phlegmatic and determined son of Patagonia that offered an often valiant but always futile opposition to his advance, but it was the white man of another nationality than his own who blocked his way. Under such conditions the defining of territories and of frontiers became a necessity, and unscientific as were many of the boundaries then detailed on paper they anticipated the necessity for practical demarcation and answered the purpose of preventing collisions for a time. Never was there such an era of boundary-making in English history as during the past forty years, nor do we appear to have reached the limit yet.

One cannot touch on the various phases of national expansion where there is ample room and verge enough in the earth's space to permit of it, without a reference to those conditions which beset an overpopulated country of which the frontiers are already well determined and marked, allowing of no overflow into adjoining districts, and where emigration is regarded as the last and most desperate resource. Wide districts under these, or similar, restrictions

as to expansion may be found in India. The balance between food and population once maintained by Nature's ruthless methods of pestilence and famine, assisted by man's devices in war, has been supplanted by those of a newer administration which taxes Nature with cruelty, spreads broadcast the blessings of peace, and counteracts that primeval balancing process by the introduction of sanitary measures and regulations and improved means of importing food. But it does nothing to curb the ever-increasing pressure of prolific humanity. Whilst men continue to breed with thoughtless activity, the capacity of the land for productive agriculture as rapidly degenerates for want of recuperative measures. Some of the worst effects of the population pressure are to be seen in Bengal. There, whilst the partitioning of the province is regarded with horror, and efforts to ameliorate the difficult conditions of administration by a reconstruction of provincial limits have led to open insurrection, there is no indication of a desire to emigrate. The Bengali as a rule would sooner starve. He is not made (like the Sikh) of material that can flourish when transplanted. With great intelligence and an extraordinary capacity for finance and figures, he has no great physical capacity, and his courage and grit are on a level with those of a hare. He knows that wherever he goes he is of no use as a pioneer, he can only be a leader of men by virtue of that nimbleness of brain which enables him to edit newspapers and to hatch a spurious form of sedition. This form is, however, hardly less mischievous than the real thing; the possibility of

the arguments supporting it are apt to make those arguments convincing to the thicker-headed native of the military caste, who is the mainstay of a government which (as already said) is a government of the sword. It is true that there are many Bengali gentlemen of light and leading who are learned (too learned) in the law, and who can hold their own in the Courts of Justice with any European advocate. There are good writers and poets of no mean order amongst them, but one and all look to their own flat plains, their own little cabbage patch, as the centre of their desires. No doubt the soil of Bengal might be cultivated (speaking generally) on a system which would result in a greater yield of foodstuffs. The Indian Government has long ago endeavoured to instil this principle into the heart of the Bengal cultivator, and has even built agricultural colleges and schools for the purpose. But when the young Bengali has mastered the principles of agriculture, when he has learnt all the Latin names in his text-books, when he really knows how to make two blades of grass grow where one grew before, does he make practical use of his knowledge? Does he go back to his father's fields and take the spade in his own hand? Not as a rule. He is then an educated gentleman—agriculture is beneath him, and he joins the great army of the discontented who have nothing to do but find fault with the Government under which they live. In Bengal there is an opportunity to study the practical effects of that sort of national repression which discourages expansion. Like other expansive agents in nature,

there may very well follow an explosion some day.

Far otherwise is it with the Sikh (the Scotsman of India). Industrious, parsimonious, adventurous, but only comparatively intelligent, he would make an admirable colonist had he the gift of assimilation. Like the Jap or the Chinaman, he retains the characteristics and idiosyncrasies of his own class and country wherever he goes—and he goes far. Unfortunately the habit of thrift and industry, and his excellent handiwork in certain trades, bring him straight up against the lower stratum of white settlers who never have enough to live on and who are at the mercy of trade unions. The Sikh can do better work at a cheaper rate, and he can live on a fraction of what the low class white settler spends in drink. He is therefore a difficult problem for a Colonial Government to deal with. The white labour, which holds the voting power, will have none of him, and the result has been unfortunately illustrated lately by the return of a number of Sikh emigrants from Vancouver to India after the unpleasant experience of being denied admittance as British subjects to a British colony. The story of this unfortunate incident is as follows.

For many years past (since, indeed, East Africa started modern development) there has been a definite emigration of workmen (both skilled workmen and labourers) from the bazaars and fields of the Punjab westward. In East Africa and Somaliland Sikhs and Punjabi Muhamadans have settled down as an integral part of the population, have even invented

a mixed dialect which admits of intercourse between themselves and the aboriginal races, and have on the whole proved to be capable of adapting themselves to their new environment better than the whites, and satisfactorily to themselves. Some of them went further than Africa. They reached out westward to British Columbia and Vancouver, and, with Japs and Chinese, they threatened a considerable immigration into the western ports of America and Canada.

The origin of the Sikh movement towards Vancouver appears to have been as follows. A certain number of the Sikh police from Hong-Kong were sent to England for the Jubilee celebrations of 1887. They returned to India via Vancouver, impressed with the advantages of Vancouver for Asiatic colonisation, and started the migration from Hong-Kong and Singapore with a considerable body of friends whom they invited from India. The original Sikhs who settled in Vancouver in this way, and who came in with the Chinese, worked well. They were good carpenters and mostly skilled workmen, sober, industrious, and quiet. The main Asiatic labour which was employed on the construction works of the Canadian Pacific Railway was Chinese and Japanese, who got good wages, 5s. per diem, and were more trustworthy and steady than the white. They held to their contracts and were straight in business. The white workmen, on the other hand, were restless and unreliable. The drifting of the Canadian westward when the railway was finished brought him to Vancouver, where competition with the Sikh set

in, much to the disadvantage of the white man. The impetus to emigration which had been given at Hong-Kong and Singapore extended to India, and with the gradual influx of Punjabis and Japs combined, the exclusion of the Asiatic rapidly became a political necessity if Vancouver was to remain a white man's country. Eight thousand Sikhs were in Vancouver in 1906, with an equal number of Japs. The Chinese were also in great force, but as they adhered to laundry work and market gardening they did not interfere with the labour market. The feeling was strong against the Asiatic, although every lumber mill in Vancouver had been raised by Asiatic labour. It was the financial crisis of 1907 that brought things to a head. Lumber mills and enterprises of all sorts failed, and crowds of white men were thrown out of employment. There were white women to be seen in one street carrying their children and begging for bread. Riots followed, and a political outcry which synchronised with an election and became the main issue. All Western America was in the crusade against the Asiatic, and the question of the Asiatic right to expansion became a regular political plaint. A case (the details of which are immaterial) was won in Court by an Indian against a white man, and that small success brought out a whole shipload of Sikhs from Hong-Kong determined to fight out the question of an Indian's right to be under the British flag wherever that flag might be. A law was hurriedly passed excluding them. The story of their resistance and the action of H.M.S. *Rainbow* in coercing them is quite recent history.

They were deported, and one fine old Sikh soldier threw his uniform and all his medals into the sea as a protest against the decision that he could not be permitted to serve under the British flag. Along with the Sikhs were certain wily Bengalis, and where the Bengali is there are always sedition and mischief. It was the Bengali who took good care that no understanding between the Sikhs and the Colonial authorities should be arrived at. The *Komagata Maru* touched at Singapore on her way to Hong-Kong. This is significant in the light of still more recent events. From Hong-Kong she went on to Calcutta, and owing to the muddle which prevailed where the business of the *Komagata Maru* was concerned, the Sikhs were allowed to land armed. The European Superintendent of Police was shot, and sixteen Sikhs with him. Those that were left went on to the Punjab, which led to another fight and frontier shooting. In the meantime the Superintendent of Police in Vancouver was shot. Fortunately, most fortunately, the trumpet call of war had already sounded for India, and all the best of our Sikh soldiers were keen on military service. Some had left and some were going, and none had care for an immediate attention to a local grievance; but we have not, therefore, done with that grievance. We may quite possibly hear of it again. It is well to remember that all Sikhs are of the soldier class, generally to be regarded as the best of India's military contingent, and they are people to be reckoned with first in Indian administration. They are, as British Indian subjects, inclined to insist on their rights

to live under the flag anywhere. It is worth noting that Canada recognises Indians' rights.¹

This incident merely illustrates the general principle that whilst the white races of the world are at liberty to expand at the expense of the coloured races, reciprocation is becoming impossible unless, indeed, the coloured races rise to sufficient military significance. This is a problem of the future more or less touching the white human race, and the solution of it will inevitably lie with the sword. It is this problem more than any other, with all its attendant complications, that will demand increasing vigilance and military preparedness. The right of the white man to fill the earth and subdue it has always been unquestioned, because it is based on the principle that his dominance and lordship tend to the betterment of the world and straightens out the highway for peace and the blessings of civilisation to follow. But he has by no means solved the many problems to be faced in the process of realising his benevolent aspirations. Where, as in India, his benign rule has resulted in an enormous pressure of increasing population with no counteracting influence to set limits to the outspread, there will surely be a catastrophe in the long run, unless those limits are rendered more elastic.

¹ British Columbia appears to have acquired her voting power early—perhaps too early. She has used that power to prevent competition and to raise wages, and consequently she has put an effective drag on developments. Under such conditions her future should be an interesting national object lesson. Will she go bankrupt ?

CHAPTER IV

SEA FRONTIERS

MUCH has been said and sung about the sea as a great natural protective frontier, but it should be remembered that a sea frontier partakes of the weakness of all open frontiers—it is a highway of approach as much as a barrier. It admits of no fixed line of separation being demarcated across it. It is open to the sea-going ships of every nation in the world, and it only becomes a defensive barrier when one sea-girt nation can command it by an effective fleet and keep another out of it. The sea itself is not the barrier, nor as a frontier is it the property of any nation. It is the fleet, not the sea, which is the barrier, and no nation can extend proprietary rights farther than three miles from the shore. It is not therefore strictly accurate to regard the sea as a protective frontier if that term is used in the ordinary landsman's sense, although the power of defence afforded by the strongest fleet (measured in terms of guns, armour and submarines) is greater than that afforded by any natural or artificial barrier whatsoever. Mobility, the rapid power of concentration of big guns at any one spot, is the key to

successful fighting, whether that mobility is effected by land or sea ; and there can be little doubt that no combination of strategic railways ever yet realised can equal the possibilities of rapid mobilisation by sea.

Although the sea cannot be regarded as a national frontier in the sense of being a barrier between rival nationalities, yet as a factor in the expansion of nations and distribution of mankind, it is so important that most of the historical records of the rise and fall of empires are directly concerned with naval exploits. The earliest, and almost prehistorical, example of the spread of a cultured and enterprising people throughout the world from the small beginnings of a narrow island home is afforded by the Phœnicians. The Bahrein islands off the Arabian coast of El Hasa in the Persian Gulf are but a comparatively insignificant group, with no promise of wealth or fertility within their coral-bound shores. Nor is there any evidence that at any time in history they could have supported a pastoral or agricultural population. The climate may be described as that of Hades, and if during the winter months there is some amelioration of the intense heat which pervades the Persian Gulf (and especially that part of it) for nine months in the year, the enervation caused by the humid atmosphere of those nine summer months would seem to preclude the possibility of developing a race of superior physique or moral enterprise. Yet undoubtedly these islands were the original home of a part, at least, of the most enterprising and, commercially, the most successful race that the world has ever seen. The

largest of them, Bahrein, is only twenty-seven miles long by ten in width, a low, flat space of sandy waste with a few palm groves scattered around a central group of tumuli composed of gravel and clay, of which the outer layers have been hardened by the weather action of centuries into the consistency of conglomerate. Within these mounds are two chambered sepulchres built of huge slabs of limestone, containing relics of undoubted Phœnician origin. The capital town of the island of Bahrein is Manameh ; it looks across a narrow strait to Moharek (second in importance) and is inhabited by a population which appears to thrive chiefly on seaweed. The only water supply of Moharek is derived from a submarine spring, and the water is obtained by elastic pipes fixed over the outlet of the spring at low tide. Only one island of the group—Arad—retains its ancient classical name, but the names Tylos (or Tyros) and Sidodona are still recognised. That such a human habitat should produce (or assist to produce) a people whose enterprise and knowledge were for their time far beyond that of any other nation in the world (excepting perhaps the Chinese, about whom we know nothing) is only to be accounted for by the necessity in the first instance of finding some outlet for their resistless energy by sea, and the development of a race of sailors who for a time (indeed, for more centuries than we know) held practical command of the ocean. Gerrha, on the mainland, not far to the north of Bahrein, became the mart of Indian trade and the starting point of caravans across Arabia, but this was long after the Phœnician occupation of Syria

took place, and the initiation of a series of marvellous voyages of exploration which reached to Iceland and Scandinavia. Thus was the world taught early the value of the command of the sea in assisting commercial enterprise and colonisation. Nothing like it has occurred since, but we must remember the peculiar condition of the times in which Phœnicia so triumphed. There was no rival on the ocean. The world was not over-populated. There was ample room for the outspread of nationalities, generally, without taking to the sea. Only on that sun-scorched coast was there no such opportunity for expansion by land. The Arabian desert hinterland of El Katif afforded no chance for expansion into the mainland westward. The unprofitable coral reefs and soil of the Bahrein islands rendered sea enterprise a necessity if anything was to be realised from the fertility of Mesopotamia, or the wealth of Persia. And so sea enterprise grew and prospered, and knowledge grew with foreign intercourse, and the Phœnicians gave their language to the Hebrews and their alphabet to the Greeks, and after exercising a most profound influence on the earliest beginnings of civilisation in the world, they founded a nationality which for four hundred years held its own against the powers of Greece and Rome. A hundred years before the foundation of Rome there arose on the north coast of Africa, in the heart of the bay of Tunis, a city named Karthada by the builders, and Cartago subsequently by Rome, of which the inhabitants called themselves Canaanites—or plain dwellers. This city dominated the earliest Phœnician colony in an extensive territory of North

Africa. The destruction of Carthage became the objective of Rome during the Punic wars which lasted from 265 to 146 B.C., and it was only effected when the command of the sea passed from Phœnicia to Rome. Rome never made use of her sea frontiers in the same way, or to the same extent, as did the Phœnician, and, with an extensive seaboard even in the early years of commercial competition in the Mediterranean, she possessed no fleet of warships to protect that commerce until the growing power of Carthage and her conquest of Sicily directly threatened the western provinces of Italy. But Rome must have possessed a "long shore," or nautical, population from which to draw her sailors when the defence of her frontier by sea was forced upon her. She could not otherwise have started with such an effective fleet as 100 quinquiremes and 20 triremes in the year 261 B.C. for the purpose of attacking the maritime strongholds which defied the assault of her legions, of protecting her own coasts, or of carrying war into Africa. Neither could she have achieved a naval victory of great importance during the same year off Mylæ. This was a good beginning, and it was followed by the defeat of the Carthaginian fleet off Ecnomus by these raw sailor levies and subsequently by the invasion of Africa. This might have finally disposed of Carthage (defenceless for want of military preparation, trusting too blindly to her fleet for protection, apathetic and full of domestic trouble with the Libyans), but for red tape rules and traditions on the part of the Roman Senate, who could not part with the old republican system in

favour of new requirements for an extended war. A large portion of the Roman troops was recalled from Africa, and then there suddenly appeared on the African scene the man of the Carthaginian hour, in one Xanthippus, a Spartan soldier of fortune, who changed the whole character of the war. There followed a period of disaster for the Romans; the fleet was wrecked in a storm on its homeward voyage, and only 80 vessels out of a total of 364 reached the shores of Italy. But Rome had learnt the great lesson of sea power, and she persevered in spite of persistent disasters in establishing her maritime position. An appeal was made to private liberality and a fleet was equipped under Catulus, who started for Sicily early in the summer of 242 B.C. with 200 quinquiremes. From Drepana, where he was assisting a blockade, he sailed out to meet a Carthaginian fleet from Africa, and a battle was fought out some twenty miles from the Sicilian coast in which Catulus completely defeated the enemy. We know that superior tactics had much to say to this victory, and it is remarkable that an old and well-trying sea power like that of Carthage should have so deteriorated in strength and naval ability that a comparatively new rival for the command of the Mediterranean, which was at one time little else than a Phœnician sea, should have so easily wrested her command from her. Practically this naval victory ended the first Punic war. The Carthaginians abandoned Sicily, restored captives, and paid an indemnity of 2,300 talents.

The second Punic war was but the inevitable sequel of the first, inasmuch as Carthage still main-

tained a fleet, and the sea frontier between Africa and Italy was still the scene and cause of conflict. It was, however, a war of legions rather than of ships, rendered brilliant and historically impressive by the genius of the Carthaginian general Hannibal. It is not necessary to recount the story of his marvellous exploits, but it may not be out of place to remind ourselves that his hope of victory against Rome was mainly founded on rapidity of movement before Rome could mobilise her levies or get her cumbrous military machine into working order, and a belief that a rapid and victorious advance would gain him allies and increase the readiness of his own government to give him effective support. The war ended with Hannibal's last fight at Zama, where Scipio, the Roman hero of the war, won a complete victory. Carthage had then to surrender her fleet, and her time-honoured and most ancient prerogative of command of the sea ended with this humiliation. The supremacy of the West passed by right of conquest to Rome ; but Carthage made yet one more effort to regain her independence, and it was not till 146 B.C. that the Roman was able to write the word "deleta" over Carthage. The city was razed to the ground at the end of the third Punic war. Thus ended the most remarkable example of the expansion of a nation from the most remote, inhospitable and unproductive source that the world has ever seen. It differed from the long subsequent eruption of the Mongol from Central Asia inasmuch as it was an expansion across a sea frontier, and in its initial stages was undoubtedly more of a commercial than a military

progress. Its motive power lay originally in the necessity for sea enterprise in order that a small nation might live. It ended through failure to maintain those high qualities of national energy and enterprise which have ever distinguished the races of Southern Arabia, under the influence of an enervating climate and too close an admixture with subject races. The virility of the Phœnician was lost in the Libyan half-breed, and Carthage was bound to go down before the perfected military system and determination of Rome. Meanwhile for three-fourths of a century before the fall of Carthage Rome had remained mistress of the Mediterranean, and it is instructive to recall from history the use she made of her naval power. The gradual consolidation of Roman supremacy in Spain, which was not effected without many vicissitudes, did not interfere with the spread of Roman civilisation to the coasts and seaboard of the countries concerned. Roman colonies sprang up in Spain, traders and colonists began to spread inland from the coast; the Roman legionaries married Spanish wives and settled in the country in preference to returning to Italy. The first communities established by Rome outside Italy owed their existence to the Roman legions. In the year 133 B.C. it is said that Spain was "more Roman than Rome itself." But whilst Roman ships were busy in the Mediterranean we hear nothing of naval enterprise beyond the Straits of Gibraltar in the unknown regions of the Atlantic, until the campaigns in Gaul by Cæsar and his possession of the western coast invited the invasion of Britain in 55 B.C. Then indeed must Roman

galleys have been busy in the Straits of Dover and the North Sea. Rome, however, never made use of her naval supremacy in the Mediterranean to further the cause of expansion beyond comparatively local limits. She was never a great sea power as were the Phœnicians, and her navy was but the supplement of her army. She depended far more on the perfection of her military system for the advancing of her frontiers by conquest than she did upon her fleet; and we must look to Greece and to Southern Arabia to find examples of race expansion by sea which can compare in extent and world-wide interest with that of the Phœnicians. The Greeks were a maritime nation from the beginning. A Greek fleet of 300 sail defeated the fleet of Xerxes numbering 2,000 ships more than two centuries before the Romans built their first fleet, and they utilised their naval strength to extend their commerce and their colonies through the East from the Euxine to the equatorial regions of the African coast. Their commercial enterprise by sea was only equalled by their astonishing power of forcible exploration by land. Alexander's military campaigns, which added Persia to the Greek Empire and only terminated in the Punjab, founded Greek colonies in Badakshan and in the Indus Valley, faint traces of which may be found to this day; and there seems to be evidence that in even earlier times emigrations from Greece and the Black Sea colonies reached the Hindu Kush, and laid the foundations of an ethnographic admixture of races which is quite recognisable still. It was, however, their sea adventures which stamped the Greeks as the most expansive nation of their time. All along

the Red Sea coasts and on the further shores of East Africa may traces be discovered here and there of Greek occupation. Probably there are more of these relics of the classical past than are yet known to explorers. Greek ships undoubtedly visited the coast of Makran from Egypt, but I doubt if they sailed farther east to India, although the route followed by the Indus-built fleet of Nearkos from Karachi to the Persian Gulf was apparently well enough known to a previous Greek navigator, Skylax. Nearkos hugged the shores of Makran and kept in touch as far as possible with the expeditionary forces of Alexander which were shaping a parallel course by land from the Indus Valley to Persia. The Greek expansion was both commercial and military. It was prompted by the prospects of conquest and of material gain. There was no pressure of population from within to lend it force and no means of preserving a continuity of colonists from the parent land. Greece (as a European State) was not large enough nor populous enough to support such a widespread system of emigration. Thus her colonies (like those of Phœnicia) rapidly lost their distinctive Greek character and were merged by a process of assimilation into the countries of their adoption. They rapidly ceased to be Greek. Greek language and culture disappeared, and Greece herself, weakened by the distribution of the best of her people abroad, became a province of Rome. A sea frontier was to Greece but a temptation and a snare. It is a weakness still.

The story of the rise of Arab sea power has yet to be written. The Arab races (with which we associate the

Phœnicians) were undoubtedly the oldest shipbuilders and navigators in the world. Long after the Phœnicians had struck out for independent existence Southern Arabia entered the lists with a bid for supremacy on the high seas which was won, and for centuries was maintained, with a persistent success admitting of no rival. The primary reason for Arab naval enterprise was probably of the same geographical nature as that which first prompted the Phœnicians to cross the seas from their southern island group in the quest for a promised land which might form the basis of a nationality. The Phœnicians of the Bahrein islands could have entertained no hope of expansion westwards from the Arabian coast of El Hasar. The great shining sand desert of Southern Arabia blocked the way and almost pushed them into the sea. Similarly, the overcrowded cities of Hadramaut (the extent and nature of which are only indifferently known to us yet) could not find an overflow channel to the north on account of the same desert barrier, which narrows the productive regions of Arabia on the south as it does on the east. Expansion could only take place on commercial lines across the sea. The Dahna, this great "Red" desert of the south, which is not explored even by the Bedouin, furnished the geographical impulse for Arab sea enterprise through all the ages; to it we probably owe the development of that marvellous naval service which gave us the original lines for our own sea-going ships and introduced Arabic terms into our nautical phraseology, where they remain to this day. The further tremendous impulse given to Arab expansion by the propagation

of the faith of Islam carried the Arab races into almost every region of the habitable world ; but long before the days of Muhamad there were Arab colonies in India, China and the Farther East as well as on the African coast, and it was the wealth derived from these trading centres that filled Hadramaut with important cities (some of which are still in existence) and furnished the supplies and sinews of war which could never have been realised from the resources of the old country. Even now, in this year of grace 1916, we may find Arab settlers in India (particularly in Haidrabad, where they take service with the Nizam) who earn the money in India which is spent in Hadramaut. The distribution of the Arab race over the face of the world generally was, however, in its inception a religious movement, and long before that movement had ceased the narrow limits of habitable Arabia ceased to be accountable for the over-spread of population, and it can only be quoted as one of the few examples in the past history of the world of a great human tidal movement which owed its origin to causes which are never likely to trouble the peace of nations again.

A modern instance of the effect of a sea environment in promoting concentrated development within a limited and inexpansive area is Japan.

The extraordinary advance of Japan in a period of less than half a century to the position of a first-class Power amongst the nations is a case in point. Such rapid development could never have been effected in China, for instance. It was the power of intensive culture due to her restricted territory that first lifted

Japan above all the old-world expedients of slow-moving development on antiquated lines. Successful imitation, combined with a positively unique faculty for profiting by the experience of other countries, was the key to her marvellous progress. If a man could be born with the will and the power to profit by the combined experiences of his ancestors he would be the wisest man that ever lived, and at the same time probably the most intolerable. In the history of Japan we find a highly intelligent, if not intellectual, people united by a bond of pure patriotism which welded them into the shape of an intelligent, unswerving machine, determined to benefit by the experiences of all the most advanced of civilised communities that had gone before them. They were not an inventive but an imitative people; and with this unrivalled power of imitating the best, they effected an advance in material knowledge and in actual power with a rapidity such as the world never before has witnessed. Could this have been so if the Japanese had not dwelt in sea-surrounded islands which necessitated concentrated effort?

The effect of the sea environment on England has been so often emphasised that there is no use in discussing it. One indirect effect of it has been that by circumscribing energy it has concentrated effort—not in imitation, but in original invention. Nearly all the greatest practical inventions of the day may be claimed by Britain. We do not as a people fully recognise the greatness of the inventive genius which has permeated these islands in the past, and still permeates it, though we have serious rivals now in

France and Germany. But as a defensive barrier the sea is no more to us than it would be to New Zealand or Australia unless we hold command of it. We can, however, claim this advantage from our environment of sea—it has saved us from the necessity for demarcating boundaries. When we consider that we have 3,000 miles of land frontier in Canada, 6,000 in Asia, and 13,000 in Africa, we may well be thankful that so far as Great Britain is concerned she possesses no land frontier and is girt about with no demarcated lines.

CHAPTER V

THE GROWTH OF RUSSIA

A FRONTIER is not a territorial unit in the sense that it is bounded by definite lines, either natural or artificial. An indefinite frontier only becomes a recognised territorial unit when such boundaries are demarcated.

The North-West frontier of India has become a territorial unit under the name of the North-West Frontier Provinces, and these provinces are now placed under the administration of a special Commissioner or Government agent. When we talk or write of the "Indian frontier" we refer to action which may have taken place within these provinces, and probably in that part of them which is still under tribal home rule. The frontier of an expanding country is primarily elastic, reaching outwards under pressure from within, and occupying an indefinite area which is gradually to be assimilated with that of the districts already brought under central control. No limit is set to a frontier until an actual line of boundary is defined by treaty; even then it is generally open to dispute until that boundary is actually demarcated. It is only when two equally powerful

nations expanding in opposite directions meet and the demand for a settled boundary becomes insistent that boundary commissions step into the field. Or it may happen that there are strong political reasons for defining the limit of expansion on either side before any actual collision occurs between the expanding countries. For instance, it may be recognised that a common boundary between the two is not barrier sufficient, and that there must be introduced between them a "buffer" State or territory which shall have the effect of widening the intervening gulf and of introducing material obstacles to an advance on either side. There is to be a recognised borderland of neutral tendency which neither side shall overstep. Then naturally follows the question of political allegiance on the part of the "buffer" State. To which side or people is it to incline? Here comes in the question of "sphere of influence," which will be considered later.

The greatest historical example of the expansion of a civilised nation into regions where there was little or nothing of the natural wildness of nature, but where step by step new territory was acquired and new frontiers pushed forward in spite of the determined resistance of a whole series of minor nationalities not so very far removed ethnically or socially from their conquerors, is afforded us by the advance of Russia into Central Asia. Within the vast territories of Russia there are at least twenty distinct nationalities, and on the Caucasian and trans-Caucasian borderland there were included three or four millions of Muhamadans. From these border

provinces the majority of those troops which formed the numerical strength of the Russian advanced brigades on the Asiatic frontier were recruited, so that there was a strong element of the Muhamadan faith, especially amongst the Cossacks, supporting the Russian advance in Central Asia. The Central Asian troops who first met them in the field were Muhamadans almost to a man. They were the people who as Turkomans or Tartars (a convenient expression which includes the Mongolian as well as the Turk element) had held possession of the bleak, sandy steppes and narrow bands of cultivated ground near the foothills of the mountains, or the banks of rivers, from prehistoric times—nomadic, independent, fierce and uncompromising. Behind them were the Central Asian Khanates with big cities and large city populations—all Muhamadans, and nearly all of the Sunni sect, whose forefathers had maintained certain forms of civilisation in the valleys of the Zarafshan and the Oxus which were older by far than those of the West. Central Asia was not a savage wilderness peopled only by nomads, although the nomadic element was strong in the steppes and deserts north and east of the Elburz mountains. The position in Central Asia held no analogy whatever to the conditions obtaining in North America, Canada or Australia when the march of the white man first began. Russia's advance was that of a conquering host; it was no series of geographical expeditions, but it held a determined purpose, and that purpose was aggressive—to increase the might and strength of the Russian Empire by the absorption of many millions of fighting

racés and ultimately, no doubt, to secure a fair share of the world's commerce by the attainment of a warm-water port. It is indeed a remarkable feature in the geographical distribution of Russia's vast territories that nowhere can she touch a sea that is not periodically ice-bound. As soon as Russia set her face resolutely to the east from the Caspian (until then we had not betrayed much interest in her geographical acquisitions) we, in England, began to reckon up her progress and to feel doubtful about her intentions as regards India. We had good reason for our apprehensions, as a short summary of her progress will show. In 1873 the Russian frontier outlook from the eastern edge of the Caspian was not an attractive one. A limitless expanse of stone-strewn and sun-baked wilderness was all that intervened between the Caspian and Khiva, some 400 miles distant. Most of the attributes of the typical desert distinguish this arid waste. In altitude it is little above the level of the Caspian Sea, and the patchy recurrence of broad flats of low alluvium in the midst of the sand-drifts which cover the greater part of its surface indicate that for a considerable width beyond the Caspian it has only emerged from the sea within recent geological periods. It is subject to terrific gales of intensely cold north-west winds in winter, whilst the shadeless heat of the summer months is almost unendurable. The wandering tribes of Tekke Turkomans who pervaded it lived partly on the results of "alamáns" or raids into Persian territory, and partly on the pastoral developments which were possible in the recesses of the mountain borderland

of Persia, and in the narrow strip of green territory bordering those mountains on the north and watered by the streams from the hills. It was this narrow ribbon of fertility stretching south-eastwards under the northern shadow of the hills that formed the most practicable, and certainly the most alluring, avenue for further advance on the part of Russia. Khiva to the north-east had to be secured as a preliminary to such a movement, for Khiva marked the most important oasis in the region of desert, and it directly flanked the Oxus and held the key to Samarcand and Bokhara. The campaign which resulted in the occupation of Khiva brought two separate columns into the field, one, the main column, from Turkestan, the second from the Caspian. The honours of the campaign fell to the latter, for Khiva was actually captured before the Turkestan column (under Kaufman) reached the oasis. It is said that Kaufman's treatment of the Yomad Turkomans of the Khivan oasis, which indicated a policy of extermination, was really due to his disappointment at his failure to secure the premier honours of the war. After Khiva, Merv became the objective of Russian progress. But Merv was halfway to Herat on that cultivated line of Tekke Turkoman occupation which passed along the northern edge of the guardian mountains of Persia. This great mountain system, which is a western extension of the great Asiatic divide which includes the Hindu Kush on the far east, is a fine example of a great international barrier; it reaches from the southern provinces of the Caspian with a northerly curve to the eastern borders of Khorasan

where the waters of the Hari Rud (the river of Herat) break through the divide and are spread northward fanwise into the waste. The Elburz ranges may be crossed with difficulty at many points, but the process of crossing would, for an army, imply in the first instance the complete command of the Akhal oasis at their northern foot. It was along this narrow line of oasis that Russia could penetrate south-eastwards from the Caspian to Merv and Herat, and thus command the one available high road which leads to India. There could be no other object in adopting this route than to strike at Afghanistan en route to India. The Caspian as a defensive frontier was all that could be desired. No enemy from the east was likely to cross those shimmering deserts or to violate that inland sea. A move forward from the eastern banks of the Caspian was an aggressive movement designed to secure a position from which India might be threatened. It was at no time dictated by the necessity for national expansion, and even if we credit Russia with the ultimate design of reaching the Pacific coast by railway extension, the Caspian line viâ Merv was not the one which would commend itself as a national and commercial undertaking. At the south-east corner of the Caspian the Attrek river empties itself into that lake and it here forms the boundary of Persia. The course of that river from near Mashad on the north-eastern borders of Persia would have afforded a useful highway between the Caspian and Herat if it were not within striking distance of that Akhal oasis to which we have alluded, and which would flank it from the northern

side of the intervening ridges of the Elburz, and, further, if it were not within Persian territory. The Russians, then, had no wish to raise complications about Persia. Their Caspian centre, their border town was Krasnovodsk, far to the north of the Attrek debouchment and just opposite to Baku, the great oil depot on the western shores of the lake. But Krasnovodsk is some 200 miles from Kizil Arvat, the first settlement of importance in the long Akhal oasis, and the intervening territory is a part of the great desert system which flanks the Caspian on the east. It was necessary, then, to tackle that inhospitable wilderness before they could reach the first settlement of the Tekke Turkoman. By 1874 the trans-Caspian military district was organised, and expeditions eastwards covering the districts between the Uzboi (the old course of the Oxus when it flowed into the Caspian) and the Attrek were carried through successfully and peacefully. Meanwhile, on other frontier fields Khokand had been formally annexed by Russia, and the Alai expedition had been carried out and was followed by Russian appropriation of the northern Pamir region. By the annexation of Khokand the frontier line, which Prince Gortchakoff had pronounced eleven years before to be the final limit of Russian conquests, was far advanced. The Alai expedition added greatly to the general scientific and geographical knowledge of a wide tract of elevated hill country through which the Surkhab affluent of the Oxus runs, and incidentally proved that a Russian force of all arms could cross the Alai and trans-Alai mountains without difficulty

in the summer months. This was regarded as information of the greatest military importance in view of the general scheme for the advance, a part of which was that the Pamir region should be traversed to the northern foot of the Hindu Kush passes whence detachments could be pushed forward into Gilgit or Chitral. When the Czar's Government decided in 1878 to make a demonstration against India they did not lose sight of that part of Skobelev's famous project of invasion which arranged that whilst the Turkestan columns were marching across the Hindu Kush their flank should be protected by a Caucasian force operating in the Turkoman country on the northern border of Persia. Whether or no they realised at that time that it was this force which could be utilised with the greatest effect as a menace to India, the use of it was undoubtedly a part of their general policy of advancing their frontier until they were actually brought up by collision with Persia and Afghanistan. The failure of Lomakin's expedition against Kizil Arvat when Verdi Khan, the Akhal chieftain, forced the Russians back to Krasnovodsk, entailed a second expedition on a large scale which was equally unsuccessful. It should be noted that whilst these frontier officials were thus waging war the Central Government was preaching peace and the Czar's Empire steadily expanding. In September, 1879, the Russian force under Lomakin was disastrously beaten at Dengehil Tepe, and at the end of the year the Tekke Turkomans of the Akhal oasis were still independent. Then followed (coincident almost with the British operations in Afghanistan which

ended with the defeat of Ayub Khan at Kandahar) Skobelev's expedition, and the final capture of Daghistan after a wholesale slaughter of the tribespeople, which was quite Teutonic in its violence and indiscrimination; and thus the road to Merv (which shortly became a Russian garrison town) became an important factor in the Russian scheme of further frontier expansion. It was then that that phase of "Mervousness" was apparent in England which ended in the appointment of a boundary commission to define the line of division between Afghanistan and Russia from the north-eastern boundary of Persia at Zulfiqar to the Oxus. The value of this boundary and the methods of determining it will be the subject of consideration elsewhere.

Between the years 1873 and 1880 Russia had jumped her frontier claims from the Caspian to Merv, the east of the Oxus, the Northern Pamirs and the trans-Alai mountains. It was a progression by conquest, but over all the conquered regions time has exercised a beneficent influence. Russia's administration has, on the whole, resulted in the promotion of peace amongst the conquered tribes and of useful economic developments without any real assimilation of the people or much attempt at absorption. There can be no disputing the theory of the advantages of European rule in this case any more than in our own in Egypt or India.

The future of Persia is on the knees of the gods, but inasmuch as Russia's southern frontiers from Persia to the Pacific appear to be quiescent for some years to come, it may be well to refer to so useful

an example of a frontier in the making, although we know but little of its geographical environment.

