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FRENCH INDO-CHINA

BY

A. COTTERELL TUPP, I.C.S., LL.D.

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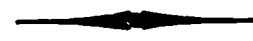

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FRENCH INDO-CHINA

PART I

INTRODUCTION AND GEOGRAPHY

1. Connection with Central Asia.

Sir Thomas Holdich, in introducing the lecturer, said: Dr. Cotterell Tupp is well known to the members of this Society for the very kindly and useful interest he takes in its finances. I do not know exactly how we should be able to do without him. This afternoon he is reading to us a paper on a subject about which we have heard very little of late either here or elsewhere —the position of the French in the East. He has collected his information from such varied and exceedingly comprehensive sources that I am quite sure that the compilation he has made as a result of his studies will be most interesting to us. We shall have the advantage of having put before us a vast amount of information which it must have taken Dr. Tupp months to collect.

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen, — It may have occurred to some of you that the connection between Central Asia and the Indo-Chinese peninsula is neither very obvious nor very intimate; and it may be asked why Indo-China should be the subject of a lecture at the Central Asian Society. The answer is that the connection between these two portions of Asia is both physical and ethnological. All the great rivers of the Ultrindian peninsula (which is the name I venture to suggest for the great mass of land which juts out to the south from the south-east portion

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TO VIMU
AMAGOTLAO

of Asia) have their origin in the eastern extremities of the Himalayan range.

Taking them from west to east, the Irawaddi, the Salwín, and the Mekong, all rise in the eastern highlands of Tibet near the borders of China. The Menam, the great river of Siam, does not begin its course till these ranges have sloped down into the mountains of the Shan States and of the Laotian Kingdom; but this, the Menam, is the only one of the four great rivers of the Ultrindian peninsula, which does not rise directly in the Central Asian mountain ranges. I will speak of the ethnological affinities of Central Asia and Ultrindia further on; it is enough to say now that there is little doubt that a large portion of the population of the northern part of the peninsula is of Central Asian origin, just as a large part of the southern portion is of Malayan origin.

2. The Name and Constituent Provinces.

And now as to the name. This great peninsula is composed of Barma on the west, Siam in the middle, and French Indo-China in the east, with the Malay States and Singapur in the extreme south. It is obvious that the name Indo-China is not appropriate to a country situated between India and China, and belonging to neither. Chryse the Golden and the Golden Chersonese are fanciful epithets and not names; whereas 'Further India' would appear to indicate that it was another India further east than the real India, but it is not India or Hindusthán in any sense, and the inhabitants are not Hindús; I therefore venture to recommend to you the name of *Ultrindia*, or the countries beyond India, as a good working name for this great peninsula as a whole.

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It is composed of the three great States—Barma, Siam, and Indo-China. In this lecture I have nothing to do with Barma and Siam, except in as far as they border on, and have political relations with, Indo-China ; and in the case of Siam, inasmuch as a great part, or nearly the whole, of the present French Indo-China was at one time under the rule of the Siamese, and has been annexed from time to time from that kingdom.

I shall afterwards give a short account of how and by whom the French conquests and annexations were made ; but in this geographical portion of my paper it is perhaps enough to say that Indo-China, as it now exists politically, is composed of five provinces :

1. *Tongking* in the north, next to China, and traversed by the Red River.

2. *Annam* along the eastern coast, from north to south, and wholly beyond or east of the great river Mekong, which traverses Indo-China from north to south.

3. Next to this on the west comes the great province of *Laos*, which stretches from the Chinese border in the north in lat. 23° to lat. 12° on the borders of Cambodia. Its western boundary is the great river Mekong throughout.

4. The fourth province is the ancient *Cambodia*, stretching from 14° N. to 10° N., and having the Siamese province of Battambang on the west. The river Mekong flows right through the middle of this province and of the remaining fifth province—

5. *Cochin China*, and empties itself into the sea south of Saigon in lat. 10°. Cochin China is the extreme southerly province which occupies the southern extremity of the great peninsula from lat. 12° N. to lat. 8° N., and includes all the mouths of the Mekong

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To these five provinces must now be added, since 1896, a great slice of Siam, extending from the Mekong westwards as far as its tributaries extend to the west. At first the French contented themselves with Annam along the eastern coast; then they gradually absorbed the whole of Cochin China and parts of Cambodia; and they finally annexed all the Laotian districts—*i.e.*, those between Annam and the great river Mekong; then they took a zone 25 kilometres wide to the west of the river, first making it neutral, and then annexing it; but in the last arrangement, which has now been sanctioned by England (in 1896), the whole country west of the Mekong and covered by its tributaries has been made over to the protection of France (Doumer, p. 44); and the boundary-line now runs roughly down the 100th parallel of east longitude, from the great bend of the Mekong at Nong-Khay in lat. 18° to near Battambang in lat. 13°. The French have now, therefore, in their possession the whole of the peninsula east of the 100th parallel—about 270,000 square miles—('Ireland,' p. 146); and the boundaries of their territory are: on the north, China; on the east, the Chinese Sea; on the west, a small extent of Barma and for the rest Siam; and on the south, the Gulf of Siam and the Chinese Sea. The French took possession of Battambang and Chentában (the port on the Gulf of Siam), and held them till quite recently; but an article by Dr. Morrison (the *Times* correspondent at Pekin) in the *Times* of May 19 states that Chentában has now been given up by the French to the Siamese. Battambang is now within the watershed of the Mekong, and does not, therefore, come within the agreement of 1896 with England.

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3. The Political Administration.

French Indo-China is governed, under the control of the French Colonial Office, by a Governor-General or Viceroy, who is usually appointed from those deputies or senators who have had colonial experience, or have distinguished themselves in debate on colonial subjects. The last but one was M. Paul Doumer, who is now President of the Deputies' Chamber, and who was in the running for the Presidency when M. Loubet resigned. M. Doumer has written a very large book on his government of Indo-China for five years, from 1897 till 1902, and I recommend those who wish to pursue the subject further to read his book, for though it is diffuse and might have been more systematic, yet it is a storehouse of facts; and it is the first, and, as far as I know, the only authoritative, account of Indo-China which is in a moderate compass, for M. Pavie's great work, 'La Mission Pavie Indo-Chine,' has already reached five volumes quarto, and is still unfinished, and I am afraid that a work of that size would daunt the courage of most of us.

The capital of French Indo-China is Saigon, which is in the east of Cochin China, and near the south-east extremity of the peninsula. The Governor-General generally lives in Saigon, and the headquarters and Government House are there; but he also resides at Hanoi, in Tongking, on the Red River in the extreme north. Under the Governor-General are the provincial Governors who live at the headquarters of provinces; Hanoi for Tongking; Hué on the east coast for Annam; Luang Prabang on the Mekong for Laos; Pnom-penh at the junction of the Mekong and the great lake for Cambodia; and Saigon for Cochin China.

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Under these, again, are the Préfets of what we should call 'divisions' in India—*i.e.*, groups of four or five districts each; and finally the Subpréfets of districts. I may here remark that there is nothing more difficult in the study of this great country than to ascertain accurately the proper names of places and of people. In all cases they are in languages with which the ordinary Englishman is little likely to be acquainted, such as Laotian, Khmer or Cambodian, Chinese, and Siamese. Then we have acquired our knowledge of these names chiefly from French sources, and you will be well aware how strong is the tendency in French to corrupt and mutilate all proper names of places and of persons. It is only since McCarthy in the employ of the Siamese Government has surveyed so much of the peninsula from 1883 to 1900 that many of the names have acquired a fixed form and an intelligible spelling. The Anglo-Burmese Boundary Commission of 1889-1890; the Anglo-French Mekong Commission of 1894-1896; and the Barma-China Boundary Commission of 1898-1900, have all added greatly to our knowledge of places and boundaries in Indo-China; but even now the official French map of M. Pavie differs seriously from the maps given in M. Doumer's 'Indo-China' and in Hugh Clifford's 'Further India'; and in the latter the spelling in the text constantly differs from that of the map.

The population of Indo-China is about 20,000,000, divided into—

Cochin China	3,000,000*
Cambodia	1,000,000
Laos	1,000,000
Annam	7,000,000
Tongking	8,000,000†

* Norman says 2,000,000. † See Doumer, p. 32.

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According to M. Doumer, these populations are fairly well ascertained; but, apart from making allowance for Oriental inaccuracy, it seems improbable that Laos and Cambodia, which are together more than double the size of Annam, should have only 2,000,000 against Annam's 7,000,000, particularly as Annam is extremely mountainous, while Laos is in the fertile valley of the great Mekong.

The present Indo-China is nearly conterminous with the old Empire of Annam when at the height of its prosperity. This empire included Tongking, Annam, and Cochin China; and Cambodia was tributary to it, but Laos seems never to have been completely conquered by it. Most writers agree that the inhabitants of these provinces were to a large extent of Malay origin, especially in the south; but in Laos there appears to be a different race, and in Tongking there are, of course, many Chinese. I can discover very little in M. Doumer's book on Indo-China about the native functionaries who work under the French officials, but in one place (p. 59) he says that the French have preserved the titles of the old Annamite officials, and that they are—

Huyen = Sous-Préfet;
Phu = Préfet;
Doc-fu-su = Deputy-Governor; and
Tong-doc = Governor;

but he adds that there are really no Annamite Tong-docs, or Governors, now, as the French have absorbed all these posts for themselves, and the titles are merely honorific.

Before I leave the subject of the administration, I may say a word as to the French view of their persistent expansion eastwards at the expense of Siam. They say

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that they have succeeded to the old Annamite Empire, which, as we have seen, included all the eastern provinces, including Cambodia and, to a partial extent, Laos, so that as long as the French restricted their claims to the country east of the Mekong they had some justification for their action ; but when they extended them to the 25-kilometre zone west of the Mekong, and then to the whole valley west of the Mekong, right up to its watershed with the Menam, it is difficult to see any moral right in the matter ; and they have now, I believe, occupied the purely Siamese districts of Battambang and Chentában, for which there is no excuse, as they promised to give them up if the valley of the Mekong was ceded to them, but the *Times* of May 19 says Chentában has been given up again. Of course, we have no right to throw stones, for we have taken the whole of Barma by no better right, and we have even encroached on Siamese territory in the Malayan Peninsula, but I believe we have never annexed any portion of Siam proper. Our Barmese borders march with Siam for 900 miles, and with Laos for 100 miles, or altogether 1,000 miles ; but we have as yet had no serious disputes with either France or Siam about our boundaries in these regions ; indeed, we surrendered to France portions of the Shan States on the Laotian border which we might very well have kept for ourselves, and I am not sure that we shall not some day regret having done so.

4. Physical Geography.

From the southern face of the Continent of Asia there project three great subcontinental peninsulas ; beginning from the west, they are, first, Arabia, then India, and lastly Ultrindia. The Indian and Ultrindian

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peninsulas are connected in the extreme north, where Bengal and Assam join on to Upper Barma. To the North of Assam and of Upper Barma the eastern extensions of the great chain of the Himalayas form stupendous mountain barriers between them and Tibet and China; and still further east, in the Chinese province of Yunnan, great spurs of the Himalayas stretch away southward till they divide Upper Barma from the Laos States, and, being continued in smaller ranges still further south, they divide Barma from Siam, and stretch right down the whole length of the Malay Peninsula. In the east of Yunnan they stretch down into Tongking, and then, forming the eastern edge of the peninsula, constitute the range of mountains which traverse Annam from north to south and form the backbone of Indo-China. Between the range on the west, which goes down to the Malay States, and the range on the east, which traverses Annam, lie the fertile valleys of the Mekong and the Menam, which form the countries of Laos, Siam, and Cambodia.

It is these great ranges and the southern spurs of the Himalayas which determine the course of all the great rivers of this peninsula, for all of them, except the Menam, rise in the Yunnan Mountains, which are prolongations of the Himalayan range. Taking them from west to east, the Irawádi, the Salwín, and the Mekong all rise in the north of Yunnan, not far from one another. The Irawádi flows down through Upper and Lower Barma to Rangoon, and discharges itself into the Gulf of Martaban; the Salwín flows through Yunnan, Upper and Lower Barma, to Maulmain, and also discharges itself into the Gulf of Martaban, not far east of the Irawádi. The great Mekong, the mightiest of them all, rises far away in the north of Yunnan, traverses the

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whole width of that province, and then divides Upper Barma from Laos, and Siam from Laos, and Annam from Cambodia, and passing through the centre of Cambodia and Cochin China, it debouches by many mouths into the South China Sea. It is roughly 1,800 miles long from Yunnan to Cochin China. It forms the great waterway through Indo-China, dividing Laos from Cambodia and Siam. It is really navigable only for 300 miles, up to Stung-treng, in Cambodia, where there are formidable rapids; but French gunboats have pushed on past the rapids nearly up to the great bend in lat. 18°, where the Mekong turns south after a long easterly course.

I need not deal in detail with any of the other great rivers, as they flow through Barma and Siam, and do not affect French Indo-China; but one other river which flows throughout the whole length of Tongking must be mentioned—viz., the Red River, which has become famous as the scene of many of the fights between the French and the Chinese and Tongkingese. This river rises in the Yunnan Mountains, west of Yunnan city, and flows down to the borders of Tongking south-easterly at Lao-kai; thence it flows south-east throughout Tongking, and, passing the capital, Hanoi, it empties itself into the Gulf of Tongking.

I must not weary you with further details of the physical geography of this great and little-known country; but, before concluding this section of my subject, I may perhaps draw your attention to the general construction of the whole country, and to the wonderful way in which it is extending its whole area. It begins at its highest on the borders of Yunnan, in China, and slopes gradually downwards, as is shown by the course throughout it of the great river Mekong, to

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the South China Sea and the Gulf of Siam, and in the north it slopes eastwards to the Gulf of Tongking. The consequence is that the Mekong, with all its innumerable tributaries, the Menam in Siam, and the Red River in Tongking, all bear down to the sea immense quantities of silt, which is derived from the higher ground, and is constantly deposited in the sea, near the embouchures of these three rivers. The land is therefore ever encroaching on the sea, and nearly all of Cambodia and Cochin China must have been formed in modern times, geologically speaking, while a great part of their southern borders have been created within human, if not within historical, periods.

There is in Cambodia a great lake, the Tonle-Sap, which is at present 120 miles from the sea, and which communicates with the Mekong near its mouth. This great lake in the rainy season covers hundreds of square miles, and occupies a considerable part of Cambodia, and there is every reason to believe, from the physical geography of the region and from the great ruins of Angkor Wat, which are situated near the lake, and which I will describe later, that this lake was at one time quite close to the sea, and that, at an earlier time still, the sea extended up to the mountains which are 100 miles north of it.

The immense deposit of silt and the gradual encroachment of the land are further proved by the persistent and constant silting up of the Gulf of Siam; it is shallow everywhere, and the northern part has got much shallower within historic times. It is possible, therefore, to look forward to a time, no doubt historically remote, but still geologically not far distant, when the Gulf of Siam will be completely silted up — in its northern part, at least—and when the Malay Peninsula

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will be joined on to the west coast of Cambodia by dry land of the deltaic aspect, which we now see in Cochin China and in the south of Siam.

5. The Railways and Communications.

As you will easily imagine, all the railways in Indo-China date from a period subsequent to the French conquest, and they are not as yet numerous or very extensive. They all start from one of the three capitals, Hanoi in Tongking, Hué in Annam, and Saigon in Cochin China. There are no railways as yet in the provinces of Cambodia and Laos. There is a projected railway from Bangkok, the capital of Siam, to Hué, the capital of Annam, right across the peninsula in about the 15th degree of latitude. The first portion of the railway, as far as Korat, will be Siamese; and is, I believe, already constructed; but the portion from the Siamese border to Hué is not yet made, and will be a work of years; as it traverses part of what was Siam, and the whole width of Laos and Annam, besides crossing the great Mekong where it is a mighty river.

Beginning in the south, the railways in Cochin China are a short line from Saigon south-west to Maitho, on one of the mouths of the Mekong — this is about 50 miles long. The other railway runs north-east from Saigon, and is constructed with some gaps up to Hué, the capital of Annam. From that place there is another gap of 200 miles, and then it is complete into Hanoi, the capital of Tongking. From Hanoi there is a railway for nearly 200 miles up to the Chinese frontier at Lao-kai; this is intended to be prolonged up to Yunnan city, the capital of Yunnan; and, if feasible, on to the Yang-tse, the great river of China. The French have found the

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Red River, which runs parallel to this railway, entirely unfit for navigation, and they have therefore devoted all their efforts to creating railway communication with Yunnan, and so drawing off the trade of South-West China into Tongking instead of into Barma; but from what Mr. Colquhoun says of the greater fertility of Western Yunnan, it seems probable that the greater part of the Chinese trade will always go westward, either viâ Bhamo and Momein, or by Mr. Colquhoun's route through the Shan States further south. At this last point China is nearer to the sea than anywhere else in the south-west, and it is quite possible that the route parallel with the Salwín River, and coming out at Martaban or Maulmain, will be *the* trade route of the future. The south-west corner of Yunnan is as near to Akyab as it is to Maulmain, and it might be expected that trade would go to Akyab; but in this mountainous country the trade routes are bound to go north and south parallel to the rivers, and not east and west across the valleys and at right angles to the rivers, as commercial intercourse is practically impossible in this direction. From a telegram that has been recently sent from M. Beau, the present Governor-General of Indo-China, it appears that he expects that the railway from the north frontier at Lao-kai towards Yunnan city will be finished to Mengtse, about half-way to Yunnan, in three years' time; so we have still time to begin our railway from the south, and to penetrate Yunnan through the Shan States.

Besides railways, the only other communications in Indo-China are the two great rivers, the Mekong and the Red River, whose courses I have already described; both of them are full of rapids and obstructions, and really only afford navigation for boats and small vessels

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except for a certain distance from their mouths. Large vessels come up the Mekong to Stung-treng, and up the Red River to Hanoi ; but beyond these points navigation is practically confined to boats, though I am informed by the late Lieutenant-Governor of Barma that the French now have gunboats in the Upper Mekong, near Luang Prabang.