The southern boundary of Russia from the point where it leaves Persia till it touches China (a little short of 1,000 miles) is the barrier between Russia and Afghanistan, and is therefore a very important factor in British frontier geography, and is better examined in connection with Indian frontiers generally. Beyond the trijunction of the three empires (Britain, Russia and China) in a remote and lofty corner of the Pamirs, Russia's southern frontier runs for some 4,000 miles through the mountains and valleys of Central Asia ere it touches the Pacific, where room for expansion is practically unlimited, and where Russia can find for many years to come opportunity for the extension of her influence into lands which are already ripe to welcome it. The fear of complications with China will probably prevent any immediate infringement of the very definite limits which shut off the Russian Pamirs from the Tagdumbash valley on the east, which are well marked by the rugged meridional range of the Sarikol; and further north, where her frontier runs eastward almost overlooking the fertile oasis of Chinese Turkestan, till it touches the State of Kuldja or Ili, the boundary is still a barrier of mountains, lying along the crest of the Tian Shan ranges. In this strange Asiatic depression, centrally occupied by the Tarim sand basin and fringed with the green oasis watered by the streams which drain into it from the surrounding mountains, Russia has already made her influence felt. The Russian Minister at

Kashgar keeps up a sufficiently imposing state to impress on the minds of Orientals so far removed from direct Western influences the great power and dignity of Russia, and he certainly once dwarfed our own representative, who could not hope to attain the same degree of authoritative influence. This discrepancy has, I believe, been considerably modified lately, but it must be abundantly clear that Chinese Turkestan is just as absolutely at the mercy of Russia as is Afghan Turkestan. Russian occupation could only be met by diplomatic querulousness. Whether Chinese Turkestan is practically within the sphere of British influence (as it is theoretically) is more than doubtful. A "sphere of influence" only extends as far as armed support can ensure its maintenance. In the case of Turkestan the sustaining power of military strength in the background is in the Russian background. We should never fight for Kashgar, in Asia. From Kuldja (which has already proved a bone of contention between Russia and China) northward to the great Altai the frontier passes through a region of lakes, forests and hills, and the provisional boundary is again determined chiefly by the mountain ridges. The same geographical conditions pervade the Siberian frontier from the Altai to the Sayanski, where to the west of Irkutsk and Lake Baikal the Mongolian frontier touches its most northern limits; nor is there much to record as regards the continuation of the southern Siberian boundary to the Argun river, where it reaches Manchuria and protects the line of the trans-Siberian railway, that differs from this general principle of

a mountain barrier as the limit of the frontier. On the whole, so far as we know, it appears to be a good geographical definition, and at the same time in no way interferes with the problem of the further southern expansion of Siberia whenever pressure from the north becomes insistent. At present there is no such pressure; Russia is content with extending a social and commercial influence into the wilds of Dzungaria and the far more developed northern provinces of Mongolia, which is surely preparing the way for future movement. The general aspect and configuration of such a wide extent of frontier varies greatly, but there is no barrier throughout the whole length of it that forbids advance. Northern Mongolia and Dzungaria hold the upper sources of many of the great rivers of Russia, and although the altitude is great and the winter severe in these upland valleys north of the Altai, there is nothing to rival the colder regions of Central and Northern Siberia. On the contrary, they are comparatively warm, and offer wide opportunities for successful agriculture to the hardy people of more northern climes. There is no frontier in the world of anything like the same extent so fraught with possibilities as the frontier of Southern Siberia. Urga, the capital of Northern Mongolia, and the headquarters of Lamaism, is well under the influence of Russia already; Buriát Lamas have made diplomatic journeys to Lhasa under Russian direction, and it was to Urga that the Dalai Lama of Tibet fled when the British advance threatened his capital. But it is unnecessary to argue from the interference of Russia in Tibetan

affairs, or from similar movements in future, that the expansion of Russia into Mongolia could offer any serious menace to Britain in Asia. The Russianisation of Northern Mongolia need give us no immediate concern. Further east, however, where the Siberian frontier nominally follows the line of the Argun and the Amur rivers to about 48° North Latitude, enclosing Manchuria within the loop, we have a typical example of an elastic frontier which is destined to disappear with the advance, not of an overflowing population, but of Russia's enormous interest in securing an ice-free and open port. The population of Russia, which numbered 130 millions in 1897, had increased 74 per cent. in the course of the previous thirty-seven years. But even with this enormous increase which peoples the great cities of Siberia, Lithuania, the Caucasus and Poland, and which must by this time be immensely greater, there is ample room for her people within her own frontier. The extraordinary resources of Siberia had never yet been adequately tested and they remain practically inexhaustible.

The possession of a good harbour and port on the Pacific coast doubtless led to the extension of Russian territory by the lease from China of the Liaotung peninsula (at the southern extremity of which Port Arthur was founded) with the adjacent seas and territory to the north. This became the province of Kwangtung officially in 1899. The trans-Siberian railway was extended through Manchuria by 1896 with a branch to Port Arthur, and Manchuria was practically occupied by Russian troops after the

Boxer rising of 1901. Russia's frontier had here expanded into something much more definite than a "sphere of influence," Manchuria became a Russian dependency under similar political conditions to those of Bokhara or Khiva. Then, for the first time since leaving the outskirts of the province of Herat, Russia came again into collision with another Power whose interest in this remote corner of China was even greater than her own. Japan has never had cultivable soil enough to feed her people. The development of her population has outstripped her means of subsistence. Between 1888 and 1897 the population increased by about ten millions, whilst the acreage under cultivation remained almost stationary. In 1901 it was estimated that the southern island (Japan) had reached the limit of her capacity for the production of foodstuffs, and that her people would become more and more dependent on imported supplies. In 1875 a treaty was effected with Korea by which three ports were opened to trade, and Korea established friendly relations with Japan which started foreign commercial intercourse. To Korea then Japan naturally turned her eyes under pressure from her too abundant population as the nearest land of promise. Only a short fifty miles of sea frontier separates Japan from the Tsu-shima islands, half-way to Korea, so that geographically Korea is as much the natural avenue for Japanese expansion as Northern Mongolia is for Russian. The Yalu river, the nominal boundary between the Russo-Manchurian province of Kwangtung and Korea, was no barrier, and across the

Yalu was the immense seaboard of Korea, an irresistible attraction to a country seeking useful ports for her Siberian commerce south of the ice-bound Vladivostok. Thus there arose a division of national interests which ended in one of the most sensational of modern wars, when Japan supported her claims against Russia and maintained them with such magnificent patriotism and valour that Russia not only gained no new footing in Korea but lost the port she had founded at Port Arthur. It was a dramatic finish to a frontier dispute.

CHAPTER VI

SPHERES OF INFLUENCE

THE relative positions in political geography of England and Russia involve the consideration of certain frontier problems such as "Spheres of Influence" and "Buffer States"; the position of Russia at the present time being inexplicable without a reference to these factors in frontier dispositions, and an explanation of their meaning and tendencies. In ancient times it was not uncommon to create a broad waste of unoccupied land between rival nationalities which should prove a practical barrier to intercourse between them, and into which it might be dangerous for either side to penetrate. Occasionally the intervening strip of unoccupied land was admittedly under the protection of one side or the other, but usually it was to be regarded as neutral. This system of creating a territorial boundary rather than a line has been found convenient and suitable in certain parts of the world until quite recent times. Between Norway and her eastern neighbours there was such a territorial interspace until 1826, when a boundary was defined between Norway and Russia. The Scandinavian Alps were a physical obstacle to

advance on either side; they presented a broad band of rugged waste, desolate and free from human occupation, and were regarded as neutral, if common, property. Into this unoccupied space the Lapps finally penetrated and here they wandered as nomads for years, owing allegiance to none. A similar dividing frontier existed between Korea and China until the middle of the last century. It was an artificial rather than a natural wilderness, wherein no settler was permitted to dwell under pain of death. The inevitable destiny of such frontier wastes is that the land thrown out of cultivation or settled occupation becomes the habitat of all the undesirable population from both sides. The first attempted settlers are usually those who have found it inconvenient to remain within reach of the laws of their own country, and as free and independent squatters they frequently form a menace to the peaceful development of the borderland on either side.

Sir Walter Scott's novels have rendered us familiar with scenes drawn from the Scottish Borderland which, even in his time, retained an atmosphere of the romance of past ages, when the Scotch and English wardens of the marches, three by three, watched each other across the Tweed. The marches were the northern barrier of England against the Scotch raider, as were those on the west of the ancient Kingdom of Mercia against the Welsh. For centuries they stood for separation between the kingdoms, and although the best of the stirring romance of chivalry is associated with the castles and keeps of that wild borderland, its heather-clothed hills and

moors were incessantly swept bare by the robber bands of both sides, all equally out for pillage and rapine. Doubtless the opportunity was great for the recruitment and training of the fighting man. It is always so. The more insecure and lawless the border territory, the more does the habit of strife and bloodshed become hereditary amongst its peoples, and the border clans of Scotland in the middle ages were in much the same stage of civilised development as are the border clans of the Afghan frontier of to-day. Inasmuch as a nation's stability and its cultural and economic developments are all dependent on its ability to protect itself, and to hold its own in the great world competition—in short, so long as an appeal to the sword is the ultimate appeal of divided peoples (which will be apparently as long as humanity remains unredeemed) a fighting frontier is an asset of considerable value, especially during the stages of semi-civilisation. In this sense the turbulent frontiers of the past were useful—more useful probably to Scotland and Wales than they were to England—but, regarded from the point of view of a permanent and well-assured partition between those countries, they were a failure; a failure such as is never likely to occur again. Instead of presenting a broad field for mutual intercourse and promoting a feeling of kindly neighbourliness between antiguous clans, they either became nests of intrigue and villainy, a thorn in the side of the administrative powers of both the countries they were supposed to divide, or else there gradually emerged therefrom powerful chiefs and factions, bred in an atmosphere of strife, and strong

enough in military strength to found independent principalities which might ultimately expand even to Imperial dimensions. This was the case in Germany in mediæval days, when there sprang from the marks, or marches, instituted by Frankish and German kings for the protection of their frontiers against alien races, a number of independent principalities and States which either held themselves altogether independent or else were federated as States of the German empire. At the root of their existence was opportunity, and opportunity was found in the savage and barbaric independence of the original marks. To a certain limited extent, and altogether in a minor key, the story of the marches has been repeated in modern times. For instance, between French and native interests in Siam there was created by treaty in 1893 a narrow strip of neutral zone, twenty-five kilometres wide, on the right bank of the Mekong river, which nominally belongs to Siam but is peopled by inhabitants whose connections are French. On the upper Mekong between India and France a similar device was adopted about the same time. In Africa a sort of territorial buffer was set up in the Gold Coast hinterland, and we have already noted an attempt to establish a diplomatic hedge between the territories of Great Britain and the Congo State which proved abortive in 1894. In effect all these efforts to interpose a barrier between rival States and nations were but a modification of the more ancient form of devastating and depopulating an intermediate area; only in these latter days political convention and accommodating international

law have been called into play and the object has been effected by treaty rather than by force. In any case it can only be regarded as a provisional form of boundary-making, which must in good time give way before the emergencies of national expansion, and the necessity for the definite occupation of useful land. A far more effective form of the interposition of neutral territory between rival nationalities is the creation of a "buffer" State of which the independence is guaranteed by one or both of the nationalities concerned, and the geographical extent of which is definitely outlined by joint agreement. A "buffer" State is but a form of that ancient system of protectorates which has existed since the days of Greek and Roman empires, only the process by which an international arrangement of this sort is gradually evolved in modern days differs theoretically from the drastic methods of the past, when there was no legal juggling with the old principle that might was right. International law now modifies our method so long as international law is recognised and respected by contending nations. There is, however, no power behind international law sufficient to enforce the observance of its obligations, and its requirements seem to be as readily evaded in these days as if judicial theory had no connection with practical exigencies.

The first step forward in the progression of a frontier is an acknowledged interest in some sphere lying beyond it of which for the time being the advancing Power is unable or unwilling to assume control. Such interest may arise in a variety of ways; it may be

that a defensible frontier is not to be secured without the attainment of some strong geographical position (this has happened more than once in India), but it is far more frequently due to national expansion along lines which will lead to permanent occupation. When this occurs in the midst of uncivilised and undeveloped waste of wide spaces under the control of barbarous tribespeople nothing interferes with the expression of that interest which a powerful and advancing nation may take in a weaker (and prospectively useful) neighbour ; but if, on the far horizon, another Power looms large whose interest may ultimately prove conflicting and antagonistic, something more than a declaration of interest is necessary as a warning to possible trespassers. The sphere of interest becomes a sphere of influence (which useful and somewhat elastic political term seems to have been invented by Lord Granville with special relation to Russia) and a definite political situation is evolved by treaty which requires the recognition of international law. A sphere of influence involves no direct interference with administration of that sphere. It does not lead necessarily to international arrangements for mutual support. It has no practical connection with any guarantee for its maintenance and security, and it involves the power which exercises it in no political responsibilities except those which may concern other and possibly antagonistic Powers. Such a sphere is the outcome of an agreement between two Powers (which agreement is made more or less over the head of the sphere) to limit and to respect each other's prospective interest

within a certain geographical area. When any nation announces of any extent of territory "this is within my sphere of influence," it practically sets up a warning to trespassers much in the same way that a Scottish landowner warns casual pedestrians off his grouse moors. But there is this difference. The Scottish landowner has a support for his position in common law, and a legal remedy which may prove effective against the trespasser. The declaration of a "Sphere of Influence" has no such support, and its maintenance depends entirely on the length and strength of the military arm of the nation which makes it. It is as if the warning "Trespassers will be prosecuted" should be changed into "Trespassers will be shot." A case in point is that of the well-known Monroe Doctrine, which does not claim any recognition in International Law, but stands simply on the basis of a policy or a doctrine. This doctrine practically maintains that a large portion of the American continent, including the Latin States of Central and South America and certain adjacent islands, fall within the sphere of influence of the United States. Originally formulated in 1823, it was aimed at foreign intervention in the political affairs of independent American States, and contained a warning against future European colonisation on the American continents. "We owe it to candour and the amicable relations existing between the United States and those Powers" (European Powers) "to declare that we should consider any attempt on their part to extend their system to every portion of the hemisphere as dangerous to our peace and safety.

With the existing colonies or dependencies of any European Power we have not interfered, and shall not interfere, but with the Governments who have declared their independence and maintained it, and whose independence we have on great consideration and just principles acknowledged, we could not view any interposition for the purpose of oppressing them, or controlling in any other manner their destiny, by any European Power in any other light than the manifestation of an unfriendly disposition towards the United States." This amounts to a policy of protection for the minor republics and of opposition to further foreign colonisation on the American continents, but no legislative sanction was given to the policy at the time of its announcement, and although efforts have been made repeatedly to legalise its principles by giving them statutory form, it has remained a policy and a doctrine and not a law. The underlying principle of spheres of influence as distinct from protectorates is that of policies rather than laws, even though the special terms on which they are to be maintained may be embodied in treaties. The Monroe Doctrine has been enforced on several occasions, of which the latest was with reference to the frontier claims of British Guiana in Venezuela, when war was threatened with America in 1895. The dispute was finally settled by arbitration. The territorial limits of the United States claims in 1823 were necessarily limited to "such Governments as had declared their independence." Much of South America was then in the hands of its native inhabitants, and European colonisation was effected in the

southern regions of South America before those regions were annexed to the republics of Argentina or Chili. Nor has European interference been absolutely negatived until intervention became necessary on account of the failure to preserve peace and good order in the American borderlands. In the case of Cuba, until 1898, Spanish control was admitted. It has remained for modern history to show that a one-sided policy which admits of no foreign interference whilst it binds a Government to no responsibility in the matter of preserving the peace and security of its borders, and which trusts to the beneficent effects of an atmosphere of political influence only, may be disastrous both for the borderland concerned and for the commercial interests of all European countries connected therewith. Political influence unsupported by arms is quite useless in face of the passions aroused by local insurrection and the thirst for plunder and destruction which follows in its wake. The anarchy and general disruption which prevail in Mexico at the time of writing this chapter are largely due to the feebleness of the political influence on the part of the United States, which refused financial interference in the first instance—an interference which might have saved the situation, but which was refused on sentimental grounds—and direct armed interference in the second instance, which had become the only form of influence which could probably be effective. The end of it may well be prolonged and destructive anarchy.

The next process to the creation of a sphere of

influence, in that forward process of assimilation which by a natural law usually awaits the slowest and feeblest of the tribes and communities which occupy the hinterland of strong and expanding nations, is the formation of a protectorate. There is nothing indefinite or vague about the relations of a protectorate to the overshadowing Power. It has sheltered itself under the wing of that Power and the relations between the two are definitely fixed. This form of exercising control by one country over another is a very ancient institution—as old indeed as the hegemony of Athens in the year 467 B.C. It is an old device to obtain power without incurring responsibility; to reduce a State to submission without nominally impairing its independence. The Romans made large use of this method of administration of frontier States, and on the whole successfully. Although the relations between the controlling Power and the protective State are definitely fixed there appears to be a great variety in the terms in which those relations are defined when applied to different protected States. On the whole, the real criterion of protection seems to be in the power to enter into political relations with foreign Governments. This power remains in the hands of the controlling State, and reduces the protectorate to a position not far removed from suzerainty. Whether protectorates originate in treaties or force, the system is one which marks the gradual expansion and advance of the conquering, or superior, race. If occupation follows the declaration of protection it is but the first step to annexation, although under special treaty a certain

amount of military occupation for defensive purposes may be a necessity involved by the responsibility of protection. Such appears to be the position achieved by the treaty of May, 1881, between France and Tunis. British advance in India has been marked by the formation of a series of protected States which are sometimes called feudatory States, an Indian native chief being under the suzerainty of the British Crown. These feudatory States, which occupy about one-third of the area of the Indian peninsula, are, however, peculiar, and can hardly be quoted as examples of protected frontier territory. The presence of a British Resident at their Courts brings them into direct touch with British institutions. Advice is given to the administrative authorities which is not to be distinguished from command, and indirectly they are within reach of the arm of the British Parliament. Independent they are not. Self-governing they are, with but few (not important) restrictions. On the other hand, the independence claimed by frontier and trans-frontier States which are clearly protectorates rather than mere spheres of influence is real, as in Afghanistan, the political status of which country is that of an independent protected buffer State. Besides the creation of spheres of influence and protectorates there is another method of extending a frontier which has been found useful, *i.e.*, by lease. A lease signifies occupation more or less permanent, and there is little to choose between it and annexation. A lease is, in fact, a compensated form of annexation. Quetta and Nushki, for instance, are leased from the Khan of Kalat on

a quit rent in perpetuity. Practically they are as much British territory as if they had been formally and officially annexed. It is clear that all these forms of frontier expansion, spheres of interest, spheres of influence, protectorates and leases are elastic, and the conditions under which they are called into political existence vary infinitely. There is a progressive tendency possessed by them which usually results in spheres of interest becoming spheres of influence; these spheres of influence again harden gradually into protectorates, until the final impulse is given by diplomatic exigencies, or by war, which ends in annexation. At the present time Persia is partitioned into spheres of influence under an agreement which has been concluded between Great Britain and Russia which guarantees her independence and integrity. Persia becomes, like Afghanistan, a buffer State between the dominions of the two Powers. The creation of a neutral zone between these two spheres which occupy the northern and eastern territories of Persia is a feature in the agreement which has been subject to much criticism, for within that neutral zone, which undoubtedly offers future opportunity for the expansion of Russian influence, British interests are very largely involved already, and the chance of future disagreement based on rival claims remains much the same as if no political engagement between the two countries had ever been entered into. Lord Curzon, in his Romanes Lecture at Oxford in 1907, condemns the arrangement as "wanting both in expediency and permanence."

CHAPTER VII

BUFFER STATES

THE purely artificial expedient of the buffer State depends for its stability on the strength and capacity of the administrative power of the buffer Government and its capability for suppressing intrigue and anarchy within its own borders; for the buffer State is expected to preserve its own nationality under a guarantee from the two Powers that it separates, whilst it is independent of either. Or it may happen that the buffer State is guaranteed by one Power only, which practically assumes a protectorate over it and includes the responsibility for its defence from outside aggression. In either case the internal disruption of the buffer must inevitably lead to dissolution and annexation by the one Power, or to division between the two. This is (or was) the opinion of Lord Curzon, who maintains that Persia is a true buffer between Russian and British interests, guaranteed by the two great contracting parties, and that Afghanistan is the typical buffer of the class which is guaranteed by one Power only. Neutralised States protected by international agreement take the place of buffers in Europe. Switzerland,

Belgium and Luxembourg have been neutralised by international agreement between several great Powers, and their political status and value as buffers will be considered in connection with Europe. In Asia there are several buffer lands besides those of Persia and Afghanistan (Siam, for instance, and the Korea), but it will be enough to take those with which we are more immediately concerned at the present time, *i.e.*, Persia and Afghanistan, as illustrations of the special purpose of the buffer expedient.

The geographical dispositions in Persia which render her effective as a buffer between the Russian frontier and British interests in the Persian Gulf and on the Afghan border have already been referred to. The real buffer is the geographical one—the barrier of the great expanse of trackless desert which stretches literally through Persia from the mountains south-west of Tehran to the Afghan frontier.

By the Convention of August 31st, 1907, Great Britain and Russia set a limit to their respective interests in Persian territory by the adoption of certain lines beyond which those interests should not extend. Great Britain engages not to support in favour of British subjects, or the subjects of any third Power, any concession of a political or commercial nature beyond the line running from Kasr-i-Shirin through Ispahan and Yezd, etc., “to the intersection of the Russian and Afghan frontier at a point on the Persian frontier” (the meaning of this is the point of trijunction of the Russian, Persian and Afghan boundaries). Russia makes a similar engagement with regard to Persian provinces towards the

British frontier, the limiting line being that which runs from the Afghan frontier by way of Gazik, Birjand and Kirman to Bandar Abbas. The two Powers respect the integrity and independence of Persia, but contemplate the possibility of financial control in conformity with the principle of the Agreement. Under this Agreement the political buffer is apparently the neutral zone which lies between these two spheres, and it is, to say the least of it, unfortunate that so much of British interests should lie within that neutral zone and outside Britain's sphere of influence. The line which crosses the Afghan frontier somewhere near Gazik and runs to Birjand and Kirman presumably includes those towns as well as Bandar Abbas, the country beyond them being neutral. It thus secures the seaboard of the Arabian Sea, *i.e.*, the coast-line of Makran, and with it the Indo-European telegraph line where it follows that coast to Jask, from which point it is carried by cable through the Persian Gulf. This is undoubtedly important, as is also the easy line of approach from Kirman to Bampur, which is part of the line of least resistance for a Persian railway between Bagdad and Karachi, or Quetta. But it is only part. Between Yezd and Kirman the line would pass through neutral territory (assuming that the central line of railway route through Persia to be the one finally selected) and the rest of it would pass through the Russian sphere. The British sphere also precludes (politically) any advance of Russia southwards from Mashad on the Persian side of the Perso-Afghan boundary beyond Yazdin (on the road

from Herat to Birjand). This is practically unimportant, for if Russia advanced her frontier across the intervening neutral zone to Yazdin it could only be with Seistan as her objective, and it would be part of a general movement southwards from Mashad and Herat towards India. Such a movement would take place on both sides the Afghan frontier simultaneously. The political power to extend protection to Seistan and the Makran coast, with the power to veto any railway construction through Persia, connecting Mesopotamia and India, is about all that Britain can claim as the outcome of this Agreement. Presumably the Persian Gulf is within the British sphere, but no part of Persian territory bordering that Gulf from Bandar Abbas to the Turkish frontier is within it. This has all been declared neutral. Within that neutral zone lies the river Karun, the one great navigable river of Southern Persia with its steady commercial steamer traffic maintained by the Lynch firm between Muhamrah and Ahwaz, as well as the Anglo-Persian oil-fields of Maiden-i-Napthan and the pipe line, to say nothing of the countless other undeveloped oil-fields which are to be found within comparatively easy reach of the coast between the Karun river and Bandar Abbas. There is, further, the important port of Bushire, and the commercial high road from Bushire to Shiraz and Ispahan, and there is the possible development of other commercial centres with the advent of a railway, which is a possibility not to be overlooked.

All these lie beyond the respective sphere of interest of Britain and Russia as defined by the Agreement of

1908, wherein Britain is not to support or favour any concession to her own subjects. How the development of the oil-fields and the national financial support of them fits in with the Agreement is a matter of speculation.

The Russian sphere of interest is one which if maintained fully will lead to important developments in future—possibly in the near future.

In Russia's hands probably lies the Indo-Persian railway initiative, that is to say, that there can be no initiative without the consent of Russia. If we are ever to have a connected line to India viâ Bagdad and Persia, Russia must certainly have her share in it. Various lines have been suggested and some of them surveyed, but the broad geographical conformations of Persia (which are very simple) will in the end decide the question, and there can be little doubt that Ispahan will become an obligatory point in the line. Between Ispahan and the sea the wild Bakhtiari mountains extend their long and rugged ridges in lines parallel to the coast, and this peculiarly rough mountain system trends north-westward till it becomes merged in the mountains of Kurdistan. This is only part of the broad and difficult mountain barrier which runs parallel to the Tigris and the Persian Gulf from the Kurdistan frontier to Bandar Abbas (where there occurs a break or indentation in the formation), which shuts off the great central plains and deserts of Highland Persia from the coast-line; and a trans-Persian railway would have to be carried on lines parallel to this system, either above it in the comparatively cool climate and picturesque

surroundings of the Persian plateau, or below it on the Mesopotamian flats to Ahwaz and Bushire, and thence through the hills to Bandar Abbas.

The suffocating and humid heat of the latter route during the many months of the year would alone render it almost prohibitive. If, on the other hand, the railway extension is to traverse the best provinces of Persia with a fair prospect of commercial success and all the advantages of a most delightfully picturesque environment, Ispahan, the border town in the Russian sphere, will be an important objective in that line. From Ispahan to Bagdad indeed we should be treading inside the Russian sphere all the way till we touch the telegraph line connecting Bagdad with Tehran via Kermanshah and Hamadan; as we should indeed in the opposite direction between Ispahan and Yezd. In short, the Russian sphere, which should never have extended across the desert south of Tehran, holds all the best possibilities for a commercial railway, whilst the only alternative is within that neutral zone on which lie the important Anglo-Persian oil-fields and within which we are pledged not to support any concession to British subjects of a political or commercial nature.

Without indulging in futile anticipations as regards the final outcome of the present war it may be well to take stock of Russia's present position in respect of her sphere of influence in Persia. She has already by her marvellous powers of recuperation, by the military genius of her great generals, and by the valour and tenacity of her troops, extended military

occupation to the extreme limits of the territories comprising her sphere, at Kermanshah and Ispahan ; and has thus secured the command of the great highway of approach to Mesopotamia from the East—that highway which by reason of the significance of its geographical position has been the highway of the nations from time immemorial. At the same time she has extended her field of occupation so as to cover Armenia. Part of the old kingdom of Armenia has been hers for ages ; she now dominates the whole (or very nearly the whole), and in the interests of humanity it is to be hoped that she will continue to dominate it. She has thus the command of the northern routes from Erzerum to Diarbekr, Mosul and Bagdad, and practically holds the military key to all Northern Mesopotamia. If Armenia becomes a Russian protectorate, it may very well happen that Persia too will find herself dominated from her capital, Tehran, by Russian influence, and once again the “sphere” may blossom out into the “protectorate.” It is indeed difficult to anticipate any other conclusion, unless Germany again successfully asserts her supremacy in this part of the Near East ; which is a contingency that does not appear likely at present. What then will be the political position in Mesopotamia ? The importance of Bagdad as a factor in future diplomatic discussion is obvious, for Bagdad dominates all Lower Mesopotamia with Basra and the Persian Gulf, and Bagdad will be within reach of Russia’s military arm whenever she likes to extend it. The great possibilities of large agricultural wealth which lie in Lower Mesopotamia when

the splendid scheme of reclamation designed by Sir W. Willcocks is carried to a successful issue are important factors for diplomatic consideration, as well as the oil-fields of the Karun basin, with the prospects of a new Indian colony—involving a new frontier to maintain. No frontier revisions that will be the necessary result of the war will be more important to British interests than those which lie in the regions of Persia and Mesopotamia.

Turning to the contemplation of Afghanistan as a buffer land, we must admit that Afghanistan has stood the test of time remarkably well so far. Afghanistan occupies the almost unique position of being an absolutely independent kingdom and at the same time a protected State. Protection in this case amounts to an engagement to protect Afghanistan from outside influences and foreign invasion. With this condition Britain does not exercise the slightest control over the military methods or financial administration of the country. Over the boundary line between Afghanistan and India the British officer cannot venture, and it is only within recent years that we have acquired anything like an exact military knowledge of the gateways and passages through the hills which approach Afghanistan. Afghan independence is so far absolute that we have no British European Resident at the Court of Kabul, and it is only by grace of very special favour that any European visitor is permitted access to that capital at all. It would hardly be too much to say that we know nothing about the internal affairs of Afghanistan. It is true that large volumes of information are collected at

the headquarters of our Indian Intelligence system, but it is certainly not amassed at the present time from day to day, and from month to month, as the result of direct personal European observation. Together with *past* records of European observers we have only the statements of existing native officials.

Having passed some years in Afghanistan whilst collecting geographical and statistical information, I know by experience that information obtained from the ordinary irresponsible and untrained native is seldom trustworthy. From carefully trained political assistants or native surveyors, it is possible to obtain information of the highest importance, but there are few men of this class in Afghanistan at present, and it would be safe to assume that no really exact statistics are available. Nor are they necessary in considering Afghanistan as a buffer State, or its potentialities as an advanced frontier of India. Generally we know that within the last twenty-five years considerable progress has been made in re-organising the Afghan army, which is now fairly well armed and equipped; the artillery is old and out of date; irregular cavalry fairly efficient; infantry trained by Turkish officers said to be passable—the whole effective regular force amounting to perhaps 100,000 men, with a large and expansive crowd of irregular jezailchis, or marksmen, who are perhaps just as useful for guerilla war as the regulars. Were it not for the traditions of the Afghan army we might look to such a force, composed as it is of magnificent material drawn from fighting

clans, as a formidable power for direct resistance in the field. But good as the Afghan, or Pathan, undoubtedly is as a guerilla unit when fighting in the hills from good cover, or sniping the enemy's camp in the dark, he must be regenerate to an extent which we can hardly credit if he will stand up for a square fight on the flat plain. It may be said that men of the Afghan, or Pathan, type have been exhibiting splendid bravery in the field of Flanders, and have shown themselves—somewhat fitfully—to be the equal of the best trained European troops. *But they have been led by Europeans*, and therein lies the whole secret of successful use in war of the native military class. So long then as Afghan independence will admit of no control, or instruction, or leading in the field by British officers we must not look to any Afghan force to make a good showing against an advance from the north either to Herat or to the plains of Afghan Turkestan. Behind the walls of Herat or within the fastnesses of the hills they would doubtless be fairly efficient for a time, and that time might be enough to enable support to reach them from the Indian frontier. Such support would certainly be expected, and it is, indeed, within the terms of “protection.” We are pledged to it, and although we should find ourselves in line with troops for whose value we had little respect, who would be strangers to us and our methods, who would be under the command of men who were ignorant of the most elementary rules of scientific strategy and tactics, the combination might possibly prove effective in keeping the enemy at a distance from the Indian

frontier until such time as our usual unreadiness were exchanged for a practical and determined scheme of defence.

Such, then, is the military value of Afghanistan as a buffer.

The violation of the northern boundary of Afghanistan would be the signal for war, and there can be no doubt whatever that such violation would band all the tribal communities of Afghanistan into one united whole to meet the invader; nor can there be any doubt that unless we gave some signal proof of weakness in our preliminary military dispositions we should have all India with us. There may be—there is certain to be—a bubbling and irresponsible stream of sedition ever flowing in certain channels, but the aspirations of the discontented are not at all in the direction of Afghanistan. Education in India has at least prevailed so far as to induce a belief that, however distasteful alien rule may be, it is probably better in the form of British administration than in any other; and that belief will prevail unless we allow India, like England, to be filled up with spies forever preaching another doctrine. The plague of foreign spies in India has never been quite so insistent as in England; but we must not forget that there have been symptoms of such a plague in the past, and that like the coming of the swallows in the spring, the advent of them from over the border is a portent of future events. Spies cost money; they are indeed a most expensive item in any scheme of military preparedness, and they would not be scattered broadcast amongst a peace-abiding people

were there not a more or less immediate prospect of their being utilised.

The value of Afghanistan as a buffer between India and Russia does not, however, depend wholly on the efficiency of her troops or the fighting capacity of her generals. It is the geography of the country which forms the chief obstacle to interference with the Indian borderland and which fulfils the conditions best which are most required of a boundary or a frontier, *i.e.*, that it should be a barrier. This requires a little explanation, for it has already been pointed out that between the Russian frontier outposts and Herat there is no effective barrier at all, and that the Oxus river cannot be regarded as such on the northern flank of Afghan Turkestan. The old time-worn theory of Herat as the key of India is by no means worn out yet. If any position on the Russian frontier can be called a key it certainly would be Herat, for Herat and the river of Herat (the Hari Rud) marks the only break in the continuity of that magnificent Asiatic divide which stretches eastward almost from the walls of Herat, flanking the right bank of the Hari Rud till it merges into the wall of the Hindu Kush and the gigantic ranges of the Muztagh in northern Kashmir. The smiling valley of Herat, with its vista of whitewashed villages clustering amidst orchards, and the soft beauty of its green cultivation sheltered by protecting ridges, runs very rapidly eastward into a narrow sand- and rock-strewn ditch, ever narrowing towards its head, steeply enclosed by rifted hills of rapidly increasing altitude, till it finds its source near the

head of the historic Band-i-Amir, not so very far west of Kabul. Across that valley from north to south, from the heads of the Murghab affluents (the Murghab is the river that runs to Merv and there loses itself in the irrigated oasis) to the Helmund affluents at Girishk, and by the Helmund affluents to Kandahar, might be regarded as an alternative to the better-known caravan route which forms the recognised high road from Herat to Kandahar, viâ Farah ; but it would involve such a succession of passes before and after passing the Hari Rud and would be so impeded by the wilderness of hills which surround Taiwara to the south-east of Herat, that it is impossible to conceive of any competent leader selecting such an alternative. There would be, indeed, no point in it which would at all compensate for the difficulties involved to any but a small flanking force. From the Oxus region again, and those plains south of the Oxus that we know as Afghan Turkestan, the problem of an advance southward becomes more and more complicated. These plains between the Oxus and the northern foothills of the Hindu Kush are full of that romantic beauty which so often distinguishes the atmosphere of plains dominated by hills and watered by a thousand rivulets streaming from their slopes. When the very earliest of city builders, Nimrod, traditionally laid the foundations of Balkh in the midst of these plains, he must have had a keen eye for the wonderful agricultural possibilities of the surrounding plain. The old irrigation schemes are still in evidence that were the joy of Assyrians, Persians and Greeks as from time

to time (with intervening centuries) they made themselves masters of the Oxus plains, after advancing from Nineveh to Balkh along that great high road which connects the Euphrates with Mashad, Mashad with Herat and Herat with Balkh, and which is, perhaps, the oldest commercial road in the world. Time has not entirely obliterated the mounds and the earthen ramparts which once contained these ancient canals any more than it has at Babylon, but it seems probable that a more effective agency than Time has put them permanently out of action. It is not probable that the Oxus has deepened its bed—it is much more likely to have raised it. It is, however, probable (and, indeed, there seems to be scientific proof of the fact evolved by the labours of the Afghan Boundary Commission) that the whole plain of Oxus flats has been subject to a lateral line of upheaval which has disturbed the relative levels of land and water, and thus irrigation on the old plan has become impossible. Ancient ruins stand about the plains; significant mounds and faint traces of foundations, which may be seen as the lowering sun sends slanting shafts of light across the green, but beyond all doubt the real wealth of historic remains lies deep buried, many feet below the surface, and its records are only to be read with the help of the spade. For the rest it is a green country in spring when the yellow crocus and white anemones are out, and long lines of purple rushes mark the course of such irrigation channels as are brought from the hills. There is always the background of purple hills, straight and steep as a wall,

south of Balkh, the first ramparts to be negotiated on the road to Kabul. There is more than one crack in that wall, leading southwards to the Hindu Kush, but they are exceedingly narrow, the scarps of the mountains on either hand being sheeted rock, smooth and absolutely inaccessible. These are the waterways of the drainage from the bands of parallel ridges that fence the Hindu Kush, mere troughs through the hills giving outlet to floods which occasionally force their way in foaming torrents to the plains. Once through these narrow gateways the road, though rough and crooked, is more open, and the valleys which it follows are shallower and wider. Important villages such as Haibak (once a great Buddhist centre on the pilgrim route from China to northern India) stand in comparatively open spaces with a surrounding of sparse cultivation, but human habitation is rare and the route is inconceivably rough when it approaches the northern flanks of the Hindu Kush. It is then, when it becomes necessary to force a passage across this mountain system presenting a series of parallel walls each in its turn to be surmounted by a steep and rocky staircase with precipitous descents into narrow drainage troughs intersecting the broken cliffs, that the real trouble begins. There are many ways of crossing, but there is a common feature of rock and precipice about them all, and there is the further obstacle of altitude which is in itself a complete and final barrier for many months in the year. Roadways may be artfully engineered and highways smoothed out in time over the roughest mountains,

but there is no known method yet of dealing satisfactorily with excessive altitude and the difficulties that arise from heavy snowfall and ice-sheeted slopes.

It is not necessary, nor is it wise, to represent these northern passes into the plain of Kabul viâ the Panjshir on the east, or Bamian on the west, as impracticable to a small and well-equipped force. Armies have been moved from Kabul to the Oxus plains through the mountain wilderness of Badakshan frequently in history ; but they have been unopposed armies of the irregular Afghan type, guiltless of effective artillery and self-supporting. But no force of any strength that would be formidable on the Indian frontier could move southward from the Oxus through Badakshan to the Kabul plains without the support of a light railway. Such assistance has been rendered time and again to armies crossing desert spaces, and so well developed are modern methods of laying surface lines that across these desert flats rails have been laid at the rate of two, or even three, miles a day. No such opportunity is afforded by the stony beds and boulder-strewn lines of advance offered by the waterways in this wilderness of hills. They traverse wide rock-filled areas of denuded country, from the thousand slopes of which the periodic rainfall drifts with undiminished volume, and the torrents that rapidly fill the nullah beds are irresistible by any provisional device for arresting them. Beyond these waterways (which are possible only for the advance of a slowly moving force on foot) railway making would entail an amount of technical construction that could only be undertaken with the

lapse of months of careful engineering, whilst opportunity for the sudden destruction of such work by guerilla bands exists every mile of the way. Finally, when up against the walls of the Hindu Kush, it would require an almost superhuman capacity for mountain-railway engineering to carry a surface line across without the slow and difficult processes of tunnelling. Indeed, in these days when the conduct of war depends so largely on striking quickly and striking hard, such a process as the support of a large army (such as would be necessary to occupy Kabul) by railway communication with the Oxus may be ruled out of the question. If roads alone were to be depended on they would be rough roads requiring a vast effort to reduce them to the grade and surface-quality necessary for motor traffic. They would, moreover, have to face the main difficulty involved in the passage of mountains by passes 10,000 to 12,000 feet above sea level.

One great lesson of the present war with Germany has been the enormous influence on military action which is due to weather conditions.

The Carpathians have furnished an object lesson which is yet later than that of the Balkans during the Russo-Turkish War. The desperate efforts of the best mountain troops in the world—the Russians—have failed to make a rapid advance across these crests such as their signal success against the Austrians in the plains of Galicia would have seemed to justify. Yet the Carpathians are generally to be classed as easily accessible mountains, steeply graded on the north-eastern side, but gently sloping to the plains of Hungary, a system of rounded slopes and luxuriant

vegetation, yet still sufficiently high to present enormous difficulties to an advance in winter time. There is no comparison possible between the Carpathians and the Hindu Kush. The winter time of the latter lasts for eight months in the year, and the height of the rugged peaks of that gigantic offshoot of the Himalayas is such that there must be a considerable development in the capacity of the aeroplane for negotiating great altitudes before even that most modern of military assets could be practically useful for reconnaissance purposes. If I point out that the occupation of Kabul would be a necessary corollary to the occupation of Herat with any prospect of further advance towards India, it is only in relation to the whole subject of Afghanistan as a buffer between India and Russia, and not as a contribution to any scheme of frontier strategy ; and, similarly, the defensive features of the Hindu Kush are but illustrations of its value as a frontier barrier. The Hindu Kush actually carries the eastern boundary of Afghanistan from the head of the Kunar river to the boundary of Western China, where that eastern boundary effects a sort of counter march on itself and turns from the Chinese frontier westwards again till it touches the head of the Oxus river at Lake Victoria. A long and narrow extension of Afghan territory is thus effected, the width of which at its narrowest part (the bottle neck as it were of the extension) is but a few miles. The upper Oxus, from the plains of Afghan Turkestan to its source, is a deep and rapid mountain river steeply enclosed between rocky banks up to its Pamir affluents.

These affluents form a very peculiar hydrographical system which gave rise at one time to much political discussion as to the real source of the river. Within the Pamir regions all these glacier-fed affluents are subject to violent changes in volume and rapidity dependent on weather conditions, but nowhere can the Oxus or its affluents be regarded as a serious obstacle to a determined advance. Indeed, the Hindu Kush itself overlooking these upper Oxus affluents does not present the same forbidding features as a barrier that distinguishes it south of Badakshan. Its slopes are weather-worn and depressed. Glacial action has scooped out wide valleys flanked by terraces which in the summer months are green with low Pamir vegetation. They are the pasture land of the Ovis Poli whose heads and horns strew the swampy plains where their owners were slain by wolves, or by Kirghiz hunters, when the snow lay deep. In spite of its altitude (from 13,000 to 15,000 feet) this roof of the world, intersected by glacier-streaked ranges, is not an undesirable country for a summer holiday ; and it is here that Russian sportsmen from over the border find pleasure and relaxation from frontier garrison duties. Indeed, Afghanistan in its weak extension from the great Oxus bend to the Chinese frontier can hardly be regarded as a serious buffer, except in so far as it presents a demarcated boundary the military violation of which would be equivalent to a declaration of war. The northern barrier of India (as apart from the north-western) does not lie in the Hindu Kush, but in another and an even more formidable defensive mountain system

to the north-west of Kashmir, and in those gigantic trans-Indus ranges which uprear their snow-bound crests between the Hindu Kush and the Indian frontier. There is an important geographical corner here of disputed strength which may be referred to before taking up a general consideration of India's northern barriers conterminous with the Chinese frontier. At its northern extremity the Hindu Kush abuts on the gigantic Muztagh range—a pathless and practically impassable range—which guards the northern flanks of the Indus in its wildest mountain reaches, and separates by a width of 100 miles of stupendous spurs the valley of that river from the valley of the Yarkand in Chinese Turkestan. But the Hindu Kush has not in its early beginnings the robust constitution of its great parent. At the angle of junction and yet lower down there are passes across the main range (notably the Baroghél) which offer no insurmountable obstacle to the passage of troops, and it remains for the most impressive and insurmountable of the long spurs which trend for hundreds of miles to the south-west till they round off in the Kabul river valley, to present the real barrier on the road to India. These children of the Hindu Kush take after their grandparent the Muztagh in altitude, in ruggedness, and in the uncertainty of their behaviour under varied climatic conditions. One of them divides the river of Chitral (the Kunar) from those affluents of the Gilgit river which lead to Gilgit and Kashmir; and it might well seem that an important river like the Kunar running under the walls of Chitral (where we have a frontier post)

might afford something of practicable route southwards. Another hedges off the Yasin affluent of the Gilgit from the Hunza river; but the character of them both is the same. They are lofty (as high as Mont Blanc), inconceivably rough, lending themselves to precipitous hillsides and to the narrowest of goat tracks, and all of them subject to the force of terrific blizzards and blinding snowstorms. The restricted and uninhabited valleys which they enclose (especially the valley of the upper Chitral or Kunar river and that of the Hunza) may be barred at any time by the sliding of a glacier or by a sudden avalanche of mud and rocky *débris* into the river bed. They are uncertain at the best, and the passes which connect them near the point where they take off from the Hindu Kush are only to be approached with caution under rather exceptionally good weather conditions. In short they are not (and cannot be made to be) practicable military routes. A few detachments might make use of them, but no masses of troops could possibly pass that way.

This being true of the north-west barriers of Kashmir it is infinitely more true (if that is possible) of the whole of that long extended line of India's frontier which reaches from the bend of the Indus (where that river leaves the rough valleys and highlands of Ladak to break through the mountains towards the Punjab) to the great bend of the Brahmaputra, where it again splits the Tibetan Himalayas to turn southward towards Assam. Enclosed within the arms of these two mighty waterways is the grandest, the most effective, the most stupendous of

all the mountain barriers of the world. Not even the great oceanic divide of the Andes can rival it. For at least 1,500 miles does that huge unbroken wall of peak and snow-field shut off India from Tibet or China. As I have already said, this is, indeed, our ideal of a typical barrier wall, a barrier such as no device of man, no devilish ingenuity of invention, can assail with any hope of a successful issue. There are cracks in that wall as there are cracks in every wall, and through them we may creep over the edge of Tibet and reach the comparative comfort of 15,000 feet of altitude in the valley of the Brahmaputra about Lhasa. We can do this because Lhasa is close to our border, and because it marks almost the lowest altitude which may be found on the great upland of Tibet. It is sometimes the fashion to regard Tibet as a possible political buffer between the Indian frontier and that part of Chinese Turkestan which lies within the potential sphere of Russian expansion to the north of the Tibetan plateau, but no such political buffer is really necessary. As a practical geographical buffer Tibet fulfils all required conditions. As a political buffer it is totally unnecessary to maintain an affectation of influence in Tibet such as would create it a "sphere."

The value of Tibet as a practical buffer land is twofold. It is due first to the enormous altitude of its wastes of salted plain and scattered lakes, and secondly to the distance which intervenes between the Kuen Lun passes and those of the Himalayas which point Indiawards. Six hundred miles separate the Kuen Lun foothills in Turkestan from Lhasa.

Six hundred miles which include the stupendous wall of the Kuen Lun itself in the first place, and then the indescribable wilderness of the Tibetan plateau intersected with arid and rugged ranges and swept with ice-cold blasts that carry death in winter to the wayfarer. At the same time, we may admit that the Tibetan plateau is as a rule free from snow. The precipitation of the vapour-bearing clouds from the south and west is lost on the slopes of the Himalaya, and consequently the climate of Tibet is comparatively dry. In the winter season of intense cold, the lakes, salt though most of them are, and the swamps and rivers are frozen, and there is as much movement amongst the Tibetans in winter as there is in summer. Large parties of pilgrims from Western China and Mongolia face the awful hardships of the trans-Tibetan route yearly, and although many of them never return from Lhasa, they do not shrink from the perils of that bitter pilgrimage. If we consider the necessity in the first instance of an occupation of Chinese Turkestan, and the peril of a conflict with China ere that is accomplished; and add thereto the immense labour of surmounting the Kuen Lun before facing the difficulties of the Tibetan plateau (which, after all, only leads to the hinterland of the Himalayas, where the worst difficulties of all would have to be faced before ever the Indian border was touched), we may well leave Tibet and all east of Tibet as out of our reckoning in summing up the possibilities of an advance from the North.

The position then is this; India is so well hedged in by the giant buttresses of successive ranges on the

north, and the geographical distribution of mountain barrier and desert waste is so effective on the west, that we have only the 300 miles or less of Afghan frontier stretching eastwards from the Persian boundary to demand our watchful care and attention as the weakest link in the long chain of frontier defensive features. It is, indeed, a remarkable fact about our Imperial hold on India that we should find a frontier for India almost as invulnerable as that of Great Britain. Once again, however, Imperial, as national, security depends on Command of the Sea. It is our power of naval defence which secures our own shores from invasion, and it will be the power of naval transport which will decide the fate of India. Between the enormous difficulties to be faced by any considerable military force which undertakes the invasion of India from the north, and those of supply and transport which would be the backbone of a British defence, there is no sort of comparison. If we cannot make such use of our advantage as would ensure not only sufficiency (sufficiency of men and material) but efficiency on our Indian border enough to secure our safety, we do not deserve to keep India at all.

A comparatively late illustration of the political doctrine of spheres of influence is to be found in Siam, where, by Lord Lansdowne's Declaration of 1904, the basin of the Mekong is placed definitely within the sphere of French influence and that of the Salwin within British influence. The result of this political measure is that the important and productive half of Siam, which includes all its eastern provinces, has passed through the initial stages towards the fulfilment

of its destiny as a province of French Indo-China. The British acquisition merely signifies that certain unimportant valleys which flank the great impassable crest of the eastern Salwin watershed have passed from the sphere of British interest to that of British political influence, as indeed they were almost bound to do in any case from their geographical position.

It is difficult to understand the nature of those diplomatic considerations which justified the adoption of an irregular line so unscientific as that which now forms the boundary of British Burma from about 20° North Latitude till it touches the Salwin. It apparently leaves a small subsidiary basin of Salwin affluents, shut off by the main watershed from the basin of the Menam and affiliated ethnographically to the tribal system of the Salwin, as an inaccessible corner of the Central or Menam neutral zone. The boundary indicated as the limit of British interests which is carried by the crest of the Salwin divide between that river and the Menam is the natural frontier, and the frontier which is most easily protected and therefore most scientific. On the other hand, the indefinite half-explored area which falls to the share of French interest is not only of great extent but of immense possibilities as a productive area. Between these two "spheres" lies the basin of the Menam, the neutrality of which is guaranteed by Britain and France with most scrupulous care for the maintenance of the integrity of all that is really left to Siam. It is not so much Siam therefore as the basin of the Menam which becomes the real buffer between ourselves and France.

CHAPTER VIII

MILITARY ASPECTS OF A FRONTIER

ASSUMING that the primary object in defining a frontier is to set up a defensive partition between contiguous States which shall prevent mutual trespass or illegal expansion into either territory, the actual boundary of that frontier is designed either to settle immediate disputes, or, in the case of conquered territory, it is to prevent future complications of an aggressive nature. Consequently two important strategic factors are usually employed which will tend to ensure this result. These are the construction of defensive forts and of strategic railways. Strategic railways may, of course, point to offensive as well as defensive strategy, but in either case the adjustment of political boundaries is almost immediately followed by their development, and the extent of that development depends on the defensive assistance derived from natural features of the ground or it may be from artificial features already in existence. Where an impracticable mountain wall separates two countries, with difficult passes at intervals (such a wall as is afforded by the Andean Cordillera or the Swiss Alps) the inevitable delay attendant on any aggressive

movement across them discounts, to a large extent, the necessity for a highly developed system of military railways. Where, on the other hand, the dividing line is unsupported by strong geographical features strategic railways to assist rapid movement, and the construction of fortresses wherein may be gathered large military forces of strength sufficient to render it impossible to pass them by or ignore them, have always been considered imperative. No better illustration of the importance of these military features can be found than that which may be derived from the course of the present campaign against Germany. When political guarantees are set aside as so much waste paper, the only safeguard for a frontier is a useful capacity for defence. It was the strength of the line of French forts from Belfort to Verdun, facing the Vosges mountains and the Meuse, which undoubtedly determined the initial strategy of the German campaign and directed the first advance through Belgium as offering the line of least resistance towards Paris. It was the gallant defence of Liége that destroyed the effect of that great initiative and gave priceless opportunity for mobilisation to the Allies. It is the Rhineland fortresses, and not the Rhine itself, which now protect the western frontiers of Germany from France. The lessons of the war, so far as we may gather them at present, are fairly convincing as to the value of frontier fortresses, whether they stand as sureties for the security of a land or a sea frontier.

There is nothing more remarkable amongst the many surprises of the war than the reversion to ancient

methods and instruments in the prosecution of it. The combination of new weapons of warfare with old alone renders this war unique amongst all wars ; it creates an eternal landmark in warfare. Never was there a war waged which will leave such a heritage of military and naval lessons behind it. Flying machines and submarines work in with hand grenades and "stink-pots"; the bayonet has come into its own again, and wire fencing supplements burrowing in the ground on a system as old as war itself. Nor has the introduction of a new and marvellous artillery power really done anything to shake our faith in the value of defensive fortresses along a frontier line. It is true that Liège, Namur, Maubeuge and Antwerp succumbed with unexpected rapidity to the new form of bombardment introduced by new and powerful forms of siege artillery, but when the results of the war come to be reckoned up and due weight is given to each successive phase in its order, I shall be surprised if the verdict is not still in favour of the frontier fortress, on the grounds that the whole course and subsequent conduct of the German campaign was fatally affected by the resistance, short as it was, set up by these fortresses. With a land frontier, the position of the fortress is decided by the nature of the dividing boundary and the topography of its environment. Between Belgium and Germany the frontier north of Luxembourg, stretching to Aix-la-Chapelle, is not constituted by nature so as to afford opportunity for the development of a strong defence. It offered no bar to German progress, and it was not till the River Meuse had to

be faced with its line of protecting fortresses that any effective resistance was encountered. The combination of fortress and river front as a powerful double barrier to aggression is the usual one in flat countries like the Netherlands, and it furnishes an argument in favour of the adoption of the natural features afforded by a river rather than a frontier boundary with no special aptitude for defence. I need not enter into technical details of the character of the Belgian frontier fortresses further than to point out that the general design is that of one central fortress, with smaller protecting forts encircling it at a distance such as would preclude the bombardment of the main position. The forts are built on the pattern of the German school, triangular in shape with ditches flanked by quick-firing guns in counterscarp galleries and an open infantry parapet following approximately the line of the ditch. There were, as is well known, two schools of engineering design as regards armament. This resulted from the effects of experiments carried out with high-explosive shells in France in 1886. One school advocated the construction of bomb-proof cover for guns within the fort; the other favoured the removal of the guns generally from the fort to concealed positions in the intervals between them. The latter school maintained that unprotected guns in concealed positions were safer than protected guns in exposed positions, and that it was not the business of the fort to take part in the preliminary artillery duel of an attack, but to furnish secure positions for connecting defensive entrenchments and to rake the intervals with flanking fire. The older, or bomb-

proof, school pinned their faith too surely to the defensive strength of the cupola, and must admit sadly that recent events have not justified their contention. I have heard an eye-witness's account of the effect of a shell thrown from a howitzer of Austrian make, but in German hands, which fell squarely on to the cupola roof of a bomb-proof emplacement. He likened it to the effect of a nail driven in with a hammer. The cupola was driven down and flattened out with the complete effacement of all that was below. It is, however, an old truism that forts and fortresses are made to be taken, and the only question concerning them of real import is how long they can resist, and what enemy force they can hold up for purposes of investment meanwhile. The natural disposition of topographical features influences this result so largely that it may safely be inferred that the command given by elevation, for instance, is almost more important than the details of construction.

Never probably in all history has any barrier of mountain formation witnessed such scenes of heroic contest as the Carpathian ranges between Galicia and Hungary. Not even the thrilling story of the Russian conquest of the Schipka pass leading across the Balkans to the affluents of the Maritza river, and the road to Constantinople, can rival the series of determined attacks, or of obstinate defence, on the ridge of the Carpathians. At one time amidst the wild whirl of the winter storm and through depths of unfathomed snow, at another when the sunny slopes were crowned with flowers and bright with

autumn tints, or again under the full heat of a blazing sun, we have witnessed one long succession of desperate battles for the mastery of the passes during crowded months of war. Never was the value of a mountain frontier more significantly manifested than this. It is the natural "physical barrier" of Austro-Hungary against Russian Poland; but since Galicia became a Crown land of the Austrian monarchy, and has been separated from Poland (in spite of the fact that one-half its inhabitants are Poles) by an irregular, unscientific and indefensible boundary which does not appear to be due even to ethnical requirements, it has been found necessary to plant certain fortresses on its plains as a protection against the invader. Przemysl and Krakao are two most important fortified positions. Krakao, the ancient capital of Poland, guards the road to Silesia, as well as certain Carpathian passes to the plains of Hungary. Neither of them so far has had any decisive influence on the Russian advance to the Carpathians. Przemysl has, indeed, held up a Russian army of investment, but has in no other way contributed to the defence of Austro-Hungary. It is the natural barrier of the Carpathians rather than the artificial bulwark of the forts which has so far protected Hungary from being overrun by Cossacks. And yet the Carpathians are not a lofty system. There is not a pass across them which exceeds 4,000 feet in altitude, and although the slopes are steep and occasionally precipitous on the side of Galicia, there is not a really difficult route amongst the many which traverse the ranges. Can it be doubted that had the engineering skill which

designed such a remarkable fortress as Przemyśl been expended on strengthening positions on the Carpathians it would have been far more effective? It is not Przemyśl but the passes of Dukla and Uzhok which are Vienna's defence.

The lessons to be derived from the war so far as they affect the relation between defensive works and national frontiers are likely to reach much farther than questions of the combination of permanent works. As far back in modern history as the meeting between Briton and Boer at Laing's Nek in South Africa was the first opening of a new phase in warfare clearly indicated. A thin line of undisciplined troops, incapable of ranking with the most inferior class of disciplined soldiers, but immensely capable of shooting straight and animated by a fierce spirit of race antagonism, there held up a well-equipped force of British troops by the simple effect of a line of fire maintained from concealed (and mostly natural) positions. It was the first reversal of all our previous convictions of the relative strength of Briton and Boer. The lesson begun then was well hammered into us in the subsequent South African campaign. Russia learnt it in her contest with Japan, and the lesson was a bitter one. Germany failed to appreciate the lesson taught to others, believing that no military experience in foreign fields could teach a German anything useful about the conduct of war, and the first great necessity for shooting straight (so persistently maintained by that great practical soldier, Lord Roberts) was lost upon her. Now at length we know that the great advantage held by generals

through all time of attaining the initiative in attack has passed to the defence. Over and over again in Flanders and in Poland has a weak line of defence sufficiently well "dug in" and sufficiently (or not always sufficiently) supported by automatic machine guns from sheltered positions, been able to withstand the massed phalanx formation of attack and to deplete the enemy forces to an extent altogether out of proportion to the losses sustained by the defence. Military strategy has resolved itself into the effort to establish such a line in positions which admit of no outflanking movement. For many hundreds of miles these lines of trenches extend across the face of the widespread theatre of war, unconnected with permanent forts and independent for the most part of strategic positions as recognised by the older generation of engineers. It is a case of earthworks, of narrow, deep trenches not to be turned by enfilade, and not to be forced by a direct attack until weakened and broken by concentrated artillery fire of an intensity never before experienced in war, or by the use of poisonous gas, or by bombs, or by mining devices or any other devilment that the ingenuity of man can compass. Thus do certain antiquated methods of conducting war come back again from the past and take their place as novelties. In front of the trenches is a comparatively new device, consisting of a regular system of wire entanglement, and it is by far the most effective (because the least visible and the most difficult to remove) of any device which has yet been applied to defensive purposes. The net result combined with rapid and effective shooting is an enormous

access of power to defence. We must expect that a new school of defensive engineering will arise after the war which will regulate the military requirements of a frontier on new lines—lines of earthworks, in fact—protected by concealed batteries and secured by a complete system of railway communication. Deep and narrow trenches, flanked by multitudes of automatic quick-firing guns, thousands of miles of wire twisted and tangled into a network of obstruction, with a powerful artillery concealed far in the rear, and a fully-equipped squadron of aeroplanes, will supplement (but will not altogether replace) the old lines of fortresses at intervals, and render a rapid military rush across a boundary an impossibility. Naturally the question presents itself whether on the geographically weak line of Belgian frontier between Holland and Luxembourg such a defensive system, had it existed, would not have been even more effective against the first German onset than the Meuse line of fortresses.

Holland and Luxembourg would have been drawn into the fray, and it seems probable that English and French Allies would have gained valuable time for mobilisation, and might even have taken the field soon enough to save Belgium from the horrors of invasion.

The military protection of a strong frontier such as that afforded by a barrier of mountains would not admit of continuous lines, and it would be necessary to compass the purpose in view by the application of defensive works at important points, such as passes and commanding positions.

Even here it would seem that such defensive works should be of the nature of earthworks rather than permanent forts, which supply a definite target for artillery fire. The defence of the Carpathians and of the hills at the southern extremity of the Gallipoli Peninsula are instructive examples of defensive hill warfare under modern conditions.

Where a sea frontier is concerned it seems unlikely that we shall have to modify our views in future as to the value of permanent works for its protection. Not yet can we say that the heaviest armament carried by battleships is a fair match for a well-conducted coast defence. It never has been so, and the reason is simple—the battleship has so much more to lose by being hit than the fortress. It is impossible to sink the latter, whilst a single lucky shot may dispose of a warship. This is the great advantage of a sea frontier. Given a fleet powerful enough to deal with the enemy fleet necessary for the protection of his transports, together with the advantage of heavy weight of metal in a coast fortress, no landing of an enemy should be possible where the guns of the fort can reach ; but inasmuch as an enemy will scarcely select a well fortified position for such an attempt, the security of the seaboard must further be assured by lateral lines of communication, either by rail or motor traffic, rendering it possible to concentrate heavy artillery rapidly at any threatened point on the coast. There is nothing new in this, but we are daily re-learning old lessons in fresh fields, and therefore repetition needs no apology.

Although military methods for piercing a frontier

have developed with most amazing rapidity in certain directions, and one may find in future an entirely new school of engineering thought arising with highly specialised schemes for works of defence, there is one factor in frontier military dispositions which has practically altered in its motive and effect not at all, and that factor concerns frontier railways. We have already had the opportunity of witnessing the extraordinary strength given to a national army acting on interior lines by facilities for conveying large bodies of men from one scene of conflict to another hundreds of miles apart. Over and over again have strong German forces been moved from the Polish front to the fighting line in Flanders and in France (or *vice versa*) in the course of this war ; indeed, the chief strategical features of the German campaign have been based almost entirely on the advantages of railway communication, largely assisted, no doubt, by new developments in the matter of motor traffic. But it is the facility for direct approach to the frontier of Poland especially which has led to the extraordinary vicissitudes and changes which have occurred in that great field of action, which will afford lessons to the military world in railway strategy for years to come. Mainly it has been the object of the Germans to concentrate, by means of the many lines of direct approach which are in their hands, overwhelming forces with a powerful backing of artillery on unexpected points of the long Russian line of frontier defence in Poland and of offence in Galicia. More immediately on the frontier, lateral lines of communication within German territory have afforded the means of shifting

large bodies of troops from point to point with a rapidity unexampled in history, and thus of preserving the initiative of unexpected attack. On the other side the border (in Poland especially), no such facilities exist, or at any rate they exist in nothing like the effective strength that distinguishes the German lines, and it has consequently been the strategy of the Russian generalship to withdraw, with the best grace possible, from the overwhelming force of concentrated German attack, and to effect a strategic retreat to a line so far within their own frontier as to draw the German forces beyond the reach of any effective railway system. With the power of initiative in massing troops on weak links on the Russian chain, by means of lateral railway communication, thus lost, the sting of the German attack appears to have been drawn. Russia's first objective promised to swamp Galicia and Eastern Prussia, and seriously menaced Silesia. But behind the Russian advance there was but one main line connecting Petrograd with Warsaw and Warsaw with Lublin, and from it but three branches by means of which troops could be concentrated on the frontier to the west of the Niemen river, *i.e.*, viâ Kovno to Königsberg; from Bielostok to the river Lyck and Königsberg; and from Warsaw to Mława. On the other hand, within the limits of their own territory, the Germans possessed a perfect network of railway lines. After the first repulse of the Russians from Eastern Prussia and the German frontier of Poland, the German forces closely threatened Warsaw. A glance at the map is sufficient to show that on the German side the Polish frontier

which curves out westward from the Vistula to Galicia, there is a general railway system maintaining a line parallel to the Polish frontier from Thorn to Krakao. There are one or two branches from this main line which point directly towards Lodz and Warsaw. But within the boundary on the Polish side the large province of Kalisz seems to be destitute of railways to the west of the Thorn—Lodz—Krakao line of communication. Roads and bridges were destroyed and such temporary lines as may have been laid were torn up by the Russians in their first retreat towards Warsaw, and the German army found itself competing in the matter of mobility with that of Russia, and, being reduced to movement dependent on their marching capacity on their own flat feet, were easily outdistanced by the Russians. This is but one general illustration of the relation that exists between frontier railways and a frontier boundary, and it is only one of many that might be adduced from the annals of this present war.

One other instance of the value of rapid concentration on a particular point well served by railways may be given. During the month of May, 1915, strong German forces were withdrawn from the Flanders and French front to assist in a massed attack on the Russian front in Galicia to the east of Krakao. It was an extraordinary concentration of men and guns. There are said to have been 4,000 guns in the massed artillery. The transport required for the artillery and munitions alone must have been enormous. According to Petrograd reports, about 800 shells per yard of the Russian lines of defence

were expended before the effort to break through was successful. As usual, the expenditure in men was relatively as heavy as that of ammunition. The result was the successful advance of the German across the San river and a partial investment of Przemyśl. With this advance was combined an attack in great force by the Austro-German Army in Southern Galicia. Whether the ultimate success of this great strategic effort should result in the reconquest of Galicia or the fizzle out of German attacking activity, the conception of it was entirely due to the concentration of railway lines in Silesia on to the Galician frontier near Krakao.

With the admirable use made by the Germans of "interior" lines of railway, we have nothing to do. It is only in relation to the attack or defence of a frontier that I am anxious to emphasise the absolute necessity of careful attention to the military requirements, in the matter of railways, of other frontiers which may more immediately concern us in the future.

The stormy period of a war with Germany and Austria in which Russia is concerned as our most valuable ally, may seem to remove us far from the necessity of any present consideration of such a subject as the defence of India against Russian aggression; but apart from the fact that no examination of frontier positions would be complete without it, we must still remember that it was only the comparatively recent Russo-Japanese War which removed our anxiety regarding Russian movements in the East, and that alliances are not permanent institutions. We may well hope that for the next

half-century at least, we may rest assured of the mutual goodwill of Russia and Britain, and of an earnest desire on both sides for the peaceful and happy development of our respective countries without undue friction over remote boundaries ; but inasmuch as we have at last learned (or ought to have learned) the bitter lesson that to preserve peace it is necessary to be strong on our frontiers, it may be as well to remind ourselves of our relative positions and of our chronic apathy towards our border responsibilities. Now I have already pointed out that whatever the conditions may be which lead to advance India-wards, we have but a comparatively short line of frontier which is really vulnerable, and which demands our most special attention. This is the 300–400 miles which represent the weak section of the Russo-Afghan frontier before Quetta. South of Herat, the open way from the north narrows to 200 miles, and just beyond Quetta to 100 or even less. We know that the general military proposition is simple enough, and that successive lines of defence can always be ensured. The arrangement and disposition of the strong defensive works at Quetta lie within the province of our military engineers in India. It is not necessary to discuss them, because it is not the works but the method of supporting them, and keeping up the supply of men and material which matters here. How do we get troops to Quetta at all ? At present we have but one line from the Indus at Sukkur to the foot of the Baluchistan hills. There the line divides. One branch takes the Bolan route to the plateau, and the other follows the Harnai to

the same end. This duplicate line was the result of the washing down of a local torrent in the bed of the Bolan and the absolute destruction of the line within a few hours. It has now been reconstructed on a higher level. The Harnai route avoids the water flood, but is subject to mud avalanches of quite peculiar force at certain seasons of the year. On the whole, perhaps, the Bolan is the safer—but both depend on the single line from the Indus, between Sipri at the foot of the hills and Sukkur. Even if both were always in full working order they could carry no more between them than this single line through Jacobabad. We are well aware that the future requirements of even the simplest defensive campaign will run into many hundreds of thousands of men, and it is with this knowledge and the enormous transport involved that we have to do at present. There is no alternative route to our strongest frontier position. From our great military centres in Northern India—Rawal Pindi, Lahore, Multan, etc., we want a converging system of lines on to the Quetta plateau; and from the coast we want more than one single line to carry that perpetual stream of reinforcements from Europe which, as things now stand, would meet another great stream flowing from the north and east with a sure prospect of hopeless congestion at the junction.

Alternative lines to the one existing are pointed out by Nature—difficult, no doubt, and possibly expensive; but certainly not prohibitive on either account, and possessing all the advantage of passing through the most settled part of our inde-

pendent frontier borderland. One of them connects Quetta with the Indian railway system by the Zhob valley and the Gomal pass. The other connects Quetta with Karachi by Kalat, Las Bela and Sonmiani, and is perhaps the more important of the two. Both these lines would be absolutely protected by their geographical position from anything worse than local or tribal interference, and even that could hardly be serious. With three useful lines, supplemented by roads, converging on our Quetta defensive system, we should be in a position of defensive security such as would ensure very long and very anxious deliberation before it was challenged ; unless, indeed, we let our hard-won armies slip away from us and again relapse into a position of military insignificance. If we wish to be free from a renewal of nervous apprehensions about the one weak link in our whole Imperial frontier defensive strength we must have those lines—and we must keep our armies.

This important subject of the relations between national frontiers and supporting railway systems is one which has exercised the minds of military strategists ever since the development of railways became a factor in the mobilisation of armies. In England the demand for a perfect system of defensive lines has not been insistent, and because it has not been insistent too little attention has been paid to the frequent representations made on the subject in India. In Europe there is no country which can afford to neglect it, and, as we have seen, the greatest attention has been paid to it in Germany, where no expenditure has been deemed too great to ensure

a perfection of military preparedness for the ultimate expansion of the German Empire by conquest. In India the question resolves itself mainly into one of concentration on Quetta, the value of lateral communication along the line of the Indus valley having been already recognised and its necessities partially met.

CHAPTER IX

NATURAL FRONTIERS

ONE inevitable result of the present war will be a redistribution of national frontiers both in Europe and in Africa, and the present tendency is to demand this rearrangement on ethnographical grounds only, leaving out of account all questions of geographical suitability ; fitting a frontier to the positions (irregular and scattered though they may be) occupied by a spread-out nationality, rather than securing a sound defensible line within which the great body of the people may find peace and security. Thus Rumania would gladly advance her frontier from a strong position to a weak one in order to include the Rumanians in Hungary, and Greece is apparently hopeful of a new frontier in Asia Minor which would on the whole undoubtedly be a strong natural frontier, but which would enormously increase her responsibilities for its maintenance as a defensive line. There has been no secret made of the aspirations of many other nationalities, but they all agree in grounding their anticipations of an extended frontier on the same basis of ethnographical requirement. The evolution of a sound international boundary however depends

on much besides the mere advantages of a ring fence, and nothing is perhaps more worthy of careful attention than its geographical attributes. There are many sorts of frontiers and of boundaries, but those which have through all the ages proved most effective are undoubtedly those which are best secured by strong natural geographical features. Frontiers, and the boundaries which define the frontiers, may be classed under two heads—natural and artificial. Natural frontiers possess many advantages over artificial ones. They are readily delimited and demarcated; they are inexpensive and immovable; they last well under all conditions of climate, and they are, as a rule, plain and unmistakable. There is hardly a natural feature or circumstance of Nature that may not be pressed into the service of the boundary maker, and there are but few wide spaces existing in the world where some adaptable features of natural topography are not to be found ready to his hand. Mountains, watersheds (or divides), watercourses, and rivers, lakes and deserts figure largely in the political geography of the globe as indications of lines of partition between nations or communities, which may not be overstepped by unlicensed expansion of territory on either side, or may not be crossed without toll being taken from the traveller. And of all these natural features, a definite line of watershed carried by a conspicuous mountain ridge, or range, is undoubtedly the most lasting, the most unmistakable and the most efficient as a barrier. I need not again insist that boundaries are not set up in this world of human ambitions and land hunger for the purpose of

assimilating the peoples on either side, or of providing them with suitable accommodation for meeting one another. A boundary may, of course, be driven by political pressure right through the midst of a homogeneous race of people talking one language and deriving from a common ancestry. But even so, the same rough political considerations which lead to the adoption of so unscientific a measure for partition will inevitably decree that the boundary shall be as much of a barrier as possible against the intrigue, dissatisfaction and active resentment which will inevitably arise therefrom. Or it may indeed happen that political mismanagement may in itself foster the germs of a factious form of race hatred, so that it may become absolutely necessary to divide a people speaking a common language, and to herd the two factions into separate compartments. It is conceivable, for instance, that it may be necessary to partition Ireland between the Nationalists and Ulstermen. Would anyone suggest that the boundary between them should admit of constant raids, counter raids, and general border ructions if space and natural features can be found which will set a limit to such constant friction and its attendant bloodshed ?