There is one other route of commerce which must be mentioned—viz., the great lake of Tonle-Sap, and the River Mesap, which joins it to the Mekong. The lake itself is about 120 miles long in the dry season and from 5 to 20 miles broad, and in the wet season it expands into a veritable sea, stretching from Sisophon in Siam to Pnom-penh, the capital of Cambodia, or 250 miles long and 70 miles wide from Angkor Thôm to Pursat. This river and lake give communication between all places on their banks and all those on the Mekong, and afford a trade route between Siam on the west and Cambodia and Cochin China on the east. As regards the trade of Indo-China, I shall not weary you with statistics, but a few facts show the immense costliness of the colony to the French nation. It cost the French £600,000 to build the railway from Saigon to Maitho on the River Mekong, which is under 50 miles, or £12,000 a mile (Candler, p. 161), and yet it has never been of any real use to trade. It is reckoned that the French have spent £19,000,000 in order to dispose of £2,500,000 worth of products; and Mr. H. Norman, M.P. ('Far East,' p. 133), reckoned that Tongking had cost the French taxpayer £4,881 a day, *for every day he has had it.* Everything is subsidized—the chief towns, the steamers, the papers, the opera, the hotels, the merchants, and everyone ; and the cost of this may be imagined. Of course, protection is the rule everywhere

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in a French colony, and heavy duties are levied on all articles imported, which restricts trade, and which has prevented even the French themselves from having anything but a small share—about a quarter—in the total imports (Ireland, p. 150).

The total area of Indo-China is 200,000 square miles, or rather was before the annexation of Eastern Siam. It must be now at least 250,000 square miles, if this latter be considered as finally annexed to France. Mr. Ireland states it at 270,000 square miles (p. 155). Up to 1896 Indo-China cost France about £33,000,000; in 1897 M. Paul Doumer began his financial reforms, and by 1902 he had made the receipts and expenditure balance, and from 1902 to 1906 Indo-China has repaid to France about £2,000,000 as military expenses. How M. Doumer managed to effect this miraculous change I cannot say; for he seems to have been spending freely on public works, etc., all the time; and, having had some experience of Oriental accounts, I must confess that some doubts of the exactitude of the recent Indo-Chinese budgets have crossed my mind. These doubts are confirmed by the opinion of one of the most competent of Frenchmen, M. Leroy Beaulieu, who says, 'Our colonial official statistical documents incessantly contradict one another' (quoted by H. Norman, p. 127).

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PART II

DISCOVERY AND HISTORY

6. Exploration before the French Conquest and Early History.

From the dark and distant ages, from the dim and obscure twilight of primeval times, a faint glimmer of light here and there reaches us in which we see the peoples of what we now call Asia and Europe existing as nomad tribes, scattered over the sparse and infrequent oases of semi-cultivation, which were interspersed at rare intervals among the deserts, the swamps, and the forests of the age, when man was but little more than one of the races of animals which roamed o'er the face of the earth. Distances which are now traversable in days were then immeasurable both in time and in hardship, and presented the most formidable obstacles to intercourse between tribes who were even a few hundred miles apart. In all the vast extent of space from the Arctic regions to the Black Sea there could have been but little intercourse between Asia and Europe. Any intercourse which did exist was confined to Caucasia, the southern shores of the Black Sea, Asia Minor, and Syria. To these countries, for unnumbered ages, all the commerce which took place between east and west was restricted. The earliest empires of which we know anything grew up in that south-western corner

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of Asia which we now call Persia, Mesopotamia, Asia Minor, and Syria, and it was not till a few centuries before Christ that the Greek races formed States which exercised any influence in Asia.

The first influence of Europe on Asia of which we have any detailed records was that of Alexander of Macedon; the first influence of Asia on Europe was that which filtered through Asia Minor to the western coast, and gave to Ionia and the islands of the Levant that Oriental tinge which has characterized them for many centuries.

Of all the nations and countries of Asia there is not one which took longer in becoming known to the European peoples, and which was more completely left undescribed, than Ultrindia. Right up to the middle of the nineteenth century only the coasts of the Ultrindian peninsula were known, and it was not until Henri Mouhot, François Garnier, and Auguste Pavie made their adventurous journeys up the great Mekong River, and throughout the provinces of Laos and Tongking, that we really knew anything of the interior of Indo-China. Far away, even in the centuries before Christ, vague rumours of a land beyond India which was yet not China grew and spread, but no certain knowledge was attained; and so late as Pomponius Mela, in 43 A.D., the earliest definite mention occurs of two headlands beyond the mouths of the Ganges; but he seems to have thought that the continent of Asia ended here, and that there was nothing beyond these Capes.

About 70 A.D. the author of the 'Periplus of the Red Sea' (one of the first contributions to geography) visited nothing further east than the Malabar coast in India, and thought that Chryse was an island.

The next distinct mention is by Ptolemy, about

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A.D. 130. Ptolemy describes, and enters in his map, a large peninsula, jutting out south from the continent of Asia, and situated east of the mouths of the Ganges; and he is, therefore, the first who defines Ultrindia in any way, and even he is quite wrong as to the shape of it. During these first centuries after Christ it was called Chersonesos Aurea, and was believed to be the land from which Solomon obtained his gold. M. Pavie still supports this view, but it is extremely improbable. After Ptolemy there is a long interval till Cosmas, the monk, in about 550 A.D., describes the sea-route to China, and dwelt on the necessity of turning north after getting round Ultrindia. He was the first to get rid of the idea of a great southern continent south-east of Ultrindia.

After this the Muhammadan traders and adventurers appear on the scene, and in 850 and 920 A.D. there are books describing the sea-route to China by Sumatra, the Malay Peninsula, Cambodia, and Canton, but they are of the roughest description, and give no details about Ultrindia (Clifford, p. 20). Ibn Batuta returned from his travels about 1347, but he tells us nothing about Ultrindia.

About 1300 A.D. Marco Polo returned, probably from Amoy, to the Persian Gulf by the Straits of Malacca, but he does not describe Ultrindia or seem to know anything about it, though he proves that the sea-route to China was well known and much travelled by that time. Friar Odoric, who lived from 1286 to 1331, travelled through Sumatra, Java, and Borneo, but adds little to our knowledge. For more than two centuries after this we have no further travels in South-East Asia; and it was not till 1500, after Vasco da Gama had rounded the Cape and brought the Portuguese into

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Eastern Asia, that we begin again to hear of the lands east of India.

The Hindus and Muhammadans, who had in their turns converted many, if not most, of the natives of the country south-east of India, never attempted *conquests;* but the Portuguese began at once to acquire territory, and the first expedition was to Malacca in 1508, under Lopez de Siqueira. In 1511 the great Dalboquerque himself sailed against Malacca, and after a siege took it; and though it passed to the Dutch and then to the English, it never returned to the native power after that, and was thus the first *permanent* European settlement in the Ultrindian peninsula. Dalboquerque sent one Fernandez as an ambassador to Siam, and that was the first European intercourse with that kingdom. Before leaving for India in 1512, he sent Dabreu to Borneo, Celebes, and other islands, and this was the beginning of the Portuguese dominion further east than Malacca. Dalboquerque died in 1515, and by that time the Portuguese had made good their hold of Malaya and the islands.

In 1526 the Portuguese annexed the Moluccas (Geram, Amboyna, etc., on the equator just west of New Guinea), and the Spaniards began to appear in the east, though they were hampered by the decree of the Pope giving the east to Portugal and the west to Spain; but the defeat of the Armada opened the way in 1588 to the English and the Dutch, and they now appeared upon the scene from about 1600 (Clifford, p. 81).

Still, the Portuguese maintained their superiority for some years, and it was not till almost 1630 that their power declined; and first the Dutch and then the English obtained the supremacy. The first Englishman to reach Barma was Robert Fitch, in 1586, but before

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this, in 1548, the Portuguese had helped the King of Pegu against Siam, and he flourished till 1600, when his kingdom was conquered by the people of Arakan and Tunghú. In 1613 the King of Ava obtained the ascendancy over all Barma, and this lasted down to our own conquests in 1852 and 1885.

There was a colony of Portuguese in Siam from 1540 to 1636, and the first exploration of the coasts of Indo-China was made by them in 1540-1541, under F. Mendez Pinto. He touched at Pulo Kondor, an island off Cape Cambodia, the south-east cape of Indo-China, and then at one of the mouths of the River Mekong; thence he sailed up the coast of Annam, and crossed to the island of Hainan, and then visited Tong-king. This is the first European exploration of Indo-China, and was made while the Portuguese were still supreme in the East. The Portuguese then settled in Cambodia as they did in Siam, and they discovered the great lake Tonle-Sap and the ruins of Angkor Wat about 1570. About 1580 the Frenchman Louvet visited the delta of the Mekong, and was the first of his race to set foot in Indo-China.

The first Englishman to arrive in Ultrindia, and to dispute the mastery of the Portuguese was James Lancaster,* who afterwards commanded the first British East India Company's fleet. He reached Sumatra and Penang in 1592, and there captured several Portuguese ships. He was forced to return to Ceylon and thence to England by sickness among his crews. In 1596 the first Dutch East India Company's fleet reached Sumatra and Java, and traded at Batavia. On December 31, 1599, the British East India Company's charter was

* He was knighted by Elizabeth afterwards (Knight's 'Dictionary of Biography').

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granted, and the first English fleet sailed for the Far East on February 16, 1600. Lancaster, who was in command, reached Sumatra in June, 1600, and traded there with Achin, and took some rich Portuguese prizes. He left a factor and eight men at Bantam, and this was the beginning of the East India Company's *trade in the East.*

In 1605 the Dutch took the Molucca Islands of Amboyna and Tidor from the Portuguese, and in 1641 they took Malacca and became the leading European nation in Malaya and the islands. In 1682 the Dutch drove the English out of Java, but they remained in Sumatra, and in 1795 the English took Malacca and retained it after the Treaty of Vienna in 1824, exchanging it for Bencoolen, in Sumatra. They thus became established on the Ultrindian peninsula. In 1786 the English leased Penang, and in 1798 they purchased the province Wellesley. In 1819 Sir Stamford Raffles obtained the cession of Singapur from the Sultan of Johor. In 1871 we ceded our rights in Sumatra to the Dutch in return for their abandonment of all rights in Malaya, and in 1874 we extended our protection over all the native States of the Malay Peninsula, south of the Siamese border, and thus became possessed of all the southern part of Ultrindia.

I may say a few words about Siam, as much of it is now Indo-China. In 1634 a Dutch post was established in Siam, and trade went on for many years till in 1740 the Dutch finally withdrew. About 1650 the Greek, Falcon, who had established himself at Bangkok, entered the service of the Siamese Government, and in 1665 became Prime Minister; but after introducing the Jesuits, he was murdered with them some years later.

In 1821 John Crawford was sent by the English on

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an embassy to Bangkok and to Hué, in Annam, and this seems to have been our first intercourse with Indo-China. Even then he found a Frenchman established at Saigon, a M. Diard, and French influence was already predominant at the Court of Annam at Hué, although the French did not attempt to acquire territory till 1858. Both the Dutch and the East India Companies established factories in Indo-China soon after 1600, and in 1616 the English had a factory at Pulo Kondor, but it was abandoned soon afterwards. In 1635 the Dutch East India Company founded a factory in Cochin China, and began the first exploration of the Mekong. In 1641 the Governors sent a factor up the Mekong to Vien Chan, but the Dutch soon after abandoned their settlements in Cochin China. After the Dutch left, the Portuguese remained in Cochin China, and exercised a good deal of influence till, in about 1700, they were all murdered, and the Portuguese never returned. French influence increased, and in about 1770 the Bishop Pigneau de Béhaine built a church at Saigon, and in 1787 took the King's son to Paris, and a treaty with France was made. It was on this treaty that the French afterwards based their rights to Cochin China, though they did nothing at the time, and the country was not ceded to them. Many Frenchmen returned with Béhaine to Cochin China, and they helped the King to conquer Annam and Tongking. Béhaine died in 1789, but the King retained all three kingdoms for twenty years, and encouraged the settlement of Frenchmen till his death in 1820. In 1824 his successor persecuted and expelled the French, and in 1851 a second massacre of missionaries took place. In 1857 Bishop Diaz was murdered, and Cochin China was invaded, and finally, in 1860, it was ceded to France, and the modern history of Indo-China commenced.

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In 1859 a French protectorate was established over Cambodia, and a few years later a rebellion broke out, and the King Norodon was re-established on the throne by French arms, since which time Cambodia has been really a French province.

To turn to Tongking, the last of the present French provinces. A Dutch factory existed there from 1637 to 1700, but was then abandoned. Tongking was conquered by the Empire of Annam in 1788, and remained a part of that Empire till after Dupuis' exploration of the Red River, which led to the French interfering, and it was annexed after a long struggle lasting from 1874 to 1888.

We have now traced, in brief, the earlier history of all the States of the Ultrindian peninsula, and I now wish to give you some account of the explorations of the three great Frenchmen, Mouhot, Garnier, and Pavie, which really led to the annexation by France of all Indo-China and of the eastern portion of Siam, which had never belonged to the Empire of Annam.

7. French Exploration and Conquest—Mouhot—Garnier—Pavie.

Henri Mouhot's is the most pathetic story of the three, for Garnier died fighting bravely in Tongking, and Pavie survived to write his great book and to compile the map which you see before you, while Mouhot died of fever all alone at Luang Prabang, the capital of Laos, with no friends near him except the faithful servants, who preserved all his property and sent his journals and specimens to Bangkok, whence Dr. Campbell forwarded them to Jersey to his family.

Mouhot was born in France in 1826, and was first a

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teacher in Russia and France, and then took to photography as a livelihood and natural science as a hobby (Mouhot, p. 20). On the outbreak of the Crimean War in 1854 he returned to France, and travelled with his brother in Germany, Italy, and Holland, always photographing. In 1856, having married an Englishwoman, he settled in Jersey as a professor ; but a book on Siam excited his desire to explore, and he left England on April 27, 1858, and arrived in Bangkok on September 12. He first went up to Ayuthia, the old capital of Siam, and into the mountains beyond, but he had to return, and then started to explore Cambodia and Cochin China. He went down the coast to Chentában and all through the islands to Kamput ; thence he travelled up country to Pnom-penh, the capital of Cambodia. He sailed through the whole length of the great lake Tonle-Sap, and visited the great temples at Angkor Wat and Angkor Thôm, which will be described later on ; he then proceeded north of Battambang and through the mountains to Bangkok. From Pnom-penh he had visited the savage Stien tribes to the east, and lived among them for some time on the borders of Annam.

After resting for a time at Bangkok, he started for Laos and the north-central part of Indo-China. He went by Mount Phrabat and Korat (where the railway now ends), and turning due north he traversed utterly unknown and unexplored country, right through the heart of Laos, up to Paklai, on the River Mekong. Thence he went up the river to Luang Prabang, the capital, and there died of fever, although he had never suffered from it in all the marshy countries of the south. He died on November 10, 1861, and in three short years he had explored the whole of Cambodia and Laos and a great part of Cochin China and Siam. He was an

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enthusiastic naturalist, and made great collections of birds, insects, and shells. He died just when he might have hoped to succeed in getting through to Tongking, and so to complete the circle of his exploration (Mouhot, p. 25).

The last three entries in his diary are: 'October 18.—Halted at H——'; 'October 19.—Attacked by fever;' 'October 29.—Have pity on me, O my God . . .' and then silence. His servants buried him in European fashion, and carried all his property to Bangkok. His journals were preserved and published in 1864.

FRANÇOIS GARNIER was a very different type of man. Mouhot was a scholar, professor, and naturalist, exploring only in order to obtain his beloved specimens; but Garnier was the fiery and ambitious explorer, administrator, and soldier, who explored in order to find new countries for his beloved France to annex, and that he might rise higher in her service himself. Garnier was born in 1839, and was a naval officer. He began with the most violent hatred of England, and in youth laid plans for its total destruction through a league of young men, which, of course, came to nothing. Later in life, when he visited India, he changed his views completely, and praised our administration enthusiastically. He proved the truth of his conversion by marrying an English wife.

Garnier went out to China in 1860. Saigon had been captured in 1859, and when the war with China was over Garnier arrived in Saigon with Admiral Charnier in February, 1861. Charnier raised the siege of Saigon, and took Maitho, and by October all Cochin China was subdued.

Garnier returned to France, but in June, 1863, he went back to Cochin China, was appointed an Inspector of Native Affairs, and was made District Officer of

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Saigon. Here he first definitely planned his explorations, and became fired with the possibilities of the great Mekong. He urged them strenuously, and at last, in June, 1866, an expedition was sanctioned, but he, at twenty-seven, was thought too junior to command it, and Captain Doudart de la Grée, a post-captain, was appointed the leader. Garnier was second in command, and was the geographer and surveyor. Four other French officers accompanied the expedition, and they started in June, 1866. They went up the Mekong to Pnom-penh, and up the great lake Tonle-Sap. They landed and visited the famous ruins of Angkor Wat, and went on to Siam-Rep.

In July the De la Grée expedition began its ascent of the Mekong. On the 9th they had to abandon their gunboats. They soon reached the rapids of Sombor, and Garnier saw that his hopes of the Mekong being navigable right up to China were quite untenable. On July 21 they reached Stung-treng, and thence ascended the Mekong by degrees, exploring the streams which fell into it. By September 11 they reached Bassak, on the borders of Siam, and here they remained till Christmas; but Garnier made an excursion back to Stung-treng, and found the whole country south of that in rebellion. The trade from the Mekong only goes south to the delta, and Saigon from as far up as Bassak. North of that it goes west through Korat to Bangkok.

While the main expedition halted at Ubon, Garnier made his famous exploration south by Sankea to Angkor Wat, and he arrived at Siam-Reap on January 29, 1867, and at Pnom-penh a week later. He got his mails and instruments, and returned to Ubon on February 26, and to Uten on March 10, whither the expedition had proceeded from Ubon. He explored 1,000 miles, twice

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passed through the rebel lines, fixed many landmarks, and proved himself an explorer of the first rank.

On March 24 they reached Nong-kai. The ancient capital of Laos, Vien-chau, was near this ; it was taken and destroyed by the Siamese in 1820.