Examples of the effective use of important mountain ranges as frontiers are abundant in the civilised world. Chief amongst them I should place the Himalayan barrier of Northern India, but there are others almost as impressive and possibly even more important. The Andine divide between the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans is almost ideal in its vast extent, its imposing character and uplifted isolation, although the natural

features of it are not so majestic as those which coldly embrace the Himalayan line. For more than 2,500 miles does this giant watershed divide the long strip of Chilian territory (all latitude and no longitude) from Bolivia and Argentina. For more than half that distance it is an unbroken line comprising a long succession of high level watershed averaging 13,000 to 14,000 feet above the sea, not always a distinct and definite ridge but here and there forming the western termination to vast solitary uplands, salt, desolate and inconceivably cold, spreading out towards the Atlantic. To the west it overlooks the jagged rows of spurs and tumbled foothills which edge the narrow plains of Chili. It reaches its highest altitude on Aconcagua (22,800 feet), and as it winds southward over the "Thunder Mountain" (Tronadar) to the southern extension of the Cordillera de los Andes it loses in altitude, but gains in the marvellous beauty of its fantastic surroundings. Forest-clad slopes here reach upward to eternal snows and glaciers, and downwards to the shores of deep-bosomed lakes reflecting the myriad hues of autumn's painting. Here, however, there is not the same character of rigid continuity which distinguishes the boundary further north. The line becomes broken, but still retains much of the dignity of a mountain barrier, and has proved to be equally effective as the parting wall. Although the Andine line is traversed by many passes, and has already been spanned by a railway between Buenos Aires and Valparaiso, it is only quite lately that many of these passes have become well-known geographical features. During the War of

Independence the Argentine General, San Martin, selected the pass of Valle Hermoso for the passage of his army across the Cordillera. This pass is 11,700 feet in altitude, and the successful accomplishment of this remarkable feat will remain a record in South American military history. There are many opportunities now revealed of passing at lower altitudes than this, especially at the head of the river affluents of Nequen and Limay, but so far this mighty Andine boundary has proved a powerful factor in maintaining peace between the two great Spanish-speaking republics of Chili and Argentina. It is quite fitly symbolised by an impressive statue which has been set up on the Uspallata pass representing Christ extending the blessings of peace on either hand. In Europe the Pyrenees form perhaps the most typical example of an effective mountain barrier. The Pyrenees appear to be more literally a wall than most ranges owing to their flat-topped formation and the steepness of their northern gradients. No railway crosses them ; they are, however, out-flanked at either end on the Atlantic and Mediterranean seaboard. No ethnical or linguistic interests are involved, and they stand as they have stood for ages as the parting line between two Latin nations which so far have shown no tendency towards mutual assimilation or desire for cultural unity. The original idea in adopting this political frontier was no doubt that of a barrier, and as a barrier it is still effective.

Ages yet will pass in the world's history before civilisation becomes the basis of international unity. No sooner are human passions aroused, even in

nations, than primitive and savage characteristics betray themselves. Then the laws of civilisation are cast to the winds, and forcible separation becomes again the stern law of political boundary making. The Pyrenees stand for an excellent example of what that separation should mean—until the advent of the Millennium. The frontier of Italy on the north-east, although not so perfectly adapted to the barrier ideal as the Pyrenees, is yet a magnificent natural frontier regarded either in the light of an ethnical division or as a military defence. From the Maritime Alps to St. Gothard the boundary follows the crest of the Alps, and the only exception is when the Maritime Alps reach down to the sea, and the watershed is abandoned in consequence of territorial considerations connected with the acquisition of Provence by France. There is at this point a “bulge” into Italy from the French side which covers the lowland road between the two countries. The military value of this boundary lies in a certain power of concentration for defence on the Italian side. The long concave curve of the boundary causes the convergence of roads leading from the well-known passes across the Alpine crests to Turin and Milan, the steep side of the mountains facing in the same direction. At the same time this convergence would assist a concerted scheme of invasion from France, making use of the passes between the great St. Bernard and the sea. So far, indeed, the northern boundary of Italy conforms to those mountain features which render it a typical geographical line; but from the St. Gothard to the Splügen pass, looking southward

towards Como, there is an irruption of Swiss territory which has no geographical explanation. The boundary here follows no divide ; it passes athwart the local ridges ; it descends to the lake region of Maggiore and Lugano, cutting off the northern ends of those lakes, and thence reaching up to the mountains it follows the western watershed of the Como basin, Splugen, and thence encloses the Upper Engadine. The same disregard for geographical requirement distinguishes it through the southern frontier of Austria. Here it cuts off a slice of Lake Garda, crosses the valley of the Adige, leaving the Italian-speaking province of Trent to the north ; then taking once again to the hills, scaling mountain sides and descending to valley depths, festooning its way from ridge to ridge, it eventually finds some sort of rest in the Carnic Alps. From the eastern end of this chain it plunges again into a wild orgy of geographical eccentricity till it reaches the sea. To the inconvenient political boundary of the Swiss Canton Ticino (the Italian Switzerland) there is attached so much of ancient European history that it must be regarded as sanctified by age. It dates from a time when political and geographical considerations were subordinated to commercial interests. The Val Levantina and Val d'Ossola were purchased from Milan in 1426 in exchange for a vast sum of money and certain commercial privileges. This was long before Switzerland possessed a nationality. Locano and Lugano were ceded in 1512 ; Bellinzona and the Val Levantina were officially recognised as the Canton of Ticino in 1813. This was before Switzerland was adopted as the name of the

Confederation. Although Italian, French, and German are recognised as national languages in Switzerland it is practically a German-speaking country north of the Italian-speaking Ticino. The original language (Romansch) of Switzerland is preserved as an archaic relic in but one Society. Switzerland is indeed less of a nationality than a community. On the whole, the natural frontier and the political frontier of Northern Italy coincide, and usually as a natural frontier hardens into consistency with time, its effect is to become a racial frontier. But in the case of these two remarkable lapses from the geographically scientific border—Ticino and Trentino—it appears that no such racial adaptation has occurred. It becomes difficult to account for the permanence of such a frontier as that which holds Ticino. It has outlasted many more perfect institutions. There is no reasonable theory to be advanced in favour of the Trentino indentation, and it is impossible to believe in the long-continued existence of a boundary so fatally opposed to all scientific theories of boundary making.

The North Italian frontier is of exceptional interest as an example of an extended mountain barrier which is ideal in its geographical conditions for the greater part, but, whilst still a mountain barrier, illustrates fully the weakness and futility of such a boundary scheme when once the principle of following a main watershed is abandoned. Valleys are crossed ; local interests divided ; racial and social affinities are disregarded ; mountains are traversed with an air of readiness which suggests that the boundary can only exist on paper, and a permanent international

grievance is established which can only be settled by force.

A convenient range of mountains so disposed by nature as to present the opportunity for utilising its crest in the delimitation of a political boundary does not always occur, and the majority of such boundaries have to depend on other natural or artificial means of support. Failing a definite uplifted watershed, the ordinary divide between the heads of the minor affluents of river basins is a useful alternative. Its advantages are those of permanence, definiteness and economy, even if it presents no advantages from the fact that a divide usually represents a certain command in altitude which would render it important as a military feature. It occasionally happens that a divide or watershed is affected by the action of the watercourses which it divides in their tendency to cut back at their heads, and thus change the position and shape the line of division of their sources. Such action in Nature does occur, and it is a well-known geographical feature which has now and then to be reckoned with in demarcation, but it occurs so seldom as hardly to affect the general advantages of the divide. It may also happen in Nature (and this is a matter which is sometimes overlooked) that there is no divide at all. This indeed may be the case on a mountain range where a glacier sits astride of the watershed, or where such a glacier has disappeared within recent geologic periods and left a lake behind it. Instances could be given of such geographical features on the broad back of the Hindu Kush range, on the crests of the Lower Andes, and on several of the Pamir ridges,

but the remoteness and the isolation of these features render this characteristic of a double water source quite unimportant. When, however, the general trend of a long and conspicuous line of divide suddenly encounters a self-contained basin, including perhaps several lakes, there is more serious difficulty. This is one of those features which demand close geographical examination before any attempt at delimitation is made. On the whole, however, a divide must be regarded as a permanent feature which is unlikely to be shifted, or affected, by the wear and tear of Nature's destructive forces. It is also a definite one. One of the minor characteristics of a really efficient boundary should be that it is unmistakable. No man should be able to cross it and to claim that he was not aware of his crossing. This is not always possible, as, for instance, in dense forests such as those which distinguish the borderlands of Peru and Bolivia, where boundary work is even now being pressed forward, but where the overstepping of the boundary is under present conditions a matter of comparative unimportance. The economic view of the question is perhaps a subsidiary one, but it is important. As a rule a divide is recognisable without the aid of artificial landmarks—cairns, pillars, and the like—to define it. Far less of such expensive aids to demarcation is necessary than in any other form of boundary. It follows from this that it is more readily and more quickly demarcated. The advantage of rapidity works in two directions. It is much less expensive and much safer politically; rapidity in execution may be of the highest importance. It may even save a war between

the disputants. Always rapidity is important where the boundary touches Oriental susceptibilities. Waste of time, leisure to discuss and to foment difficulties, the idleness that finds mischief so readily, are all more or less discounted and defeated by rapid action and steady employment. "Never give them time to think" is a useful motto when dealing with Orientals.

Next to mountain ranges, rivers afford the most tangible line for boundary definition. There is no mistaking the line, there is no waste over artificial constructions in connection with demarcation. Their geographical conditions and environment are always better known, and they do very often serve the purpose of a barrier. There are geographical conditions in many parts of the globe where a river line is the only one possible to afford any prospect of permanence and easy recognition. Indeed it entirely depends on these same conditions of environment whether a river is a good boundary or a bad one. Where the surrounding country is a waste of trackless forest or wild upland, and where the river is confined to a comparatively narrow channel in a rock-bound bed, it is a God-sent feature for boundary-making, and requires no assistance from man. The Oxus river from the Badakshan plains to its glacier sources in the Pamirs forms a typical boundary of this nature. The wild and waste grandeur of the enclosing mountains, the steep scarped cliffs of its narrow channel, and the force and strength of its mighty flow as it gathers its waters from a whole series of ice-cradles combine to render it almost as perfect a

natural barrier as the lines of glacier-bearing ranges which give it birth. But where it leaves the hills and spreads into the plains, changing its banks and its channels, swallowing up acres of good alluvial soil at one place, pushing up sand banks in its midst, and laying out new curves and new threads of streamlets to wander over the plains at another, it possesses more of the nature of a sea frontier than of a boundary. No man can say of it (or of any other great river intersecting plains) exactly where the boundary passes. There is none in fact. Where rivers intersect cultivated plains it often occurs that racial, linguistic and local agricultural claims are divided by it, and if it is broad enough and deep enough to warrant navigation, it inevitably becomes practically the exclusive possession of the most pushing nation. Rival claims for the right of way are far more likely to arise than friendly interchange of civilities and international goodwill. The Oxus river, for instance, has practically become a Russian river west of Badakshan. In shallow rivers the dispute about water rights for irrigation often leads the way to serious contention. From the point of view from which all frontier boundaries must be critically examined in these days, viz. its efficacy as a barrier, rivers must be regarded generally as a failure. One great lesson that the war with Germany has taught us is that rivers in these days are but feeble checks to an advance compared to mountain heights. When the Germans shifted their boundary from the Rhine to the Vosges mountains to the west of Alsace, they strengthened their

frontier greatly. Where that boundary leaves the Vosges to define the southern limits of Lorraine it is weak and dependent on artificial support. The German defence of their frontier hangs on their success in defence of the Vosges and on the heights above the Meuse; not on the Meuse, the Moselle or the Rhine. The annexation of the French provinces of Alsace and Lorraine did nothing to damage the efficacy of their national frontier from the military point of view. It rather improved it. That it proved to be a gigantic political blunder is due to their incapacity to appreciate the force of that fundamental moral consideration which deals with the will of the people concerned, as well as to their national incapacity for assimilation.

The usefulness of lakes as a link in the chain of topographical features suitable as the basis for a boundary is problematical. When they are narrow they rank as rivers; when they are broad (as in the case of Lake Geneva) their "barrier" conditions more nearly approach those of a desert so far as they present a wide unoccupied space only to be crossed with artificial assistance. Their weakness is due to the fact that they possess no demarcated or recognisable line of boundary, and that disputes may arise therefrom. No such difficulty attends the desert frontier, which is, under certain conditions, a most effective barrier, offering no opportunity for local disputes and presenting an impossible obstacle to sudden attack. Many countries owe their long-continued national existence to the protection afforded by flanking deserts—as, for instance, Egypt. But not

even in these later days when advancing armies can be supported by light railways, and these railways can be laid at the rate of two or three miles a day, have the advantages of a desert frontier been seriously discounted. We have had an example of some force in the abortive Turkish expedition across the Sinaitic peninsula from Palestine to the Suez Canal. Not even Turkish troops (the most enduring of all troops) could compass a successful raid across that short 100 miles of desert space, nor can the passing of troops in sufficient number to be a menace to Egypt be effected until the supporting line of railway becomes a *fait accompli*. This again is rendered extremely difficult by the topographical confirmation of the uplifted peninsula, which is flanked and protected by deep depressions both east and west. Not less protective is the vast Lybian desert on the west of Egypt, which requires no artificial boundary demarcation to set a point to its integrity; whilst the Hamar desert of Nubia on the south successfully defied approach to Egypt by any route other than the narrow and circuitous valley of the Nile till Kitchener spanned it with a railway. The surroundings of Egypt are typical illustrations of the value of desert frontier protection, but other instances occur in Africa, and they are frequent in Asia. The Kalahari desert in South Africa and the Persian deserts in Western Asia, or the Baluch desert on the Indian frontier, all play an important *rôle* in frontier policy. Deserts possess the very obvious advantage that definite demarcated lines in their midst are seldom necessary. It is true that such lines have been laid down here

and there, but it is rare that they are worth the expenditure in life, labour and money that they involve; they violate that fundamental principle of frontier-making which advocates the utmost use of all permanent natural features that can be pressed into the service before resorting to the expense and delay involved in ephemeral artificial demarcation.

CHAPTER X

ARTIFICIAL BOUNDARIES

ANYONE interested in the subject of International Frontiers who will take a map of the civilised world and examine the nature (so far as the map reveals it) of those irregular outlines, neatly defined in colour, which indicate the dividing boundaries of nations, will see that the most prominent of them are natural geographical features. Apart from the sea, which is the most obvious frontier of all, ranges of mountains and rivers occupy a large place in the scheme of political divisions, and it will need but little historical knowledge to reveal that these seas and rivers, mountains and lakes, where they occur, have proved to be the most lasting and the most effective barriers that have been accepted as political frontiers. Nevertheless, artificial boundaries have had their use in the making and dividing of nationalities, and there seem to be indications that such artificial methods of keeping communities apart may figure far more largely in future—in combination with

natural topographical features—than they have done hitherto.

Purely artificial frontiers based on no geographical data, dependent on no natural or topographical features which may render them plain and recognisable by those whom they are designed to separate, are generally the result of ignorance of the local conditions of the country they pass through. It is because no natural frontier can be suggested or, more rarely, because no natural features present themselves as available for boundary demarcation, that artificial means are resorted to. Artificial frontiers are not to be compared with natural frontiers as useful barriers or obvious limitations to territory. They are most expensive to demarcate, most difficult to maintain, and the time and labour that are lost in their construction is often fatal to the object for which they are designed. Consequently no diplomatist should ever agree to artificial demarcation until he is satisfied by trustworthy evidence in the shape of accurate local surveys that a natural boundary is impossible. In mediæval times artificial barriers of a certain form commonly represented the limits of a State because a simple scheme of construction rendered them more or less defensible lines, and the transgression of them was difficult to people whose only weapons of warfare were such as they could wield personally. When concentrated artillery fire did not exist walls were a solid obstacle, and ditches were quite useful. The latter, in the form of trenches, seem to have come into their own again in face of modern artillery, and, for

many obvious reasons, they are quite likely to prove useful supplements to those natural features which may serve defensive purposes, in spite of the expense of construction and certain other disadvantages. We have relics and indications of artificial barriers in Britain which must have involved an enormous expenditure of money and labour, the value of which as defensive works and boundaries has long passed away. The most important of them were the lines of wall, ditch and rampart which were raised by the Romans as protection against the incursions of northern clans belonging to the Gaelic branch of the Celtic race, known as Picts and Scots. As early as A.D. 80, Tacitus constructed a line of detached forts between the Firth of Clyde and the Firth of Forth. It was along this line that one of his successors in command of the Roman troops connected eighteen detached forts by a wall and an immense fosse, averaging 40 feet in width by 20 feet in depth, which was carried over hill and plain for 36 miles from sea to sea. This was further protected by a rampart on the southern side of the fosse. It is usually known as the Wall of Antoninus, or, in late years, as Graham's Dyke. This protection did not, however, prevent incursions from the north, and in 129 A.D. we find the wall of Hadrian between the Tyne and the Solway representing the northern limit of Roman occupation of Britain. About the beginning of the fourth century A.D., the Picts and Scots invaded England and succeeded in nearly reaching London. They were driven back across Hadrian's Wall, and the arms of Rome were carried

again to the Clyde and the Forth. Hadrian's Wall was an ambitious structure. It consisted of a triple line of defence: first, a stone wall 6 to 9 feet thick and (probably) about 12 feet high, which ran for 73 miles from the Tyne to Solway. This was faced with stone, and the interior was filled in with rubble masonry cemented by mortar. A deep ditch ran near the foot of its northern base. There were three parallel earthen walls lined behind the stone structure with a ditch sloping down from the northern face of the second, the space between the system of earthen ramparts and the stone wall having irregular castles, or turrets, built at intervals and connected up by a good military road running laterally along the whole defensive line. Camps existed at every four miles. The frontier of England was then the intervening space between Graham's Dyke and Hadrian's Wall—the forerunner of the Scottish Marches which lasted through the Middle Ages until quite modern times. These walls were not the only lines of defence against tribal irruptions into England. Towards the end of the eighth century A.D., the powerful Mercian King, Offa, constructed a dyke—still known as Offa's Dyke—as a protection against the Welsh. A part of it is incorporated in the county boundary of Denbigh. This great barrier extended from the Wye to the Dee. Another ancient form of artificial barrier defining a frontier is that of palisades. This very primitive method, which to this day finds a place in Oriental systems, has long passed out of recognition in the West, but it was largely employed in the days of the Roman Empire, and relics of it are

still dug up on what used to represent the northern frontier of Rome in the province of the Danube, where barbarian irruptions were constantly expected and defeated. It is a remarkable fact that a very ancient palisade boundary still exists between China and Manchuria following a definite natural line at the foot of the western extension of the mountains above Kiu-chau. It answers the purpose of reserving from Chinese occupation the long ridge of hills which overlooks the main line of communication between Peking and Mukden, following the western shores of the Liaotung gulf. It abuts on the Great Wall at a point not far from the junction of the wall with the sea, but it is an indifferent continuation of that remarkable barrier which will figure through all history as by far the greatest achievement in artificial barriers, if not as the greatest monument of human industry, that the world has ever seen. Everyone knows the main facts connected with the Great Wall of China. Before the Manchu Tartars subjugated China it was the northern boundary of the Empire. It is undoubtedly the most gigantic, as it is apparently the most extravagant, conception of an artificial boundary that ever occupied human energy and intelligence. Chi Hwang Ti, of the Tsin dynasty, laid the foundations of its most eastern flank in the year 237 B.C., and for century after century it must have engaged an enormous army of forced labour to carry the project to a conclusion. For 1,700 miles it stretches over hill and valley between the Gulf of Liaotung to the point beyond the city of Sining in the western province of Kansu,

where it touches the borders of Turkestan. Here, until lately, it was supposed to end, but the investigations of Sir Aurel Stein in this part of the Tibeto-Chinese borderland have revealed the fact that it reaches still further westward, for at least 500 miles into Chinese Turkestan. The eastern end of the wall, near Peking, consists of huge blocks of granite resting on pedestals, traditionally said to be the hulks of ships filled with iron. At first the masonry on these eastern sections was fitted with great accuracy, but the elaboration of its construction (which resembles that of the walls of Peking) deteriorates as it proceeds. Its average height near Peking is 20 feet, including the five feet of parapet at the top. The thickness at the base is 25 feet and on the platform 15 feet. The face is composed of a double wall, each wall being 2 feet thick with rubble filling up a space between. Up to 6 feet the extra face is of granite and the upper part of sun-dried brick. The platform is paved with brick and provided with ramps so that horses can be ridden on to it. In the province of Pechili the wall is terraced and cased with brick; in the province of Shansi it is sometimes nothing better than an earthen rampart, but, crossing the trade route to Siberia, in Kansu, it is again a stone and brick construction with large and strong towers; but, beyond the Hoang Ho, generally, it is only really well maintained where it traverses important routes or guards river navigation. It is carried up rugged hill sides and reaches an elevation of 10,000 feet, and where the nature of the ground renders invasion easy it is sometimes doubled, or

even trebled. Battlemented towers stand on it at 100 yard intervals in its fully completed sections, and it is everywhere protected by guard houses. Sir Aurel Stein, in that part of the ancient wall which extends into Chinese Turkestan, almost to the Gobi desert, discovered traces of the sentries' well-worn tracks as they passed to and fro beneath the wall, and he explored certain guard houses, which, in that dry climate and under the preserving influence of sand drifts, retained written evidences of their former occupation. As a mighty specimen of a purely artificial barrier it will stand unrivalled through all time. Although history records that it failed to keep the destroyer, Chenghis Khan, to his own side of the border, it undoubtedly served (and still serves) a useful purpose in preserving the Chinese frontier from local raids and irruptions, but it no longer separates the nomad from the agriculturist. The eastern and southern frontiers of Mongolia are already vague and uncertain, owing to the irruptions of Chinese into Mongolian territory, where they now cultivate the best watered and most favourable pastures of the Monguls and leave patches of unproductive ground between. Nothing stops the outflow of the Chinese. The Chinaman has invaded the commercial towns and has seized on every opportunity of adapting his methods to the local business of Mongolia, whether it be by simple processes of trade or by exploiting the natural wealth of the country. He is the German of the East.

The Great Wall has suited the times and the environment for which it was destined. Its enormous

cost in money and life (it is said that 400,000 workmen perished of cold and starvation during its construction) was of little consideration to the builders. According to Chinese historians, a generation perished that future generations might be served. It is impossible to realise the immense influence on the destinies of China which that wall may have exercised during the twenty centuries of its existence, but the maddest Empire builder of to-day would never again conceive the project of defending thousands of miles of an irregular frontier by the building of a wall such as that of China. As a physical obstacle in these days such devices would be of very little use, but where one nation with a highly developed military organisation threatens the existence of another equally well found in all the modern requisites of armament, a somewhat analogous system has been adopted of constructing important fortresses at intervals unconnected by defensive lines. It may yet happen, as history rolls on, that whilst the wall, as a defensive feature, vanishes from the face of the frontier, the ditch may survive in an aggravated form. We cannot get away from the fact that, at the time of writing this, there are certainly more than 1,000 miles of provisional frontier defended for the most part by nothing better than elaborate ditches. With modern armies, reckoned in millions, and modern weapons which give a new power to defensive tactics, lines of well-prepared trenches may again be found to be absolutely necessary connecting links between supporting fortresses, even over long distances, such as might represent a boundary of some significance. The ideal artificial frontier

of the future would then be represented and demarcated by long lines of trenches, supported by fortresses of varied size and importance, with a lateral system of railway communication in its rear which would ensure the rapid concentration of troops at any threatened point. Present indications point to that as the "great wall" of the future, the dividing barrier between well-armed nations, jealous of each other's prosperity, and greedy of each other's territory.

There are, however, vast spaces in the world where no such conditions exist, where the white man has but recently taken up the burden of reclamation from savage barbarism, or from more advanced misuse and oppression, whilst incidentally he takes up more land and possibly makes his fortune. It seldom happens, however, that the expanding influence of the pioneer stops much short of collision with some similar expansion moving in an opposite direction, and, indeed, it is difficult to see where, in the future of the world's history, untrammelled expansion is ever to take place. It is the collision between rival interests which necessitates a definite frontier with a well-marked boundary, and it unfortunately happens that the necessity is often in advance of accurate geographical knowledge, and that some artificial makeshift as a dividing line is hastily adopted instead of waiting for a rational inquiry into the local conditions prevailing in the territories in question, with solid evidence of the topographical conformations and tribal distributions. Thus we find in some of the remoter portions of the globe long international boundaries defined by straight lines. Now Nature abhors a straight line,

and Nature will have no hand in presenting opportunity for a useful and easily demarcated boundary, that is absolutely straight. Nothing but the necessity imposed by ignorance can justify the adoption of the straight line. It is inelastic, allowing of none of that give and take in the business of mutual settlement on the field which is an essential factor in a rapid and reasonable agreement. There are innumerable features, small in themselves maybe, but locally important, that may require a divergence from a rigid line. There may be the question of water supply (or perhaps of oil) to consider, and wells may be unevenly distributed. Or, again, a village may become separated from the tribal community to which it rightly belongs. Indeed, the complications arising from a straight line definition are almost infinite, and they all add to the difficulties of demarcation and tend to foster ill-feeling and resentment, not only between the representatives or commissions of the two countries engaged in setting up a hedge between their respective interests, but amongst the people themselves, whose interests are often the last to be considered. If the history of the many straight line boundaries which have been determined by treaty between contending national interests could be fully traced, with the considerations which led to the adoption of this form of frontier definition, it would probably be found that geographical ignorance was, in four cases out of five, at the root of the decision. There are few instances of mathematically straight frontiers in Europe, because those frontiers are the outcome of ages of settlement and re-settlement amongst the nations

whose geographical conditions were long ago ascertained and, in most cases, reduced to accurate representation in map form before political discussion took place. It is usually where the expansion of white races has led to international complications caused by the process of supporting claims in regions only half explored and possibly represented by an absolute blank in the world's map, and where the division between international interests appeared to require immediate settlement without the delay of scientific exploration, that resort has been made to such a weak substitute for rational and scientific frontier definition. Of all forms of straight line definition that which depends on the accurate determination of graticule lines (that is to say of meridional or latitude lines) is the most unsatisfactory, because of the initial difficulty which frequently exists in determining their exact geodetic position. Where, indeed, accurate geodetic surveys have been sufficiently advanced to ensure such accuracy, there appears to be no reason for the adoption of the inelastic straight line at all. Two well-known and most important international boundaries in America are thus defined. The Treaty of Washington, 1846, provides that the boundary between Canada and the United States should run from the western shores of the Lake of the Woods in a westerly direction along the parallel of 49° North latitude to the middle of the channel which separates the continent from Vancouver Island, and thence in a southerly direction through the middle of the same channel and up Fuca Strait to the Pacific. Seventy years had passed since, on July 4th, 1776, the Declara-

tion of Independence had been made by the American Congress. Seven years later America was free from English interference, and the northern boundary of the United States was settled very much as it now stands from the Atlantic to the longitude of the Mississippi river. It is, on the whole, a boundary which follows a natural frontier requiring little artificial assistance to render it effective as an international division of territory. Of the thirteen organised States then created there were several the charters of which carried them to the Pacific Ocean although they nominally admitted the Mississippi limitation on the west. The expansion of the white races was clearly contemplated even before any political Federation was accomplished, but we cannot trace any systematic attempt to acquire a geographical knowledge of those lands of promise reaching out westwards to the Rockies. During the next half-century the red man was still in possession of his own, and exploration, except of a military nature, was necessarily risky. In 1830 there were but twenty-three miles of railway in the United States ; in 1845 there were 4,000 miles, and the enormous pressure of expansion westward and north-westward, which had been gradually developing for fifty years, demanded a definite decision between Canada and the United States as to the extent of their dominions. It was under such conditions of nebulous geographical knowledge that the 49th parallel of latitude was adopted as a boundary. The enormous expense attendant on its demarcation may be faintly realised from the nature of it. For upwards of 1,200 miles

through primeval forest (for the greater part) a track 100 yards wide had to be cleared and decorated with iron pillars and concrete cairns at intervals. Sixty-five years after the treaty was signed that boundary was still in the process of making, and during that time it had mercifully no opportunity of proving its weakness as a barrier, although as a dividing line between the nations its inefficiency was made sufficiently clear. French and English Canadians have overlapped the line in large numbers, both east and west of North Dakota, just as Americans have settled north of it, but this fusion of nationalities along the edges of national territory has proceeded by natural impulse and free will and has given rise to no political complications. As a scientific geographical and political definition it has little to commend it. After leaving the Lake of the Woods it crosses the Red river of the north, almost at right angles, and instead of following the natural line of the Pembina affluent, which would have conducted it to the divide between the Red river and the next great stream—the Mouse river, it cuts off the heads of the Pembina affluents from the south, mounts up the Turtle mountains at the head of that river by the flank (disjointing a comparatively small mountain section on the north), and descends again to traverse the Mouse river and proceed on its way to the Rockies by a course which unhappily leads it to sever the heads of seven or eight of the smaller affluents of the Upper Missouri before it strikes the mountains. From the Rockies to the sea it necessarily traverses the mountain system of Columbia for some 500 miles by a process of geo-

geographical gymnastics which might be difficult to avoid, but which must have involved much painful labour and great expense. America is fond of straight boundaries. Those which determine the limits of States are mostly straight, and her cities are all divided up into square blocks. The Alaskan frontier again follows the meridian of 141° West Longitude from the Beaufort sea, in Arctic regions, to near the Pacific, crossing the Porcupine river and the Yukon in its course. The treaty which ratified the cession by purchase from Russia of Alaska to the United States allocated to America first of all that part of North America which lies west of the 141st meridian west of Greenwich; secondly, the Eastern Diomedé island in Bering Strait and the islands of Bering sea, and the Aleutian chain east of a line drawn from the Diomedes in a south-westerly direction so as to pass midway between Alta island of the Aleutian and Copper island of the Commander group; lastly, of a narrow strip of coast with its adjacent islands north of Latitude $54^{\circ} 40'$ North, west of Portland channel, and thence bounded to the east and north by a line following "the summit of the mountains situated parallel to the coast"—"to the point of intersection with the 141st meridian," provided that when this line "shall prove to be at a distance of more than ten marine leagues from the ocean the limit shall be formed by a line parallel to the windings of the coast and which shall never exceed the distance of ten marine leagues therefrom." This latter clause in the treaty involves consideration of the use and meaning of geographical terms which will be referred to later;

it is with the meridional line that we are immediately concerned. In a region so remote as Alaska it would be rash to assume that any other course than the adoption of an artificial frontier, such as this, was open to the political Powers that sanctioned the treaty. No exact topographical delineation of the territory lying between the Beaufort sea and the Pacific could have been available, neither could there have appeared to be any local considerations involved which might lead to international difficulties hereafter. It is not so much the adoption of a line which can never be fully demarcated, as the inelastic and too definite terms of its situation, which is open to criticism in a case where the whole geographical situation must be indefinite. Its value depends on whether there exists a Canadian survey which can fix the geodetic position of the meridian of 141° West Longitude. If it has been fixed as an abstract determination of longitude, or on the evidence of such coastal charts as may have existed at the time the treaty was made, it is liable at any time to be challenged by such an extension of geodetic triangulation as may be carried into those remote districts by the Canadian Survey, or even by a careful differential determination effected by the use of telegraphy. An instance of such a catastrophe occurred in East Africa, where a comparatively thriving and settled community found themselves suddenly transferred from British to Belgian authority by the removal of a meridional boundary from its assumed position to a line much farther west. Alaska is, after all, well within the ring of active commercial interest. Alaska was purchased by the

United States from Russia in 1867 and in 1890 the monopoly of seal fur trading was secured by the North American Commercial Co., which was a trade important enough to lead to difficulties and negotiations with the British Government on account of the wholesale destruction of seals. It was not till 1895 that the gold discoveries on the Klondike tributary of the Yukon led to a vast immigration of prospectors, not only into British territory, but into every part of Alaska. Over 50,000 emigrants are believed to have swarmed into the country, and the United States then set about a vigorous exploration. The gold belt was found to extend in a general line from old Fort Selkirk on the Yukon to the Bering Straits, with an average width of about 100 miles. As the 141st meridian traverses the Yukon river between Fort Selkirk and Fort Yukon (leaving Klondike on the Canadian side of it) it is obvious that very important claims might arise were the assumed meridional line of boundary found to be misplaced. This risk might have been avoided had the terms of the treaty indicated that the boundary was to run as near to the 141st meridian as could be determined under existing conditions, and that, with regard to any future or more accurate determinations, the boundary was to remain unaffected by them. Yet another straight line international boundary exists in America which has already given rise to difficulties which may be considered as commercial rather than political. This is the southern boundary of the United States with Mexico. From the Gulf of Mexico to the town of El Paso near the meridian of 107° West Longitude the Rio Grande

forms a magnificent natural boundary between the State of Texas and Mexico. As a definite and dominating geographical feature it would be difficult to surpass it. It possesses, doubtless, some of the weaknesses incidental to river boundaries. It is no barrier, and there has been for long a gradual shifting of population from territories adjoining its southern banks into the United States across the river, which has resulted in a very high percentage of the inhabitants of the Rio Grande counties being American. In 1890 this percentage varied between 27 and 55. By this time, since the revolution in Mexico expatriated Porfirio Dias and resulted in indescribable anarchy and political confusion, that percentage must have very largely increased. From the town of El Paso, westward to the Pacific, this northern boundary of Mexico is defined by a system of straight lines with one small and unimportant link where it is carried by the Colorado river. The boundary is distinguished by the unusual institution of a free zone, 12 miles broad and running the whole length of 1,800 miles between the two oceans. This was established in commercial interests in order to effect a balance between the excessive taxation on internal trade which prevailed in the Mexican towns of the Rio Grande valley with the exceptionally low tariff of the Texas towns. The result was that some check was put on the persistent smuggling and on the still more persistent emigration; but, incidentally, it led to the establishment of a double line of custom houses which have to be maintained on either side of the free zone, entailing considerable outlay and the expense of

upkeep. The inefficiency of the artificial section of the barrier (and indeed of the river itself) in preventing smuggling has been quite sufficiently well illustrated recently during the course of the Mexican revolution. Arms and ammunition, if not actual fighting units, have passed into Mexico freely, and it may well be doubted whether, without the assistance thus obtained, the revolution could have lasted long enough to throw the country into the present state of absolute, and apparently hopeless, anarchy.

CHAPTER XI

GEOGRAPHICAL PROBLEMS IN BOUNDARY DELIMITATION

THE delimitation of a frontier is the business for the treaty makers, who should decide on trustworthy evidence the line of frontier limitation which will be acceptable to both the high contracting parties with all due regard to the local conditions of topography and the will of the peoples who are thus to have a barrier placed between them. These are the two first and greatest considerations, and they involve a knowledge of local geography and of ethnographical distributions. Dependent thereon are other important matters which may largely influence a final decision—matters which may include military, political or commercial interest, but all of which are subject to geographical and ethnographical dispositions. It is only quite recently—within the last half century or so—that geographical knowledge has been considered an important factor (or considered a factor at all) in the education of the political officer. It is even now regarded rather doubtfully by the older school of administrators who, like the older generations of generals, managed to conduct their campaigns

in happy ignorance of the topography of the territory in which they were to fight. It is doubtless the warning that has been conveyed and the risks encountered in frontier delimitations where geographical considerations were practically ignored, to say nothing of the vast expenditure incurred by the consequent delays and disagreements, that has led to a better appreciation of the necessity for geographical knowledge. It was the disasters of South African campaigning that led to revised systems of map making in that country, and since no general dare go into the field now wrapped in a cloak of happy geographical ignorance, so it may be assumed that no future treaty-maker or boundary-delimitator would care to face the risks of failure by following the methods of a past generation of political blunderers. This is not unimportant, and it is quite worth while to refer briefly to the development of a national interest in geography (especially in that branch of it which includes geographical map making), because even now it is very little understood by the mass of educated British people.

Fifty years ago the whole area of scientific knowledge embraced in the wide field of geography was narrowed to a ridiculous little educational streamlet which babbled of place names and country products. Scanty as was the educational value of geographical teaching fifty years ago, it was almost equalled in its feebleness by the practical knowledge of the subject which included the all-important matter of map making. True we had our geodetic scientists, and much profound thought and practical

energy had already been devoted to solving the riddle of the earth's form and dimensions such as laid the foundation for an after extension of valuable bases for surface measurement which would sustain the building up of maps. But it was not the development of map making alone which led to the better appreciation of the absolute necessity for scientific geographical education in the widest sense of the term. It was the practical consideration that we were being left very far behind in the field, not so much of pioneer research (there we have always held our own) as of that practical knowledge which profoundly affected our position as a commercial nation, our prospects in the military field, or our political dealings with other countries when the question arose of partition of spheres of interest, that forced the conservative hand of our educational administration, and led to the formation of geographical schools throughout the breadth of the country. In short, it began to be quite clear that geography was a science that had to be reckoned with, and which it paid pre-eminently to study. But so wide is the field which that science embraces, so intricate are its relations with almost every other natural science which either has its roots in land formations and a growth dependent on climatic influence, or else is in itself the bedrock of such formations, that a whole world of separate and distinct branches of geographical study have arisen in connection with them. But we need not enter further into the question of what geography covers. The basis of all map making is a geodetic framework. Whatever may be the out-

come of geodetic measurements (conducted and perfected with all the scientific care of the best observers in the world) as regards scientific theories of the world's shape and constitution, and of the corrections which thereby may be introduced into those data from which our computations of latitude, longitude and azimuth are deduced, there is this solid, practical effect of it—that it furnishes the anatomy or framework of the whole world's map construction; and, as the years roll on, and here and there a continental area is added to the map geography of the earth, there can be no fitting together of the patchwork puzzle—no unity or continuity of illustration—unless it is nailed down to a pre-existing geodetic framework. But all this initial process must necessarily be in the hands of scientists—and science moves slowly, if surely, and it is usually expensive. The world cannot sit idle and wait for this slow evolution of exact determinations on strictly geodetic principles before demanding maps.

And we have found now by the experience of the last twenty to thirty years that other provisional methods, methods which involve the use of a smaller class of instruments and lead to rapid progress, are quite sufficient to enable us to spread out our map system on comparatively small scales of work over the vast areas that are of primary interest to the commercial, military or political geographer without the accumulation of any error that would invalidate the map. This is the sort of work nowadays which is voluntarily undertaken by many travellers, and which gives us results that are far

beyond those of earlier geographical pioneers in value. It is this sort of work which is wanting whenever a political discussion arises as to respective spheres of national interest in wide and only half-explored regions, and which usually remains wanting. It is often because of possession of geographical data of the most absurdly elementary type that the commercial pioneer succeeds in striking in early to the development of a fresh trade area and thus secures the first fruits of commercial enterprise. The details of this work, the actual processes by which it is accomplished, belong to the demarcator, who starts in to complete the boundary demarcation when the delimitation has taken shape in the form of an agreement or treaty between the high contracting parties. It is with the form of delimitation and the primary necessity for trustworthy geographical information in the first place, and of sufficient geographical knowledge to prevent the misuse of technical terms, that we are now concerned. This is an age of boundary making, of partitioning and dividing up territory, which has by no means come to an end yet, and which may well continue as long as the world endures. The territories to be partitioned, to which political boundaries have to be set, may be those of highly developed and well-mapped countries (with which we are not immediately concerned) or they may be dark and remote, and guiltless of any map-illustration which can be accepted as good enough to guide the work of demarcation. All sorts of countries, under all sorts of Governments, from the black barbarism

of Central Africa to the hothouse civilisation of South America, have been subjected to the process, and of all of them may the same thing be said, *i.e.*, that the process of frontier defining has resolved itself into a strictly geographical problem. It must always be so. A boundary is but an artificial impress on the surface of the land, as much as a road or a railway, and, like the road or the railway, it must adapt itself to the topographical conditions of the country it traverses. If it does not, it is likely to be no barrier at all. Boundaries have been twisted out of every conceivable natural feature with more or less success. Those—as I have already explained—which have been defined in abstract terms of meridians and parallels, or other abstract lines, for want of knowledge of existing natural features have never proved satisfactory. The first preliminary to a boundary settlement should be, if possible, a reasonably clear topographical illustration of the country concerned; but this is not always possible, and it may happen that the mere agreement between two countries upon an abstract definition may be all that is necessary for the time being. In that case a store of future trouble is laid up if in the terms of delimitation it is not made clear that this arrangement is provisional only.

Here, then, we find the first rock upon which delimitation treaties split. It is the want of geographical knowledge. If, indeed, it is compulsory ignorance, if there is no possibility of waiting till maps can be made, and arbitrators are forced into the position of adopting the worst of all possible expedients—the

straight line—a provisional or elastic agreement must take the place of a more elastic boundary.

Some very notable instances have occurred lately in connection with boundary settlements in Central and Southern Africa which strongly support this contention. In one case, a meridian line was selected before even such preliminary investigations were concluded as might have determined a fairly accurate longitude and fixed a point on that meridian. The result was an awkward international complication as soon as it was discovered that in the neighbourhood of the Ruwenzori mountains a wide tract of valuable land had been erroneously assigned to England which subsequently had to be transferred to Belgium. In that case, I think I am right in stating that quite enough of the geographical features of the country were known to decide whereabouts the dividing line ought to run, only, unfortunately, the meridian fixed upon did not happen to represent that line. There was no excuse for the mistake. In another instance a definite meridian was adopted which traversed a desert—the Kalahari desert—of South Africa. This was once, not so long ago, the eastern limit of German South-West Africa. Now a desert may form an excellent frontier in itself, just as may the highest altitudes of a great range of mountains where the eternal snow fields and the remoteness of an uplifted wilderness are never trodden by the foot of man. It is true that even in deserts, African or Asiatic, wild nomadic tribes may exist who can band themselves together for mischief, and raid across the frontier into each other's territory; and to them it

may be desirable to point a landmark, either natural or artificial, and to say: "You may not pass that mark." Outward and visible evidence of a barrier is the only thing they can understand. But how does a meridian help the matter? It is not only neither outward nor visible without demarcation, but it may be very hard and very expensive to determine. In this case a lengthy series of geodetic triangulation had to be carried from Cape Colony to the south of the boundary till it entered German territory, entailing years of scientific labour in a most unwholesome climate, and costing a sum equivalent to the value of many thousands of square miles of useful geographical mapping, in order to determine with some approach to scientific exactitude where that meridian really lay. This was before the days of wireless receivers and the interchange of time signals. Then followed a most expensive and unnecessary process of demarcating a straight line through this unwholesome wilderness, and the final result, which cost valuable lives as well as money, was no more useful than would have been attained by a rapid compass traverse and an artificial demarcation with piles of stones at intervals—assuming that any demarcated boundary at all was required—somewhere near where that meridian might be. The question whether that boundary were half a mile in error one way or the other, or whether the line was absolutely straight or not, was not worth a discussion involving the expenditure of a £10 note.

Next to absolute blank ignorance of the geographical conditions which prevail in the theatre of boundary

operations, perhaps the sharpest and most dangerous rock in the delimitator's course is an inaccurate or assumed geography on which to base his treaty. Undoubtedly the most remarkable instance in recent history of this form of delimitation error is afforded by the dangerous and determined antagonism which arose between the two great South American Republics of the Argentine and Chili, with reference to the partitioning of Patagonia. Patagonia had only recently emerged from primeval conditions of barbarism under Indian occupation. The Tehuelche Indians of Patagonia are a fine aboriginal race of peculiar fighting proclivities. They are not only magnificent men but magnificent horsemen, and the rapidity of their movements combined with their extraordinary skill in the use of the lasso and kindred methods of entangling an enemy, rendered them a people to be reckoned with in a country of hills and plains which had developed the peculiar character of their activities. Opportunity for exploration had been small, and the usual result of geographical enterprise along the pampas bounded by the Andean foothills had been disastrous to the geographer. Such knowledge as was at the disposal of the high contracting authorities who met in 1881 to frame a treaty which should dispose of Patagonia between the two claimants had been furnished chiefly by Old World records of missionary enterprise, which were seldom illuminating as map illustrations of the Andean territory. Later and more scientific inquiries carried out by competent explorers revealed the fact that the text of the treaty had no foundation

on geographical fact. Throughout the northern territories of these two Republics the international boundary for thousands of miles had been determined by a line which was eminently satisfactory to both parties. It was the great divide of the Andes which parted the waters of the Pacific from those of the Atlantic. Nothing could have been better. As a natural barrier it is magnificent ; as a definite line of partition facing the trespasser either way it may perhaps be difficult to recognise here and there, but as such intervals are just those which no trespasser from either side can possibly approach, this is a matter of no consequence whatever. The extension of such a line to the extreme south of Patagonia, where the Andes end so far as South America is concerned, was the simple and effective solution of an international difficulty that presented itself to the political arbitrators. The treaty laid down the principle that Nature's excellent management for a central water-parting should continue to furnish the boundary, and decreed that it should be caused by the main range of the Cordillera of the Andes, which parted the waters of the Pacific from those of the Atlantic to a point near the Straits of Magellan. When, however, geographical explorers took the field, it was not long before they discovered that the conditions of the treaty were irreconcilable. The Southern Andes break up into a mountain system which still contains all the grandeur of snow-capped ranges, seamed by magnificent glaciers, and presents to the Pacific a snow-crowned rampart of majestic forest-clad hills, with, here and there at intervals,

the white pinnacle of a volcano dominating its walls. But on the Argentine side it softens down towards the pampas and plains into a comparatively irregular formation of lower ridge and valley flanked by broad terraces, scarlet and purple in autumn with all the glory of the Patagonian beech scrub, and infinitely varied both in form and colour. This lesser Cordillera encloses valleys of great beauty, and is frequently traversed by lakes of surpassing loveliness, the waters of which draw this way and that, taking their sources sometimes from the flats and "mesetas" of the Argentine plains and passing right through the mountain system to an exit in the Pacific. This, to the treaty-makers, was unexpected and vexatious, and experts on either side were deputed to prove that the boundary could follow but one course, which course—according to the side from which the argument proceeded—was either the main range of the Cordillera (*i.e.*, that which was highest and most dominating), or else it was the main water-parting—the great divide—of the continent, which sometimes followed a prominent range and sometimes was lost in marshy flats. These experts respectively proved these contentions to be just in a series of really splendid volumes which can only be regarded with admiration, but which left international difference of opinion exactly the same at the end of these literary efforts as it was at the beginning of them. War seemed the only possible termination of the dispute. Millions, many millions, were spent in ships and armament, and the foundations laid for an effective army trained on the latest military

principles (German chiefly) on either side the Andes; and it really appeared as if a most natural assumption of geographical conformation which did not exist was destined to set back the tide of splendid progress which both republics could boast, and to wreck them on the shores of a long, bloody, and probably indecisive war. Fortunately, stern good sense prevailed in the end, and British arbitration, crowned with the King's award, was accepted with deep gratitude by some, and, I am inclined to think, with relief by all.

Another instance of assumed geographical data for the basis of treaty-making which led to results which were certainly awkward and expensive, and which might have been dangerous, occurred in connection with the Russo-Afghan frontier. There was once, not so very long ago, a Liberal Government, led by Mr. Gladstone, which was anxious to bring the tension of doubt and suspicion which surrounded Russia's proceedings in Asia to an end, and at the same time to deal very gently with Russia's political sensitiveness. This was to be achieved by setting that boundary between Russia and Afghanistan to which I have already alluded, and thus to draw across Central Asia a hedge beyond which Russia's progression southwards should not extend. There followed a meeting between high diplomatic dignitaries on either side—in which British interests were represented by that worst of all possible treaty-makers, Lord Granville, and the delimitation of the boundary was duly effected. There may have been worse delimitations perpetrated since that day—I am

inclined to think that there have been—but there has never been one in which less precautions have been taken to ensure that the map geography of the regions in question was accurate. There is this much excuse for the light-hearted acceptance of the ancient maps then in existence, that, for the greater part of the delimitation, the Oxus river was itself to represent the dividing line, and the Oxus river, no matter how much displaced on the map, was a great natural feature which could not be missed. The trouble came with the definition of a particular point—the post of Khwaja Salar—as a boundary objective on the banks of that river. Great rivers which wander untrammelled and free through wide alluvial plains of their own making are not to be trusted as permanently bound by any banks which possess no artificial means of defence against corrosive action, and the Oxus—a splendid boundary, as already pointed out, in its higher reaches—is no exception to the rule in the plains of Afghan Turkestan. Two commissions, the British—unwieldy and hampered by much official staff—and the Russian—compact and consisting chiefly of surveyors—spent weeks of diligent searching with the interchange of much political controversy over that wretched post, which was not of the least importance, and which had been washed in by the river and swallowed whole many years before the commissions met. There *had* been such a post in the days of Alexander Burnes, and it represented one end of a ferry which was conducted on similar principles to that of Kilif below it, where a small breed of horses is trained to swim

in harness and haul enormously heavy boatloads across the rapid current.

Many other important changes in the configuration of the Afghan Turkestan plains have taken place since the days of Burnes, less than a century ago, and there could have been no difficulty in indicating an assured position for the point of junction of river and boundary, so as to avoid the risk of collision with any of them. The mischief effected in this case was chiefly that due to financial considerations and the risk of delay. There had already been long delay in the field before the Russian Commission appeared. The historic incident of the Panjdeh action had passed; Herat had been placed in a state of defence, but the political atmosphere had clouded at Kabul so that it was clear that it would take but little to shipwreck the whole purpose of the Commission. The worst that happened, however, was delay in the field of Afghanistan whilst an uncertain-tempered and gout-ridden Amir (who was exceedingly anxious to be rid of us) dominated the political situation. It was, indeed, exceedingly dangerous, and we were well out of it.

Assumed geography hardly works more havoc with frontier treaties than does the misapplication of geographical terms. The main points of the land configuration may be sufficiently well known; maps may be fairly up to date and the setting out of an agreement may be based on points and features that are fixed and unalterable. And yet the terms of an agreement may lead to most unpleasant discussion as to their meaning between rival commissions in the

field, and may even be the means of breaking up proceedings altogether until the high contracting parties have explained themselves. Several such instances have occurred within my experience. One of the simplest occurred during the demarcation of the boundary between Afghanistan and those tribal territories which were to be reckoned independent, and beyond interference by the Kabul Government. Although I am dealing with the general line of partition which represents the borders of British India I am not sure that the particular section of it to which I shall now refer was a part of the agreement concluded between Sir Mortimer Durand and the Amir, or whether the Amir's consent to it had not been gained previously to the Durand mission. The boundary concerned passed through an open country—a country of hill and plain where the hills were sharply defined in long and generally continuous lines, sometimes knife-edged as to their summits, with steep, rocky spurs deeply rifted by water channels, and from the foot of the spurs there sloped away in smooth but often steep gradients the fans formed by detritus washed down from the mountain sides, forming what is locally known in Baluchistan as “dasht.” The “dasht” sometimes shaped itself into a broad and apparently smooth ramp seven or eight miles in width, a prairie land of low scrub and flowers in spring, a wide expanse of stone-dusted slope in winter, which stretched between the foot of the mountain spurs and the meandering course of the nullah bed which formed the main drainage line of the valley. A very considerable length of the boundary which was to be

based on the mountain range or ridge was defined as following "the foot of the hills." Here at once was the opening for serious disagreement—and the disagreement promptly arose. What was the "foot of the hills"? Was it where the steep, rocky spurs ended and the sloping grades of dasht began? Or was it where the nullah ran in the midst of the plain and the slope from the hills could descend no farther? In the latter case one would have expected the boundary to have been defined by the actual nullah bed rather than "the foot of the hills." That, at any rate, was the interpretation maintained, and the interpretation threatened a frontier war. Another instance of similar slipshod definition occurred in the Asiatic highlands, where the Pamirs spread out their gently sloping flats and valleys under the shadow of well-defined mountain ranges. So vast and so rugged are these ranges that it is only by grace of a glacial ramp that they can be ascended, as a rule, and the connection between the triangulation which determined the points on which to base the boundary between Afghanistan and Russia in these elevated regions and that which supplied us with a series of fixed peaks in the Himalayas to the south was exceedingly difficult. However, it was accomplished, more or less successfully, and Indian triangulation was carried into the Pamirs and connected with the Russian surveys. This was important scientifically for reasons which concerned the demarcation of a boundary based on astronomical determinations of latitude. All went well enough after the junction was completed and accepted for the purpose of

supplying initial data. The trouble arose when approaching the end of the demarcation ; the boundary was defined as running to the Chinese frontier. The definition ran as follows : " From this point the boundary shall run in an easterly direction to a junction with the Chinese frontier." What is an easterly direction ? A little north of east ? A little south of east ? Due east ? The expression was indefinite and the interpretation involved the question of certain passes (whether they were of value or not we need not stay to inquire) which were considered important at the time. The short summer and autumn were drawing rapidly to a close. Snow was settling deep in the passes Indiawards and it seemed possible that ere an answer could be received to the simple question, " What is an easterly direction ? " the camp of the Commission would be snow-bound in those vast altitudes and condemned to an Arctic existence for the next six months. Naturally there was no agreement between English and Russian camps ; and they arranged to separate for the winter. Much expense was incurred in collecting fuel and selecting the best shelter available for the next six months. It fortunately happened, however, that the weakness in geographical expression had been recognised in time. It appeared to be so certain to lead to complications as to justify a reference to the high contracting authorities in anticipation of such complications long before they occurred ; and the reply, which determined the conclusion of the line on the basis of ascertained topography, was received just in time (and *only* just in time) to enable us to escape over the

passes already deep in snow and shrouded with menacing snow mists, back to sunny India.

It is true that geographical nomenclature is by no means fixed. The question has been discussed with great diligence and after careful research both by the Royal Geographical Society and the Geographical Society of America, but it is not with reference to the actual facts of land conformation in nature that trouble usually arises. It matters not much whether the technical classification of land forms is geodetic, based on the geological history of the formation, or whether it is simply physiological description expressing the character of the form in terms of its influence on other geographical features; whether the names of such features have a foreign derivation, or whether they are pure Anglo-Saxon, so long as the geographical definitions contained in a boundary treaty are technically accurate and precise in their meaning. Probably the actual loss to England due to the promulgation of boundary treaties drawn up with little or no regard to simple precision in statement could be reckoned in millions of pounds sterling. If a man were making a will full of complicated provisions he would employ a lawyer armed with the full technical vocabulary of that rhetorical profession to make it for him. If he wished to put a hedge between his own and his neighbour's estate he would take care that the agreement was correctly worded. But in defining a boundary between one nation and another not even the most elementary knowledge of geographical nomenclature has seemed to be considered necessary. To take the case, already quoted, of the boundary

disagreement between the Republics of Argentina and Chili, when the treaties laid down broadly that the boundary was to follow the main range of the Cordillera dividing the waters of the Atlantic from the Pacific; what is meant by a "main range"? The actual backbone of a mountain system, which by reason of continuity as a divide and general strike should be reckoned the fundamental axis of the system, is usually the oldest and often the most disintegrated and degraded of the ranges composing it, often overshadowed by the magnificence of parallel ranges of later formation, with the highest and most important peaks either decorating its own subordinate spurs (and thus running in a sequence more or less transverse to the general strike of the formation) or dominating distinct ranges. In short, "main range" is an indefinite expression which may refer to a "highest and most prominent" range, or, on the other hand, it may be difficult to determine its relative importance. It has already been explained that there may be no water parting at all, and in this particular case there was none within the terms of the treaty; and yet it must be added that the treaties were most ably prepared on the whole, with certain indications that the difficulties which actually occurred were not entirely unforeseen; but they were not sufficiently elastic, and the provision for dealing with these difficulties was quite inadequate.

There is yet another shoal in the intricate sea of delimitation (even when that delimitation is based on sound topography) and that is the application of some impossible geographical feature to carry

the boundary. This is, indeed, not very usual, but it is very fatal to rapid and satisfactory progress in demarcation. An instance of this occurred in demarcating that part of the "Durand" line which separates Chitral and Kashmir interests from Afghanistan. One of the loveliest valleys in Afghanistan is that of the Kunar river, the upper reaches of which flow past the historic fortress of Chitral. The valley is narrow, and the broad flats which border the feet of the Kashmund mountains to the south, where the river winds in loops of azure through emerald fields, give place, towards the north, to closely terraced hillsides with villages clinging limpet-like to the rocky spurs, and the river rushing as a noisy torrent in an eroded waterway through cliff-faced gorges. Here it was a question of fixing a limit to Afghan interference with tribes which more or less recognised British control and which were some fifteen years ago termed (in the frontier maps) "independent." It was, in fact, the boundary between Afghanistan and India that was under demarcation, and the working Commission party was safeguarded by an Afghan escort which was technically true to its trust, but at the same time taking a most suspicious (and probably practical) interest in the siege of Chitral, where Townshend and our little frontier force were shut up not so very far from the scene of boundary operations. The "Durand" agreement here, under the principles which governed it, barred the river as the boundary, which would indeed have proved a fatal division, because interests historically united were on both sides of it. Back from the left bank of the river

stood a well-defined range, with flat terraces carved out of the rugged spurs at its foot, one of the many great offshoots of the Hindu Kush, with its water-parting line removed some six miles from the river and parallel to it. The agreement defined the boundary as running parallel to the river on the side of that range at an even distance of four miles, and thus it fell on the spurs of the range, about halfway between the summit and foot, festooned from spur to spur, cutting across mountain torrents and dividing water rights in accessible valleys, a continuous line of ascent and descent over some of the wildest, ruggedest, and most inaccessible mountain-side country that the Indian frontier presents. Demarcation was an utter impossibility, nor could, or would, any tribesman of that wild Pathan frontier pretend to recognise such a line without an infinity of artificial boundary marks. Fortunately, it was possible to suggest an alternative without any great loss of time, and as that alternative was the well-marked crest, or divide, of the range, instead of being halfway down its rugged side ; and as the alternative would include a certain concession of (utterly unimportant) territory to the Afghans, there was no great difficulty in effecting an alteration in the text of the agreement. Here again the hazard of the business was delay. Delay and inactivity in regions such as Afghanistan on the Indian borderland spell idle hands and immediate mischief. A four-mile limit might not necessarily lead to impossible demarcation. Similar strips bordering a river have been adopted elsewhere, though never with much success.

CANADIAN BOUNDARY

REFERENCES to a few of the difficulties which have occurred in the interpretation of comparatively recent boundary treaties owing to lapses in scientific geographical description only prove that until lately the great principle of recognising the geographical function of boundary demarcation, before proceeding to political definition in detail, was misunderstood. Quite recently, however, many boundaries have been settled in many quarters of the globe (especially in Africa and in South America) which have led to no disastrous disputes whatever, and have called for no arbitration. This is a satisfactory proof of the gradual development of geographical teaching for which the Royal Geographical Society may fairly claim a share of credit. To illustrate the advance made in geographical definitions, we may refer to the position of geographical knowledge in the eighteenth century. Geographical terms in treaty definitions in those days were so vague as to be almost grotesque. There is one treaty with its attendant interpretations and the disputes arising therefrom which makes a good story, and is worth a reference, if only to set a point to our satisfaction at the gradual development of this branch of practical knowledge. The negotiations for the Canadian boundary from the Bay of Fundy to Juan de Fuca have really lasted into this century, but they commenced late in the eighteenth century. In November, 1782, representatives of Great Britain and the United States signed at Paris a provisional treaty

of peace. It acknowledged the independence of the United States. Article II provided that between the United States and Canada "It is hereby agreed and declared that the following are and shall be their boundaries, viz., from the north-west angle of Nova Scotia, viz., that angle which is formed by a line drawn due north from the source of the St. Croix river to the Highlands ; along the said Highlands which divide those rivers which fall into the St. Lawrence from those which fall into the Atlantic Ocean, to the north-westernmost head of the Connecticut river ; thence down along the middle of that river to the 45th degree of north latitude ; from thence by a line due west on said latitude until it strikes the river Iroquois or Cataraquy ; thence along the middle of said river into Lake Ontario," etc. The definition then deals with the series of great lakes and their connecting streams till the boundary reached the Lake of the Woods. "Thence through the said river" (Lake of the Woods) "to the north-western point thereof and from thence on a due west course to the river Mississippi" "East by a line to be drawn along the middle of the river St. Croix from its mouth in the Bay of Fundy to its source, and from its source directly north to the aforesaid Highlands which divide the rivers which fall into the Atlantic Ocean from those which fall into the river St. Lawrence ; comprehending all islands within 20 leagues of any part of the shores of the United States and lying between lines to be drawn due *east* from the points where the aforesaid boundaries between Nova Scotia on one part and East Florida on the other shall respectively touch the Bay

of Fundy and the Atlantic Ocean ; excepting such islands as now are, or heretofore have been, within the limits of the said province of Nova Scotia.”

On 3rd September, 1873, a definitive treaty of Peace was signed at Paris in which Article II was repeated as above.

For geographical information the negotiators were dependent on a map issued in 1755 called Mitchell's Map. It appears to have been a better map of North America than any previously published, but it was a fact which must have been well known to the negotiators that much of the country was absolutely unexplored. The childlike faith with which that map was registered as the basis of an important treaty sufficiently indicates the value set on scientific geography in England in those days. The following difficulties immediately presented themselves to the demarcators :—

1. Where was the St. Croix river ? There were two rivers 50 miles apart, either of which might be the St. Croix of the map. The name was unknown locally.

2. What was the source of the river which was finally decided to be the St. Croix (in reality the Schoodic) supposing it had two branches ?

3. What was meant by the *north-west angle* of Nova Scotia ? Where was it ?

4. What were the Highlands ? Did they merely represent a divide, or were they actually hills ?

The discussion of these questions lasted for many years. There was a long period of acrimonious dispute lasting about fifty years over the question of the Highlands alone, during which we were more than once

on the edge of a war with the United States, and geographical theories were put forward which would lead to the conviction that a sense of humour has only recently been acquired by Americans. An ancient grant of all Nova Scotia made in 1621 to Sir William Alexander defining the borders of that province was produced in evidence of former boundaries, from which it was clear that the expression "due north" from the source of the St. Croix had been substituted in the treaty for "northward," and the western branch of the St. Croix (or Schoodic) had been adopted for the eastern. The first piece of pedantry cost England all the northern half of the State of Maine; the latter was not of great consequence. The "Highland" question was finally referred to the King of the Netherlands for arbitration, and that wise monarch, with the geographical acumen of a Dutchman, at once put his finger on the weak spot. After pointing out that boundary disputes based on apocryphal geography must ultimately end in compromise, he decided that a divide was not necessarily hilly or mountainous, and awarded a line from the head of the St. Croix northwards as a "line of convenience" to the "north-west angle of Nova Scotia," and from thence by the St. Lawrence—Atlantic divide to the head of the Connecticut (which river also had two heads). The award did credit to his position as king of a nation of practical geographers; needless to say this did not satisfy the disputants, and the boundary finally accepted departs from the divide (to the advantage of Britain) for a space sufficient to destroy its value as a true geographical barrier. This arbitra-

tion treaty was signed in 1842. The area in dispute amounted to about 12,000 square miles, of which about 5,000 fell to Britain, who made concessions about the head of the Connecticut where the 45th parallel had been wrongly determined.

Long before this fierce antagonism had been roused by the question of the fishing rights, and the ownership of islands in the Passamaquoddy Bay into which the St. Croix debouches. The geographical definition of a bay was called in question as soon as it was admitted on both sides that the "due east" of the treaty meant "due south." Was the Passamaquoddy Bay a part of Fundy Bay? Was Fundy Bay the Atlantic, etc.? Difficulties here were not finally disposed of till the year 1910. From the head of the Connecticut to the Lake of the Woods there was no fundamental ground of dispute. It was found that the great chain of lakes really did link up one with another, and the only question that arose was in connection with islands in those lakes. In the Lake of the Woods, however, it was speedily discovered that no line running west from the north-west corner of the lake would ever reach the Mississippi, inasmuch as that river rose south of the lakes. Consequently, the effort to reach the Mississippi was abandoned, and the 49th parallel of latitude was adopted as the international boundary under the mistaken impression that it was the northern boundary of Louisiana. The nature of this extraordinary boundary from the Lake of the Woods to the sea need not be referred to, but the final difficulty of San Juan's Island renders this story of an historical geographical

muddle complete. The treaty maintained that the boundary was to follow the 49th parallel to the middle of the channel between Vancouver and the mainland and thence pass southwards, following the middle of the channel round the mainland. But between Vancouver and the mainland south of 49° North Latitude there is an archipelago of islands, and at least three channels that might be called main channels leading through them southwards. Chief among these islands was San Juan. In 1859 a pig was shot by an American on San Juan, and the American was haled before a British magistrate and threatened with imprisonment. This put a climax to the dispute, American honour was touched, and troops were landed from both sides. It looked as if the pig incident would lead to war; but the position was saved by arbitration, the German Emperor being appointed arbitrator. The award gave away the whole archipelago to the United States.

It may be added that in 1870 the Canadian boundary at Pembina was found to be 4,700 feet south of its true position in parallel 49°. This was rectified and the work completed in 1874. Demarcation was effected in 1908. It has only just been completed (if indeed it is complete), but the cost of maintaining it will last through all time.

Absurd as are many of the incidents connected with the Canadian boundary, it may be doubted whether the Alaskan muddle was not almost equally remarkable. It was primarily caused by the purchase of Russian territory in Alaska by the United States which included a strip of coast land extending roughly

from Mt. St. Elias in South Alaska to Cape Muzon and the Portland canal to the west of British Columbia and bordering the Pacific. After much negotiation a convention was concluded at Washington in January, 1903, which was to decide the position of the boundary by reference to a tribunal. The difficulty of decision arose chiefly from the original terms of delimitation in the treaty of 1825. The boundary was to run northward from the 56th degree of north latitude (*i.e.*, the head of the Portland channel—or canal) “ following the crest of the mountains situated parallel to the coast until its intersection with the 141st degree of west longitude, subject to the condition that if such line should anywhere exceed the distance of ten marine leagues from the ocean then the boundary should be formed by a line parallel to the sinuosities of the coast and distant therefrom not more than 10 leagues.” If any continuous range such as the treaty demanded had existed with a crest uniformly parallel to the coast it might have been an ideal boundary, but the geographical impossibility of such a disposition of Nature seems hardly to have been recognised, and the question resolved itself into the determination of an irregular line in a mountain region which should never be more than 10 leagues from the ocean, and which should accord as far as possible with the condition of parallelism to the coast. This involved the secondary question of what is the coast line in such an archipelago of islands and inlets as that with which the tribunal had to deal. The condition of strictly following its sinuosities was an impossible one. The tribunal finally decided on a line

which was a mountain boundary practically in accordance with the contention of the United States. The line joined certain peaks, marked on a map attached to the award, forming a sinuous boundary about 30 miles from the general trend of the shore, and is, presumably, a line which it would be impossible to demarcate. The question of the course that the line should take from the point of commencement to the entrance to the Portland channel formed an important branch of the award. This involved the right of occupation to certain islands. By the decision of the tribunal (with the strong dissent of two of the British members) the channel of the treaty was decided to be that which passes to the north of Pearse and Wales islands, and which transfers two other important islands, Silklan and Kanna-ghunyut, commanding the channel, to the United States, from Canada. The indignation which was aroused in Canada by this decision is a matter of comparatively recent history. It did, in fact, ignore one of the most important principles of boundary making when a compromise is in question. In the scheme for a fair and useful division between rival claims generally it is most important to preserve the entity of any one concession in particular. For instance, to divide a valley so that water sources are on one side and the irrigable lands on the other is merely to invite the trouble which it is the whole object of a boundary to prevent. In this case to give the right of navigation through the channel to Canada, and the command of the channel to America, by the cession of these islands, certainly seems to be a mistake.

CHAPTER XII

DEMARCATION OF BOUNDARIES

THE process of demarcating a boundary is quite apart from definition or delimitation. It is the crux of all boundary making. Any political administrator can define a paper boundary, given the necessary topographical and ethnographical data, but it falls to the demarcator to do the real spade work of boundary construction; to determine the sites for pillars and artificial boundary marks and fit the line to the conformation of the land. It is in this process that disputes usually arise, and weak elements in the treaties or agreements are apt to be discovered. Important features are found in unexpected positions, and a thousand points of local importance crop up which could never have been taken into account by the delimitators, whose definitions leave them unconsidered and unadjusted. Where frontier making deals with new regions, unmapped and unexplored, the obvious method of arriving at a satisfactory definition for a boundary line is to ascertain the correct geography of the country first, and to settle the conditions and position of the boundary afterwards. This has always been well enough understood

by the Colonial administrators of certain foreign countries. Russia, France, Germany have all had their explorers and surveyors early in the field, wherever that field was likely to come under discussion. Russia, indeed, has always been particularly busy in Asia. It was the explorations of Lessar in Turkestan which formed the basis of Russian claims on the Oxus. France and Germany have had their emissaries in Africa, who have been geographers enough to carry away with them a fairly exact knowledge of the problems with which they might hereafter be called to deal in boundary making. England, on the other hand, has been slow in acquiring practical geographical knowledge of important lines of frontier; sometimes for the reason that it was not exactly her own frontier with which she had to deal, and that it was far removed from the centres of exploring energy; but usually because her knowledge of scientific methods of geographical map making was, until comparatively recent years, unhappily deficient. We may flatter ourselves that a remarkable change has been effected in this particular branch of scientific activity within the last twenty or thirty years. There is no country in the world now which can compete with England for the rapidity in execution and accuracy of her geographical mapping—nor for the number and general efficiency of her map-makers. Thirty years ago military officers on the Indian frontier gazed with interested eyes at the rugged grey line of hills which barred the horizon on the west and wondered what lay beyond, whilst they knew that at any time they might be called on to

follow blindly up the rough waterways through those hills and hunt out some rascally crew of robbers from fastnesses which were probably as intricate as a rabbit warren. Even fifteen years ago our armies stumbled across the South African veldt in desperate uncertainty as to whether the all-important water supply on which depended their future movements might not be some twenty miles or so farther than the crude maps of the period represented it. I have even known a distinguished general of a past generation, who was hopelessly incapable of reading an ordinary contoured map, decide that maps were quite unnecessary. With a truly national apathetic want of prevision we set about making our maps—as we are now making our army—after the war had begun. But we have, I trust, happily changed all that, and, moreover, the amount of unmapped world has so considerably diminished that the necessity for supporting a boundary delimitation by previous geographical inquiry is gradually disappearing. And yet there are large spaces “beyond the seas” in which England is interested, and where she may yet be more interested, where frontiers may have to be defined by boundaries, and peoples duly packed into separate compartments in order to keep the peace of the world. This being so, it may be interesting to an inquiring public to enter for a little into the details of demarcation, not only as a matter of history, but of possible practical use as a guide in the future. A public which follows with deep interest various elementary expositions of the military situation from time to time may possibly find it

convenient, if not instructive, to know how boundaries come to be fixed in the waste places of the earth. It is almost needless to point out that there are no such waste places in Europe.