The expedition followed the great bend of the Mekong westwards, and reached Paklai in April, 1867, thus crossing Mouhot's route. On April 29 they arrived at Luang Prabang, the capital of Laos. There they found the grave of Henri Mouhot, and erected a monument over it. In 1836 General McLeod had penetrated to the Mekong by Zimme and Kiang-tung, in lat. 21°, and he reached a point higher up the Mekong than Garnier did, as the latter had to turn off to the east. McLeod tried to penetrate to Yunnan, but failed, and returned through the Shan States to Maulmain ; he was, however, the first European to visit the Upper Mekong.

Garnier and his companions then went on up the course of the Mekong. They spent all July, August, and September pushing slowly up the river, and crossed the border into Chinese territory. There, on October 8, they left the Mekong finally, to their great regret. At last, after eighteen months of the most arduous exertion, and exposed to perils of all kinds, they reached the first Chinese city of Szemao in Yunnan, and, as Garnier himself says, they were the first Europeans ever to enter China from the south and from Indo-China. They reached Yunnan city in December, and were well treated there. The Governor gave them 5,000 francs, but refused to allow them to proceed to Talifu, as they wished to do, in order to trace the Mekong to its source. They left Yunnan on January 8, 1868, and almost at once De la Grée fell ill of fever, and sent off Garnier to try to reach Talifu. Garnier crossed the southern

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branch of the Yang-tse-Kiang, and in March he entered Talifu ; but the Governor ordered him back at once, and he left in two days. Talifu was the capital of the Muhammadan rebels, who were then supreme in North Yunnan.

In April he got a letter informing him of the death of De la Grée, who had died on March 12. On April 5 he disinterred De la Grée's body, and carried it with him northwards till he reached Su-chau on the Yang-tse, and thence took boat down it to Hankau on May 27. Thus ended one of the most adventurous explorations which has ever been made, and the first which not only traversed Indo-China from south to north, but penetrated Yunnan right up to the Yang-tse, and returned by that river to Shanghai. They reached Saigon ou June 28, after two years and one month's absence. The greater part of the credit is due to Garnier—the idea was his, and he did nearly all the mapping and surveying, besides being alone in the dangerous expedition to Talifu ; but De la Grée's tact and conciliatory ways smoothed the path of the mission. Garnier returned to Europe, and wrote an elaborate account of his mission, which was published just before his death. He then went back to Tongking, and the next we hear of him is that he died fighting bravely at Hanoi which he had seized. Garnier was sent to Hanoi, in November to arrange the disputes of Dupuis, a French trader and adventurer, with the mandarins. Dupuis had crossed Yunnan from the Yang-tse to Tongking, and was trying to carry back a cargo of salt to Yunnan city ; the mandarins refused to allow Dupuis to proceed. Garnier declared the Red River open to all, and war was declared. Garnier seized the citadel of Hanoi on November 20, and gradually got possession of all Lower Tongking, but the Tongkingese

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called in the help of the Black Flags from China, and Garnier was killed in a sortie from Hanoi on December 21, 1873.

I now come to the third of our great explorers, AUGUSTE PAVIE; and afterwards I must say a word about Prince Henri d'Orléans, who was the first man to cross from Yunnan into Annam. Pavie began in the Siamese service and surveyed the telegraph line from Bangkok to Battambang. At the end of 1885 Pavie proceeded to Luang Prabang, the capital of Laos; in 1887 he made a journey from there into Tongking, and in 1888 was joined by two Frenchmen, Captain Cupet and Lieutenant Nicolin. In 1888-1889 Cupet surveyed the whole country south and east of the Mekong, right down to Cambodia, and across the Mekong to the Menam. In 1893 he was appointed to edit M. Pavie's great map, which is before you. Captain de Malglaive, M. Harmand, and Captain Rivière all worked at surveys of Laos and Tongking under or with Pavie from 1888 to 1894, and their labours formed the groundwork of M. Pavie's great work, 'Mission Pavie Indo-Chine,' in five volumes quarto (1902), and of the large scale map of Indo-China, which you see before you, and which is a monument of industry.

PRINCE HENRI D'ORLÉANS, after exploring a great part of Central Asia and Tibet, started in January, 1895, to cross from Tongking through Yunnan to Assam. He went up the Red River to Lao-kai, the frontier town; he then crossed the frontier to Manhao, and kept along the Red River through Yunnan to Isa, where he turned west to the city of Szemao, and reached the Mekong River at Dayaken. He ascended the Mekong to Chunning city, and thence diverged to the city of Talifu. He then returned to the Mekong, and went straight up

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it to lat. 28° at Tse-kon, on the borders of Tibet. There he turned west, crossed the Salwín, the other great river, and then the Irawādi River, and, passing through the Khámti tribes, he reached the Mishmi country, and was rescued by friendly natives when at the last stage of exhaustion and distress. He finally reached the Assam station of Sadiya, where he was welcomed by the English in December, and he then descended the Bramaputra to Calcutta ('Tonkin to India,' p. 351).

8. The Khmers and their Monuments, Angkor Wat and Angkor Thôm.

In the depth of Cambodia, near the great lake Tonle-Sap, are the immense and wonderful ruins of Angkor Wat and Angkor Thôm. The first account of these which I saw was in Mr. E. Candler's 'Vagabond in Asia,' and I was astounded at his description of these magnificent ruins. Dr. J. Macgregor also gives an account of his visit to them in his book 'Through the Buffer States,' and gives the same descriptions of miles of stately edifices covered with carvings of the most delicate and elaborate description, and retaining to a great extent their beauty and strength, although they are sunk in tropical forests, overgrown, deserted and abandoned of man. Accounts of these ruins are also given in Hugh Clifford's 'Further India,' and in Paul Doumer's 'L'Indo-Chine Française'; and they have also been described in J. Thomson's 'Antiquities of Cambodia' and in Frank Vincent's 'Land of the White Elephant.' I may also refer you to Henri Mouhot's 'Travels,'* as he was the first European to describe them in modern times, although the Portuguese knew them so long ago as 1564. In all these works you will find the

* 'Travels in Indo-China,' p. 278.

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same expressions of astonishment and wonder at the discovery of these immense and splendid ruins, far from any great city or river, abandoned but not destroyed, covered with the most elaborate ornamentation, and still resisting in their solid strength the attacks of time and the encroachments of the forests and jungles with which they are surrounded. It is impossible for me at this late hour to give you any but the most cursory details of these magnificent ruins; but I refer you to the books I have just quoted above, and particularly to the illustrations given by Thomson, Clifford, Fournereau, and Vincent. Mouhot says that these ruins have not their equal anywhere on the earth. Candler says, 'My wildest dreams of Angkor Wat were more than realized. I will not attempt to describe what I saw —it would not be believed.'

Angkor Wat is an immense building, designed as a temple and monastery, and is three miles in circumference within the ditches; Angkor Thôm is a ruined city; and besides these two there are scattered about in Cambodia, Laos, and Siam, temples and ruins which indicate a high state of civilization at the time they were constructed. What this civilization was we know not; whence it came, how it progressed, and how it fell into decay are secrets which history will, perhaps, never divulge.

The people are called Khmers or Kumers; but we really know hardly anything about them. Of their history only this much is known, that they inhabited Cambodia and the valley of Mekong from a very early time; and that they must have reached a very high state of civilization and organization in the early centuries after Christ. The city of Angkor Thôm is supposed to have existed before the Christian era, and

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the temples of Angkor Wat were certainly finished by the fifth or sixth century. From the main gateway to the main entrance of the temple is 1,000 feet, and the main building is 796 feet long and 588 feet broad; the central pagoda is 250 feet high, and it is calculated that there are more than 100,000 separate sculptured figures on the outer walls of the temple. The whole of the stone was brought from 30 miles away, and some of the blocks weigh 8 tons. Almost every stone is carved, some with Hindu and some with Buddhist figures. Angkor Thôm, the ruined city, covers 24 square miles. The two Angkors are first mentioned in 1296 by a Chinese emissary sent to Cambodia in the time of the great Kublai Khan; and the first mention of them by Europeans is in 1570.

The Chinese visit shows that the Khmer Empire was already decaying about A.D. 1300; for it was partially subject to China. Nothing is known of why the city and temples were abandoned as they were by 1550, but it is conjectured that earthquake and not pestilence was the cause. The Khmers were probably of Hindu origin, and not Mongolian, and their empire is supposed to have lasted from about A.D. 200 to 1500; but nothing is really known.

I had hoped to say a few words about the relations of France with Siam, of their long contest and its results; and also to speak of the positions of France and England in Ultrindia, and of the possibilities of the future; but time does not permit, and I must conclude.

Those of us who have served in tropical countries, and know the difficulties and drawbacks of administration and control in tropical lands and with tropical peoples, will be the first to sympathize with our French

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friends—may I say allies ?—in the splendid efforts which they have made during the last ten years to introduce order and civilization among peoples accustomed for centuries to live amid rapine and violence, and to wish them every success in their gallant endeavours, which have already cost them the lives of so many of the best and bravest of their explorers and officials.

I have tried, ladies and gentlemen, to describe to you the divisions of this great country, and to sketch its physical geography—its political administration and its communications. I have endeavoured to give you a short account of its history and exploration up to modern times, and then of the devoted and successful efforts of the French explorers ; and lastly, I have tried to bring to your notice the wonderful relics of the Khmer civilization of which we know so little, and of which we should wish to know so much. The study of this great country—its history and physical characters and geography—grows on one as one learns more ; and if I shall have induced even two or three of you to study some of the many able works which have appeared on this subject, and to feel a deeper interest in Ultrindia than you have hitherto felt, I shall have been amply rewarded for what has been to me a labour of love.

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DISCUSSION

Sir Thomas Holdich: I think I shall only be expressing the opinion of the meeting generally if I say I am very sorry Dr. Tupp has brought his paper to a conclusion so soon. We could have listened with very great interest to a good deal more of it, especially as regards the relationships between France and England in respect to the Far Eastern country of which he has spoken. I regret that I have no practical acquaintance with that part of the world myself. It would have been to me an unending joy to see such ruins as those we have heard described. I cannot help thinking that they must to a certain extent surpass those marvellous ruins in the central forests of Ceylon at Anuradhapura; and it seems pretty certain, from the account the lecturer has given us, that they are chiefly of Hindu, and not Buddhist origin.

Sir Frederic Fryer, in responding to an invitation from the President to speak, said: When I was in Burma we had a good deal of correspondence with the French on the subject of boundary demarcation. At one time it was intended to form a buffer State between Indo-China and Burma, and a Commission was actually appointed for the purpose of delimiting the boundaries of the proposed buffer State, but finally the idea was abandoned as impracticable. The only possession which Burma had on the eastern side of the Mekong was the Shan State of Möngsin. This was claimed by the French, but there was no particular justification for the claim so far as we could discover, and it was decided to occupy Möngsin with troops. Accordingly we sent a wing of a Goorka regiment there, and they remained for three or four years. Then came the treaty of 1896 with France, under which the Mekong was made the boundary between the British and the French spheres. Thus Möngsin was ceded to France and our troops marched out. I believe that the Sawbwa of Möngsin was much delighted when this happened,

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because he thought he would have more independence and exercise greater authority under the suzerainty of the French than of the English. But he very soon had occasion to change his mind, and he would have been very much delighted if Burma would have taken him back again, but of course that was impossible. We never had any serious disputes with Siam on boundary questions. About 1892 we sent an expedition to occupy the Eastern Karenni country, whose inhabitants had revolted against King Thibaw before we took over Upper Burma. The Siamese authorities very kindly asked to be allowed to send a force to assist us. In due course the Karennis were brought to reason, but the Siamese force still remained there, and we were engaged for some years in diplomatic efforts to induce them to return to their own country, for they had no business whatever in Karenni. In the end, as negotiations were futile, a force was sent up and the Siamese troops were expelled. But in the meantime they had cut down several very valuable teak forests and carried away the teak. England still has a claim against Siam for damage done to the teak forests, but I do not think there is any present intention to press the claim. There is not very much intercourse between our officers and the French officers in Indo-China, but in the border province of Kengtung the French do occasionally come across our officers. We have a postal line established between Kengtung and the nearest French post, and as the French sometimes come backwards and forwards by that route, it may be said that regular communication is kept up between the two countries. At present our relations with France in Burma are entirely friendly, and I see no reason why they should not remain so, particularly now that the English people are such excellent friends with the French.

Sir Thomas Holdich: Major Molesworth Sykes, who is with us to-day, has a more intimate acquaintance with the travels of Marco Polo than anyone I know. Perhaps he can tell us whether Marco Polo's writings throw much light on the subject of Indo-China.

Major Molesworth Sykes: I am afraid my studies of Marco Polo have been chiefly directed to his travels in Persia, but I may perhaps say a few words on the reason why he undertook the journey to China. As you know, it was as a boy of sixteen that he accompanied his father and uncle in the extraordinary journey which they took, lasting about three years, right across Asia from

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west to east to visit Kublai Kaan,* to whom reference has been made this afternoon. Kublai Kaan took special notice of Marco, who. being very observant, was able to gratify the Kaan's delight in a good story, a delight shared by so many Orientals. Whenever Marco was sent on an expedition, upon his return he retailed vividly to the Kaan the things he had seen and heard, so much so that the Kaan refused to think of allowing the Polos to leave his Court. Twenty years went by in this manner. Marco's father and uncle were getting old, and he had reached middle age himself. An embassy came from the Court of Persia asking Kublai to send one of his grand-daughters to marry the Khan of that country—for they were not called Shahs in those days. Marco made up to the envoys, and said he knew the best way for them to travel home, and was willing to conduct them thither. So they petitioned Kublai Kaan to allow the three Europeans to guide them back to Persia, and he gave his consent. They started off with a large retinue 700 strong, but on arrival at Bandar Abbas only eight or nine remained, all the others having died on the road. So I think we may come to the conclusion that the climate in that particular part of the world is not very suitable for sanatoriums. The lady was one of the few survivors, and on reaching the capital, she found the potentate she was to marry had been dead some years. She settled the question quite amicably, however, by marrying his son; and Marco Polo, his uncle and his father then went safely back to Venice. The journey to which I have referred was taken by sea, and it is to be remembered that communication between China and Persia by sea was known as far back as the fourth century A.D. Chinese junks were reported in the Shat-ul-Arab, somewhere near the Busra of to-day, by Masudi. In the tenth century they went to Hormuz, at the mouth of the Persian Gulf. Such journeys must have been paid when progressive dynasties were reigning, and we cannot but regard the traffic as extraordinary. When the Portuguese appeared in the Gulf there were only legends of the traffic to attest its existence. That such a traffic did exist was denied by a professor of Chinese at one of our universities to whom I wrote when I was hunting up the subject. But the fact is brought out by Sir Henry Yule in his 'Cathay and the Way Thither'—the way thither being very much I imagine, the Ultrindia of Dr. Tupp.

* Kaan signifies Khan of Khans.

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Dr. Cotterell Tupp: There is but little for me to say in reply to the discussion. With regard to the ruins of Ankor Thôm, the extraordinary thing is that they are mixed Hindu and Buddhist remains, and they appear to have been decorated with absolute indifference as to which religion they represented. On the same panel of sculpturing you will see both Buddhist and Hindu figures—a mixture not to be seen anywhere else I believe. As regards the boundary of the Shan States, I understood Sir Frederick Fryer to say that the Mekong was agreed upon as the dividing-line; but I believe the French claim some part of the country to the west of the Mekong. M. Doumer certainly does so.

Sir Frederick Fryer: I don't think so. I think it is finally settled that the Mekong is the boundary.

Sir Thomas Holdich: Is there not a neutral zone?

Dr. Tupp: The question is still being argued, I believe. A large part of the Laos province is to the west of the Mekong, and I am not at all sure that further north the Mekong is made the strict dividing-line.

A vote of thanks to Dr. Tupp for his paper concluded the proceedings.

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THE COLONIAL POLICY OF JAPAN IN KOREA

BY

F. A. McKENZIE

December, 1906

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THE COLONIAL POLICY OF JAPAN IN KOREA

LIEUTENANT-GENERAL SIR EDWIN COLLEN, G.C.I.E., C.B., was in the chair at a meeting on December 12, 1906, when Mr. F. A. McKenzie read a paper on "The Colonial Policy of Japan in Korea."

In introducing the lecturer, Sir Edwin Collen said that Mr. McKenzie had acquired much experience and knowledge of Far Eastern affairs as travelling correspondent of the *Daily Mail*. In 1903 he visited Japan, and went on to Korea a few days before the outbreak of the Russo-Japanese War. He was present at the Battle of Chemulpho, advanced with the pioneer Japanese scouts towards Manchuria, and joined General Kuroki when he established his headquarters in Northern Korea, remaining with the 1st Imperial Japanese Army until the end of 1904. He then returned to Europe, and during the present year had revisited the Far East, travelling through Japan, Korea, Manchuria, and Northern China. In Korea, besides having considerable opportunities of learning the Japanese point of view from the Marquis Ito and his chief assistants, he secured a great deal of information from the members of the old Korean Government. He also spent some time in the interior, and as far as possible endeavoured to obtain first-hand knowledge of the results of Japanese administration in Korea.

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Mr. F. A. McKenzie said:

The past two years have revealed Japan to the world as one of the supreme colonizing nations on earth. In a little over twenty years the population of Japan has risen by 25 per cent., rising from 36,000,000 to over 48,000,000. For that additional 12,000,000 fresh territory, fresh business, and fresh means of earning bread have had to be found. Japan, with its heavy proportion of mountain and rocky land, could not easily bear the greater population without some form of expansion. Part of the growing millions has been absorbed in the new industrialism. Others find an outlet in the new colonizing enterprises of the Empire. Dai Nippon! Great Japan is no longer a figure of speech. In Honolulu and in San Francisco, in the back block of Western Australia and the back-streets of Singapore, Japan's surplus population is settled. There are Japanese communities to-day all over China, and in Manchuria they bid fair before many years to outnumber the Manchus and Chinese combined.