This fixing down of boundaries is, as I have said, the demarcator's business, and, of all the many functions which are involved in international frontier settlement, it is by far the most interesting. To the demarcator belongs the real romance of the work. It is for him to penetrate into the wildest recesses of mountain systems, to discover the trend and the conformation of snowbound ridges and dividing chasms; to seek out from the depths of the forest the traces of primeval occupation, and the marking of farthest limits of civilisation; to explore the sun-baked desert wilderness, scraping casual acquaintance with wild-eyed and inquisitive nomads; to explore to their rocky sources some of the great rivers of the world, and withal, to keep the peace between hostile factions, and persuade them that all is working well for the best of all possible worlds. It follows that there are two very distinct functions for the demarcating party to exercise. There is the political and ethnographical side of the inquiry to be maintained, as well as the geographical map-making work, which has to be carried through simultaneously with the collection of information bearing on every useful scientific and political subject of investigation. This double-headed duty is usually met by the appointment of a special political officer to accompany the geographical staff, which latter must be strong enough to carry through a difficult, and, it

may be, a dangerous reconnaissance with rapidity and certainty. Here, once again, I repeat that the governing principle in demarcation should be such promptness of action as is compatible with the plain and effective marking out of the boundary line combined with the acquisition of important local information. There should be no hawering and no delay ; and, since references to headquarters for the settlement of some unexpected local dispute may be absolutely necessary, it should be the business of the delimitators to eliminate from the agreement all possible excuse for such disputes as far as they possibly can ; and, when they cannot foresee the exact nature of a difficulty that there is reason to apprehend, as wide a power of initiative and discretion should be allowed the demarcator as arbitrators can be induced to concede. In some cases it may even be advisable to limit the agreement to a plain statement from what point the boundary is to start and on what front it is to close, and leave the rest to the discretion of the demarcator. Happy is the demarcator who is thus trusted. After all he is the best judge of the local situation and, nine cases out of ten, his advice will have to be taken. The formation and strength of a demarcation party are better understood now than in the days when a large and cumbersome " commission " with a strong escort was put into the field for the simple purpose of demarcation—as happened, for instance, in the days of the Russo-Afghan boundary settlement. The object to be attained by this extensive expeditionary party was the demarcation of a line of boundary already delimited, and that

object could have been attained by a small geographical party of surveyors, with a comparatively small escort and one or two experienced political officers. If serious trouble is to be apprehended in a country such as Afghanistan, no escort, short of a brigade, would be sufficient. If, on the other hand, a peaceful solution of the demarcation problem is anticipated (and no other conditions are practically admissible) a personal guard and a guarantee for safety from the Government of the country concerned should be sufficient. The escort difficulty is, perhaps, the most important consideration of any in the arrangements for the successful conduct of the working party. In the instance to which I have referred, 500 men including cavalry, reduced the commission to a military expeditionary force, demanding almost as much commissariat and transport arrangement as would have served for a whole brigade. At the same time it formed quite an ineffective force if the demarcation was to be fought out against military opposition, either Russian or Afghan. It would have been absurd to contemplate such opposition. Even when the Commission was nearly reduced to the ridiculous situation of defending itself within the walls of Herat against Russians from without and (possibly) Afghans from within, it was felt that a small group of European officers would have been much safer under the Afghan ruler's guarantee than in such an anomalous position as that which so nearly presented itself. There is another danger in too much escort. A claim is certain to be set up that both parties to this peaceful demarcation function should be equally well supplied

with arms and men, and there is thus a much increased chance of trouble arising either with the local peoples or between the escorts. As a rule there is little trouble with the local authorities who are expecting demarcation, if they are really in earnest about the settlement of a question which very clearly affects their own welfare and the security of their land tenure. The exception occurs when a truculent frontier chief finds his chance of successful raiding into his neighbour's territory suddenly curtailed and his chief source of supply cut off. If he is powerful enough to set at defiance the Government of the country to which his tribe and people are properly accredited, and to decline to recognise any authority as better than his own, there may, of course, be serious local trouble, but this presupposes a state of things in which frontier demarcation should not be attempted. A demarcation is not an aggressive military function. There must not only be first of all an international agreement for peaceful settlement before delimitation is effected, but there must be a controlling power sufficient to maintain that agreement on either side. I only remember one instance in which the local authority expressed his supreme contempt, not only for British intervention, but for his own Government. This was when the Governor of a frontier province of Persia defied the authority of the Itisham, or representative of Persian sovereignty, and declined to admit the demarcation of a frontier between Persia and British Baluchistan on his own responsibility. It was, unfortunately, for him to supply the escort which was necessary to maintain the dignity of the

Persian representative. He had consequently a force at his command which was quite sufficient to give trouble and which, consequently, had to be reckoned with. A straight fight between the British and local Persian escorts was not to be thought of. It would have sown the seeds of future trouble for an indefinite period by setting up blood feuds between the Baluchis on both sides of the border, and, for many other reasons, would have proved disastrous to the success of an expensive mission. Under these circumstances it looked at one time as if the British mission would have to withdraw ; but the art of Persian diplomacy is one which works in strange grooves, and the recalcitrant chief, who possessed more practical force at his disposal than diplomatic wit, was outmanœuvred by the Itisham. The boundary was settled and demarcated without his consent (which was not required at Tehran) and without his knowledge. It may safely be said that such an incident could only happen in Persia. There are, however, other risks which are by no means negligible in the presence of two strong military escorts in the field representing divided national interests. There may be for a time, and under circumstances calling for nothing but ordinary duty on either side, great cordiality and much interchange of good fellowship between the escorts. To that extent nothing is gained by contiguity that is not advantageous. There will, however, almost inevitably be slack seasons, when it is desirable to keep the men occupied by any means which promotes their health and contentment. International contests in shooting, running, horse

racing, etc., are organised which, under very careful supervision, lead to nothing more than pleasant social intercourse and good feeling. But they are always more or less dangerous, and there are special forms of sport which are specially dangerous. Close personal trials of strength between men who have been brought up to regard each other as alien competitors rather than friends is very apt to arouse latent international hostility, and to lead to a bitterness of feeling which is the very last object intended by the promoters. It is so even under the most favourable circumstances in the fields of English sport. Can anyone say that our own international contests at athletics, cricket, golf, etc., always further that feeling of international brotherly love which they are intended to foster? They do not, and it is well to avoid the possibility of friction of this sort by the repression of such contests on the field of the frontier. They may be meant well, but they do not always end well. Wrestling I regard as the most fatal promoter of those primeval passions of fierce determination to win, and fiercer resentment on losing, that beset the natural sportsman (especially the Oriental), and next to wrestling I take it that the simple process of pulling at opposite ends of a rope oftenest promotes bitter recrimination and determined hatred on the part of the team that loses. It is, of course, always the loser who hates his adversary most. Three times have I seen the peaceful understanding between the military supporters of a demarcation party wrecked in this way—for a time at least. In one of these cases an armed conflict was only narrowly

avoided. On another occasion, when similar international sport might have led to the wreck of a most elaborate frontier settlement, the circumstances were really picturesque. High up on the roof of the world, Cossack and Sikh had met each other for the first time in their lives, and they regarded each other with all the suspicion of strange dogs suddenly introduced and doubtful about methods of advance towards intimacy. However, they got on well enough for a time. Neither could speak a word of the other's language, but that did not interfere with much cordial interchange of conversation, and a general good-tempered acknowledgment on either side that, though the other represented an ignorant and foolish people, it might be polite to recognise them as brother soldiers and fix up some sort of temporary social understanding between them. I have always, indeed, suspected that they understood each other a great deal better than we, their leaders and officers, were aware of. The Cossacks were a fine, muscular set of cheery soldiers, very like our own Britishers, both in appearance and in manners ; they were delightfully independent of any red tape formalities when in the field, and would lend a hand at anything. Their mounts were rough, but useful, and altogether they were as good under the irregular camp conditions of escort in the Pamirs as any exploring and hard-driven geographical survey man could wish. They never complained and never asked a question as to supplies, equipment or route. They were, as a matter of fact, the product of an environment very similar to that in which they found themselves, for most of

them had been born and bred in the Caucasus. This important fact was overlooked by our big and brawny Sikhs, who challenged them to a tug-of-war with light-hearted confidence in their own superior weight and muscle, and without a thought of the fact that, as men of the plains, they could not expect to preserve the same capacity for strenuous exertion at an altitude of 15,000 feet that they possessed in their own sun-dried cantonments. So they were pulled over by the Cossacks, after a fierce and breathless struggle which left them limp and helpless on the grass, whilst the Cossacks cheerfully smiled at their very real distress. I thought the Sikhs would never get over it. All their lives had they lived in the faith that the Russian was an inferior sort of dog who could be easily dealt with when the good time came for meeting him in the field. Here he was—quite a small dog too—and happily unconscious that there was any great point about pulling over a team of lusty, heavy-weight Sikhs. They sulked for days, and there was quite an angry gleam in their eyes whenever the smallest reference was made to the end of a rope. All social companionship ceased from that day between the rival escorts, for the Sikh does not take a beating well.

An escort, fortunately, is only necessary in wild and risky frontier districts, and even so, it may be but a local force raised in the borderland. Demarcating on the frontier of Kafiristan was a somewhat thrilling experience, where the bodyguard which should preserve the peace of the frontier consisted of a band of irregular and half-armed tribespeople, backed, at a

little distance, by a brigade of Afghan troops who were almost openly engaged in the duty of forcibly convincing the Kafirs that the rule of the Amir was for their good, and, at the same time, supplying secret assistance to the bands of Chitrali ruffians who were besieging a British force in the fort at Chitral. But they were quite effective so far as the demarcation was concerned, and they served usefully to illustrate the advantage, under certain circumstances, of trusting to the guarantee of a local chief for safe conduct rather than of depending upon a small and insufficient escort for protection. In this case, owing to the Chitral complications which affected the security of the same valley in which the demarcation party was camped, even a small British escort might have been a source of real danger.

The methods by which demarcations are actually put through, and pillars and other artificial sign-posts set up to warn off trespassers, have differed from time to time with the character of the country to be dealt with and the scientific means at the disposal of the demarcators. One of the essentials to a sound demarcation is perfect agreement between the two parties concerned as to the position of the point of departure. It might appear that this was quite a simple matter. Any fairly well ascertained natural feature, or even an artificial one of sufficient stability, might serve, by mutual agreement, for the starting point; and this would be true enough in districts already well mapped and well known. But, where a boundary has to take off in a remote and only half-explored country of which the geographical conditions

are assumed rather than known, it is very essential that the boundary should be so laid down that no matter what may be the future extension of scientific surveys on either side (and such surveys are bound to come) it can never be questioned or displaced. In short the boundary serves a very important scientific purpose—it becomes the basis for future map making on either side, and the risk of future complications, owing to its displacement in the general map scheme of the world by the disagreement between subsequent scientific deductions as to its true position, must be eliminated. What is wanted, then, in plain terms, is the exact co-ordinate position in latitude and longitude of some point on the earth's surface which is common to both the countries concerned, and of which the co-ordinate value has been scientifically determined by both parties independently, with a satisfactory resulting agreement.

There is one popular scientific instrument, recently introduced into practical world-mapping business, which has enormously facilitated this most desirable purpose. It is the wireless "receiver" which enables differential longitudes to be fixed by the simple process of telegraphing time signals from a position of which the longitude is fixed to any point on the field of demarcation where the receiver may be set up. It is by no means perfect yet, but it has enabled surveyors to maintain their geographical position with approximate accuracy in such desperately difficult regions as the western Brazil borderland, where any more regular method of geodetic measurement would be out of the question. The demarcation of the boundaries of the

South American republics in the regions of the Upper Amazon is one of the romances of demarcation. The depth and solid consistency of the trackless forests, split here and there by the wanderings of the Amazon tributaries, the extraordinary revelations of primeval groups of savages, parted from each other by differential customs for which it is hard to account, yet all alike in the savage simplicity of their social existence ; the wonders of the world of Nature which runs riot in the production of gigantic snakes and in legions of dangerous insects, all mark off this world corner of scientific boundary making as apart from any other known. The process of tracking out a fair-way to represent the boundary through the dark tangles of the forest, and linking up the line across swamps and rivers, is both dangerous and expensive ; nor will such a boundary be distinguishable in the course of a year or two unless the expense is renewed almost year by year. In such a stretch of forest and swamp as is the borderland of Peru, or Bolivia, and Brazil it is perhaps not a matter of great consequence whether the boundary is recognisable throughout its length or not. If an ignorant savage wandering through these geographical fields should stumble across the boundary he will raise no political crisis. There is only one way of dealing with the map making necessity, which is the first principle of boundary demarcation in forests such as these. The rivers are traversed and their course accurately determined, and points are fixed in them where necessary by a check process which determines latitude and longitude astronomically. The marvellous perfection of the

small class of surveying instruments enables this to be done with quite sufficient accuracy for all practical purposes. The stars glinting above the forest trees give the latitude direct—and they give time direct, and time is longitude. Thus, where the boundary does not actually follow the course of a river (which answers its purpose for definition sufficiently well in these regions) but skips from river to river, if the points of contact are well fixed it is but of the smallest consequence to maintain a practical line between; unless, indeed, the forests are thick with rubber, in which case the maintenance of a clear line of boundary becomes a most troublesome and expensive necessity.

Very different are the conditions in such countries as the Asiatic Highlands or in civilised South America, where on either side of the projected boundary a comprehensive and highly scientific scheme of geodetic survey is approaching which must eventually expose any imperfection in the locating of that boundary.

No great system of world survey on a strictly scientific basis is more complete than that of Russia, which now extends to the Asiatic frontiers. On the other side of these frontiers the great triangulation of India was, in the days of Anglo-Russian political agitations, already touching the sacred peaks of the Himalayan mountains, though it did not look across them. No one had approached the Oxus or Herat. Thus it required a very elaborate series of scientific processes, analogous to triangulation, reaching from the Indian frontier at Quetta to Herat and Mashad, and from Herat again through Afghan Turkestan to

Kabul, to ensure that when the Russian surveys extended across the Caspian into those regions they should not necessitate a revision of the boundary on the ground of an inaccurate determination of the geographical position of the initial point of departure. It was the same with regard to the Pamir demarcation subsequently. We were not likely to trouble ourselves further about the Pamirs, but the Russians were. So it was "up to us"—as the Americans say—to secure mathematical proofs of the accuracy of our deductions such as no subsequent discussion could possibly impair. In South America, over the Southern Andes boundary between the Argentine and Chili, the same situation developed itself. Both republics boasted a well-tried and most efficient survey department with every modern apparatus at their disposal. But neither had anything like scientifically completed surveys of the Southern Andes on which to outline their claims. It was absolutely necessary at the start to determine the geographical position of one or two of those southern peaks in terms which would be definite for all time, and the accuracy of which both sides must acknowledge. This was, in effect, the scientific crux of the whole position. Having decided on the co-ordinate values of a few points by the combined efforts of both parties, the rest was easy. By a simple extension of survey processes—simple in plan, but difficult enough in practice—every pillar or post of the whole line was tabulated in terms based on those origin values. If an earthquake were to remove the Andes into the sea, those values could be re-

determined and the pillars set up again in their rightful place.

Considerable difference of opinion seems to exist as to the value of artificial marks (pillars or mounds) in defining the exact position of the boundary and thus fix it down as an actual frontier feature. There can be no doubt about their value. They are absolutely necessary at certain points where a boundary may be indefinite, or where it may be crossed. The usual mistake committed with reference to such marks is their introduction where they are not necessary, thereby inevitably increasing the cost of demarcation and possibly entailing long delay in settlement. When the natural features selected to carry the boundary, such as rivers, mountain ridges and divides generally, are prominent, there can be no excuse for artificial marks. I have known a line of pillars to be set up on a high, inaccessible and lonely ridge at great cost and with great difficulty. They were absolutely useless. I have also known a straight line of pillars or artificial mounds to be carried across a desert which was almost devoid of inhabitants. Difficult and dangerous—from the inhospitable nature of that desert—the operation proved, and probably within a few years hardly a mark-stone was left clear of drifting sand ; and it would not be a matter of much consequence whether it were distinguishable or not. On the other hand, passes and roads traversing a frontier have to be unmistakably marked, and so should the line of frontier which traverses a populated and cultivated country, where the necessity for exact definition is paramount. A

formidable line of mountain barrier may carry a splendid line of boundary to some point where it is suddenly traversed by a river and the ridge is cleft by a deep gorge. Here, again, the frontier limit has to be defined; and some of the most troublesome expeditions involved by boundary making have been undertaken with the object of definitely marking the point up to which a road or railway may subsequently extend before passing into the territory of an adjacent Government. This question of the value of artificial boundary marks and the extent to which they should be used is most important, for it has very much to say to the stability of the boundary.

CHAPTER XIII

BOUNDARIES IN AFRICA

APART from the terrible sacrifice of human life, the greatest material loss which Germany has suffered during the war is the loss of her South African possessions. Her most important Colonies have gone from her, and it is not unreasonable to expect that those of East Africa will eventually follow suit. It is, however, a little too soon to assume with confidence that the colours of Germany will totally disappear from the map of Africa, and meanwhile it may be interesting to note a few facts about the international boundaries of Africa as they exist at present, in order to arrive at a better understanding of the principles which should underlie the redistribution of territory in the future.

Africa was originally partitioned amongst European nations when the knowledge of the physical conditions governing the climate and geography of that continent were but nebulous, in the expectation that the acquisition of large slices of undeveloped territory would more or less effectually guarantee an outlet for superabundant European energy.

Doubtless Africa differs in many essential respects

from Asia as a dumping ground for Europe, for Asia is in no sense a white man's country south of Siberia; and Siberia is already ear-marked for the Russian colonist. Asia affords excellent prospect of expansion for the teeming millions of Russia, but for few besides. Africa can easily absorb millions more of the best European manhood and still preserve ample room for the influx of Asiatics thrust by over population out of the East; but it may well be doubted whether Africa, as a whole, has been found to possess the receptive capacity with which she has been so freely credited. Let us take a geographer's view of Africa.

The mean elevation of the continent approximates to 2,000 feet above sea, which is about the same as North and South America, but contrasts with the altitude conditions of other continents in the relatively small area which is very high or very low. There are few altitudes over 10,000 feet, and these are confined to mountain ranges and individual peaks, whilst lowlands of under 600 feet elevation are insignificant in extent but easily accessible. Table-lands of moderate elevation are generally characteristic of the continent, and from these table-lands rise the higher peaks and ridges intersecting them. The greater elevations are to be found generally on the eastern side of Africa, with a gradual but fairly uniform slope towards the west and north. The surface configuration of the continent may be classed as consisting of narrow coastal plains, with the flat delta lands of important rivers, constituting the lowlands; the highlands of the southern and eastern

plateaux with a mean elevation of 3,500 feet ; the plains of the north and west, generally below 2,000 feet ; and the Atlas system, which orographically and geologically belongs to Europe rather than Asia, and is cut off from the south by a huge area of depression.

A vast proportion of the continent is desert. From the Atlas mountains to the Niger river stretches one great sand sea ; where this great Sahara ends on the east the Lybian desert extends its waste of trackless sands to the Nile, and east of the Nile again there is not much change in this scene of desolation till it touches the coast of the Red Sea. Here, between the Nile and the Red Sea, interpose the highlands of Abyssinia, and as they reach down southwards they commence that central plateau system from which the great rivers of Africa fall away east and west to the Indian Ocean and the Atlantic, and which is scarcely broken till it ends on the flat-topped table mountain of the Cape of Good Hope. There again we find a large slice of the interior between the Zambezi and the Orange river filled up with a scanty scrub-covered width of desolation (not absolutely irreclaimable) which is known as the Kalahari desert. The coastal lowlands of Africa which through all history, ancient and modern, have been most occupied by foreign settlements (because most easily accessible from the sea) have been discarded as a possible habitat for a white population from the days of Greek colonisation till now. East coast and west are alike in this respect. Traders and missionaries have indeed established a footing on the lowland

African fringe through many generations. Where money is to be made, or Christianity is to be preached, there will be found an earnest band of devotees all the world over, no matter what the climate may be or the difficulties of life amongst savages. But it is impossible to rank the lowlands of Africa as affording any open door for white expansion generally, and it is gradually becoming evident that very little of tropical Africa is really a white man's country. Probably the most suitable land for white race expansion in all Africa is to be found in the one territory of any extent which is not open to immigration—Abyssinia. The climate of Abyssinia is for many months of the year probably unequalled for its marvellously bracing and exhilarating quality. Not the October and November climate of the outer ranges of the Himalayas, or the winter altitudes of Switzerland, seem to me to possess the essence of vitality and strength that is to be found on the Abyssinian highlands. Much of this quality of blood-stirring power is to be found further south on the African plateaux; and it is here, in the great uplands of Uganda at the head of the Nile; in the elevated parts of German East Africa; through Rhodesia to British South Africa, right down to the Cape, that white races generally could assimilate themselves to their environment in a manner similar to that already maintained by the Dutch for the last century. We might take a line, say the proposed railway line from the Cape to the head of the Nile (approximating to the meridian of 30° East Longitude), and it is along that line, spreading east and west in irregular exten-

sion, that we find the white man's land. It remains to be seen whether any good will come of Northern Nigeria. It may be that here too white men may live and labour and multiply ; but for the rest of Africa, European settlements are but those of the trader, or the missionary, or the capitalist, and the white man's interests are but a passing show. To this extent there certainly is in Africa a land of promise such as does not exist and never can exist in Asia, and it is for us to see to it that the great central line which may hereafter link up the white Colonies of Africa remains in strong and friendly hands.

In the year 1875 Great Britain was, of all the European Powers, the one most interested in Africa. These interests were the result of the strenuous work of explorers, missionaries, and traders who had succeeded in establishing widespread British influence without the official sanction of Government. Forty years ago there was little fear of competition in the African field, but great fear of increasing obligations and responsibilities. Then the general European scramble set in, and Britain found it necessary to defend her own interests. These interests did not extend north of Natal on the east coast ; on the west coast there were settlements, but no hinterland. Germany and Italy had no position at all in Africa, and the Congo Free State had not been evolved. In 1878 Walfisch Bay was reluctantly made an English port with fifteen miles of hinterland. In 1884 Germany officially assumed control of South-West Africa, for which, indeed, she had ample justification

in the previous work of her explorers and missionaries. But no such justification existed for her underhand action with reference to East Africa. The three innocent-looking travellers who landed in Zanzibar in November, 1884, where they had arrived as deck passengers, and whose baggage consisted chiefly of German flags and blank treaty forms (Dr. Peters and Count Pfeil were two of them), were representatives of an unofficial society called the German Colonisation Society which aimed at a colonising raid on Africa and general defiance of Great Britain. After rapidly concluding a number of informal treaties in the interior, they hurried back to Berlin with the results of their bag. Then did the German Emperor issue a charter and placed the territories in question "under our Imperial protection." This might have led to awkward results, inasmuch as these German explorers had completed their first treaty just at the time when European diplomatists were arriving at Berlin for the high purpose of dividing up Africa. Complications were averted by the complaisance of our Foreign Office, and Lord Granville acquiesced in the jumping of the claim with almost effusive affability, and warned off British capitalists whose competition might interfere with German interests. Such is briefly the story of the German wedge in East Africa, and it says much for German enterprise and resource. The Berlin Conference met in November, 1884, and it settled many things besides the partitioning of the continent. It dealt with laws of neutrality and the navigation of big rivers, and ordained that any fresh act of occupation

must be duly notified by the Power taking possession. It also defined (vaguely) the obligations attached to a sphere of influence. Actual definition of the limits of territorial possession did not extend much beyond the frontiers of the Congo Free State. In 1885 the scramble for territory recommenced, and by the end of the century Africa was practically dismembered.

Geographical knowledge of Africa at the beginning of the century was nebulous. The coast regions were known, and Cape Colony was surveyed more or less; the interior of Africa nearly a blank on our maps. The Germans alone had set an excellent example in geographical map making which we were slow to follow. It was probably the defective geographical knowledge revealed by the Boer War, and which was, directly or indirectly, the cause of so much trouble and disaster, that led to the organisation of African Surveys on the principles recognised in India. This has, since the beginning of the century, been responsible for vast areas of excellent geographical map-making based on sound triangulation. The result has been that amidst the confusion of international frontiers that prevail in Africa, some of which have originated at haphazard, and are more or less unscientific and unsound, very much of the 13,000¹ miles of frontier for which Britain is responsible has been definitely fixed and determined by boundary commissions who have carried out their business scientifically and well, in spite of the geographical ignorance displayed in the controlling treaties and agreements.

¹ Rapidly diminishing.

It is not in the detail of demarcation, but in those processes of delimitation which should have demanded not only an accurate knowledge of geographical environment but deep discernment in estimating the probable course of the needs and aspirations of future Colonies, that certain of these frontiers fail. The partitioning of a vast continental area such as Africa presented, has been the hurried result of strenuous international competition, and it was undertaken at a time when no one could say of what that continent consisted. It was inevitable that paper partitioning should reveal many errors of judgment and many inconsistencies when translated into practical demarcation ; but there are some few broad principles applicable to the rounding off of new colonial territories (under conditions which included no great opposition on the part of the inhabitants), which might well have been observed. In very few instances in the African partition has the will of the inhabitants been really consulted, nor, indeed, would it be of much use to consult it. Between rival claims to govern these dark-skinned people for their own good, advanced by different European nationalities, it might have been difficult to choose. They want none of them. This removed at least one difficulty in the way of frontier adjustments which might have raised political dissension, and it left for consideration only those geographical questions which arise from the dividing up the continent into rival spheres of interest with indefinite borders, or else into actual protectorates with definite limits, which might be regarded as already ripening for

annexation. One very obvious principle applicable to this process is that of shortening a frontier as much as possible. The less of a frontier there may be on the edge of a sphere of influence, or of an actual protectorate, the less chance is there of the usual run of frontier tribal difficulties, the less there is to defend against the aggression or expansion of neighbouring States, and the less is the cost and difficulty of boundary demarcation and maintenance. There is no advantage to be gained by a long frontier to balance its very obvious disadvantages. If a sphere or a protectorate (Africa is full of them) or definite colonial occupation is confined to one piece within a ring fence, as it were, it is clear that there will be less perimeter to deal with than if it is scattered about in small parcels. If it is a truism that it is almost always disputes over frontiers that lead to wars, this alone is a very excellent reason for reducing the length of these frontiers as far as possible. This principle has been lamentably ignored in the processes of partition. It is not possible to say what weighty considerations induced our diplomatic authorities to agree to the German wedge which is driven between the British East Africa Protectorate and Northern Rhodesia for instance, blocking the continuity of the railway route from north to south, and adding at least 1,000 miles of frontier which would certainly require constant watching and means of defence. Nor is it clear why France and Germany should equally thrust in a barrier of foreign territory between the Gold Coast and Nigeria. Here we have another 700 or 800 miles of extra boundary to watch against

active and enterprising neighbours. With the German wedge thrust in from the Cameroons and splitting French territory in order to reach the Congo, we have nothing to do; but no Colony could hope to last long in such a position. On the other hand the retention of Walfisch Bay by Britain with a strong German hinterland seemed an unnecessary request for political trouble. The trouble has, indeed, come to pass, and a new distribution of colonial interests in Africa is a certain outcome of the war with Germany. When this happens the scheme of Africa's regeneration as suggested by one of our greatest authorities on Africa, Sir Harry Johnston, in his address to the Royal Geographical Society on the 24th February, 1915, may possibly take shape. It would be idle for anyone less well acquainted with the great African continent than Sir Harry Johnston to offer any useful criticism on his suggestions, where those suggestions are based on the topography, the climate, and the idiosyncrasies and character of the inhabitants; but he does not enter into the question of frontiers, which are of vital importance in any scheme of protecting and developing a Colony. We had, in 1914, about 13,000 miles of frontier line to safeguard in that continent. Of these, about 3,400 divided British territories from German; 2,800 separate us from France; 1,400 from Portugal; 1,100 from Belgium and 1,800 from Italy (including Tripoli). These figures are, of course, only approximate. We have besides an Abyssinian frontier of 1,600 miles, Liberia 200, and Aden (not exactly in Africa, but included here) 400. The western watershed of the Nile passing

through the Libyan desert is a frontier which needs little or no artificial means for exact demarcation. A desert frontier is always useful as a natural barrier. It protects itself, and the position of the boundary is a matter of no urgent importance. Nor need the Egyptian frontier marching with Abyssinia give us much concern. It is a demarcated frontier line which leaves the lowland valley of the Nile to Egypt and shuts off the uplands of Abyssinia. The British borderland adjoining Eritrea and Italian Somaliland is also fairly secure, Italy and Britain being the two Powers which guarantee the independence of Abyssinia; though the exact terms of that guarantee appear still to want definition under the authority of International Law. Abyssinia and the negro State of Liberia on the west are the only two independent States in Africa. The river Juba and its chief affluent have been pressed into the service of the boundary-maker of British East Africa, separating that Colony from the Italian Somaliland and Abyssinia. It is on the whole an effective boundary that is not likely to be called in question, nor need criticism be wasted over the western frontier of British East Africa where it adjoins the Congo Free State. The Nile river and the remarkable series of equatorial lakes which from the Albert Nyanza on the north extend to the southern end of Tanganyika through the great rift of Central Africa, dominated by the splendour of the Ruwenzori peaks, offer a fine opportunity for a frontier. The boundary has been scientifically determined and demarcated, and the limits of the two colonial territories allow of no indefinite

expansion either way across the borderland. It is not a defensive barrier equal to that which would have been afforded by a mountain line (so far as a great watershed was available), but it is nevertheless a strong frontier with marked features of great significance. The boundaries of Rhodesia as a whole are highly irregular and absurdly prolonged, but there are some good points about them. The dividing line between Belgian territory and Rhodesia is not an ideal boundary, but it is on the whole a natural frontier, definitely fixed, and should lead to no complications. It follows a fine watershed at the head of the southernmost affluent of the Congo till it is carried to the southern end of Lake Bangweolo, and from that lake to Lake Moero it is defined by a connecting river.

This is a strong frontier so far. A straight line (which is never a strong line) connects Lake Moero with Lake Tanganyika and finishes off the southern borders of the Belgian Congo State. Between Rhodesia and Portuguese East Africa there intervenes the British Protectorate of Nyassaland on the west of Lake Nyassa. Here we may very well assume the lake itself to serve the boundary (nearly every great lake in Africa is made use of as a frontier feature), but the extension south thrust towards the Zambesi, which includes Blantyre and secures connection between the Shiré basin and the coast, is a weak feature in our political partitioning in spite of the fact that the western boundary of the Nyassaland Protectorate is carried by a very definite waterparting between the basins of the Shiré and the Zambesi.

The extraordinary inthrust of Portuguese territory so as to secure the best part of the navigable Zambesi is sanctioned by the rights acquired from primary occupation, but it lengthens the boundary greatly and so far it increases responsibility for its safe maintenance. For the rest, the boundary between Rhodesia and Mozambique is a strong boundary, well defined by scientific demarcation along the waterparting between the highland and the coastal rivers. The defect that it leaves no direct outlet for Rhodesia to the coast, except through Portuguese territory by the Zambesi and by the Portuguese line to Beira, is the inevitable result of our national slowness of perception.

With one important exception, we may regard the frontiers of British territory in the eastern regions of Africa as unlikely to lead to international disputes and political complications, at any rate in the near future. They have been delimitedated by high authorities with anxious care, and they have, on the whole, been well and truly laid down by scientific demarcation. But there is that one important exception, which we find in German East Africa. Undoubtedly there must have been weighty reasons for thus disturbing the continuity of British possessions from north to south, and of largely increasing the frontier perimeter of our territory by the admission of a German colonial wedge in the midst, which not only separates the centres of colonial administration and renders it practically impossible to bring all British East African territory under one central authority, but actually cuts across the line of communication from

north to south which might otherwise connect Rhodesia with Uganda and ultimately develop a central British trunk line reaching from the Cape to Cairo. At present Rhodesia is completely shut out from any northern port. For the economic development of that rising Colony for the simplest necessities of the military defence of our East African possessions as a whole, and for the strengthening and economising of East African administration, there should be means of communication by land between British East Africa and the southern Colonies. It was doubtless impossible to ignore the splendid results of Germany's persistent and successful efforts in exploiting the interior of Africa from the eastern coast. Full justice to German enterprise in this field of African exploration cannot be done here without unduly lengthening the story of African partitioning, nor does it bear directly on the subject of our frontiers, but it was certainly a factor in those considerations which admitted of such an extraordinary anomaly as an important German protectorate in the midst of our East African Colonies. Before the advent of the German stormy petrel, Karl Peters, on the scene, there was strong representation already made for one unbroken and united British East African province extending from the Cape to Abyssinia, but we were not then opposed to Germany, and we were on the whole inclined to be politically good-natured and to allow Germany to expand at our expense. The result has been the addition of at least 1,000 miles of weak frontiers, which on the south connects the northern end of Lake Nyassa with the southern end of Lake Tangan-

yika, and on the north is defined by a line from about the middle of the eastern shores of Lake Victoria to a point on the coast about fifty miles south of Mombasa. This line has apparently little to recommend it as a barrier. Being a straight line, it accepts none of the opportunities which are afforded by local topography, although to the south-east of Kilimanjaro the Pare mountains would offer a defensive line. To the north-west the wide, waterless tracts which it crosses are themselves an efficient barrier. The railway systems of the British and German administrations approach within fifty miles of each other between Taveta and Moshi, where strong defensive works would be necessary to close the gates between them. The boundary has not even the nominal advantage of regularity, for it goes out of its way to include the isolated mountain block of Kilimanjaro within the German line. Doubtless our responsibilities in Africa are already sufficiently heavy, and it would be absurd to add to them without reason. It will be a long time yet before we can claim the necessity for expansion, which is forced on every growing nation, as a sufficient reason for taking up the administration of further large slices of African territory with more frontiers to deal with; but in this case we have clearly added to our burden by adding to our frontier. It is the length of the frontier, not the size of the territory, which matters here, and by the absorption of German territory into our East African protectorate, by centralising administrative authority, and above all by diminishing the extent of our boundary line, we shall diminish

our responsibilities more than we shall add to them. We can hardly say the same about that which was German South-West Africa, shut off, as it is, from British interests in South Africa by a long, weak meridional line of boundary running through the Kalahari desert, and by the Orange river. The Kalahari desert is in itself a useful natural barrier independently of any artificial demarcation through its midst; but to the north of it we may note the long German arm which extended eastwards for about 250 miles (barely 25 miles in width at its narrowest), which intervenes between British South Africa (Bechuanaland Protectorate) and Portuguese territory, so as to include the Kuanda Swamps at the junction of the Kuanda and Zambesi, about 31 miles above the Victoria Falls. This extension afforded the Germans a well-watered right of way from the north-east corner of their possessions to the terminus, on the Zambesi, of one of the chief lines of communication running through Rhodesia from the Bulawayo district. The object of it no doubt was to give German trade an outlet eastward into Rhodesia. Incidentally, it also turns the flank of the Kalahari barrier and greatly neutralises the useful effect of that great natural frontier. Were Germany to retain South-West Africa (which is now improbable) her territory should be separated by as compact and effective a frontier as can be devised with due regard to our interests, and that unscientific and dangerous extension should at least disappear. But it is impossible to leave this subject of South-West Africa without pointing out

that Walfisch Bay could never be permitted to pass into alien hands. The reasoning which precluded Germany from establishing an African seaport at Agadir on the Atlantic coast of Morocco is equally conclusive (if not so forcible) as regards Walfisch Bay. This terrible and prolonged war has taught us the use of a seaport for the development of submarine war on trading vessels. Possibly the submarine is only in process of evolution towards some far more potent and destructive form than it possesses at present; certainly one outcome of the war will be a huge increase in this form of naval armament. Its development in any position commanding a great commercial sea route such as that between Britain and South Africa would be fatal to our trade interests, and for that reason alone Walfisch Bay must remain under our control, whilst the strictest possible watch will have to be kept on other bays to the south (Lüderitz Bay and Elizabeth Bay) from the islands already in our possession off the coast. This is, however, an important political question in which undoubtedly the South African Union will have a voice.

The frontiers of British possessions in West Africa, *i.e.*, of Sierra Leone, of the Gold Coast and of Nigeria, are all defined, and demarcated boundaries indicate their limits on the map. Natural features predominate, rivers and watersheds, but there are straight line definitions here and there which indicate a weakness in resource of the boundary-makers, and considerable outlay in artificial construction. The hinterlands of these Colonies extend to spheres of French interest

but not further than British administrative control can reach, and British power of assimilation has brought the native population into a reasonable regard for law and good order and a recognition of the advantages of a strong government. Germany thrust a wedge again between Britain and France in Togoland; and south of Nigeria she occupied part of the Kameruns which should be British by right of primary occupation. There is, however, reason to think that there will be a redistribution of boundaries in this part of Africa. Such a redistribution will probably efface German Togoland altogether, and result in a restoration of certain Kamerun settlements at Ambas to the Baptist missionaries, who were ousted in 1884 by the Germans. The changes indicated all point to the simplifying and shortening of frontiers and consequently to the strengthening of our powers of control and of defence. Whether we consider ourselves as trustees for the natives of the districts we occupy, and look forward to a time when educated leaders amongst them may ultimately take a share in the government and ordering of their own countries, or whether we accept the gifts the gods provide as the white man's opportunity for acquiring wealth and power, we shall never really make a white man's country of this particular black man's land. All these West African possessions are held with difficulty, and under the necessity of a constant return to England for the recruitment of health and strength on the part of the Britisher. They are not European Colonies as are the South African territories or the East African

highlands. They have not been outlets for the expansion of England, although they are important as commercial centres. Amongst them Upper Nigeria alone may possibly be found suitable eventually for white colonisation, consequently it is with regard to the Upper Nigerian hinterland that we should be most sure of the limits and strength of our claim.

CHAPTER XIV

THE WHITE MAN IN ASIA

THE paramount problem of the expansion of the white races through those regions of the world suitable for its continuance, a problem which grows in weight and importance from year to year, and which must, in a not very remote future, find a partial solution in the extermination of many of the dark-skinned races which now reveal to investigators a practical epitome of the development of humanity from its earliest beginnings, leads to the serious consideration of those geographical conditions which influence it at present, and must inevitably decide the fate of it in the long last. How much of the wide world is there left which is still open to white colonisation? In Europe a certain climax has been reached. Practically all territorial doors are closed, and that fierce struggle has commenced for the survival of the fittest, which we must regard as the heritage of the world's overgrowth of population. That which to some appears to make for the strength and riches of individual nationality appears to others to threaten disaster to humanity at large. We must take it as we find it. The question is too large for discussion

here. In Asia, whichever way we look, we are reminded that other racial communities which are not white demand the right to increase and multiply and to inherit the earth on equal terms with the white. Undeniably, the white man in Asia is usually an exotic. He is out of his true environment. With the exception of Siberia, there is no great space in Asia which can commend itself as a future field for the development of white energy. Siberia is wide, and the doors are open; but we must remember that Siberia first and foremost is the promised land of the Russian, and it is the channel of overflow for the teeming and increasing millions of Russia which enables Persia, Mongolia, Manchuria and certain districts south of the Oxus to retain definite northern boundaries. At present, European Russia is not suffering from the squeeze of overcrowded humanity as is Germany or Japan; but so far Russian territory in Asia has never been regarded as an outlet for overcrowding on the part of any other European nationality than her own.

Siberia covers an immense area in Northern Asia, extending through more than twenty-five degrees of latitude and 120 degrees of longitude, including mountains, uplands, lowlands, and steppes with almost every conceivable variety of climate and orography short of that which we call tropical. There are rich prairies in the middle Amur and Usuri regions, fertile plains covering twenty-five millions of acres of Tobol and Ishim, rich valleys, lakes and snow-clad peaks amid the highlands of Altai—a country resembling Switzerland, only three times as large; there

are the elevated plains of Eastern Siberia, the land of water melons; the flower-spangled steppes of Minusinsk, with the lower plateaus of Transbaikalia, already feeding hundreds of thousands of cattle. Amidst all these are high inhospitable marshes, and vast mountain tracts, forest-covered and visited by hunters and gold diggers, and beyond, in the far north, the frozen tundras, stretching away to the Arctic Ocean. Except for the universally prevailing climatic feature of cold during the long protracted winter, Siberia offers probably the finest, and certainly the most extensive, prospect for colonising enterprise that is to be found in the narrowing world. Her mineral resources are immense and mostly unexploited, and her potentiality for future wealth such as promises to make Russia the richest, as she is the most populous, of European nationalities. Siberia might be the Canada of the East, but her severe climate—even in the south—renders her a more suitable habitat for the hardened sons of a northern country, such as Russia, than for those whose early environment has been of a more temperate nature. This severity of climate arises from her geographical position which interposes the vast plateau of Central Asia between Siberia and the southern sea. Both lowlands and highlands are exposed to the influence of the Arctic Ocean, and the warm south-west winds are deprived of all their moisture as they pass over the plateau of Persia before reaching the Aral-Caspian depression. A current of warm air from the west is only felt in the highlands, where places situated in the Alpine regions

above 3,000 feet experience a rise in temperature of a few degrees only, which does not affect the lowlands, where the cold is severe. The summer, if short, is warm, for the days are long and mostly unclouded, and the earth enjoys the full benefit of the sun. As in all uncultivated countries, the forests and prairies of Siberia become uninhabitable in summer on account of the mosquito plague, which is, of course, worse in the low marshy districts than in the higher and drier zones. Siberia is an unparalleled example of the nationalisation of land, nearly the whole area being State property, with a large reservation in favour of the Cabinet of the ruling Emperor. Private property is quite insignificant in extent, purchase of land being permitted only in the Amur region. To purchase within a zone of sixty-seven miles wide on either side the Siberian railway is permissible and the extent of Crown lands sold to any single person—or group—for exploiting purposes, is strictly limited. Russian immigration to Siberia has been organised lately, so that immigrants are directed into regions where free land is available, and they now flow into the country in a steady stream numbering some 200,000 per annum. The transportation of exiles, political and criminal, into Siberia, was officially discontinued in 1901; but the descendants of those earlier exiles who have become settled in the country rank amongst the best and most capable of the people. The Russian emigrant is as a rule a poor colonist. There are to be found the abandoned relics of Russian colonists in many parts of the world—notably in Patagonia, where they proved quite incapable of

adjusting themselves to their new surroundings, and positively starved in a land which Welsh settlers found to be a land of plenty. With all its great possibilities and with many natural advantages discounted by the rigorous climate and a long winter, Siberia has never offered a field for European immigration generally. For Russia, at any rate, there is ample room to meet the exigencies of her expanding population for many years to come, and the gradual colonising incursions of Korean and Chinese from the East, which are yearly increasing, need excite no apprehensions as regards space at present. Asia affords other fields for European enterprise than Siberia, and some of them are important; but there is no other part of that continent of which it can be said that it is really a white man's country, that is to say, a country where the white man may make a permanent home for himself, and where he may leave his children after him to take up his burden. Nature has decreed that under certain physiological conditions the basis of which are light and heat, human evolution should include a colour scheme which is an essential factor in the adaptation of the human creature to his surroundings, and which is an outward and visible indication of man's fitness for life under certain geographical conditions. The dark-skinned man is the recognised product of an environment of strong light and heat, and possesses actual physical characteristics which are only associated with such an environment, and this means to him life and continuance of race; but the white man, originally starting in the race for peopling the world

from the cold uplands of High Asia, has never yet adapted himself to a tropical condition of life. He is still by nature and development as much an exotic in the sweltering plains of the equatorial regions as a polar bear would be in the Indian Ocean. Altitude serves him to a certain extent, because altitude means the gain of cool air and cool breezes which are to be found in the tropics, but no amount of the grace of adaptability, which is a characteristic of varied force in different races of the white people, can ever really adjust the inherent difference in physical construction and render him absolutely "at home" in tropical regions. The Russian, as we have seen, when he starts on the world-pilgrimage to the new land of his adoption, is not really making for a new land at all. He is shifting from one environment to a very similar one, and he may walk if he so pleases from Petrograd to Eastern Siberia without setting foot outside of Russia or of Russian climatic conditions. Consequently, we seldom see Russians join the rush for pegging out land claims in Africa or South America, or in the tropical islands of the Pacific. Russians and Poles do sometimes listen to the voice of the charmer in the person of the emigration agent, and find their way southward to the tropics and beyond, but never in large numbers, and seldom without living to regret their decision. Hitherto the Russian has advanced no claim in Africa at all, nor is there any reason why he should, nor, it may be added, much hope for him if he did. It is different with France. France has long required room for expansion, and has found it partly in Asia in the region of Indo-China.

Undoubtedly the Frenchman has succeeded in adapting himself to tropical conditions in Asia better than the Englishman; but it may be doubted whether the Frenchman of Indo-China has permitted himself to be assimilated by his adopted country to any greater degree than the Englishman. He lives so far as his surroundings permit the life of the Frenchman in France; there is a faint elusive whiff of Parisian atmosphere about his boulevards and his cafés, and his daily relaxations, enough to indicate where his heart is, and this supplies the key to his whole life story. Indo-China and the commercial business of its cities or the daily round of superintendence in the development of plantations in the upper country, the land of higher elevations and cooler conditions, is but the means to an end—and the end is the return with sufficient wealth to live out comfortable years in France. Still, he is a good colonist, just as the British planter in Ceylon or in the southern hills of India—where, by the way, is no official Colony—is a good colonist, and the pressure of over-population in France is relieved, and relieved on most satisfactory terms, by his exile, which does not prevent him from being a useful economic asset to his country. The question is, How far does his corner of Asia lend itself to the general scheme of white expansion?

The geographical configuration of Indo-China is as follows. Facing the South China Sea to the east is the long, narrow maritime province of Annam, just a narrow ribbon of seaboard, 700 to 800 miles long, terminating at its southern extremity in the delta

of the Mekong (which delta comprises the province of Cochin China) and at its northern in the delta of the Red river (or the province of Tong King). Running through the length of Annam, and forming a sort of backbone to the province, is an isthmus of mountains connecting the two deltas, known as Lower Laos, and generally included in Annam. Farther to the north towards the southern frontier of Yunnan, between Tong King and Burma, a wild region of unexplored and mostly uninhabited mountains, are the Laos States, or Siamese Shan States. On the west, the river Mekong separates Tong King from British Burma and Annam from Siam, until it reaches the plains of Cambodia (adjoining Cochin China to the north) and thence winds in numberless channels through the Cochin China delta to the sea. Cochin China and Lower Laos are the only districts under direct French administration; Cambodia, Annam and Tong King being protectorates. The population of Cochin China has been ascertained by census to be between two and three millions at the present date. In 1901 it was 2,300,000, giving a rate of 346 to the square mile in the rice delta province of Mytho, and 220 in that of Sadec. The rest of Indo-China may be reckoned to contain some 800,000 people, but no reliable data are available. We may certainly allow a rate of over 400 per square mile for the delta of the Red river. In contrast to this, France has a population of 174 per square mile. Cochin China, which is the first province taken by the French in 1863, is simply a tropical delta devoted to rice cultivation, and with an area of one-twelfth

the whole of Indo-China it produces four-fifths of the total supply of the Colony. Other tropical productions are sugar and cotton, but in small quantities. The foreign population of Indo-China (chiefly, of course, French) probably does not amount to more than 10,000 to 12,000, exclusive of 8,000 French troops which form the permanent garrison of the country. There does not seem to be a large promise of opportunity for white colonisation here, but we must remember that the Colony is still young. Mr. Archibald Little considers that, taken as a whole, Indo-China, with its ample rainfall, its rich soil, and altitudes varying from sea-level to 6,000 and 8,000 feet, may doubtless rival Ceylon and Java in the wealth and variety of its produce in time, when the country is cleared and population increases, provided that present regulations hampering Chinese immigration be modified or withdrawn. Labour for plantation developments is wanting, but clearly it is not white labour that could meet the necessity. The French immigrant can only live as capitalist and employer.

The same condition practically obtains throughout the Asiatic colonies. The Ceylon planter must have capital to invest in land ere he can make a successful beginning to a sound business as tea or rubber grower, and he depends entirely on native labour for economic developments. The climatic conditions of Ceylon entirely preclude the possibility of white labour in competition with that of the native. The hottest months in the year are March and April, and the wettest—on the West Coast—are June and August.

December and January are disagreeable months because of the long shore wind. The conformation of hill and plain in Ceylon divides the island into climatic spheres, which are differentiated by the action of the monsoon. From June to August the south-west monsoon produces a humid, vaporous condition of atmosphere on the west, which is both depressing and enervating to Europeans. In November, the north-east monsoon from the Bay of Bengal catches Eastern Ceylon and produces similar effects in that region ; the two spheres being divided by the Central mountain system culminating in Adam's Peak. In the southern districts the rain may in bad seasons be continuous for about eight months of the year. During the months that the rain is excessive on the western slopes of the mountains, the eastern slopes are comparatively dry, and at the elevation of about 7,000 feet the air may be actually bracing ; but the emigrant who proposes to make Ceylon his home is advised to study the weather chart and rainfall statistics most carefully before he decides where he will pitch his permanent camp.

With such a climate as this, the premier Crown Colony of Great Britain is not, and can never be, the permanent home of the colonist. A planter of European nationality may spend his life there, and he may build up a future from rubber, or tea or land, but he is only a settler—a bird of passage—and he looks forward to ending the evening of his days elsewhere. Ceylon is certainly not available for white emigration of the labouring class, nor can we

possibly consider India generally as affording any opening for the overflow due to European expansion.

Not only is the climate of India prohibitive to white labour, but political reasons are strongly adverse to any such scheme of immigration as would bring a stray population of white origin into competition with the native—even if India's crowded field offered the smallest chance of a livelihood. But, as a matter of fact, there is far more necessity for relieving India of some of its overburdened population than for finding room for aliens. India, like Indo-China and Ceylon, must be ruled out of any scheme for the further distribution of the white races, although as a temporary home and a field for military training, for the planter, the commercial capitalist or the great body of the ruling administration, both civil and military, the value of India as an Imperial asset is so great that were India to be lost to us, it could only signify the disruption of the Empire. There are, of course, a few permanent European settlers in India who might rank as colonists—English families settled in Kashmir or in the lower valleys of the Himalaya, and occasionally an English gentleman occupying the position of Zemindar or landowner; but the instances are rare, and in no case do they involve the application of European labour. And what is true of India is yet more true of tropical regions in Asia that lie more completely within the tropics. The European exists in all these regions as the overlord, the employer, the capitalist; but never as a member of the productive body of workers by whose labour the riches of the East are

materialised. Even if it were possible that the white man could live and continue his race in the tropical climate of the East—in India, Ceylon, Burma, the Straits Settlements, or the islands yet farther east—he would be brought into direct competition with the Eastern emigrant from China, Japan and India, who not only regards Asia as his own heritage, no matter to what extent he may shift his Asiatic habitat, but who can by force of heredity and physical sensibility to his environment live on a fraction of that which would be necessary to support the European. In short, Asia affords no future asylum for overcrowded Europe, and we must look elsewhere for those climatic and geographical surroundings which make white emigration possible.

CHAPTER XV

INTERNATIONAL BORDERLANDS IN ASIA

IT would be absurd to close even such an elementary work as this on political boundaries without a reference to the one frontier which concerns England most, indeed the only land frontier that is of primary importance in her international Councils—*i.e.*, the frontier that divides Russia from India. The days of acute apprehension as to Russia's military progress in the East have passed away we may hope for ever. At any rate, many and many a long year must pass before the interests of the two great Powers, Britain and Russia, can again be regarded as irreconcilable, nor is it possible to conceive, if we make a careful examination of the actual physical conditions which surround the borderland of the two countries in the north and north-west of India, that the final adjustment of boundaries either there or in Persia (which latter must be effected sooner or later) can lead to any serious misunderstandings. Such misunderstandings in the past have been bred largely from geographical ignorance and want of appreciation. In the East we are not dealing with European conditions where boundaries are often weak and

uncertain lines divide the interests of nations who live and press right up to them. There is room in the East—wide spaces which, for a time at least, must remain as effectual buffers. Civilisation can, and does occasionally, turn a desert into a pasture land and render a strong wilderness a valuable commercial asset ; but it takes time and the labour of long years to effect such transformations, and of the wide, sun-scorched wildernesses of the East it may fairly be prophesied that many of them are irreclaimable for all time. Another consideration, too, has arisen from the experiences of the Great War, and it is a strong factor amongst other considerations which make for the future peace and stability of nations, and that is the immense power for the defence of a line of frontier which is put into our hands by modern military methods and machinery. Given a reasonably well-selected boundary line with defensive possibilities and it becomes a most formidable barrier against aggression, and will exercise an influence in military councils which will appeal to the aggressor far more strongly than moral principles derived from the rights of humanity. A general description, therefore, of the frontiers of Russia towards Persia and India, and of India towards Russia should, if it at all fulfils the intentions of the writer, satisfy even the most nervous of military and political critics that in the final settlement (which is bound to come) between Russian and British interests after the war, there is far more opportunity for the promotion and the cementing of permanent good feeling between two nations which possess many characteris-

tic in common than for misapprehension or misgivings.

The Russian frontier from the Chinese border eastwards to the Pacific has already been dealt with. Her frontier from the Caspian to the Chinese border is that which concerns us most, and it is on the whole a most useful example of the evolution of a sphere of interest. The process of her expansion eastwards to Merv and the importance of the railway factor in that process has been referred to, but the ultimate issue of Skobelev's insistence on railway support, when he set out to reduce the Tekkes of the Akhal oasis, has yet to be fully traced, and the tracing of it may yet fill up some important pages in future history. The Russo-Persian boundary from the Caspian commences with the Atrek river, flowing into the Caspian at its south-eastern extremity. This brings Russia over against Astrabad at the northern foot of the mountains which ring about the southern shores of the Caspian. Astrabad is not fifty miles from the boundary, and is within reach of Russia whenever she may choose to stretch out her military arm.

Between Astrabad and the Persian capital, Tehran, there is a formidable mountain system, the Elburz, and the direct connection between the two is by a rugged mountain road of a difficult nature. But it is quite unnecessary to tackle that road, for round the southern shores of the Caspian the way to Amol is clear and flat, and from Amol about 100 miles of mountain road passing under the shadow of the great Demavend peak (the peak itself

is 18,600 feet above sea level) leads almost direct to Tehran. There are, of course, many possibilities of defence about this pass to the north-east of Tehran, but the most optimistic supporter of Persian military capacity could hardly expect more than a nominal show of opposition which would be readily brushed aside even if political exigencies admitted of any opposition at all. In short, Northern Persia is within the shadow of Russian domination already, and it is not, or should not be, surprising that Russian influence is strong in the province of Mazanderan, and that the day when the whole seaboard of the Caspian shall be definitely under Russian control is not far off. From the Atrek the international boundary is adjusted to the mountain ranges which stretch away to the south-east towards Mashad (so as to leave the whole valley of the Atrek in Persia) with certain diversions northward which carry it down the northern foothills until it nearly touches the Russian Transcaspian railway. It is a weak boundary, inviting trouble and offering opportunities which appear to be totally unnecessary for its own violation. When it leaves the mountains finally to reach out to the Tejend (or Hari Rud) river (the river which flows past Herat) it follows the course of that river southwards to a point at Zulfikar ; from which point the International Commission of 1883-84 commenced its labours and demarcated the boundary to the Oxus.

Between the Caspian and the Tejend for 460 to 470 miles the Russian frontier reaches up to the northern foothills of the Elburz, and is separated by from 80 to 100 miles of exceedingly rough mountain

ranges and ridges from the plains of Upper Khorasan and the great high road connecting Tehran with Mashad. The command of that road means the domination of all Northern Persia, and with it the most fertile and promising section of all the "land of the rose and the nightingale." South of the road is the limitless expanse of the Dasht-i-Kavir, where huge swamps and quagmires lie apart, outlined and rimmed with salt, where the blinding glare from the concentrated salt of ages, spreading white sheets over sandy flats, strikes the traveller like the reflection from new fallen snow on a Himalayan pass. Northern Persia is thus shut off, as it were, by the desert and pushed into the geographical sphere of Russia. No doubt the crossing of the mountains might present military difficulties, but we know that the Turkoman *alamán* still crosses those hills to raid the peaceful northern valleys of Persia, and where the Turkoman can ride the Cossack will not be slow to follow. If we consider the enormous effect of national contiguity in the spread of commercial and even of social interests over a wide area of borderland, we need not be surprised that Russian influence within what is nominally and by political agreement assigned as her sphere should be paramount. We cannot expect that British interests should loom large in the eyes of the Persian population of North-eastern Khorasan from whom Russia is separated by no more than the width of a comparatively narrow mountain system, whilst Britain is in the position of an unknown quantity beyond the seas. At Mashad there is a British Resident, but it is doubtful whether he can maintain

sufficient state and dignity to compete fairly with the Russian representative, the relative position between them being much the same as it is in Chinese Turkestan at Kashgar. In the general expansion of Asiatic frontiers which must inevitably occur in the long course of future history it will be impossible for Britain to resist the Russian claim to advance beyond the Elburz's ranges southwards to the Tehran—Mashad road (one of the great commercial high roads of history) and thus to dominate from the important strategical position at Mashad one at least of the lines of least resistance leading to India. At present nothing but the difficulties presented by a boundary based on a mountain barrier (the strongest geographical feature that can be pressed into the service of boundary making) has prevented those partial incursions which are the usual prelude to advance.

Farther east the boundary determined by the course of the Hari Rud (or Tejend) river to Zulfikar is no barrier whatever. There are seasons when the Hari Rud river is entirely absorbed—run practically dry—by the exigencies of irrigation on either side the valley from Herat westwards. Where it intersects the great Asiatic divide and splits the Elburz system it assumes the character of a gorge-enclosed river. It is the only river which splits that divide between China and the Caspian, and unlike the great range dividing rivers of the Himalayas (the Indus, the Brahmaputra, and others) the point of its passage through the divide is fixed at the weakest link in the whole chain of that elevated line. On the left

(the Elburz side of the river) the mountains are still sharp-edged and rugged, and limestone cliffs shut in the river banks; but on the right bank there is many an opening leading into the hill system between Zulfikar and the valley of Herat north of Kuhsan, which here forms the most degenerate link in the great divide. Here are rounded hills of loess formation, disintegrated and washed down into the valleys on either side, with no appearance of a backbone of hard sustaining rock and apparently subsiding into flatter formation with each successive year's rainfall. It is hardly necessary to seek for a definite pass by which to cross these hills, unless, indeed, a mule or camel caravan is in question. Then, indeed, they may become dangerous by reason of the rapidity with which the loose surface soil, under the influence of one of these bitter spring storms of fierce cutting wind and snow (locally known as Shamshir), turns into a torrent of mud and literally embeds the caravan. The Boundary Commission of 1885 had a bad experience of such happenings on the Chashma Sabz Pass. North of Zulfikar, between that point and Sarakhs, the right bank of the river overlooks nothing but a vast flat sandy plain. Eastward across this plain runs the track to Panjdeh; northward following the river is the road to Sarakhs and Merv, and it is to be noted that already from Merv to Sarakhs and from Sarakhs to Mashad there runs the Russian telegraph line. From Zulfikar to the Kushk post (the Russian frontier military post, which is distinct from the Afghan village of Kushk) and to Maruchak on the Murghab river and Maimana, the boundary

between Russia and Afghanistan runs amongst hills before it takes to the wide expanse of lowland waste which stretches past Andkhui to the Oxus river. The boundary so far is a definite and sufficiently well demarcated line, but it is no barrier, and might have proved to be inconvenient as an ethnical division but for the fact that the country is (or was) only sparsely inhabited by tribes of Persian and Turkish origin—the Chahar Aimak and Turkoman tribes of the Oxus basin. With the exception of a question of water rights on the Kushk river, the demarcation presented no great difficulties in adjustment until it reached the Oxus.

As we are now dealing with the most vulnerable corner of Indian defensive system it may be convenient to consider the Russo-Afghan frontier as a whole, and to take the Russian point of view as regards that frontier first. The story of Panjdeh is a very old story now, but not so old that the steps which led up to the attack by a strong Russian force on the Afghans who were entrenched at Panjdeh need be repeated here. It was the deliberate jumping of a claim by which the Russian frontier on the Murghab river was advanced so as to cover an important strategical (and at one time an important commercial) position; and this took place whilst the British Boundary Commission was actually in the field awaiting the fulfilment of a mutual agreement between England and Russia that the northern boundary of Afghanistan should be determined by joint investigation. It was based no doubt on Russia's belief that no Liberal Government in England

would ever fight, and that "peace at any price" was the motto of a nation of shopkeepers. Russia's impressions of the attitude of a Gladstone Government were so far correct that the Panjdeh insult was accepted under protest, and negotiations set on foot again for the determination of that boundary. They failed, of course, until, by a chance turn in the wheel of fortune, the Gladstone party went out and the opposition under Lord Salisbury came in. Then, indeed (and not till then), was the chance of war accepted as "imminently certain" by the British Government, and Russia's pretensions, founded largely on "bluff," had to be modified to meet a contingency for which she was not really prepared. The Commissions met and the boundary was demarcated to the Oxus river, and from the point where it touched that river the Oxus itself became the boundary to its source in the Pamirs. Thus was the frontier between Russia and India (with Afghanistan as the intervening buffer State) determined by a demarcated boundary as it exists to-day. We may fairly ask, What is the value of that boundary as a barrier between Russia and Afghanistan? There is a point about 70° East Longitude where the Oxus river issues from the mountains into the plains of Afghan Turkestan. Between that point and Mashad (to put the matter as briefly as possible) the boundary is no barrier whatsoever. East of that point (for reasons which will be given shortly) it becomes a most effective barrier. The only really important section of the Russian frontier so far as India is concerned is that section of about 700 miles between Mashad and the

Badakshan hills which encloses Afghan Turkestan on the east.

Russia's strategic position behind that frontier is extremely simple and the value of it obviously depends upon her railway system. Until that system was complete the generally sterile and unproductive conditions which prevailed in Central Asia would have prevented the mobilisation of any considerable force such as would have proved a serious menace to India. That light railway which Skobelev demanded to assist him in the reduction of the Akhal oasis has grown into a stupendous system, and it is a system of which the object from the very beginning has been clearly strategic and not commercial. Taking Orenburg in South-East Russia, the junction between the Russian railways and the Trans-siberian line, as the point of departure, there is a single line which runs southwards over the 2,700 intervening miles to Krasnovodsk on the Caspian. Krasnovodsk is also within two or three days of the Caucasus garrisons by the Baku route across the Caspian, leading also to Moscow. Therefore troops from the Caucasus, Moscow and Orenburg could concentrate at Krasnovodsk with rapidity, and they certainly could be pushed on to Merv without interference. But Merv is also in railway connection with Tashkend and Orenburg on the Trans-siberian line. So that Merv is an important military centre for Central Asian activities. From Merv, however, there is but a single line to the Kushk post, which is the nearest Russian frontier station to Herat, and a single line could not deal with such a powerful concentration

of force in men and material as would ensue if both the Transcaspian and Trans-siberian systems were called into play. Thus another base for military action on the Afghan Turkestan border becomes necessary which should be in direct connection with Tashkend and the Trans-siberian lines. There is good reason for believing that Termez on the Oxus will be that other base, and that it will be linked up with Samarkand and Tashkend. There is a good military road running through Karshi already between Samarkand and Termez, Termez having been from time immemorial one of the main points for crossing the Oxus. It is one of the chief trade routes between the Central Asian Khanates and Kabul to this day. Termez will also very possibly be linked up with Charjui on the west, where the Afghan boundary joins the Oxus, by a line which would form a useful alternative to the river route between these two places. Russian activity in the Oxus direction has been in abeyance for some years—she has been otherwise occupied—but we must look to the certainty of this completion of her strategic railway system on her frontier when opportunity again offers for a general shift of the frontier southwards. Renewed activity about Termez will be the first sign of new aspirations and a fresh impulse southward. The Oxus river itself presents but few difficulties of any military significance to advance. A pontoon bridge could be made to span it effectively at many points in a few hours. It is in effect a Russian river already with regular steam traffic from Charjui upward to the furthest navigable point. The Turkoman people who

live and thrive on the left bank (Ersari Turkomans and others), tilling the soil of a comparatively narrow riverain tract that is as full of the beauty of home cultivation as any valley in Sussex, would infinitely prefer Russian to Afghan rule. In short, Afghan Turkestan is as much at the mercy of Russia as is Herat itself.

Herat is but seventy odd miles from the furthest military post occupied by Russian troops at Kushk (they have another name for the post which I have forgotten), and between Kushk and Merv is the single line of railway referred to. Between Kushk and Herat there is no difficulty of any significance in the construction of a light railway, for which material is always piled ready at Kushk. The line would cross that watershed to which reference has already been made as a degenerate link in the great Asiatic divide ; it is barely 1,500 feet above the Herat valley, and it would imply no great engineering skill to carry a military railway across it. From the southern slopes of this divide to Herat is a gentle grade falling to the foot of a second line of low alluvial hills directly overlooking Herat from a distance of about ten miles. These hills (the Koh-i-Khwaja) are traversed by water courses which offer easy passages to the plain below, and they are flanked on their southern side by an important canal (the Jui Nao) which is but two or three miles north of the city. The earthworks which enclose this canal form good artillery positions from which to shell the town. The Herat valley, which has been much overrated in the past for its productiveness, and which is limited to an

area in which every acre has for centuries been utilised to the utmost, is full of thriving villages containing an agricultural population with little or no military proclivities. If the Russians by grace of tolerance and fair treatment earn a reputation for themselves on their own frontier as good overlords (which is certainly not the reputation they enjoyed twenty-five years ago), they would find themselves in easy competition with the Afghan rulers, who are far too inflated with a quite unjustified pride in their military importance to cultivate the art of popularity. It is a little too often assumed that Herat is an indefensible town. This is not quite the case. Against a sudden assault (or *coup de main*) its defences thirty years ago would have proved absolutely effective, although the city would perhaps hardly have stood a regular siege for more than a few weeks under the siege artillery conditions that then existed. Modern siege artillery would undoubtedly reduce Herat to a confusion of mud ruins in the course of a few days, but even modern guns would find it difficult to displace the solid earth ramparts 120 feet thick and 40 feet high which surround the town, and from the summit of which the walls overlook the valley. The peculiarly tenacious character of the puddled mud and straw construction of the walls, and, indeed, of a whole town, has often asserted itself in defiance of our strongest efforts to destroy the citadels and earthworks of other Afghan towns similarly built. The mere explosion of crater producing shells and the penetration of solid shot which may riddle mud walls without greatly disturbing

them, has far more moral effect on the Afghan defenders than the actual damage done generally warrants. Most of the big cities of Afghanistan (including Herat) are already mined and traversed with underground passages constructed for purposes of protection and for the storage of provisions. There is, moreover, surrounding Herat a considerable area of irrigated land that can easily be turned into an impassable swamp of tenacious mud through which no direct assault could possibly be delivered in the face of a determined defence. Herat with a strong garrison and an efficient armament *might* detain an invading force sufficiently long for relief to reach it from India; but it would be far safer to assume that the gates would be opened to an enemy advancing from the north, with the first serious threat of investment, if not with the first shower of shells, and that the Herat valley would be occupied by Russia from Kushk as readily as the plains of Afghan Turkestan from the east.

The position then as regards the long extended Russian frontier facing Persia and Afghanistan is this: From the Caspian to the eastern limits of Afghan Turkestan in about 70° East Longitude, where the Oxus debouches from the hills, Russia faces a borderland of mountains in Persia and of plains in Afghanistan which is practically within her military grasp whenever she elects to shift her boundary forward. Throughout this strip of transfrontier territory there are distinct advantages to be gained, advantages not so much of a military character, giving her increased facilities for a further move towards India,

as of the acquisition of much fertile territory and economic wealth ; nor does it seem likely that such an extension of her border would be altogether obnoxious to the people concerned. This, however, depends greatly on the reputation which Russia may have made for herself in recent years for fair and just dealing with her subject border peoples. In this particular there is reason to think that a great change has been effected in her frontier policy during the last twenty years, a change which places Russia in a favourable light when her frontier administration is compared with the inefficiency of Persian control over her outlying territories, or the arrogance of Afghan provincial rule. Russian domination would probably be welcomed, but whether welcomed or not it is clear that such domination can easily be established. The question for us to consider is what effect such an extension of Russian influence would have on Afghanistan and, through Afghanistan, on India.

CHAPTER XVI

THE NORTH-WEST FRONTIER OF INDIA

INDIA'S first line of defence lies well beyond her own political frontier, and it is because this must be so for reasons other than those which dictate her military policy, that boundary commissions have been busy on the northern frontier of Afghanistan and that large sums have been expended from the Indian treasury on the maintenance of good relations with that country. Her second line of defence lies in that borderland of mountains which hedges in the Indus valley to the west, and which continues from the Hindu Kush to the sea near Karachi in a wild and rough series of ranges and ridges wherein have been enacted many of the tragedies of recent Indian history. There is no need to detail the historic steps political and military by which British advance has gradually moved westwards to the red line of boundary which now indicates the limit of British India. Fifty years ago it was a haphazard boundary, much of it inherited from displaced peoples now included within Indian jurisdiction, but never in its earlier phases of adoption arranged or regulated by the scientific requirements of a defensive barrier.

It was simply accepted as a provisional hedge which on the whole answered the purpose of ethnographical distributions, and kept the most troublesome of our always unsettled neighbours outside. This much trodden-over and half-obliterated old red line is not of much significance now, and has almost disappeared from our maps, but inasmuch as it still represents the limits of British India here and there some of its characteristics as a boundary are worthy of attention. Between Baluchistan and Sind it is still the dividing line, where nature rather than diplomacy has so disposed it that it becomes a really effective barrier. A more uncompromising wall, for instance, than that of the Kirthar range, which carries it from the neighbourhood of Karachi to a point level with the important line of Indus crossing at Sukkur, it would be hard to find. This is part of the old line. We have long ceased to look for border troubles in that part of Sind. As it trends northwards it is carried into the hills so as to flank the railway from Sukkur to Quetta and then runs irregularly to the south of Quetta till it touches the Afghan border line near Nushki. This part of the boundary is merely the southern limit of that slice of Baluch territory around the Quetta district, and of its extension to Nushki, which is held on perpetual lease from the Khan of Kalat, and it has little significance either as an ethnical or as a military barrier. It simply marks the development of successive stages of expansion from Sind to the interior of Baluchistan, which remains an independent protected State controlled by an interesting system of tribal federation.

The military position of Quetta on the Indian frontier, as by far the most important of the frontier gateways leading from the north to India, is of the highest importance. Nature has so arranged her topographical conformations as to render Quetta readily defensible on a comparatively short line facing and traversing the road and the railway to Kandahar. The extension of that railway to a point halfway to Kandahar through the difficult Khojak range, which once formed so formidable a barrier to advance into Southern Afghanistan, renders Quetta all important as a base of operations. Without entering into undesirable detail about this part of our Indian frontier it may be pointed out that there is no military position near Kandahar which is at all comparable to that of Quetta for effective defence, and that the extension of the Indian frontier so as to embrace this outwork of India was the wisest, as it will probably prove to be the most far reaching, of diplomatic movements on the frontier effected during the last century. The position of Quetta answers another and very important service in frontier politics. Quetta controls the railway to Nushki and the road to Seistan. Seistan is dominated by Quetta. Quetta also dominates the head of the Pishin valley, and the long lateral frontier line of the Zhob valley reaching northward to the Gomul gateway of the frontier. Along this valley (approximately) a line of British military posts held by frontier militia is established, but the wild borderland which constitutes the home of turbulent and fractious tribespeople which the Zhob intersects is not otherwise

occupied by us. It is a curious anomaly that whilst the valley of the Zhob is thus included in our sphere of occupation, and a connected line of frontier posts, extending from Harnai (on the railway below Quetta) to the Gomul river, is an integral part of the frontier system of administration, no attempt whatever is made to interfere with the self-government of the tribes who occupy the hills between this line and the plains of India either to the east or south. They are practically independent and enjoy to the full the doubtful advantages of home rule. But the situation thus created has had enormous influence on the preservation of peace on our border. It is many years now since any of these truculent people whose back doors are thus securely guarded have given trouble on the frontier, and it may be accepted as a general rule, well understood in frontier military politics, that an outflanked Oriental is never a difficult person to deal with. Of this southern part of our frontier facing Baluchistan, it may be said that it is typical of what a military frontier should be as a protection to the country it guards. Long lines of inconceivably rugged hills in more or less parallel formation denote its general character, and it is only athwart these hills by the splitting asunder of the limestone and conglomerate ridges, when the drainage collects from the long lateral valleys and passes by rushing waterways to the plains, that any passage across them exists. These natural lines of defence are buttressed on the north by the gigantic massif of the Takht-i-Sulaiman mountain, from the lofty summit of which a wide vista of the Indus plains

is visible to the east ; the gleaming line of the river can be seen in the distance intersecting a dun-coloured landscape lit up here and there by green strips of irrigated crops, and beyond is the all-pervading hot brown haze of India. To the west are the purple grey hills of Afghanistan, line upon line, till they touch the horizon, and more immediately under the foot of the Takht mountain are slopes of wild olive backed by steep walls of pine-covered ridge, laced across by white streaks of mountain streams. Far to the north is the stairway of the Gomul leading down from the Afghan plateau, through which generations of hardy raiders and robbers have passed to the looting of the plains, but which now sees only the Ghilzai caravan slowly moving on its yearly emigration to the plains with strings of camels, donkeys and women, in the everlasting quest of winter warmth and mercantile gain.