Korea represents Japan's greatest colonial experiment. Here there has been not merely an outflow of people, but an absorption of government. Since February, 1904, Korea has been actually, if not nominally, under Japanese jurisdiction. The story of what has been done in that time in the Hermit Kingdom is of double interest to us. First, it concerns us, ourselves, the greatest of colonizing nations, for it enables us to see how others attempt to solve the problem we have so often had to deal with. Next, the fact that Japan and England are to-day in alliance, and that England has in a sense stood sponsor for the Land of the Rising Sun to other Western nations, make the external and colonizing policy of Japan a matter of real moment for British people.

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Until thirty years ago Korea remained closed to all nations. Japan, its neighbour to the south-west, had a little foothold at Fusan. Between Korea and Manchuria, its northern neighbour, lay the great borderland of the bandit regions, in which no man's life was worth an hour's purchase. Time after time Western Powers had tried to break down Korean exclusiveness, but always in vain. The cables of a British ship, hung in triumph over the gateways of Ping-yang, proclaimed to the nation the destruction that awaited foreigners who visited there.

Then in 1876 Japan came and conquered. A treaty of peace and friendship was made between the Empire and the kingdom, by which three ports were opened to Japanese commerce, and Japanese subjects were given the privilege of travelling within an area of about three miles around each port. The Japanese further secured a right of establishing a Legation in Seoul, the Korean capital. This treaty was followed in a few years by others, with America, with Great Britain, and with various European Powers. Consulates-General and then Legations were established in Seoul, and the West found itself in touch with the quaintest and most fantastic of the peoples of the East.

The King and autocrat of Korea, living in his wonderful palace underneath the shadow of the mountain at Seoul, heard of the marvels of the West. Even his great dancing-hall, the hall of the hundred pillars, or his wonderful lake of the thousand lilies, or his armies of white-robed singing-girls failed then to satisfy him. He must know of other lands. So he had foreign teachers; the wives of missionaries made friends with the Empress; and schemers and intriguers of every kind came and advanced their plans for the progress of the kingdom.

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Two nations had already marked Korea out as their own. Japan wanted it to insure the safety of her territories, and to give her people a field for expansion. Russia desired it because here she could find safe and easy open ports for the terminus of her already projected trans-Siberian line. But there was one Power in the way: China possessed a somewhat nebulous suzerainty over Korea. In 1894 Japan declared war against China, revealed herself as a military nation, scored her great victory, and ended Chinese suzerainty once for all.

The natural result was that Japan immediately acquired supreme authority in Seoul. The Japanese Minister had a great and influential party of natives behind him, and he set about a campaign of reform. He was met at point after point by the resolute opposition of the Queen. She was as strong a character as her husband was weak; she believed that Japan was threatening the independence of her country, and so she met intrigue with intrigue. Count Inouye, the well-known Japanese statesman, was the Minister for Nippon at that time. He returned to Japan, but before leaving he had an interview with the Queen, who made offers of friendship which did not meet with a very cordial response. Inouye was succeeded by Viscount Miura, a stern soldier. Miura determined to solve the Palace difficulty in the quickest way. He conspired with the anti-royal party, and one night a body of disguised Japanese policemen and natives burst into the Palace, Japanese troops openly supporting them. When they quitted the Palace they left a dead Queen behind them.

The Japanese Minister had made a terrible and, apparently an irreparable, mistake. He was recalled and put on trial by his Government.

His successor managed to drive the Korean people,

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now bitter against the murderers of their Queen, to still further exasperation. The Japanese had not then learned, and apparently have not yet learned, that while you can safely break or make Governments, you must not interfere with personal customs. A nation will stand an income-tax of 1s. 6d. in the £1 with a smile, but it will smash the railing of Hyde Park if you try to close the public-houses at ten o'clock. The Japanese did the equivalent of trying to close the public-houses at ten o'clock. Under their direction it was decreed that the Korean man must leave off his top-knot. To the Korean the top-knot is the symbol of manhood and honour. The day when a boy has his hair made into a knot is the proudest of his life, because it shows that childhood is over. To be without the knot is to be a weakling and an object of contempt. The people rose in anger. The Emperor just about this time escaped from the rebels who were guarding him, and took shelter in the Russian Legation, and the supremacy of the Japanese was for the moment over.

The spell of Russian supremacy which followed was not very brilliant. The Russian Minister in Korea at the time, M. Waeber, was a wise and conciliatory statesman. He secured the appointment of numerous Russian officials, a Russian bank arose, and Russian military instructors began to appear. His Government thought, however, that he was not going fast enough, and so he was succeeded by M. Speyer, who, under orders from above, tried to quicken the pace. The Russians attempted to oust an English official, Mr. McLeavy Brown, who had been given charge of the Customs. Here for once England asserted herself. A British fleet arrived in Chemulpho Harbour, and Mr. Brown retained place and power.

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The Russians proved incapable of holding the great advantage they had gained through the blunder of Viscount Miura. Japan began to win back her old position again, and for some years a close diplomatic struggle was maintained. The Korean Emperor—for he had taken the higher title—a weak and well-meaning man, was now pulled one way, now the other. The Customs were under the charge of Mr. Brown, who proved himself an unbiassed and magnificently able administrator. He employed the methods of Sir Robert Hart, his old chief in China. He considered that it was his duty to maintain the open door and to act as the guardian not only of the particular interests of England, but of the common interests of all white nations. Thus it was that in the Korean Custom Service men of almost every European Power worked in harmony under their Irish leader. In a country notoriously corrupt, there was in his department no suspicion of corruption or of favouritism. Mr. Brown was for a time given control of Korean finances, but his position there was never so absolute as in the Customs. So far as his power went, however, he effected great reforms. Other departments of the Korean service were also administered by foreign advisers, but Mr. Brown stood alone. Korea was in the Postal Union; there was a telegraphic service from end to end of the land; a comfortable railway, built with the American capital, ran from Chemulpho to Seoul; and in the capital itself the hiss of the electric car was heard. Thus in the early years of this century we would have found in Korea a combination of modernity and of barbarism. A high official might be appointed because of his skill as a sorcerer, and would use a modern Swedish telephone to help him transact his business. The Emperor had his rooms lit with elec-

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tricity, and sat under the rays of the incandescent lamp, debating how many devils should be employed at his mother-in-law's funeral.

All this time Japanese influence and the number of Japanese settlers had been steadily growing. In the early nineties two able diplomats stood face to face, M. Pavloff, the courtly representative of the Czar, and M. Hayashi, a quiet, pleasant, and determined spokesman for the Mikado. World events had combined to make Korea of greater and greater importance. Russia and Japan both wanted her as never before, and in the closing days of 1903 it became clear that the struggle for supremacy between the two must soon be settled.

In February, 1904, Japan declared war against Russia, and her troops poured into Korea. At this time she had the choice of two ways before her. She might, making the stress of war an excuse, tear up her old treaties and assume formal control of Korea, or she might elect to regard Korea as her independent ally. Korea itself was powerless to resist whatever was done.

The latter course was chosen. A policy of open annexation would have thrown difficulties in the way of the Japanese troops marching through the country, and would further have given an opening for hostile action by European Powers. So a protocol between Japan and Korea was signed on February 23, a fortnight after the landing of the Japanese soldiers. In this protocol the Imperial Government of Japan pledged itself in a spirit of firm friendship to insure the safety and repose of the Imperial House of Korea, and it further definitely guaranteed the independence and territorial integrity of the Korean Empire.

Most foreigners in Korea at that time, myself among them, heartily welcomed the coming of the

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Japanese. We were tired of the corruption and exaction of the yangbans and high Korean officials; we knew that here was a nation that had been kept down for generations by the ineptness of its own Government; and we had daily evidence of the harm a feeble, incapable, and occasionally cruel administration was inflicting on the workers. We believe, then, that Japan, while dealing possibly stern measures against the corrupt officials, would give justice to the common man, would bring honesty in administrative work, and would open up the country as never before for the benefit of world trade.

Here was Japan's golden opportunity, the opportunity to demonstrate to the world that she was as mighty in the arts of peace as in her growing conquests in war. We believed that she would seize the occasion, and show in Korea, as she had shown time after time under other circumstances, that she had in her possibilities which the West had hardly yet begun to fathom.

The Japanese began well. They were already pushing ahead a great railway from Fusan to Seoul. Some of the most corrupt Korean officials, includiug Yi Yong Ik, the greatest and the most unscrupulous of all, found it convenient to retire from politics for a time.

Large numbers of Korean coolies were employed in carrying supplies to the north for the Japanese soldiers, and they were all paid with a punctuality and liberality which left them amazed. It seemed that Japan would repeat in Korea the strict rectitude which had been the distinguishing mark of her occupation of Southern Manchuria in 1895.

Even while battles were being fought in the North, Seoul was full of talk of reforms. The currency was to be altered, new schools were to be built, new railways to

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be laid, the Palace purified. The soothsayers and fortune-tellers, who formed so prominent a feature of Seoul life, were, it was rumoured, to be cleared out. The incapable Korean army, whose officers made up in splendour of uniform what they lacked in courage, was to be almost wholly disbanded. The Emperor was to place himself in the hands of his Japanese advisers. There was to be no more selling of Government posts; farming was to be transformed; banking was to be modernized; and the lazy officials who did nothing but prey off the people were to be swept away. The Japanese were loud in their emphasis of the fact that they were in Korea, not alone for their own benefit, but as a nation doing the work of all civilized races in securing the maintenance of the open door and of equal opportunities for all.

Then came a succession of remarkable Japanese victories, and the tone of statesmen and administrators altered. Schemes were put forward and methods adopted which first amazed and then alienated large sections of the white residents. One of the first of these new departures went by the name of the Nagamori scheme. The Japanese Legation proposed that all the waste land of the country, which meant the greater part of Korea, should be handed over to a certain Mr. Nagamori, a Japanese subject, for the term of fifty years, without payment. Mr. Nagamori was to be free to do what he liked with the lands, to sell or to keep them, and the properties were to be released from taxation for some years. If, at the end of fifty years, the Japanese Government wanted them back, it could have them by paying back all the money which had been expended, together with compound interest.

The Japanese Legation fought very hard to get this

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through, but the matter excited such resentment among the Koreans and the foreigners that it was allowed to lapse. This scheme helped to start a great revulsion of feeling amongst the Koreans against the Japanese. This revulsion was increased by a still more powerful cause.

The Japanese subjects, chiefly coolies and small tradesmen, had begun to pour into Korea by the ten thousand. Square-shouldered, heavily-built, and harsh-jawed as many of them were, they presented the least attractive or desirable section of their countrymen. They had been drawn by the hope of high wages, and their womenfolk came with them. They walked with the air of conquerors, flushed with the knowledge of the victories of their own brave countrymen in Manchuria; they despised the Koreans as cowards, and began to treat them accordingly.

These Japanese coolies soon found that there was no check on them; they could do as they liked. The few Japanese officials established over the country were very much overworked, and had no time to attend to small matters. No Korean magistrate dare punish a Japanese. The Japanese might plunder the Korean coolie wholesale, as he often did; he might beat the life out of his body, as he often did; he might turn him out of house and home without compensation, and there was no redress. If the Korean went to the Japanese Consul to complain, he would often enough be thrown out by some minor official.

When I returned to Korea this summer, I found the country ringing from end to end with the stories of the cruelty and lack of control of the Japanese settlers. Friends of my own, whom I had known two years before as Japan's most enthusiastic friends, were now bitter and

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alienated by the brutalities which had come under their notice, and by the impossibility of obtaining redress for them. No one believed that the leading Japanese authorities approved of the actions of their nationals, but practically everyone blamed them for allowing 50,000 or 60,000 of the lowest class of their countrymen to overrun the land without making any provisions for their orderly control.

The Japanese next excited great resentment by their policy of seizing the best land of the country, under the excuse that it was wanted for military purposes. In many cases the Koreans found that a few weeks after the properties were appropriated lines of Japanese shops and private houses would go up on these so-called military lands. The wholesale seizures outside Seoul and Ping-yang and still further north produced great misery. The Japanese in some cases paid a wholly inadequate sum to the Korean officials to compensate the dispossessed people; but in many cases known to me the people had not received even the most inadequate compensation, although their land had been taken from them for over a year.

The avowed policy of the Japanese has been not to interfere unduly in the internal affairs of the country. This seems to have been interpreted in many cases to mean that the Japanese shall only interfere where there is direct profit to be made for their people. This is a hard thing, I know, to say, but what I witnessed in Ping-yang and Sun-Chon forces the words from me. To quote only the case of Sun-Chon, the Japanese who have settled there compel the Koreans to subscribe a monthly rate for the improvement of the town. The administration of this rate is wholly in Japanese hands. Last July I went into the local prison of Sun-Chon. A Japanese

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sentry stood on the opposite side of the roadway, and the prisoners inside had been brought there and handed over to the Korean gaoler by the Japanese. I shall only say that I found in it conditions rivalling the worst torture-hole of an old Chinese gaol.

To turn for the moment to a brighter side of the picture. Mr. Megata, who had come over from Japan as financial adviser, set about the reform of the currency. The Korean currency of the old type was among the worst in the world. Counterfeiting was almost a recognised business, and a very large part of the coin in circulation was admittedly bad. The counterfeits were divided into classes—good counterfeits, mediums, bad—and those so bad that they could only be passed off after dark. The reform of such a currency was bound to create great trouble, and it did so. There may be a question as to whether Mr. Megata effected his reform in the easiest and most prudent way; but he did carry it through, to the undoubted permanent benefit of the land.

The railways were also being advanced with the utmost rapidity. The line from Fusan to Seoul, a railway passing over most difficult mountainous country, was opened last year, and has since been running very successfully. The continuation of the line from Seoul to Antung was also completed in rougher fashion as a temporary measure, while a good permanent line is being now finished. Beyond Antung a mountain railway was built right up to Mukden, thus making an unbroken connection from Flushing to Fusan. I travelled over the line from Fusan to Antung in July. It represented a remarkable opening-up of hitherto inaccessible country.

The educational policy of the Japanese had not up to the time I left the country been carried very far. They have accomplished very much less than might have been

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expected in this direction. They have introduced a number of so-called reforms in other directions which, so far as I can see, do little good, and help to exasperate the people. They have revived in milder manner the effort of 1895 to abolish the top-knot, and they are further trying by every means to make the people give up wearing white garments, their national costume in wintertime. They have taken over the post and telegraph services from the Koreans, thus clearing out a body of old officials and making room for many new Japanese employés. As yet there has been no marked improvement in the service. They have altered the names of towns from the old Korean names to new Japanese ones. They have even altered the time, the Tokio time being officially and universally used by the Japanese. So far as my observation goes, these little things, needless interferences with the habits of the people, create more discontent than really big grievances.

As I went through the country parts this summer, after having heard the official side of the case in Seoul, I was often moved to grief by the stories brought to me in town after town. I had been over the north in the early days of the war—the days when men, although living under the dark clouds of battle, yet looked bravely forward to a brighter and more hopeful time. Now, however, hope seemed largely to have died. In every place the tales poured into my ears were the same—tales of harsh domination by uncontrolled Japanese soldiers, tales of brutality by irresponsible Japanese peasants, tales of the plundering of land and of home. When I passed through the city of Ping-yang, the missionaries came to me on the mid-day of the Sunday, and asked if I would speak to the great congregation of about 1,500 people who assembled every Sunday afternoon.

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'Why do you not have your regular preacher?' I asked.

'Our chief native minister was to have taken the service,' they told me, 'but yesterday afternoon four Japanese soldiers entered his house. They went towards his women's quarter, and when he tried to stop them, they fell on him and beat him so badly that he cannot move out of the house.'

This is typical of many other stories, or else I would not quote it. When that afternoon I stood before that great throng, the women to my left and the men to my right, the question seemed to come up from the crowd: 'What can we, a people not skilled in arms and not used to fighting, do with this stern warrior race over us?'

The Japanese authorities found themselves greatly hampered by the stolid opposition of the Korean Cabinet. The Emperor and his Ministers could not point-blank refuse to do what Mr. Hayashi demanded, but they could intrigue, delay, and forget, and shelter themselves behind Japan's covenanted promise to maintain the integrity and independence of their country. Their friendship had by this time been turned to dislike, and they adopted a policy of passive resistance exceedingly annoying and hampering to the Japanese. Then it was that the Japanese resolved on a further step. They had by this time concluded the Treaty of Portsmouth and renewed their alliance with England. Now they would assume the sovereignty of Korea. Accordingly the Marquis Ito, Japan's foremost statesman, arrived at Seoul in November last year, bringing with him a treaty that would at once sweep Korean independence out of existence. The Emperor and his advisers resolved that under no circumstances would they consent to sign such a treaty.

At this stage the Korean Emperor determined to ask

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the American Government for aid. In the Treaty of 1883 the introductory clause provided : ' If other Powers deal unjustly or oppressively with either Government, the other will exert their good offices, on being informed of the case, to bring about an amicable arrangement, thus showing their good feelings.'

The Korean Emperor thought that this clause was something more than a pious expression of goodwill. He would appeal to Cæsar or, rather, to Roosevelt. The Korean case was carefully prepared, and was despatched by special messenger to Washington. The appeal was of no avail. President Roosevelt refused to interfere, and America was the first Power to withdraw its Minister from Seoul a few weeks afterwards.

A second memorial was in course of preparation when the blow fell. I have seen this second memorial. It states the Korean grievances so ably that perhaps you will pardon me for quoting from it at some length. The memorial began by reminding the American Government of its pledge in the treaty of 1883. ' Our Government,' it continued, ' at the present time feels forced to inform your Government that we are being dealt with ' unjustly and oppressively ' by the Government and People of Japan, and to appeal to the President of the United States of America and your Government to, in accordance with the above-quoted article of the treaty, use your good offices in bringing about an amicable and just settlement.

' The actions of the Japanese Government and People that we complain of, and to which we desire to call your attention, are well known, and can be more than substantiated, and may be called in part as follows :

' *First :* In Politics.—They have chosen out four or five of the worst officials, those who have previously disturbed the Government and, without regard to life

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and property, have extorted from the people, and have put them in power; and having placed their own nationals as advisers in almost all the departments, they are controlling the Government and oppressing the Emperor and his officials.

'*Second:* In the Dispensing of Justice.—They have by force interfered with the Korean officers of Justice, so that they could not carry on their regular work; they have been seizing the police power both at the capital and in the provincial towns, and trying both civil and criminal cases; but if a Japanese subject has been doing injustice to a Korean, they not only do not stop him, but secretly encourage him to the detriment of Korean life and property.

'*Third:* In the Matter of Finances.—At the time of the attempt to reform the money system of Korea, some thirty or more Koreans willingly offered a loan of 3,000,000 yen to their Government, to be used in this attempt at reform; but the Japanese Minister to Korea prevented the acceptance, and forced the Korean Government to accept a loan of 3,000,000 yen from the Japanese Government.

'Still later announcing that the currency of the country must again be changed, they presented a new coinage which was not any better than the old, and thus their profits were very great; and when they came to exchange the new for the old, they always claimed a shortage of 2 or 3 per cent., and not only made the people thus suffer great loss, but made it so that they could not exchange their money, the trickery of which scheme is shown in the fact that if the exchange is not made by the end of next year the old money will be demonetized, and the whole country's financial resources will be exhausted.

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'*Fourth :* In Matters Military.—At the opening of the Japan-Russia War, Japan forced Korea to make a treaty whereby Japan was allowed freely to transport her troops and munitions of war through Korea to the seat of war, and in return for this they are about to quarter tens of thousands of their troops in different parts of Korea, and have forced the Korean Government and people to surrender thousands of acres of land on which to quarter these troops in Seoul, Pyeng Yang, and other places, for which land the Government and people are receiving no recompense. In the name of the Military Authorities of Japan large tracts of land have also been staked out, on which in some cases Japanese merchants are building houses, and when the real owners apply for help or recompense they get no redress.

'The Japanese asserted that temporary military necessities forced them to seize and undertake railroads; and now, although peace has been declared, they still continue to hold and work them without receiving or seeking any concession from the Korean Government; and for the property and houses of the people condemned for the road they do not give the worth, but are paying 1 per cent. of the value, or give them nothing at all. Not only have they thus seized all the land needed for the immediate road-bed, but at all points where they have decided to have stations they have seized and enclosed large tracts of land on all sides of these stations without recompense to the owners.

'In sections of land of great importance from a commercial point of view, large tracts of land and thousands of houses have been staked off with the Japanese military stakes, as needed for military purposes, and not to be sold, thus preventing all land exchanges

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and sales in these sections, and causing great loss and distress to the Koreans and, possibly, great profit to the Japanese.'

The appeal was of no avail.

The Japanese had determined that the treaty should go through, and that the independence and autonomy of Korea should cease. They were willing to use as many soft phrases as necessary, and to describe the transfer in any pleasant language that the Koreans liked. The Marquis Ito found, however, on his arrival at Seoul, that the Emperor and his Ministers would not give in. The new treaty proposed first that the Japanese should take control and direct the foreign relations of Korea, thus sweeping away Korean Ministers abroad and the Ministers of other Powers to Korea, and leaving all diplomatic work to be done through Tokyo. The Japanese were to appoint a Resident-General, who would live in Seoul, and a Resident in every Korean place where they considered necessary. The last shreds of independence were to be stripped from the country.

When the Emperor was asked to agree to this, he replied that such a treaty could only be made after consultation with the wise men and counsellors of the country. The Marquis Ito urged very strongly that it was absolutely necessary for the preservation of peace in the Far East. The Ministers were warned that if they did not agree to it, their obstinacy would mean the instant destruction of the Korean Empire.

The negotiations continued for several days. During this time the Japanese had a great body of troops—horse, foot, and artillery—assembled round the Palace and engaged in all sorts of manœuvres. Everything was done that could be done to awe both the Palace and the people. Then one fateful evening the Japanese repre-

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sentatives insisted on at once proceeding with the business. There came a conference lasting until long after midnight. One or two Ministers showed signs of yielding, borne down by the fierce methods of the Japanese diplomatists. The Korean Prime Minister, Han Kew Sul, rose and declared that he would at once report their words to the Emperor. As he passed out of the Council Room he was seized by Mr. Hagiwara, First Secretary of the Japanese Legation, and hurried into a side-room, a prisoner. The other Ministers were allowed to believe that he had been murdered. Courage is rarely the strong point of the Korean. At an early hour in the morning the Ministers submitted, a clause being added that 'The Japanese Government guarantees to maintain the security and respect the dignity of the Korean Imperial House.'

It was an agreement extorted by sheer terror. In giving this account of what happened on that night, I would like to say that I have accepted no second-hand evidence in preparing it. One of the leading participants there told me the story, and I had his narrative confirmed from other quarters.

The Japanese since then have increased their hold on the country in every way. One of their most successful moves for creating the monopoly of Japanese interests was to make the position of Mr. McLeavy Brown, the British Commissioner of Customs, so unpleasant that he was compelled to retire. The Customs Service is being more and more manned by Japanese, and a Japanese is now at the head of it. The right of giving concessions, which formerly lay with the Emperor, has been taken by the Resident-General, and it is perhaps not unnatural that in the distribution of concessions the Japanese occupy the front place. The talk of the 'open

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door' and 'equal opportunities,' of which we heard so much some time ago, is slackening.

The removal of Mr. McLeavy Brown has brought up many charges of partiality against the Customs officers. This was perhaps inevitable.

The most hopeful side of the Japanese activity in Korea to-day is the fact that the Marquis Ito has been since the end of last year the Resident-General. No one who has even a most casual acquaintance with him can doubt his sincere desire to do his best for Korea as a whole. Unfortunately he is hampered in his work by a number of incompetent officials, and by the great influence of the military party, which is in favour of strong measures. It yet remains to be seen if the Marquis can enforce a policy of conciliation and justice. If he can do so, the mistakes of the past may yet be forgotten in the triumphs of the future.

Here we have a strong, brave, clannish people planting themselves down amidst a race of comparative weaklings. The Korean is going to the wall. The process is inevitable, and yet one cannot help a passing pang of pity for the man, as one sees him thrown against rough stones. I, for one, am by no means sure that Japan would not win for herself greater glory and sounder empire if in the process of the absorption of Korea some respect was paid to the rights of the weaker side.

The CHAIRMAN: I think it must have occurred to some of us in the course of this lecture to ask, Where is the connection between a society concerning itself with Central Asian affairs and Korea? But I do not think we are going out of our province in taking up the question Mr. McKenzie has brought before us when we bear in mind the tremendous interest that the Anglo-Japanese

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Alliance of 1902 gave us in the affairs of our allies, and that we have thereby undertaken responsibilities in connection with the preservation and consolidation of our interests and the maintenance of peace in India and Eastern Asia. The treaty constitutes a guarantee for the maintenance of our territorial rights in India and the East, and hence we as a nation are deeply and immediately interested in everything that concerns the policy of our ally. Mr. McKenzie has dealt with the question of Japanese policy in Korea in a very interesting way, but I think it not unlikely that many of his opinions may be challenged in the discussion which I now invite.

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DISCUSSION

Mr. Valentine Chirol said: I have listened with very great interest to Mr. McKenzie's paper, first of all because I was myself in Korea at about the period from which he began his retrospect of the contest between Russia and Japan in the country, and also because, in the attitude he has taken up towards the Japanese there, I seem to hear an echo of the doubtless equally honest, but equally bitter, criticism which one so often hears from foreigners on our own work in Egypt. There has been one feature as to our position in Egypt which has greatly facilitated our task—we have not had to take our lower classes with us. The representatives of the British power and the British name in Egypt are all picked men, of high training and high principle. The Japanese have sent men of high principle and high training to Korea, but amongst their lower classes which have gone there in their tens of thousands there are, as I believe would be the case amongst our own lower classes, many who do not know how to treat aliens properly, and who show towards them not merely want of sympathy, but even sometimes brutality. Consequently Japan has had a difficulty in Korea with which we have not been confronted in Egypt. The whole tone of Mr. McKenzie's observations reminds me of the tone of many foreign critics of English rule in Egypt. Indeed, if you substitute 'the Khedive' and 'the Khedivial Court' for 'the Emperor' and 'the Korean Court,' and the names of some of our own high officials for the names of high Japanese officials, you would have, I think, almost in the same words the same sort of criticism which is constantly applied to our political relations with Egypt—to relations which have, on the whole, been to the advantage of the Egyptians as well as to ourselves. (Hear, hear.) Like the Marquis Ito, Lord Cromer has the reputation of being a very strong and stubborn man, and one may often hear, not only from the lips of Egyptians like Mustapha Kamel Pasha, a stream of patriotic indignation at the way in which, in his view, the independence of Egypt, under Lord Cromer's despotic sway, is entirely sacrificed to British ambitions, and the wishes of a

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downtrodden people ignored; indeed, I have often heard the same line of argument pursued by Englishmen—Englishmen whose honesty is no less and no greater than that of Mr. McKenzie himself. Mr. Wilfrid Blunt, for example, will tell you stories by the hour of atrocities perpetrated in the name of England, and abuses tolerated for our own selfish purposes. Therefore I think we ought to take with certain reservations the stories which Mr. McKenzie has heard in Korea. I do not mean to say that the Japanese have not committed great mistakes. I recognise, for example, the gravity of the mistake made after the Chino-Japanese War, when the Japanese participated in the murderous conspiracy against the Queen of Korea. But, as Mr. McKenzie has himself told us, the Japanese Government dismissed the Minister who had been an agent in the conspiracy, and put him upon his trial. I believe, too, that when, in more recent times, serious grievances have been brought to the knowledge of the Japanese Government, there has been every disposition to provide redress. I am glad to note that Mr. McKenzie does full justice to the excellent administrative work done by the Japanese in Korea; and, for my own part, I feel confident that the Japanese in the end will learn, at some cost to themselves and at some cost also to the people of the country, that the rights and sentiments of the Koreans must be preserved and respected. They have introduced into Korea elements of enlightenment and progress that have never existed there in the past, and under their own rulers the Koreans have been subject to far lower depths of corruption and brutality than can possibly exist at the present day. (Cheers.) With regard to the proposed suppression of the top-knot, that is an exaggerated grievance. After all, the Japanese only tried to impose on the Koreans what has been done in their own country. Considering that the Japanese people, who at first resented it as much as the Koreans, have themselves submitted to what Mr. McKenzie calls a degradation, it can hardly be now as a degradation that they seek to impose it upon the Koreans.

Mr. McKenzie: I said that the Koreans regarded it as degrading.

Mr. Chirol: When the order to cut off the top-knot was first issued, the Japanese thought it degrading, but they soon found it was not so, and accepted it. And this will probably happen also with the Koreans.

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Mr. W. Crewdson said: I have followed with great interest the paper read to us; but whilst the lecturer was giving his criticisms I was wondering how a Japanese newspaper correspondent would report to his journal his impressions of a visit to the territory we have recently acquired in South Africa. He would have found many difficulties still remaining to be settled, the explanation being, of course, that since the declaration of peace sufficient time has not elapsed to deal with many urgent questions of administration. The Japanese were forced to obtain control of Korea, as the accomplishment of Russian designs would have added great weight to the traditional sentiment that the geographical position of Korea made that country resemble a dagger constantly pointing to the heart of Japan. The 6,000 Japanese settlers in Korea before the war were suddenly augmented by another 50,000, and these not of the governing or cultured classes. In these circumstances, and bearing in mind the state of Korea under its native rulers, it is not to be wondered at that excesses and unfortunate occurrences have been reported. If any foreigner wished at the present time to judge English colonial policy by the state of affairs in South Africa, we should think it unfair, and we should ask the critic to look at other parts of the Empire, telling him that things in South Africa were in a state of transition, and would work out all right in the end. That is our determination, and I believe that the determination of Japan to do justly and well by Korea is just as strong as our determination to do right in South Africa. In proof of this I may refer you to Formosa. In the Consular reports of our own Government you will find what the Japanese colonists and colonial administration have done in that very turbulent island. Not only have they taken an intractable population in hand and produced an ordered system of administration; they have gone further than other nations in doing what is right. For instance, they have dealt with that most difficult problem, opium-smoking. This habit was destroying the vitality of the native population; but the Japanese have grappled with the evil so well that our own Consular reports show that opium-smokers are diminishing at the rate of 1,000 per month. Seeing what Japanese colonial policy has been elsewhere, where time and opportunity have been theirs, I think it savours of hasty criticism to judge at present of the Japanese policy in Korea. (Hear, hear.)

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Mr. McKenzie, in answer to a question, said that he understood that at the present time there were about 90,000 to 100,000 Japanese in Korea, besides 30,000 Japanese troops; the number had been rapidly rising of late. Proceeding to reply on the discussion, he said: I must protest very sincerely against any comparison between the great work of England in Egypt and the work of Japan in Korea. I have yet to find that in Egypt we have torn up a treaty with the weaker Power; I have yet to find that we are administering Egypt for our own good alone, and not for the good of the common people there. When I spoke against certain features of Japanese proceedings in Korea, I was not thinking so much of the grievances of officials; I was protesting most of all against a state of affairs under which every Korean finds it difficult to obtain justice. I have seen men turned out of their homes and dispossessed of everything, and this has roused my indignation. I cared nothing, and I care little now, for the high Korean who has had to make way for a Japanese official. When I see England doing what has been done in Korea—for instance, acquiring private property wholesale without payment of any compensation—then I hope I shall as heartily protest against England's action as I have spoken against that of Japan. It is a pleasure to hear of the admirable measures Japan has taken, with so much success, to stop opium-smoking in Formosa. Her policy in this respect has, unfortunately, been very different in Korea. Under the native régime opium was forbidden, and opium-smokers were punished. I have myself seen men in prison as opium-smokers. To-day all over Northern Korea Japanese pedlars are selling opium without restraint and creating a great opium trade.

The Chairman, in summing up the discussion, said: There is evidently considerable difference of opinion amongst us in reference to the conclusions of the lecturer. He is to be congratulated upon the delivery of an exceedingly interesting lecture, one which must have entailed many hours of preparation, besides giving evidence of the intelligence and ability he displayed in investigating the state of affairs in Korea. But I confess that it always seems to me very difficult to arrive at a just appreciation of the administration of a country, however closely one may endeavour to apprehend it, in the course of a few months' residence. I think that perhaps hardly sufficient stress has been laid upon the position of Korea in relation to Japanese interests.

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A glance at the map shows what an important strategic position it is for Japan. It is really an outpost, and a very strong outpost, of Japan's first line of defence. It would have been at the peril of her own existence for Japan to have allowed any great Power to acquire a dominant position in Korea. Her own predominance there has now been recognised by all the Powers, being recognised by ourselves first of all in the Treaty of 1902. The first article of that treaty declared that Japan was 'interested in a peculiar degree politically, as well as commercially and industrially, in Korea.' Almost precisely the same words, if I recollect rightly, were used in the Russo-Japanese Treaty of Peace signed at Portsmouth at the close of 1905. Not only has Japan obtained possession by her victories, but Korea was incapable of managing her own affairs. She would have been in a very different position if she had had statesmen who could have foreseen what was coming, or who, at all events, had sought to guide the administration in the proper direction. So incompetent was the Government of Korea, that not only were the relations between the two Powers imperilled, but the peace of the world was in danger, and therefore it was absolutely necessary for Japan to become, as she is to-day, the dominant Power in Korea. Japan has been instituting great reforms, and some of them, no doubt, have been very difficult to carry out. We all are acquainted with plenty of instances in which the reformer is by no means a popular person. As to the complaint that the services of foreigners were dispensed with, I may say that my sympathies are rather with Japan. She has acquired by her victories the position she occupies in Korea, and she has plenty of capable men well able to undertake and carry on the administration of the country. Many of the grievances brought forward are from sources which it is rather difficult to sympathize with. I will give an illustration of what I mean. I saw the other day that an American firm had constructed a line of street railways in Seoul, 'already,' said the writer, 'operating at a nice profit,' and with good prospects before it. He seemed to think it an intolerable thing that the Japanese Government should seek to purchase these railways. But such purchase would accord with the general policy of the Powers. Korea will undoubtedly advance under Japanese administration, and we must look for an extension of Japanese control of public works. There are difficulties in the way of progress, prominent

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amongst them being the fact that there is a semihostile population to deal with. As to the behaviour of the lower classes of Japanese who entered Korea, I agree with Mr. Chirol that it is a misfortune they were allowed to enter without being brought under adequate control. But you must recollect that the Resident-General himself has complained of the behaviour of those whom he called the 'nationals.' So far from endeavouring to hide their shortcomings, he called attention to them, which indicates a desire on his part to do justly. In this connection I should like to quote his own words. Speaking only this year, the Marquis Ito said: 'Not only in regard to Korea, but to the whole problem of the Far East, nothing should be done opposed to the sentiment of the Powers. If she forfeits their sympathy, Japan will be laying up for herself misfortunes in the future.' These words of the Marquis Ito, than whom Japan has, I suppose, no more patriotic and far-seeing statesman, show that the need for just government in Korea is recognised. I will only ask you now to permit me to present to Mr. McKenzie our very grateful thanks for his lecture, and to say that, however we may differ from some of the opinions he has put forward, we welcome the opportunity he has given us to hear the impressions he has gained in his visits to Korea.

The vote of thanks having been seconded by Mr. Chirol and carried with acclamation, the proceedings closed.

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PROCEEDINGS OF THE CENTRAL ASIAN SOCIETY

THE REFORM MOVEMENT IN PERSIA

BY

GENERAL SIR T. E. GORDON,

K.C.B., K.C.I.E., C.S.I.

LONDON
CENTRAL ASIAN SOCIETY, 22, ALBEMARLE STREET, W.
1907

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Proceedings of the Central Asian Society

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READ WEDNESDAY, MARCH 13, 1907.

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THE REFORM MOVEMENT IN PERSIA

The Chairman, Lieutenant-General Sir Edwin Collen, in commencing the proceedings said: The subject of the paper which is about to be read is the reform movement in Persia. It is a very important one to us, because we are deeply concerned in the future prosperity of the country, and I do not think we could listen to anyone who is more competent to inform us on the subject than General Sir Thomas Gordon. Not only is he admirably qualified by his residence in the country, by his official connection with it, and by study and knowledge, but he has been personally acquainted with many of the actors in the great drama which has recently been enacted on the Persian stage.