The Gomul practically marks the end of our occupied frontier, the military post of Wana being a little beyond it, and above the pass. From the Gomul commences a new order of frontier which is now under direct British administration, and is called the North-West Frontier Province, infinitely more difficult to control than the southern section.

The relation of the Afghan boundary to the actual hill barrier of the frontier is important. This is the boundary extending from the Persian frontier to the Hindu Kush that was delimited by agreement with the Amir Abdurrahman at Kabul, and is generally known as the "Durand" Boundary. It is, on the whole, a conventional line laid down with

careful recognition of ethnical requirements, separating Baluch from Afghan, and Afghan from the frontier tribes, who, however much affiliated to the Afghan, have never been under Afghan (or any other) domination. It is entirely free from any pretence of military significance as a barrier. It is a typical instance of the divorce of the boundary from the barrier, which in this case lies behind the boundary in the form of that band of hills which forms the revetment of the Afghan plateau. The effect of this separation south of the Gomul has been noted, and its advantages as leading to a line of British occupation which guards and controls the back entrances to the hills wherein are to be found some of the most intractable of our frontier neighbours. Where, as north of the Gomul, it ceases to afford the pretext for the maintenance of a line of military posts beyond and behind the frontier hills, it becomes practically a dead letter, with no further significance than that of marking a definite line beyond which the influence of the Afghan is supposed not to extend. Although these northern frontier hills have been included within the administrative control of the Indian Government they are, as a matter of fact, as independent as if the old haphazard Sikh boundary of the Indus valley, which was our boundary until quite recently, still existed; and the curious anomaly has arisen that it is the tribes of our own province, living within our own borders, that now give us the greatest trouble and anxiety. This position is practically the result of the geographical conformation of these north-western hills. Waziristan, immediately to the north of the Gomul, is a

kind of little Switzerland between the Khost river and the Gomul. It is a Switzerland traversed by the Tochi. It possesses no back premises adjacent to the boundary that could be effectively occupied except at enormous expense and considerable risk. The post of Wana on its southern border has but little effect north of Waziristan; the passes of the Kuram and the Kabul rivers enclosing Tirah are indeed held by posts on the actual Afghan frontier at the Peiwar and Lundi Kotals, but between them runs the great flat-backed range of the Sufed Koh and there is no communication across it. Tirah is therefore easily open to Afghan influence.

North of the Kabul river the Mohmand country is actually cut in two by the "Durand" boundary, and there are Mohmand (*i.e.*, Afghan) villages on either side of it. From the point where it leaves the Mohmand country, however, the boundary follows a very definite series of lofty watersheds till it reaches the Hindu Kush. Waziris, Afridis and Mohmands are thus our most troublesome neighbours, and being practically free to cross the Afghan border when in difficulties, they have no fear of the effect of reprisals from the British side, whilst they are pretty sure of a welcome on the other. It is manifestly impossible that their tribal affinities and aspirations should be otherwise than in the direction of Afghanistan. It does not in the least follow that Waziri raids and Afridi risings should be prompted by the Amir; no incentive whatever is required to set the warriors of the north-west on the war path; but it does follow that if the Amir wishes to make himself disagreeable

to the Indian Government without committing himself to obvious responsibility or serious reprisal, he can stir up a hornet's nest on the frontier which may require from 40,000 to 50,000 good troops to suppress. The latest frontier rising has emanated from Waziristan with the assistance of tribal levies from the head of the Tochi valley. It has taken 10,000 troops to disperse it, but the losses incurred by the tribespeople (if the number reported is correct, *i.e.*, 500 killed and wounded) is certainly enough to keep that section of the frontier quiet for some time to come. The careless irresponsibility of the frontier tribesman in dealing with periodic incursions into British territory is well illustrated by a story told by Sir Mortimer Durand—the same distinguished officer who gave his name to the “Durand” line. Whilst lately visiting and talking to the wounded Indians now convalescent in a certain English hospital, he was surprised to meet two Wazirs of the Mahsud clan amongst them. It is only quite lately that members of a clan with such an evil reputation as the Mahsuds have found any place in the Indian army, but there they were, in the full enjoyment of an existence of leisure and good feeding such as they never had experienced in their lives before. They were full of boisterous hilarity and immensely pleased with their surroundings. Sir Mortimer expressed his surprise at meeting them, and asked if they were aware that their own people were at that moment seriously engaged in fighting the British troops on the Indian border. They received the news with the greatest delight. They roared with laughter as they expressed

a pious hope that their own people were putting up a right good fight! Diplomatic amenities are lost on such people. Until they can see visible evidence that they are "cornered" on their own frontier they will always give trouble periodically. There is no special interest in the northern sections of the Indian frontier from the Kashmir hinterland to where it passes north of the protected States of Nepal, Sikkim and Bhutan to the Brahmaputra, beyond one dominant feature: it is the finest natural combination of boundary and barrier that exists in the world. It stands alone. For the greater part of its length only the Himalayan eagle can trace it. It lies amidst the eternal silence of vast snowfields and ice-bound peaks; it gathers around it a soft mantle of cloud by day, and at night it is wrapped in a great stillness, but whether by day or by night it is inviolate, impassable. Could you stand on the summit of one of the lower and outer ranges in Kashmir, or in Garhwal, or Nepal, or at Darjiling, and watch on some clear day the white outline of the distant snowy range, you would realise then that never was there such a God-given boundary set to such a vast, impressive and stupendous frontier.

Even beyond Bhutan, where, after skirting the Himalayan foothills, it defines the Brahmaputra valley and finally rounds off (very indefinitely) the frontier of Assam, and betakes itself to the Burmese ranges, it again finds a magnificent series of lofty watersheds to support it in the stiff lines of unbroken ridge which hold the Salwin as in a deep mountain ditch. The doubtful point on this north-east frontier

is the crossing of the Lohit Brahmaputra, the north-eastern affluent of the great river, where the Chinese have already penetrated and are said to be showing their yellow faces above the fort palisades at Rima. This is a point which still requires attention. The boundary of British Burma now circles round all the Shan States, both "north" and "south," leaving no material buffer whatever between British and French interests, where it follows the Mekong river. Through Tenasserim it can only be quoted as a useful example of an excellent mountain barrier of which the position is obviously pointed out by Nature.

CHAPTER XVII

INTERNATIONAL BOUNDARIES IN EUROPE

ONE of the most perplexing features in the distributions of races in the civilised world is the apparent failure of the unlimited opportunities that exist for the intermixture of those races to shake off race individualism, and to respond to any process of assimilation whereby the component parts of a general admixture become amalgamated and consolidated into a national whole. Men who spend their lives and make their fortunes and rear their families under an alien flag usually remain aliens, and admit no allegiance to the Government under which they have lived and prospered. The more rapid and convenient the opportunity of intermixture, the more surely does this race idiosyncrasy appear to be maintained. We may talk of a cosmopolitan town or country, but the cosmopolitanism in Europe only amounts to a mechanical admixture of innumerable race units and never to a "chemical" fusion of the particles. When countries were widely separated and communication between them was difficult, the comparatively small body of aliens in any country were more readily absorbed and digested in the body corporate of the

nationality than is the case in these days, when the general tendency towards emigration and movement (which is far greater than it has ever been in the world's history) does undoubtedly lead to an over-supply of indigestible aliens whom no Government really cares to assimilate. One would, however, expect that the gradual infiltration of peaceful, hardworking citizens across a national border into a neighbouring territory would at least be followed by an automatic fusion of life interests and ideas such as would lead to real assimilation eventually. Apparently this is seldom the case, and each race preserves its own idiosyncrasies and ideas with the same vigorous care as if the transfer from one Government or nationality to another were the result of conquest and not of choice. The complexity of the psychological problems which beset race idiosyncrasy is such that nothing short of a life study of individual conditions could lead to any certain and satisfactory conclusion about them. These are the problems which the frontier-maker has to face when he sets out to define a national boundary in the civilised portions of the globe. I have endeavoured to show elsewhere that in the present stage of human evolution, when we find man as the product of an advanced civilisation still so little removed from the primitive savage that he can be roused to an emotional fury which justifies his conscience in the perpetration of the most abominable crimes, it is necessary to separate the nations, or communities, or peoples who may become subjects of such emotions, by a barrier which should be as effective as nature or art can make it.

Further, it is most important that as far as possible those communities which are under the same central sources of emotion should be included within the same ring fence. This emotional force is the problem which leads to such terrible complications in an unregenerate world. It may be a noble impulse, such as pure patriotism—that ideal love of country which seems to be natural to nearly every human race in existence—and that impulse may lead to seeking the ultimate good of country by expanding its borders. It has been, in the past, sometimes a religious impulse, although it is hard to believe that it will ever be so again; but far more often in the world's history has it been an impulse due to the pressure of a difficult existence forcing a people to expand from narrow limits into a wider sphere—a struggle for survival; or, more rarely, a simple bid for world power supported by the assurance of superior military strength. It does not generally happen that the sentiments or emotions which bind a people under the same Government are of spontaneous growth. On the contrary, patriotism, or religious sentiment, or the desire for expansion or conquest has usually to be carefully inculcated. It may be altogether a matter of education, and it is for the central Government of a nation to see to it that the education is sound. Germany is our great example. The German nation, bound together now with a solidarity which has rarely been equalled in history, has been most carefully prepared and educated for this war by the dissemination chiefly of the doctrine of British antagonism and British determination to

crush Germany out of national existence. Educated Germans are obsessed with the idea (most sedulously nurtured amongst them) that they are fighting a defensive war, just as some years ago the German soldier was equally obsessed with the idea that England was preparing to invade Germany. Add to this the magnificent assurances that German military strength is invincible, together with the vast promises of material gain, and there is no difficulty in accounting for the solid front maintained by the German people. When the teachings of this education have proved to be false, and truth begins to dawn on the minds of Germans, there is a possibility that the German Empire will dissolve, and Prussia, Bavaria and Saxony will drop back again to the position which they held prior to the Franco-Prussian War of 1870.

We are not in any way concerned with a redistribution of local boundaries within the limits of territories occupied by German-speaking peoples, so long as the wings of the Prussian eagle are effectively clipped, and Europe is once again free from the thralldom of an overbearing militarism. But there are certain aspirations which have been expressed freely by other nationalities which will render the task of European re-settlement elsewhere after the war one of great complexity and intense international interest. It is, indeed, this inevitable sequel of the war (no matter which side wins) which will live in history as the most important political problem in connection with frontiers that has vexed the civilised world for centuries. With the aspect of Europe, if this re-settlement takes place at German dictation, we have

nothing to do here. It is inconceivable that the command of the political situation after the war shall be so completely in German hands as such a resettlement would indicate, for that would mean the absolute crushing of the Allies in all fields of the campaign—an eventuality already out of sight. Nor need we concern ourselves vainly with speculation as to the division of the “bear skin” which has been parted and parcelled out so frequently already as to leave little more to be said until the bear is actually skinned; but bearing in mind the history of Central European frontiers and the indifference which has so often been displayed towards the attainment of boundaries politically and geographically sound, it may not be out of place to round up our observations on frontier construction generally with a few references to European possibilities in future. To repeat the two essential conditions of a scientific frontier, viz., that it should be a barrier in the first place, and that the position of that barrier should be selected with due reference to the will of the people chiefly concerned in the second, we may point out that if we consider those two conditions to be paramount in the formation of a scientific frontier, there are few scientific frontiers in Europe. In dealing with large waste spaces, or with wide territories occupied by primitive and barbarous peoples, the first of these conditions only is of paramount importance. The will of the people is not often consulted, and it might very well happen that there would be grave difficulties in the way of ascertaining that will. But in the realms of civilisation it is of primary importance that the boundary

settlement should result in as little of the rancour and antagonism of race idiosyncrasy as possible; for only in this way, only by the support of the majority of the divided peoples, can any such settlement conduce to the general welfare of the nations concerned and to the development of prosperity and friendly intercourse between them. The will of the people depends on a great many factors, some of which will certainly take for the time strong precedence, such as religious sentiment, national aspiration, or race patriotism, strong admiration for and personal attachment to some particular form of government, etc., etc., so that not only is there likely to be a strong current of opinion one way or another, but it is practically impossible to miss its intention. The process of ascertaining the will of the people is not really one which should require elaborate machinery. It has been suggested by one well-known writer that a plebiscite should be taken. I cannot imagine a more ingenious device for stirring up such remnants of international discord as may remain at the end of a dispute. Of course minorities will suffer—that is unfortunately the rule for minorities all the world over; but if there is no majority sufficient to make its will plainly to be distinguished and heard by those whose business it is to effect the frontier settlement, then it may fairly be assumed that such majority may be ignored in favour of those other and more important considerations which are bound up in the selection of a frontier which politically, geographically and from the military point of view is designed to be an effective barrier to aggression.

In other words, if political considerations which embody the various factors which make up the peoples' will are comparatively weak, then let us have a frontier which can at least claim the merit of being geographically strong. I have elsewhere endeavoured to explain what are the physical conditions which enable us to include a boundary in the category "scientific." Judging from practical experience, from historical evidence, and from the lessons of the present war, the first and most important consideration may be summed up as "command," *i.e.*, altitude. A mountain barrier is the most effective barrier that geography can offer, but failing the mountains, there is great value in lesser altitudes. If there are no hills there must at least be the divide or water-parting. If Alps and Pyrenees are not at our command, Carpathians are almost as effective. If Carpathians are wanting, the heights above the Meuse or even a few hills like "60" will prove most valuable assets in a protective line. Command, in these days of artillery dominance, is, indeed, all important. It may be said that this is a purely military view of the question, but it is not only the military view. There are other non-military considerations which render a distinct and unmistakable geographical line the most effective boundary—as I have endeavoured to prove elsewhere. We must not forget that we are proposing and purposing a *barrier*; and as such the great fact essential is adaptability to defence.

The complicated problem of the readjustment of European boundaries after the war has already

occupied the ingenuity of several able writers who can only suggest in outline certain modifications which will be probably claimed by those nationalities who may possess the right to put forward their claims on the basis of compensation for the losses sustained by active participation in the present war. In nearly every case the assumption is necessary that the result of the war will be in favour of the Allies, *i.e.*, Russia, France, Belgium, England, Serbia and Italy, who will have the right to dictate terms to Germany, Austria, Turkey, and Bulgaria. Such an assumption is prevalent at present. It may be more to the purpose to accept what is already well known of the wishes and aspirations of the nationalities concerned, and to see if by the light of history, or the dispositions of geography, there is reasonable possibility of a rearrangement that would be acceptable and tend to the maintenance of peace. Commencing with our own country, it is inconceivable that England will gain anything in Europe by the war. Her sea frontier has preserved her from invasion so far—and it will continue to preserve her. Beyond certain easily recognised advantages in the rectification of frontiers in her African colonies (especially in East Africa) and a dominant position in Mesopotamia, it would almost appear that England has been pouring out her treasure in blood and money for a sentiment and an ideal—the sentiment that her honour is concerned in the maintenance of weaker, but friendly, States, and her high ideal of Christianity and right.

The rectification of French frontiers involves the consideration of her eastern frontier only. The

Franco-Iberian and the Franco-Italian frontiers are geographically and politically strong; they might almost be called ideal frontiers, and there is no prospect of any question arising which would affect their permanence. On the north the Franco-Belgian frontier is of no very great importance. It is an unscientific and irregular line possessing no marked topographical or military features, and it exists rather as a relic of ancient antagonism between France and Spain than as a barrier between France and Belgium. The prospect of political dispute leading to war in this quarter may fortunately be regarded as remote. Doubtless the hopes of France are set on the recovery of the lost provinces of Alsace and Lorraine and a strong united expression of will on the part of the inhabitants of both those provinces is probable, and would undoubtedly justify a return to the Rhine as the eastern frontier of France. But the Rhine is no barrier from the military or political point of view. Its banks offer no serious means of defence, the population of the Rhine valley on either side the river being of the same ethnical type which spread down originally from Alpine regions. The western water-parting of the Rhine basin, where that water-parting is caused by the Vosges mountains, lends itself far better to the ideal of a frontier barrier and could readily be rendered impregnable by modern military engineering. To adopt the Vosges watershed would, however, amount practically to the surrender of Alsace, and as no equivalent to such a loss can be suggested that would lead to a stronger and more defensible barrier against Germany, the almost

inevitable result of a successful issue to the war will be the restoration of the status quo before the war with Germany of 1870.

Denmark has nothing to hope for except the financial results of her neutrality, which will doubtless be considerable. The recovery of the Danish-speaking province of Schleswig may be a political aspiration, but it will never be the result of the present war. Both Denmark and Holland will perchance be able to breathe more freely when the war is over, conscious of a menace of German domination which they have happily escaped; and with that, and with all the advantage of great increase of material wealth derived from a discreet use of neutral opportunities, they may well rest content. But Belgium—can anything be suggested which would render the frontier of Belgium more secure from aggression and which would strengthen her materially on her eastern borders? The present boundary of fifty miles or so which divides Belgium from Germany between Aix-la-Chapelle and the northern extremity of the Luxembourg still appears (from map evidence) to be wanting in most of those essentials which combine in a strong frontier. If it followed a line to the north-east from its present junction with Luxembourg for about twenty miles, and then was carried along the main water-parting stretching a little to the west of north to the Holland junction near Aix-la-Chapelle (Aachen), it would geographically be an excellent line for defensive purposes. The 500 square miles or so of German territory which would be included contain no towns of importance, and they would cover a

more or less direct line of communication between Aix-la-Chapelle and Luxembourg which would be of great value to the defensive capacity of the boundary. Apparently it is a sparsely inhabited district. As Luxembourg, to the south of the line, is indefensible on its eastern frontier, it would be necessary for Belgium to rectify her boundary by the occupation of more commanding positions on the right water-parting of the Ourthe basin and southwards to Arlon, so as to secure the complete command of routes crossing Luxembourg. The defence of Brussels and Antwerp would thus be shifted from the low line of Liège—Namur to the actual frontier of Belgium, where topographical conditions prevail which would give full effect to the defensive lines of the future, which will assuredly replace the system of permanent forts at intervals. This rectification of the Belgium line seems to me to be the most important problem of the future rearrangement of natural frontiers after the war.

The eccentricities of the present Italian frontier towards Austria are sufficiently obvious, and the process of straightening the line of northern frontier to the advantage of Italy and to the inclusion of Italian-speaking peoples at present outside her borders is one to which that country has already applied herself. In the event of the final success of that *entente* of which Italy is a member, it is unlikely that she will be content with less than her present efforts are designed to compass, and the geographical absurdity of the Trent valley salient from Austria will probably disappear with the acquisition of the

lower valley of the Isonzo and Trieste. Ample opportunity is afforded by the Dolomite Alps and the mountain system which encloses the western basin of the Adige for the selection of a boundary which (although it is bound to cross the Adige) will form an effective defensive barrier, nor will the safeguarding of the coastal route to Trieste prove a difficult problem so long as Italy preserves her navy.

It is in Central Europe that the great difficulties of readjustment will arise; the origin of those difficulties being based on the intermixture of nationalities which refuse to assimilate, each in its own scattered sphere adhering fiercely to the principle of racial unity. This intermixture again is chiefly due to the geographical conformation of a vast area of country which presents no natural features which might serve as a physical obstacle to mutual trespass. It would be easy to quote from history notable examples of the effect of the geographical distribution of mountains and plains in the maintenance of peace and the promotion of material prosperity. It would be found that the more effective the barrier the more permanent the nationality and the more certain the advantages of peaceful occupation. Not only do mountain barriers or other physical obstacles tend to concentrate a people's energies on the development of internal resources and peaceful industries, but they largely discount the necessity for the maintenance of armies and expenditure on war material. All this doubtless is mere truism, but it appears to be frequently overlooked in the making of political bargains between nations, and it leads to the conclusion that

physical geography should rank first as the basis of political agreements where territory is concerned, and that the distribution of races should be a secondary consideration. Where races antagonistic by heredity are so intermixed as is the case in Central Europe, there must be large tracts of borderland where the voice of the people as to their disposal could hardly be ascertained with any hope of arriving at any certain conclusion in respect to the will of the majority. The political principle of basing the States on nationality is easier to announce than to carry into effect when nationalities are so intermixed within political boundaries as they are in parts of Central Europe. A more reasonable hope of arriving at some solution of the difficult problem of dividing peoples in such a manner that within the limits of any one political ring fence there should exist a homogeneous nationality, might be derived from a process which should first of all involve the determination of the position of the ring fence, and then request the nationalities to retire into the domain assigned to them, or accept without further question a scheme of naturalisation which would actually and positively amalgamate them with the body corporate of the nationality they adopt. If South American republics such as Argentina or Chili can take emigrants from all nations of Europe and fashion them into one patriotic nationality, one in sentiment and one in heartwhole devotion to the call of duty when that call is insistent, it should not be beyond the power of the older Governments of European States to effect such assimilation in the course of time. If we take a

map of Central Europe and look at it from the point of view of a geographer who aspires to make use of the most adaptable geographical features to form the dividing lines or partitions between rival and antagonistic States, and then to create frontiers which shall carry with them an assurance of separating hostile interests and thereby of promoting peace amongst the nations, whilst at the same time disturbing the balance of territorial possessions only as far as possible in favour of those nations who have made the greatest sacrifices in blood and treasure to maintain their ideals, we are faced with a complicated problem. The greatest complexity perhaps is that presented by the problem of the future of Poland. Poland has suffered through the ages from her geographical position in Europe. Geographically balanced between Russia, Germany and Austria, Poland has never been other—never could be other—than a protected State safeguarded by one or more of her neighbours. Geographically she forms a sort of cockpit for Central Europe, a convenient centre for the settlement of disputes. With her enormous area of flat open plain, swampy rivers and extensive marshlands, she hardly possesses a single mile of boundary throughout a perimeter of at least 1,500 miles which can be regarded as efficiently defensive. Poland has ever been open to invasion from every side, and under such geographical conditions her political status as a nationality can only be assured by her more powerful neighbours. We need not enter into historical details at present. The greater part of Poland was lately Russian territory ; all that

rich and promising country known as Galicia was an Austrian colony ; much of her western borderland has been absorbed by Germany, and there is such an admixture of races in this western borderland that it is difficult to say whether there are more Poles in German territory than Germans in Poland. This is the inevitable result of a weak frontier and of a peaceful irruption of emigrants from either side. On the whole the Polish population dominates both in this indeterminate western borderland and in Galicia, and it is to the Poles as a national unit that we must look for that expression of opinion which should decide her future frontiers. Hereditary hatred of Russia is fast dying out in Poland, and the terrible lessons lately taught her during the conduct of the German invasion have induced a hatred of Germany in its place which no political promises appear to mitigate. Poland has no great reason to hate Austria, except on the general principle of detestation of alien rule—which is a natural principle all the world over. When Austrian troops retook Lemberg lately the welcome accorded them was quite possibly genuine. But it is obvious that whichever way the war may turn, Austria must accept her future policy from Germany, so that a nominal Austrian rule would mean real German domination. The will of the Polish people in deciding their future destinies would consequently set little resistance against such a result of the war as would make Russia the overlord of Poland on the political footing of a protected State. There is every hope that the measure of Home Rule accorded to Galicia by Austria would not only be

extended again to that much vexed land, but that the same, or even greater, autonomy would be granted to the whole of Poland, no matter to what limits her frontiers may be carried. Poland in short would occupy much the same political status as a protected native State in India, and we may hope, happily, with the same results. Under such conditions she might gain a boundary that is worth consideration. The Carpathians from Rumania to a point in the Carpathians south-west of Krakao would hedge Poland from Hungary effectually, and no better frontier could be desired. From near Krakao northward there might be (as several authors have already suggested) an inclusion of the Polish element in Germany which would carry the boundary far to the west of its present position. But in order to make the inclusion effective in the cause of future peace and mutual goodwill it would be necessary first of all to ascertain beyond doubt that there was such a considerable majority of Polish settlers in that part of Germany as to outweigh the will or the wishes of its German inhabitants, and then to secure a frontier that was physically superior to that already existing. We may assume that an autonomous and satisfied Poland would inevitably demand restoration of her ancient capital Krakao, and the head of the Vistula basin would certainly be included ; but from the point where the boundary would leave the Carpathian spurs to twist its way northward to the Lower Vistula it is difficult indeed to indicate a line which is physically superior as a boundary to that already existing between Poland and Germany. In

either case it is a weak boundary, and yet it is perhaps the most important of all the new frontier lines of international partition with which European Governments may have to deal hereafter, for it is the line of least resistance between Russia and Germany. At present the river Prosna carries that boundary between the head of the Vistula and the Warthe, and from the Warthe to the Lower Vistula near Thorn it is artificial and weak, passing through a low-lying land of lake and marsh. Yet weak as it is there is a difficulty about suggesting a better line further west. Some of the fiercest fighting of the war has been on the line of river front, the most determined stand of any that has been made on the Warsaw frontier being that of the Bzurka. It has not, however, been the rivers themselves that have proved so effective an obstacle, although the mud and the marshes with which they were bordered have sometimes contributed to strengthen them naturally, but usually the advantage of defence has been gained by positions of command slightly back from the rivers. This advantage of command, I repeat, is one of the important features of new war tactics which has been most impressed upon the military mind during the progress of the war. It is not necessarily a great command that is sought for—it may, indeed, be very slight. In the despatch from the Front published in the *Times* of July 13th, 1915, Sir John French refers to the historical “Hill 60” as being “only a hill to the eye of faith—no more than an earth bank from the crossing of the Ypres—Lille railway,” yet it gave such enormous advantages to its possessors that

thousands of lives were sacrificed to secure the position. We may be certain that no settlement will be satisfactory or permanent which does not sufficiently protect the eastern flank of Germany from Russian aggression, and this protection is only to be secured by a stronger defensive line of boundary. Such a line is not to be found by shifting it from one river to another. It should for military, if not for political reasons, follow the divide between the rivers. Small as may be the command thus gained it is most important, and, consequently, a line which followed the water-parting between the Oder and the Prosna or Warthe (after the junction with the Prosna) to the head of one of the small southern affluents of the Warthe, and then crossed the Warthe and the intervening divide to the elbow of the Vistula west of Thorn, would probably furnish the most promising features for a defensive frontier. It is, however, a matter for closer investigation than any small scale maps can render possible. It may be objected that this line would still leave a substantial Polish population on the German side. That, unfortunately, cannot be helped, but it may be pointed out that a wholesale alteration of frontiers is not so much to be desired as redistribution of population. It may be a difficult business to accomplish, but the people of any nationality, where they form a minority, should be brought into their own fold. Only in this way can any solution of the frontier problem hope to be permanent.

The diplomatic situation in the Near East is one which may well cause grave anxiety even should the

war terminate favourably to the Allies. It will be well, indeed, if the problem of securing a peaceful (if not permanent) settlement in such a hotbed of international jealousy and intrigue as the Balkan States can be solved without another war, which will assuredly arise should Rumania and Greece hold their hands and stand by with fresh forces ready to fight out terms for themselves, when the Greater Powers are paralysed by the results of a long, expensive and exhausting conflict.

The policy of those States appears to be that of watching and waiting—a policy of masterly inaction based upon the knowledge that no matter whether German and Turk or the Allies issue triumphantly from the war, no Great Power will be in a position to enter the field immediately in order to enforce a settlement with which it is not directly concerned. Still, there is evidence that both official and popular feeling in these States is gravitating towards intervention, and the terms on which they are prepared to take their part with the Allies are no longer disguised. Several writers have disposed of the question of redistribution of territory, with an apparent assurance that some greater Power than that of any of these States will be able to influence the final decision, and point the way to an adjustment, if not to enforce it, but it is difficult to see what that Power is to be. Like The Hague Convention it must be backed by the sword to be an abiding force, and neither England, France, Germany, Austria, Russia or Turkey will be much inclined for a fresh campaign, to settle Balkan disputes. Geographically there should

be no difficulty in the readjustment of national boundaries in such a form as to present a strong line of military defence anywhere south of the Danube, where Europe is broken continuously by mountain systems which offer innumerable opportunities for the selection of strong natural features.

In this very complicated business the chief problem—indeed, the basis of every scheme of readjustment of boundaries which has hitherto been put forward—is the repatriation of Serbia as a nation, and of the scattered groups which have expanded into strong communities outside the legitimate limits of their own nationalities, or who may have been annexed as aliens as the result of previous wars. The confusion of peoples in some districts of the Danube basin is such as apparently will defy any disentanglement. We find Germans, Magyars, Rumanians and Slovenes spreading irregularly on both sides the Theiss, south of Budapest. Serbians and Croats are patched about in small colonies up to Arad on the Maros (which joins the Theiss from Transylvania), and Greek colonies are to be found on the shores of the Black Sea. No matter what rearrangement of territory may be effected as the result of this war (or the next ?) centres of political trouble are bound to be left which cannot be dealt with in any conceivable general scheme for placing a ring fence round the people of any one nationality. It is far easier to point out the inevitable demands of the States concerned than it is to suggest a solution of the problem of meeting them. To begin with Rumania. Rumania wants all the country east of the Theiss between the Pruth

(north of Bukowina) and the Danube. This means half of Hungary and an important corner of territory in which Russia is interested. In Hungary doubtless there are good ethnical reasons for extending Rumanian sovereignty over Transylvania. Hungary is a State which calls for little sympathy both as an enemy in the present war and as a tyrant over smaller nationalities in times of peace. The ancient Magyar kingdom would practically become absorbed in Rumania. But the demand for Bukowina is not so easily justified, even if ethnical reasons could be adduced in support of it. It would shift the boundary from a good defensible line to a bad one, and immediately open the door for perpetual trouble with Russia. It would be a fatal defect on an otherwise sound frontier.

Bulgaria will doubtless consider that her participation in the conquest of Serbia justifies even greater demands. This will involve claims on Rumania, Serbia, Greece and Turkey. The restitution of the strip of territory acquired by Rumania in the north-west (Dobrudja) might be arranged without much difficulty in view of the larger extension of Rumania westward, but it is doubtful to what extent Bulgaria would thereby improve her frontier in that direction. As it now stands it is perhaps as weak between the Danube and the Black Sea as any frontier in Europe ; and it would be an improvement were it thrust back from too close a contiguity with the Ruschuk—Varna railway ; but geographically it would remain a non-effective frontier directly open to attack. From Greece, Bulgaria wants Kavalla, Drama and Serres,

the two latter districts lying north and west of the port of Kavalla. This again is not an extensive demand, although it is apparently met by Greece with a counter demand for a vast area in Asia Minor ; but Bulgaria's further claims in Macedonia must inevitably lead to trouble, nor do they seem to be supported by any ethnical consideration on the score of nationality. It is possible that there are some 20,000 Bulgarians scattered about Greece, but it is certain that there are far more Greeks (probably five times as many) scattered about Bulgaria or in the colonies of Burgas and Varna. The recovery of Adrianople and the extension of Bulgaria to the sea of Marmora depends on the continuance of friendly relations (none too secure) between Bulgaria and Turkey. It would seem reasonable to suggest that if Bulgaria wishes to advance her frontiers from the strong position she already holds on the Maritza river and north of Adrianople she should address herself without delay to the accomplishment of her purpose by a military occupation of Adrianople, and not trust too much to the unrealised results of a conflict in which she is taking little part at present. It is between Greece and Bulgaria probably that the crux of the political situation after the war will lie. The alleged claim of Greece as compensation for the cession of territory to Bulgaria in Thrace is remarkable—it is no less than that of the coast of Asia Minor from Mitylene to Cape Fineka, backed by a hinterland which is carried to Mt. Olympus eastward from the coast, from Mt. Olympus to Mt. Sultan, and thence by mountain ridges to the sea at Cape Fineka. This

embraces an area of not less than 50,000 square miles ; and effectually disposes of Smyrna as an alternative Turkish capital should Turkey lose Constantinople.

It leaves the southern seaboard of the Sea of Marmora unallocated to any State (presumably it is as a refuge for the Turks when driven out of Europe) and opens up the prospect of endless conflict between Greece and Turkey. Until Constantinople is actually in the hands of the Allies, it is perhaps premature to dispose of that capital, or to suggest an international future for the Bosphorus and Dardanelles.

The absurdity of Greek pretensions in Asia Minor is emphasised by Russia's advance westwards. At present she holds all Armenia, and it is but reasonable to expect that she will continue to hold that distressful country. The rich valleys of Anatolia are before her, and the uplands of Northern Mesopotamia, now that the way has been cleared to Bitlis and (on the Persian side) from Kermanshah. It is idle to speculate on the ultimate issues of this remarkable advance, but whether she finally occupies the Anatolian hills and cuts the line of communication between Constantinople and Mesopotamia (as seems probable) or not, it is clear that Turkey will be left but a fraction of her nearer possessions in Asia without any interference from Greece.

Serbia presents us with a less complicated solution of her possible claims after the war than any other of the Balkan States if only for the reason that she has borne a brave and brilliant part already in the great campaign, and will undoubtedly have the support of Europe in maintaining her claim to repatri-

ation. Also the Slav peoples are more concentrated and homogeneous than those of other States, and the geographical position of Serbia is included within strong boundaries supported generally by important natural features rendering her comparatively secure on all sides except perhaps on the north, where the unfortunate position of her capital, Belgrade, on a river boundary will ever be provocative of trouble, and practically led to her downfall. This fatal blot in administrative geography will probably be rectified if Serbia comes into her own again. It is generally assumed (there are, indeed, many assumptions necessary when forecasting the future of the Balkan States) that Serbia will preserve access to the sea at Salonica. This is most important, for the basin of the Morava, which practically includes all the most productive territory in Serbia (as well as in Bosnia and Herzegovina) is geographically cut off from the Adriatic by the conformation of the mountain regions between those States and the Adriatic. The long coastal State of Dalmatia, which flanks Bosnia and Herzegovina on the west, is divided from them by the effective wall of the Dinaric Alps. Across that rugged system no railway has yet been carried, and Dalmatia doubtless owes its independent existence entirely to the natural strength of her frontier. Throughout Montenegro and Albania the same trend of mountain ranges offers a series of natural barriers approximately parallel to the coast against approach to the Adriatic, and Serbia is badly placed for finding a sea outlet for her trade by any route but that of Salonica. Even Antivari, in Montenegro, offers no useful alternative

route, and Serbia is dependent on the Danube for an open trade highway. Were Serbia united with Bosnia and Herzegovina, she would then be in the position of an orthodox homogeneous Slav State with a great future before her. Croatia and Slovenia will probably play no important part in any scheme of resettlement, for there seems to be no strong reason for annexing Catholic Slavs to Serbia, or separating them from Austrian jurisdiction. In that case the present frontier of Bosnia on the north and west would become the frontier of a united Serbia; and thus with a frontier of strongly marked natural features, *i.e.*, the river Save and Danube on the north connected with the Dinaric Alps on the west, and the irregular mountain boundary which forms the eastern frontiers of Montenegro and Albania; with the Nidje Planina to the south-east (the Greek dividing line) and the Tsrkvena ranges overlooking Bulgaria, Serbia should be in a position to defy sudden or unexpected attack from any side. The weakest link in her chain of frontier is about Belgrade. The sooner she rectifies that weakness the better. The readjustment of the frontiers of her Balkan States thus generally indicated are, it appears to me, quite possible in any case short of the absolute and complete victory of Germany over the banded forces of the Allies; in which case Germany could impose her will to her own advantage on all Central Europe. No such complete victory is to be feared now that Germany has already weakened her power for aggression so greatly, even if Rumania and Greece remain neutral, waiting for the denouement of the war. In the event

of victory for the Allied forces, or even if neither side can claim complete and unalloyed success, the Balkan question must inevitably resolve itself into a problem which cannot differ greatly from that suggested, and the worst that can happen is that the three States, Bulgaria, Rumania and Greece, hold themselves in readiness to fight for its solution after the greater war is over.

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