The first serious reformer in modern times in Persia was Mirza Taki Khan, Prime Minister to Nasr-ed-Din, Shah, and grandfather, on the maternal side, of the new Shah, Mohamed Ali. He was a man of exceptional ability, and came to the front as a statesman and diplomatist at the International Conference of British, Russian, Turkish, and Persian representatives, which was held at Erzerum about 1845-1846, for the settlement of the long-standing frontier disputes between Persia and Turkey. The Mushir-ed-Dowleh, a high dignitary, had arrived there as Persia's plenipotentiary, but becoming incapacitated by illness, Mirza Taki, who was in his suite, was appointed to replace him. He found his opportunity then to show his high quality as a diplomatist, and at the close of the Conference he was said to be 'beyond all comparison, the most interesting personage amongst the International Commissioners.'

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The reigning sovereign, Shah Mahomed, died shortly after Mirza Taki's return to Tabriz from Erzerum, and he accompanied the Heir Apparent, Nasr-ed-Din, who was there as Governor-General of Azerbaijan, and had been proclaimed Shah, to the Capital. Nasr-ed-Din was then but sixteen years of age, and as yet had shown no signs of unusual mental ability, but he had the sagacity to see that Mirza Taki Khan possessed the qualities that were wanted in a Prime Minister, and he raised him to that high position. As Mirza Taki shared the common idea that the title of Sadr Azem, which may be granted to a Prime Minister, carried with it the evil fortune of sudden death sooner or later, he declined it when offered to him, and asked to be named Amir-i-Nizam, or Commander-in-Chief of the army, while continuing also to act as Prime Minister. He was accordingly so appointed, and afterwards was granted the further title of Amir-el-Kebir, the Great Chief. It will be seen later that his refusal of the higher title of Sadr Azem did not save him from the fate which he believed to belong to its greatness.

The Amir Nizam, as he was commonly called, was regarded by all as owing his elevation entirely to his own talent and services. He was a man altogether of a different nature from that of his countrymen in general, and it is said of him in Persia to this day that he was fully entitled to be considered an example of the noblest work of God—viz., an honest man. He overcame all the difficulties which lay in the way of the young Shah, and proceeded successfully to establish the royal power throughout the Kingdom. The Shah showed him the highest possible favour by making him his brother-in-law through marriage with his only sister, the Princess Izzat-ed-Dowleh, to whom he was much attached. This

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marriage placed him in a position of intimacy which gave greater facilities for communicating his views, and increasing his influence with the Shah. As a man of thought, intelligence, and patriotism, he voiced the aspirations of his countrymen, and explained the need and advantage of reform in the administration. He desired to relieve them from the oppression practised by the provincial governors, who bought their posts under the farming system, and robbed the Imperial Treasury as well as the people in enriching themselves and their followers. He showed that the existing system of provincial government encouraged the idea of semi-independence, and weakened the central government, while it reduced the contributions to the Imperial Treasury, contributions which, under a reformed system, could be largely increased. He went so far as to speak of a form of constitutional government, by which national deputies would aid in the much-needed reforms, and the consolidation of the Imperial power. This is gathered from popular sources of information, which further incline to the belief that the Shah was induced to adopt the views of his strong and able Prime Minister. The Amir Nizam lost no time in following up the favourable impression he had made, and having convinced the Shah that the first step in his scheme of reform was to secure a firm foundation for the work of government in a well-appointed and regularly-paid army, he proceeded to improve the military organization and the condition of the soldier, and succeeded in forming an efficient and reliable force.

The provincial governments being mostly held by relatives and favourites of the Shah (a system which still prevails), these beneficiaries were greatly alarmed when the Amir Nizam's reform proposals became known,

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and a combination was formed against him, having for its object, not only the defeat of his plans, but also his dismissal and death. There are Persians of liberal opinions who say that the traditional policy of Russia to check all reforms in the East was brought into play at Tehran with the view of the Amir Nizam's removal from office; but the action of the Russian Legation in its ill-timed, if well-meant interference afterwards on his behalf, seems to refute this suggestion. The Caucasus had then been very lately brought under nominal subjection to Russia, and was still in a state of semi-independence, and as the Mahommedan mountaineers of that region profess the same Shiah creed as the Persians, and have many ideas in common with them, it was reasonable to imagine that any form of constitutional government granted to the latter by the Shah might incite the former to prolong their long-continued struggle against the Russian power, in the hope of obtaining a large measure of home rule. But these suggestions may merely mean that the Persians wish to believe that it required some greater influence than that of a few of their own countrymen to induce the Shah to listen to the enemies whom an honest minister must ever raise against himself in a corrupt Court.

Unfortunately the Amir Nizam about that time lost the confidence of the Queen-mother, his mother-in-law, and this circumstance strengthened the hands of his enemies. Warnings against the ambitious Prime Minister, as he was represented to be, were constantly poured into the royal ear; his successes were called crimes; it was insinuated that he aimed at grasping the sceptre, and his influence with the reformed army was cited as a proof of his designs, and a cause of danger. The Shah's suspicions and fears were at length aroused,

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and as there were no means of checking the Minister's power except by removing him from office, his downfall was determined on. Thus Nasr-ed-Din came under the evil influence of designing counsellors, and consented to the dismissal, and afterwards to the death, of one who had served him faithfully, and to whom he was also much attached both as friend and brother-in-law.

It was not probable that Mirza Taki Khan, once fallen from his high estate, would have long survived this crisis in his career, for he was too real a character to be harmless, and means would doubtless have been devised to get rid of him altogether. The Shah offered him the choice of the governorships of Shiraz, Isfahan, or Kom, but he declined all. At length, however, through the mediation of Colonel Sheil, the British representative at Tehran, he was offered and accepted the small governorship of Kashan. Prince Dolgorouki, the Russian representative at the capital, was equally his friend, as he knew that sooner or later, if his life was spared, he would be recalled to power. He was too imprudent, however, in showing his friendship by taking him under the immediate protection of the Legation in such a public manner as to bear the appearance of an uncalled-for defiance of the Shah's sovereign authority. The fallen Minister's enemies took every advantage of the unfortunate mistake of this ill-timed, active interference, and the Shah's feelings of anger and resentment were so skilfully worked upon that Mirza Taki was degraded, and ordered to retire in disgrace to Kashan, under the surveillance of a military guard. But this did not satisfy his vindictive enemies; the Shah was told that if he valued the safety of his throne he must give the order for the death of the ex-Amir Nizam. Still the

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Shah could not be brought to consent to the death of an innocent man, and he was permitted to live for two months in retirement with his wife at the old palace of Feen, near Kashan. But at length his enemies prevailed and the fatal warrant was signed.

The Shah's only sister, the wife of Mirza Taki Khan, was devotedly attached to her husband, and accompanied him to Kashan, fully determined to watch over his safety by always keeping near him, for she knew that the traditional strict rule of Court etiquette against violence in the presence of a Princess would serve as a strong protection. Every day the guards took the precaution of summoning him from his rooms in order that they might make sure he had not escaped, and when he went outside to show himself his wife was in the habit of accompanying him; but after a time, seeing that this ceremony was a mere matter of form, she ceased to go forth with him, and contented herself with the precaution of testing every dish of food that was set before him. Such was the popularity of the ex-Minister that no one could be found willing to carry the death warrant into execution; but at length a man volunteered for the hideous work, promising that he would put him to death without the Princess being made aware of what was going to happen. This man was a clever, worthless adventurer, who had imposed upon the Amir Nizam, when in power, and had been lately admitted by him into the Shah's service as chief of the 'farash' (lictor) attendants, a post of some importance. He now offered, in order to show his zeal in the service of his new master, to become the executioner of his benefactor. When he appeared at Kashan, the old retainers of the fallen Minister who shared his exile were filled with joy, for they believed that one who owed his advance in life to

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their chief had been chosen to be the bearer of good news, but they were doomed to cruel disappointment. On January 9, 1852, Mirza Taki was called forth as usual by his guards, and on his appearing alone he was seized, gagged, and dragged to an adjoining bath-house. He at once saw that his fate was sealed, and with a resignation which was in keeping with the greatness of his life, he merely asked that he should be allowed to die in his own way. The request was granted, and he went into the bath, where a barber opened the principal arteries in each arm and he slowly bled to death. The young Princess, his wife, becoming alarmed at the absence of her husband, was told by the messenger from Tehran that he had gone to take a bath preparatory to putting on a robe of honour which the Shah had sent to him. She soon learnt the dreadful truth.

Thus perished by the hands of Persians the man who had done so much to regenerate Persia. He was distinguished as possessing the ability, patience, energy, and integrity required to enable a Prime Minister to conduct with success the affairs of State, and he had already stamped with the seal of his genius a new era for his country. His reforms were extremely distasteful to many persons in high position at Court, and they became his bitter enemies. Acts which should have redounded to his credit were made the charges on which he lost his office and his life. The Shah became so beset by evil reports and suspicions that at last he listened seriously to the constant cry of discontent and the insinuations of intrigue. The upright Minister fell, and an unworthy successor was appointed; the good that his predecessor had effected with so much difficulty was speedily undone; the troops were no longer paid until after long periods of entreaty; peculation again was

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practised openly in every department of the administration, and bribery and corruption became the rule.

The shocking fate of Mirza Taki Khan excited the greatest horror in Europe, and the Shah and his new Prime Minister had to listen to indignant expressions of regret called forth from foreign Governments by the barbarous sentence which had been executed at Kashan. Then followed the hour of remorse. When too late, the Shah realized the irreparable loss he had sustained, and, desiring to honour the memory of the great Minister, he caused his two infant daughters to be betrothed to his own two sons, one of them being Mozuffer-ed-Din, the late Shah. It was said that Nasr-ed-Din, in his grief, resolved to observe every anniversary of the death of his brother-in-law, Mirza Taki, as a day of humiliation. Writing in 1858, Mr. Watson, in his 'Supplementary History of Persia,' from which part of the foregoing subject-matter has been taken, says: 'Each year that has passed since the death of Mirza Taki Khan has added to his fame by showing how vain is the expectation of finding another Vazir capable of continuing the work of reform which was begun by him. The short period of his administration is now looked back upon as the golden era of modern Persia, and his name lives in the memory of all.'

The tragedy of Mirza Taki Khan's death put an end to all talk of administrative reform for some time, but it was resumed in 1889, after Shah Nasr-ed-Din's return to Persia from his third visit to Europe, when he was so well received in England. His Prime Minister at that time was Mirza Ali Asghar Khan, a man of strong character and great ability, who was known to hold advanced views regarding an improved system of government, and who had influence enough to induce the Shah

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to discuss in a general sense the advantage of reform. But the subject never passed beyond the talking stage, and it came to be a habit with the Shah to discuss reforms in his morning hours of business, and to forget all about them in the afternoon. He found ease in ruling through one Minister, the Grand Vazir, but the work of the Central Government was thus reduced to a very small compass, resulting in a bad system which threw greater power in the hands of the provincial governors and caused much maladministration. The sentiment attaching to Nasr-ed-Din's long reign, its general peaceful character, and his pleasant manner created a popularity which kept down any strong expression of the spirit of Liberalism that in the meantime was steadily spreading among the people. This new feeling manifested itself quietly in a desire for greater freedom and fair play in the work of life, and relief from the evils of farming out and selling the provincial governments and posts. While it seemed, however, that Nasr-ed-Din was protected by popular sentiment against overt disturbance of his rule, yet it was known that a movement, having for its object the limiting of autocratic government, was only lying dormant until his death. But an event in 1892 showed how powerless he was against the people, and very nearly precipitated revolutionary action against his absolute monarchy. This was the imposition of the Tobacco Monopoly, which, by its arbitrary proceedings, roused the deep discontent of the whole country, and resulted in the discomfiture of the Shah and his Government. The success of the people in this struggle was greatly due to the leadership of the Moullas, who at that time were viewing with alarm the spread of Liberalism, which they foresaw was likely to develop a force that would seriously affect their old supremacy. Accordingly,

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they seized the opportunity, which this occasion offered, to champion a popular cause, and to recover some of the influence they had lost. The cancelment of the Tobacco Monopoly Concession cost the country half a million sterling for compensation, and in order to pay this sum, Persia, for the first time in her history, appeared in the money-market of the West as a borrower. The people were too pleased with their escape from dear tobacco—an article which among them is regarded as a necessary of life—to pay much attention to what was said of the loan, and appeared to look upon it merely as another of the many excuses which their rulers were in the habit of making for raising money. It was sufficient for the present to them that they could continue to smoke the tobacco of their choice without fear of having to lessen or lose the enjoyment of that simple luxury.

The assassination of Shah Nasr-ed-Din in May, 1896, while in the pious act of bowing low in reverence on passing within the famous shrine and sanctuary of Shah Abdul Azim, near Tehran, sent a shock of horror throughout Persia; and the fact that the crime was committed by one of their own faith intensified the feeling of execration in the minds of the impressionable Persians. The crime was generally regarded as a sacrilege, both with regard to the life which was taken and the sanctuary it violated, and its abhorrence for a time strengthened what it was intended to end or weaken—viz., the influence and power of the Kajar dynasty. The accession of the new Shah, Mozuffer-ed-Din, was peaceful, notwithstanding the fears of some that opposition would appear. It was the first time with the Kajar dynasty that the Heir Apparent found no rival in his path to the throne, and the fullest credit was given in Persia and Europe to the Prime Minister, Ali Asghar Khan (well known as Amin-

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es-Sultan), for having, by his strong will, resolute character, and prompt action at this critical time, saved the country from disorder. The new Shah recognized his loyalty to the Crown, and fidelity to himself, by retaining him in office as Grand Vazir—an act of appointment which gave great general satisfaction. It is almost unnecessary to say that the assassination of Shah Nasr-ed-Din was in no way connected with the reform movement. It was apparently the act of a mad enthusiast who belonged to the religious party in Constantinople which advocated the establishment of one Church and one creed in Islam by a union of Suni and Shiah. He was possessed with the idea that the Shah, as sovereign head of the Shiah faith, stood in the way of this union, and he said he was chosen to do the deed of murder.

For a second time a great tragedy checked the progress of reform. Those who had waited for the close of Nasr-ed-Din's reign before taking further steps in that direction were, in common with the whole people, deeply touched by one of the saddest events that had ever happened in Persia—viz., the murder within the sanctuary precincts of their old monarch, who was about to celebrate the jubilee of his reign, and they were content to wait for what the new reign might bring forth. They soon were given hope in Shah Mozuffer-ed-Din's expression of appreciation of the domestic needs of his country, and determination to abolish the system of selling the provincial governments and posts to the highest bidders. But at the same time there were rumours of a change of Prime Minister, which seemed to point to delay in reform.

Shah Mozuffer-ed-Din was sincere in his desire to keep the Sadr Azem, Ali Asghar Khan, in office, and to maintain in high honour the Grand Vazir, who had rendered

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him signal service at a most critical time, but being of weak character he was much influenced in all affairs by the courtiers who had attached themselves to his service at Tabriz, before he came to the throne, in the hope of some day reaping their reward at Tehran. These, from long association with him, occupied much of his time, and often took complete possession of his judgment. They became his irresponsible advisers, and being greedy and presumptuous in pursuit of personal advantage, they sometimes interfered beyond endurance in affairs of State. It was not likely, in the nature of things in Persia, that this powerful Court party which surrounded the Shah would be long friendly to a Grand Vazir of such independent character as Ali Asghar Khan, and their jealousy and envy at last brought about his fall. There can be no doubt he would then have gone the usual way of all fallen Grand Vazirs, had he not been protected by influential friendly representations which secured for him permission to live quietly in exile at Kom. He was succeeded in office by his old rival, the Amin-ed-Dowleh, a minister of considerable experience of State affairs, and well known for his enlightened views and honesty of purpose. He prepared a fairly practical scheme of administrative reform, and proposed to draw up a regular budget, which should set forth the actual revenue and expenditure of the country. But, excellent as were his intentions, he had not the force of purpose to carry them through, and he in turn fell from power in 1898, as had his predecessor, Ali Asghar Khan, who now, after twenty-one months of retirement at Kom, was called back to the capital and reappointed Grand Vazir. He had tasted the bitterness of adversity after long enjoyment of the sweets of power, and he came determined to occupy as long as possible the high office

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to which he had been called a second time. This was the first instance in Persian history of a fallen Grand Vazir's return to power, as hitherto death had almost always attended downfall.

The Amin-ed-Dowleh, as a first step in his policy, had arranged for an English loan of one and a quarter million sterling to pay off some smaller loans bearing high interest, settle arrears of pay due to officials and the troops, and provide the Treasury with a small working balance; but at the last moment the Court party and Ministers related to the Royal House made such extravagant demands that the loan amount was raised to two millions. Failure to secure this increased loan caused his downfall, and Ali Asghar Khan was then recalled to take his place. He also failed to get the two million loan from England, but succeeded in obtaining it from Russia. He availed himself of the services of M. Naus, a Belgian official lent by that Government, whom his predecessor had engaged as State financial adviser, and with his assistance effected the valuable reform of the Customs, which nearly doubled the payments to the Imperial Treasury, and fully provided for the interest of the Russian loan. He was contemplating further reforms when, in 1900, the Shah made his first visit to Europe. This visit was a long one, and its expenses formed a heavy charge to the State. It was popularly supposed that the Shah Nasr-ed-Din, who was originally of a frugal nature, had hoarded great wealth, but during the latter years of his reign his old habits of economy seemed to have deserted him, and, so far from adding to his hoard, he drew largely from it. Doubtless his great overgrown domestic establishments had produced the change from economy to extravagance. The son, Mozuffer-ed-Din, accordingly found his inheritance

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to be far short of his anticipations. The accession to the throne always involves heavy expenditure, and the new monarch soon spent the comparatively small amount that remained in the Palace Treasury, after rewarding in a lavish manner the services rendered to him whilst he was Heir Apparent, and those of his father's entourage, whose powerful influence was indispensable to a peaceful succession.

A second visit to Europe was made in 1902, when again considerable sums had to be provided for heavy Court expenses, and a further Russian loan was contracted. As on the previous occasion, the journey was nominally for purposes of health, but the expenses incurred were said to be more often in keeping with the ways of a merry monarch than an invalid. The Prime Minister, Ali Asghar, notwithstanding the high title of Atabeg-i-Azem and the rank of Highness which the Shah had granted him on his restoration to royal favour, soon discovered that he was not the powerful minister he had been before his exile. He found himself hampered and harassed by the Court party, and was forced to look for support from the Russian Legation, which had it in their power to control his enemies. Mozuffer-ed-Din's weak health had become chronic, and developed in him a strong aversion from public business and energetic action which enabled the Court party to exercise much power and patronage in his name. The Atabeg tried to conciliate this powerful Court party, but found the conditions incompatible with his position, and at length in 1903, becoming weary of their arrogant pretensions and ceaseless intrigues, he resigned, after a second term of office lasting four and a half years. On this occasion there was no doubt of his personal safety, and he was allowed ample time to arrange his private affairs, and prepare for

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a journey round the world, which was to end with the pilgrimage to Mecca. He carried out this plan successfully, travelling first to Moscow and by the Siberian railway to Vladivostock, thence to Pekin and Tokio, where he was well received. From Japan he voyaged to San Francisco, and after a short stay in the United States came to Europe, and went on to Cairo and Jeddah. From the last-mentioned place he made the pilgrimage to Mecca and Medina, returning viâ Damascus and Constantinople. Since that time he has lived quietly in Europe. His Highness the Atabeg-i-Azem, Mirza Ali Asghar Khan, is a fine example of a 'man of the people,' with whom he was deservedly popular. He understood their feelings, and was well able to interpret their minds to his royal master. He may yet be heard of in his country's service.

It had been the unchanging policy of the Shahs from ancient times to take their Grand Vazirs and many of their principal functionaries from the lower ranks of life, as being more likely, from feelings of gratitude and dependence, to preserve their allegiance, than those of the higher class who, at the call of ambition, might act against them. This principle, which excluded members of the Royal House, had always been observed in the choice of a Prime Minister until the resignation of Ali Asghar Khan in 1903, when the Ain-ed-Dowleh, a kinsman of the Shah, was appointed to succeed him. He evidently was the nominee of the Court party, who had come to find their power equal to making and unmaking Grand Vazirs. Their interests being closely concerned in the existing system of provincial government, they were violently opposed to any reform in that direction. At that time (1904), of the twenty-nine provincial governors in Persia, twelve were princes of

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the royal family and relatives of the Shah, and five were favourite chamberlains and attendants. Some of these remained at Court, and ruled their provinces through deputies, who added to the burden of taxation laid upon the people. Shah Mozuffer-ed-Din, at the beginning of his reign, had expressed his intention to abolish the existing system, but no energetic action was taken to that end. The reform movement, however, was kept alive by the Shah's promise, and by hopes from each Grand Vazir as he assumed office. The Ain-ed-Dowleh, whose appointment marked the fourth change of Prime Minister in Mozuffer-ed-Din's reign of seven years up to that time, was a statesman of strong character and good ability, who had shown signs of being a determined reformer. He had much influence with the Shah through his relationship and personal qualities, and with this support there were great expectations that he would be able to overcome all opposition to his avowed policy of reform in the financial and provincial administration. He likewise shared the confidence of his predecessors in M. Naus, the Belgian financial adviser, and put into force his scheme to examine the pension lists of the provincial governments, which are a fruitful source of heavy loss to the State. Touching as this did the individual interests of an army of officials, Court favourites, and drones, there arose a great cry against the Grand Vazir, who headed the party of progress, and such was the strength and influence of the opposition to his policy of reform, that he was constrained to abandon it; and then, finding his personal interests threatened, he made a complete surrender of his advanced views, and became as reactionary as he had been progressive.

The Shah made another visit to Europe in 1905, his third in nine years, and as the Treasury was empty,

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another small loan was contracted to meet the expenses of the journey and other 'extraordinary' State requirements. In the meanwhile the popular discontent was increasing, and local committees at provincial centres openly discussed reforms and means for curbing the arbitrary power of the Government. An indication of public impatience with the autocracy was given after the Shah's return from Europe, by the refusal of the people of Shiraz to receive back as their governor His Imperial Highness Shoa-es-Sultaneh, second and favourite son of His Majesty, who had left his province for some time in charge of a deputy, and resided at the capital. The alleged reason for their action was maladministration, and on hearing of the Prince's departure from Tehran to resume his charge, the bazars of Shiraz were closed as a demonstration against his return. The Shah recognized the danger of the situation, and recalled his son from Kom, when so far on his way south. About the same time the people of Resht, chief town of the Caspian Province of Ghilan, raised a similar clamour against the return of their governor, His Imperial Highness, Azad-es-Sultan, fourth son of the Shah, who had been absent for some time at Tehran, but they eventually consented to receive him on certain conditions being complied with. The unpopularity of the Ain-ed-Dowleh as Grand Vazir was openly declared at the capital, where he was accused of acting in the interests of the princes, and against those of the people, and they loudly demanded his dismissal. In answer to the popular cry, the Shah removed him from office in August last, and appointed in his place the Mushir-ed-Dowleh (the fifth change of Grand Vazir in ten years), who had been for many years Minister for Foreign Affairs, and the right-hand man of more than one Prime

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Minister. The people suspected the continued stay of the Ain-ed-Dowleh at or near Tehran as influencing the Shah towards reactionary measures, and they persistently demanded that he should be sent to some distant place. The Shah again yielded to the popular cry, and the ex-Grand Vazir retired to Meshed, in Khorasan. Thus, just as the Grand Vazir, Ali Asghar Khan, the 'man of the people,' was driven from office and into exile by the Court, so was his successor, the Prince Prime Minister, Ain-ed-Dowleh, similarly treated by the people, when they realized their power to coerce the Court.

In 1906 the discontent with the Government became general, the popular telephone was at work throughout the land; and what was before whispered was now spoken aloud. Tabriz, the second city in the kingdom and capital of Azerbaijan, its most important province, led the way in popular agitation, and showed an alarming readiness for extreme action. The people of Azerbaijan are noted for their sturdy independence, and the district has always furnished excellent soldiers. The spirited resistance of the Tabrizis in 1892 to the Tobacco Monopoly, of which mention has already been made, was the flame which kindled the burning indignation of the whole country against that obnoxious measure. The Moullas now again joined the popular movement, showing a sympathy with the cause of liberty which was hardly to be expected from a class who generally are determined opponents to progress. This sympathy between religion and liberty is also observed in the Persian pilgrims to the holy places of Islam, of whom the numbers are yearly increasing owing to improved means of transit. Their long journeys and protracted absence from home demand intelligence and independence, resolution and energy, and they may always be

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regarded as superior to the ordinary crowd. Travelling as they do through Russian and Turkish territory, they have many opportunities of seeing the conditions of life there; and whatever may be said against the administrations of Russia and Turkey, the observing Persian pilgrims seem to find much that is good in both, and which they regret not to find in their country. They express their opinions freely when they return home, and make comparisons which are unfavourable to their own Government. Similarly, other Persians, engaged in business which takes them in great numbers to many trade centres in Russia and Turkey, where flourishing colonies of their countrymen have long been established, make the same observations. It is not that the condition of the peasantry and labouring classes in Persia is very bad, but the system of Government prevents them bettering it. The tendency is to stifle enterprise among the lower classes, who cannot pay to secure exemption from the tax collector's grasping anticipations.

The ordinary Persian abroad is a wonderfully different person from what he seems to be at home. Thus, for example, the observant traveller may note that Baku swarms with Persians, resident and migratory; he will see them everywhere—as shopkeepers, mechanics, masons, carpenters, coachmen, carters, and contract labourers, all in a bustle of business—so different from Persians at home. A sense of insecurity makes them indolent and apathetic in Persia, but out of it they show themselves active, energetic, and very intelligent. They are in great numbers at many commercial centres in the adjoining countries—at Constantinople, Damascus, Aleppo, Baghdad, Tiflis, Askhabad, and other towns. Most of the new buildings in Tiflis were built by Persians, and thousands were engaged in the construction of the

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Trans-Caspian railway. The permanent workmen now employed on it are largely Persian, and Askhabad has a resident population of over 12,000. There were said to be 20,000 from the provinces of Azerbaijan and Hamadan working on the new railway from Tiflis to Alexandropol, Kars, and the Persian frontier, and doubtless many of them will permanently settle on the line. Pilgrims, traders, town colonists, workmen, and others with experience of foreign travel and residence, who in the usual course find their way home to all parts of the country, unconsciously form a great natural organization for the spread of Liberalism, as they tell of a better condition of things which might be theirs in Persia. Shah Nasr-ed-Din was opposed to youths of the influential families being educated in Europe, as he foresaw they would return in disagreement with the severe Conservatism of old Persia; and it may be said that this generally does happen. Some, however, were sent to Germany, France, and England, during his reign by permission being obtained through powerful patrons. But they were few in comparison with the number who now go, for the late Shah was in favour of the practice as leading to advanced education. He also encouraged the enlightenment of the people, by giving freedom to the native press, and modifying the censorship on certain Persian newspapers, of advanced opinions, which are published in Calcutta, Cairo, Constantinople, and London, and transmitted to Persia. Through these means, direct and indirect, the people of late years have become better informed on many points, and more prepared to take interest and part in a reform movement which promises to give them an improved system of government.

After some street affrays in Tehran, between the Court partisans and the people last year, the old form of passive resistance, by taking sanctuary, was resorted to

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by the representative reform party. It has been said that Persia is attracted to England by her hopes, and driven to Russia by her fears; and on this occasion she was guided by her hopes, for over 13,000 of the principal inhabitants of Tehran took refuge at the British Legation as a protest against the refusal of the Shah to grant certain administrative reforms. The Persians have always known England as the 'land of the free,' and they said they sought asylum in the Legation of the 'land of liberty.' Such a state of things at the capital was unprecedented, and the Shah, who was greatly affected by its publicity, after repeated promises and procrastination, finally granted the constitution demanded. Mozuffer-ed-Din's health, which had long been bad, was then in a very precarious state, but he struggled with adverse circumstances, and showed anxiety to satisfy the legitimate desires of the people before he died, for he was said to be at heart a liberal. The Heir Apparent had been summoned from Tabriz, and was associated with him in the grant of the Constitution. On January 8 Shah Mozuffer-ed-Din passed away, after a long and lingering illness, and his son, Mohamed Ali, succeeded him, without any trouble beyond that of an empty treasury. But there soon followed the demand by the National Assembly that he should declare himself a constitutional monarch; and after some temporizing he formally accepted the Constitution, thus stripping himself of autocratic power.

The mother of the new Shah is the Princess Am-ol-Khakan, daughter of the murdered Amir-el-Kebir (Mirza Taki Khan) and his wife, the Princess Izzat-ed-Dowleh, sister of Nasr-ed-Din Shah. Thus he is the grandson, on the maternal side, of the Great Minister, the first reformer in modern Persia, and the people, in their natural quick manner, may well say that the spirit,

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which led him, in association with his father the late Shah a few days before his death, to sign the deed of constitution, will strengthen him to carry into effect the reforms for which his mother's father died. He has the people on his side, for they affect to believe that as his father was, so is he, a Liberal at heart, and is glad to see the Constitution established. He will require their fullest support, for it can hardly be expected that the various parties which have hitherto fattened on the old systems of arbitrary government will submit quietly to extinction. It is reported that public opinion at Tehran inclines to the belief that after some trials and disappointments good will come out of the radical change, and the new Government will prove a success. It is said that in the concert of hope and optimism there regarding the future of the country, only one discordant note has been heard, and that was from an Imperial Prince, who remarked that the dynasty (Kajar) was not made to govern in such conditions; that the Constitutional system was excellent for Europe, but was not suited for Asia, and it was absurd to think of it for Persia. This Prince is likely to find his provincial Government work much changed when the new system is introduced, which will probably be after the festival of Nauroz, the Persian new year, March 21.

The National Assembly is said, so far, to be composed of a majority of comparatively ignorant deputies, and a minority of well-informed; but it should be borne in mind, with reference to the former, that the Persian is the most shrewd of all Orientals, and they therefore may acquit themselves passably well in their representative character. Already this Assembly, in spite of ignorance and administrative inexperience, seems to have obtained a strange influence over the Ministers and the Shah, who accept its demands and decisions with wonderful

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amiability. The natural disposition of the Persians is docile, and we find in their history no terrible details of sanguinary popular tumults. Sir Robert Ker Porter, who travelled in Persia in 1817-1818, wrote of them: 'Their bland docility of mind, so amiable to a certain point, and dangerous beyond it, makes the Persians, of all people, the easiest to govern; the State revolutions, so often occurring in this country, have not been those of the people, nor over the people, but the result of struggles between different claimants for the Crown.' It may be said of this reform movement in Persia that a long continuance of maladministration at last drove the people beyond the bounds of 'bland docility,' and made them dangerous. It has been suggested that the movement sprang from recent events in Russia; but while it probably was stimulated by them, and the assurance that that Power was too heavily engaged with her own internal affairs to allow of interference in the domestic affairs of another country, yet there is good reason to believe that the reform party had been active in Persia for some time before the Russian troubles began.

Sir Robert Porter showed a clear insight into the cause of the decline of Persia, when, after reciting her past glories, he wrote: 'How, then, are we to account for the Empire of Persia having been so great, and yet it has hardly ever appeared to exist as a nation? How that, in the midst of trophies and spoils, the country has ever been poor? and in the meridian of victory the hearts of the people have quailed for fear? The answer seems plain to an Englishman; Persia has always been under an arbitrary Government. The people, feeling themselves nothing as a people, have been nothing as a people, but good soldiers when called upon, though always the soldiers of him who feeds or pays them. Having no political constitution to defend, it was all one

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to them whether they fought the battles of Shah Thamas or Nadir Shah.' But a great political change has now taken place; the old arbitrary Government has given way to a constitutional one, without violent disturbance or disorder, and the new Government, by giving the Persian people a Constitution to defend, may create a patriotism which will render foreign conquest, or acquisition of their country, a less easy task than it has hitherto seemed. It may serve a good purpose to repeat here what Lord Salisbury said to Shah Nasr-ed-Din, on the occasion of his visit to England in 1889. 'We desire above all things that Persia shall not only be prosperous, but be strong—strong in her resources, strong in her preparations, strong in her alliances, in order that she may pursue the peaceful path on which she has entered in security and tranquillity.'

DISCUSSION

The CHAIRMAN said: I think there can be only one opinion as to the value of the paper we have just heard read. Sir Thomas Gordon has unfolded to us a remarkable history and perhaps. the most pathetic incident in that history is the fate which befel Mirza Taki Khan, the great Minister who led the vanguard of reform. But the most curious thing—which must have struck all of us—is the leadership of the Mullas as the champions of the popular cause, because in Eastern countries we do not usually associate the priesthood with aspirations for liberty. A very interesting summary of the new Constitution was published a few days ago in the *Times*, and I may invite your attention to some of the leading features of this remarkable document. It comprises fifty-one articles, and the first eleven of these deal with the constitution of the National Council under the late Shah's decree of August last. The Council is to represent 'the whole people of Persia, who all participate in the domestic and political affairs of the country.' The number of members is limited for the present to 162, but is to be raised in case of need to 200, and the election is for two full years. Article 15 gives the National Council a right to 'propose what-

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ever may be deemed to the interest of the Empire'; and the four succeeding articles provide for the full control by the National Council over the organization of the Government and the affairs of the State, and especially over financial matters and internal administration. Articles 22 to 26 enact that the sanction of the National Council must be obtained for any territorial changes, for the alienation of any part of the revenues or property of the State, for all concessions of every kind, for Government loans, whether internal or external, and for railway or road construction. Only treaties which have to be kept secret in the interests of the State are excepted from these provisions. Articles 43, 44, and 45 relate to the creation of a Senate, consisting of sixty members, thirty being appointed on behalf of the Shah (fifteen from the capital and fifteen from the provinces), and thirty elected on behalf of the National Council in the same proportion. Other articles relate to the respective duties of the Senate and the National Council and their relations towards each other. The concluding article commands future rulers to preserve these 'principles and articles,' which are declared to be put into operation 'in order to fortify the Government, to strengthen the Sovereign, to safeguard the administration of justice and the tranquillity of the nation.' The practical question for us this afternoon is, What are the prospects of the stability of this Constitution, so admirably framed and so far-reaching in its provisos? Many forces will be working against it, and perhaps those who follow me in the discussion will indicate their opinion on the chances of its success.

Sir Lepel Griffin said: The remarks I have to make are not in criticism of the paper, for as it stands it is complete, and gives us a most accurate picture of the progress of reform in Persia during the last half-century. There is no one in England to-day, I believe, who could have given us the history so admirably and so exactly as General Gordon has done. My object is to respond to the invitation of the chairman, and express my views as to the prospects of the future. General Gordon has in the most interesting way shown the various steps by which the present situation has arisen, and I must confess that the result seems to me somewhat strange and disconcerting We regard the slow geological processes of Nature with respectful, though with somewhat languid, interest; but when those processes culminate in an earthquake we are naturally somewhat disturbed. There has been a political earthquake in Persia, and

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no one who knows that country at all well can prophesy with certainty what the result will be. Representative government has proved a failure in the greater part of the world, and has only been a very moderate success even in England. Is Persia going to be the one country of the East in which representative institutions are to be successful? I hardly think so (Hear, hear). The new Persian Assembly, or Parliament, is proceeding, it seems to me, in the same reckless, turbulent, and intolerant manner as was shown by the first Duma in St. Petersburg, and it may meet with a similar termination. It may, on the other hand—and we all hope it will—be fruitful of some good and some advantage for Persia generally. The other day there was a very clever and interesting article in the *Times* on the Constitution, the main features of which have just been indicated to us by General Collen. That article, written by a high authority, appeared to me to be somewhat too optimistic. We do not expect figs to grow from thistles, and representative institutions in Persia I shall view with distrust until I see some sign of this botanical curiosity taking place. However, there is one incidental good result of the present situation. The statesman who has twice held office as Prime Minister, Ali Asghar Khan, the Atabeg, of whom General Gordon spoke at some length, has been summoned to Tehran, it is said; but, like spirits from the vasty deep, it is very uncertain whether he will return. I hope sincerely he will. He is a man of great force of character, but he will find it a very different thing to govern Persia to-day, under this new Constitution, to what it was when he left the country a few years ago. He is not at all likely to tamely submit to the domination and tyranny of an Assembly which now holds the entire power in its hands and leaves nothing to the Shah, except, perhaps, the condescended privilege of regulating the rules for his zenana (Laughter). The optimistic spirit which characterized the *Times* article was, I think, a little premature. One element of hope, however, is that the Governments of England and Russia have at last, after a great many years' battling vainly and without result against each other, determined to act in accord in Persia. This is as it should be. The two Powers acting in concert may bring a wholesome influence to bear on the administration of Persia under the new conditions. Although we do not expect to see much influence for liberty proceeding from Russia, I hope that English influence will be in the direction of leading the machinery of Government

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into more reasonable channels than the new Constitution, exceedingly able though it be, seems to forebode (Hear, hear).

COLONEL SIR THOMAS HOLDICH said: My own acquaintance with Persia is not very intimate, and I should like to ask one question. Persia is, no doubt, more homogeneous than India; there are not so many divergent, almost discordant, national elements to deal with. Still, the divergence is very considerable. There is quite enough of it to make the National Assembly, drawn from all parts of the country, a very lively Assembly indeed. I should like to ask Sir Thomas whether it is really representative—whether, for instance, the Kurds of Western Persia are represented in it by a Kurd, and whether the Baluchis on the extreme south-east are represented by a Baluchi? The point is of some practical importance in view of the new accord referred to by Sir Lepel Griffin as existing between Great Britain and Russia. If we are to keep ourselves to Southern Persia, while Russia keeps herself to Northern Persia, it is a matter of some importance that the various races of the South should be properly represented in the new Assembly. I gathered from the lecture that, on the whole, the impelling movement towards reform had come from the North—that the people of Azerbaijan led the way in popular agitation. I would like to know whether that province has secured more numerical power in proportion than is the case with the southern provinces (Hear, hear).

MR. HART-DAVIES, M.P., said: I have very much appreciated the lecture, which is certainly one of the most interesting we have ever had. The question of the stability or otherwise of the new form of administration is one of very great importance for us. If this constitutional Parliament does turn out a success, we shall have to revise all our ideas of the East. We have always thought that in Oriental lands there could be no such thing as constitutional government, and hitherto those lands have never evolved any form of government except that of a despotism. If this experiment succeeds, the effect on our position in India will be very great; it will raise hopes there that we shall find it exceedingly difficult to accept to the full. My own ideas of Persia are somewhat antiquated, as I have not been there for many years now; but, like other travellers, I like the Persians, and feel that under good government they would be a great people. The Persian reform movement seems to me part of a general spirit of political unrest manifesting itself

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throughout the East. When I was in Russia last year, I found that one of the first proposals made by the Mahommedans of a certain province in connection with the creation of the Duma was that female suffrage should be granted (Laughter). They asked for a change which has yet to be secured even in England. When we see such a spirit manifesting itself in the East, it strengthens the hope we all entertain that the world is marching on towards something better. I am sure that the aspirations of the Persians for political liberty will receive all the sympathy they can possibly have from the people of England (Cheers).

Mr. W. Irvine said: I should like to support what has fallen from Sir Lepel Griffin. Any close student of the history of the East must be extremely sceptical as to the permanence of popular institutions started in Persia under the Constitution the chairman has outlined. It is a truism that State institutions and constitutions grow, and cannot be established suddenly. They must grow from small beginnings, and become part of the life of the people, before they have any chance of success. If study of the past history of a people is of any use in predicting the future, one is forced to the conclusion that such institutions have no chance of success in the East as we know it and have known it. As has been pointed out, if there is success in this experiment it will have the most far-reaching consequences. In fact, we shall have to reconsider entirely the basis of our political belief in the East as to what can be done by, and what we must still continue to do for, the people we govern. As to the paper, I must say that I see nothing in all the story told us leading up naturally to the grant of a constitution of fifty-one paragraphs. The course of events in the last fifty years, as summarized by the lecturer, was of the usual Oriental order. There were the attempts of honest ministers to secure better administration, but this was to be obtained under the old Oriental type of despotic power. There was no connection that I could trace between the events narrated and the grant of constitutional government; the one did not lead up to the other in the ordinary way of natural development. I do not see how this clever constitution of the European type—constructed, I should think, by Europeans —is going to stand. The mere fact that it was decreed between sunset one day and sunrise the next almost takes one's breath away. Who could expect anything of that kind to take place in an Oriental country as we have hitherto known such countries?

General Sir Thomas Gordon, in replying on the discussion,

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said: The only point to which I need refer is the question of Sir Thomas Holdich as to the representation of Kurds and Baluchis in the new Assembly. I do not know at present the personal composition of the Assembly, but I saw in a late report allusion made to the presence in Tehran of one of the principal tribal chiefs. I take him to be chief of the powerful Shah sevend nomads, whose pasture-lands extend from Zinjan to the neighbourhood of Tehran. He was reported to be in favour of a constitutional government, and a government of Ministers who would be responsible to the representatives of the people. Now this remark is in keeping with the ancient system of government from the early stages of tribal power and life in Persia. The chiefs of the tribes which went thither from Central Asia were as the heads of primitive republics. They sat in open Council surrounded by their tribesmen-subjects. To this day the Arab sheikhs, who have not been gathered entirely into the fold of Turkey, govern their tribes in the same way. The nomads of Persia, unlike the settled population, have been under the control of the central Government in only a limited degree. They have had to pay taxes upon the lands they casually tilled and upon their flocks and herds, but this is done through their own chiefs, and thus they have not suffered the oppression that lay so heavily upon the settled population. No doubt, in drawing up the Constitution, the Government had to consider the feelings of the nomads, who number altogether, I think, between one and two millions, including as they do the Kurds of the north and the Bakhtiaris of the west. The hand of the latter has often been against the central Government, because a famous chief of theirs was put to death in the most barbarous and treacherous manner by Nasr-ed-Din. In the south are the Baluchis and various Turk and Arab nomad tribes, more or less warlike. The Government has always been somewhat afraid of the strong nomad tribes, because of their natural system of military organization, which teaches them to turn out, well armed and roughly disciplined, at short notice ready for combined action. I have no doubt that it will be the policy of the Government to attract to the Assembly representatives of the various tribes to which I have referred. In each case, I should say, the representatives would be nominated by the chiefs and the leaders of tribal public opinion. What measures in that direction have already been taken I do not know.

Sir Lepel Griffin: We have no definite information at

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present. I do not think that tribal representatives have come in from the south.

The CHAIRMAN, in concluding the proceedings, said: I think we are indebted to those who have taken part in this informing discussion. The experiment—for it is an experiment—of which we have been speaking is an extraordinary and bold one. Whether the Shah will be well or ill-advised, now he has accepted the Constitution, to further its aims and practically support its principles appears to be a rather moot point. My own humble opinion is that if the Shah is wise in his generation he will see the necessity for abiding by the Constitution, which will, no doubt, be modified in the course of time—because it is likely to lead to increased prosperity, and to the strengthening of his own position and dynasty. It certainly should have our goodwill, for better government in Persia means greater security to India and the extension of commerce, while in the cause of humanity and civilization we should especially welcome this new departure. It may, of course, fail, and much must depend upon the moderation and restraint exercised by all concerned. Let us hope, however, that it will succeed. There is at least this to be said: that, as Sir Lepel Griffin pointed out, the present moment is a propitious one, because Russia and England are, we may hope, approaching a point when agreement may be possible on many vexed questions in Eastern affairs, which have interfered with the good relations of these two Powers for some time past. As regards ourselves, I hope and trust it is an earnest of the way in which we shall be regarded as the friends of Persia under the new order of things that the first outburst of this popular movement was marked, as Sir Thomas Gordon has told us, by the phenomenon of 13,000 reformers taking refuge at the British Legation in Tehran. We at least can wish the new order of things every success, and encourage it by all legitimate means, for we as a nation desire to see the amelioration of the condition of the Persian people, the establishment of a strong and settled Government, and the peace and prosperity of the country. It now only remains for me to ask you to accord a very hearty vote of thanks to Sir Thomas Gordon for his admirable and instructive paper (Cheers).

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OCT 23 1918

PROCEEDINGS OF THE CENTRAL ASIAN SOCIETY

IMPRESSIONS OF THE DUAB (RUSSIAN TURKESTAN)

BY

W. RICKMER RICKMERS

Read March 27, 1907

LONDON
CENTRAL ASIAN SOCIETY, 22, ALBEMARLE STREET, W.
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IMPRESSIONS OF THE DUAB (RUSSIAN TURKESTAN)

BY

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IMPRESSIONS OF THE DUAB (RUSSIAN TURKESTAN)

The Chairman, Lieutenant-General Sir Edwin Collen, said: In introducing the lecturer I think it will be of interest to mention that Mr. Rickmers is a partner in a well-known firm at Samarkand. Although we cannot claim him as a countryman, his grandfather, the founder of the great shipping firm, was a British subject, being born in Heligoland, one hundred years ago, and Mr. Rickmers himself is connected by marriage with one whose memory is still revered in India—I speak of Dr. Alexander Duff. For many years past Mr. Rickmers has travelled in the Caucasus and in Western Turkestan, mainly, I gather, on business, but also in exploration of those mountainous regions. Last year, Mr. Rickmers, accompanied by Mrs. Rickmers and an Austrian lady, made his way up the Valley of the Zarafshan River, and traversed the Alai Pamir and Eastern Bokhara, taking over a thousand photographs to illustrate the features of the country. He is to speak to us this afternoon of the Duab of Russian Turkestan. For the benefit of those who, perhaps, have not been in India, I may explain that the Duab means 'two rivers,' or, as we use the phrase, the land between two rivers. In India, of course, when the word 'Duab' is mentioned we think of the Punjab Duab, or the Duab between the Ganges and the Jumna. I shall not forestall Mr. Rickmers by mentioning the two rivers, the country between which he is about to describe to us.

I believe that the chief *raison d'être* of this Society is the discussion of the political aspect of Central Asian affairs. This belief induced me to resign my membership before I started for Russia. The fact that this resignation was taken in good part by the committee, and that I

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have been invited to read a paper, sufficiently proves that I have here to do with cool and clear-headed people, whose opinion on the recent *rapprochement* between Russia and England must be extremely valuable, seeing that Central Asia is the region where the frontiers of the two countries touch.

Though I listen with attention and interest to any discussion *pro* or *con*, I must myself refrain from expressing definite political views, many of which would also be against the feeling of this country. As a German subject, I dare not utter criticisms of this country's politics; I might not be considered impartial. Those who know me here, know that I am a friend of the English people; those who know me in Russia are sufficiently convinced that I am a true admirer of the Russian people. You are doubtless aware that the population of this island is divided into two types, the disagreeable Englishman and the agreeable Englishman; the latter being in a very large majority. Exactly the same in Russia. During my intercourse with these delightful majorities, I have discovered that there is not much difference between them; the human foundation is the same, and the differences are mainly words. Moreover, I have my own axe to grind. We can depend upon it that anyone who is quietly grinding his axe may add to his own prosperity, but he will surely advance the prosperity of the country in which he works. Such a man fights shy of politics. He believes that they are the private affairs of the governments; he gives his vote, be it the unconscious vote of his character and his work, be it the conscious vote of the ballot-box. Discussion he leaves to professional politicians, or to those who have nothing else to do.

Especially in Russia. Whoever has scientific or

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business aims in that country should drop politics. He cannot do any good to himself and his work; he can only do harm to himself and to others. I like to travel and work in Russia, but I shall ever be blind, deaf, and dumb as regards her political and military matters. Those who are the guests of a country should be very careful of hurting the feelings of the host. The traveller in Russian Turkestan had better resist the temptation to put stuffing into his book by posing as a military or political expert. Generally his knowledge comes from other books, or worse, from newspapers, and coloured by some adventure with a village dignitary. To be arrested by some small and narrow-minded official can easily happen anywhere; I have not yet discovered a country without small, narrow-minded officials. To quote an example: Lieutenant Filchner travelled through the Pamirs in 1900. It was a very plucky journey, very sporting, but in his book he spoke freely about the military importance or non-importance—I forget which—of the Pamirs, of the roads, etc. These are no secrets, but the Russian Ministry of War rightly thought that this was indiscreet. Naturally someone said to the officials, who had given the permission, 'You allowed a spy to come in.' The officials, annoyed, promptly turned the key. I was not allowed to visit the Pamirs simply because my friend and countryman could not keep his very unimportant revelations to himself. I call that spoiling the game for others.

But there are interests even larger than those of science and of the single explorer intent upon becoming famous. These are the interests of business and finance. There is a good old English principle, typical of the true John Bull as we knew him, say up to ten years ago, and that is, 'Mind your own business.' I am afraid he is

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forgetting it to some extent; let us hope he will recover from the slight touch of hysterics. There is a thing which has always been able to introduce itself everywhere, to roll around the world heedless of political boundaries—the English pound sterling. I am afraid, I am sure, that the influence, the quiet work of the solid golden sovereign is now often paralyzed by the nimble halfpenny, simply because the latter can shout.

The English financial interest in Russia is steadily on the increase, and it cannot be furthered, it may even be seriously damaged by the hysterical outbreaks in the English press. The press is misusing its power and overrating its importance when trying to meddle with the internal affairs of a great and independent State. Were the daily paper in a position to keep an army and navy at its own expense, it would probably not risk them with the same light heart as it risks those which it has not paid for. All this talk of Russian oppression, and the comparing of it to the British liberty, is gratuitous insult; absolutely no practical purpose is served by it. and let me mention, to those who speak of ideals, that the ideal results are nil. The Russians want to arrange their own affairs, and do not care for our opinion. Talk is cheap; it is ridiculous when not backed up by sacrifice. Therefore let us mind our own business at home, and we shall be able to increase our trade in Russia. Instead of vapouring against rotten things abroad, one had better pay closer attention to rotten things in the glass-house. A grateful task for the press would be to give attention to business enterprise, to new schemes and syndicates, to discourage financial juggles, and to investigate and encourage sound enterprises.

The scandalous Stock Exchange manipulations of Siberian properties, for instance, have done enormous

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damage to the pockets of the shareholders at home, to the prospects of honest workers in Russia, to the promotion of new and *bona-fide* schemes (as I have reason to know), and, above all, to the reputation of English business methods in Russia. Here the press might usefully apply its keen eye and its skill to the great advantage of the country in general and the pockets of its citizens in particular. 'And where do ideals come in?' you ask. Well, I think if an English newspaper enables a Russian subject to find English capital for a sound enterprise, it then will have done more for the ideal welfare of Russia than by praising to the skies some leader of the revolutionary movement, of whom it probably knows next to nothing, or by the blood-curdling report of a massacre, which in nine cases out of ten was a legitimate encounter between the police and a band of hooligans.

I am also supposed to say something on the economic future of the country, which presently I shall describe to you with the help of maps and lantern views. I shall restrict myself to a few suggestions, for I do not see much good in quoting figures from year-books and trade reports. My personal belief is in the great future of the Duab, which is the most important part of Russian Turkestan. Just now we are on the eve of the great boom-period in this California of Russia. The new rule is well established; we have railways and banks, and the people are perfectly quiet and content. We are in the great commercial period, because the country is fertile and possesses a thriving population eager to exchange raw material for industrial products.

Cotton is grown on an ever-increasing area of the soil, and I believe that Russia is supplied with about a third of its wants. The banks in Kokan advance 40,000,000

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of roubles every year to the cotton-buyers. Then we have wine, silk, and other things.

After the commercial boom will come industry and mining. But, above all this, there looms large the great work of the country—the work of a century—irrigation. The waters of the Oxus and Yaxartes still flow into Lake Aral. The great task of the future will provide work until the last drops of these rivers have been diverted to agriculture. Realize this: not until Lake Aral is dry need we expect an end to the development of the country between the rivers; until then we can expect a steady increase of produce and population. Realize this, and you then know what it means to speak of the future of the Duab.

The word means 'two rivers,' and was chosen by me on the analogy of Punjab, or 'five streams.' Its outline is easily remembered, for the two mighty rivers, the Oxus, or Amu, and the Yaxartes, or Syr, form the greater part. To complete this boundary, we have only to draw a straight line connecting the estuaries in the Sea of Aral, and another, along the watershed from the sources of the Oxus to where the Naryn, or Upper Syr Darya, comes out of the Fergana Mountains. Now, this very compact contour embraces everything that is typical of Western Central Asia; it is a museum of all the geographic features of a district three times as large, which overlaps portions of China, Afghanistan, Persia, and Siberia. The Duab includes every characteristic feature from the valleys of the Pamir to the shores of a great salt-lake. Thus, we have the great Pamir itself and the long chains of glacier mountains radiating from its western fringe; we have the many rivers from their icy cradle to the sandy plains, and on their way the many forms of mountains, gorges, river-beds, with their

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fauna and flora. We have the foothills with their covering of loess-clay, which gradually become flat steppe, and then the desert, until again we meet life of another kind in the water of Lake Aral. And we have all the peoples, and remnants of peoples, that made one of the greatest histories of the world; we have Bokhara and Samarkand. The conquest we have, the new civilization, centred at Tashkent and infusing throughout the Duab its magnificent future of industry and commerce, for the Duab is the California of Russia. Around all this, springing from a thousand veins, are the two great rivers, the beginning and the end, the life and contents of the whole, from which they are born and in which they die, which they lovingly encircle as a harmonious entity, self-contained and grand.

Through this we travelled. The great mountain ranges are the Alai, which, at the top of the Zarafshan glacier, divides into the Turkestan and Hissar ridges; between them the long and narrow valley of the Zarafshan. To the south the high alps of Peter the Great, and many other important streaks and clusters.

Our route lay up the Zarafshan Valley to its highest point, then across several ranges, and finally by a long curve over the foothills and the plains back to Samarkand, whence we had started three months before with a caravan of twenty horses and six men.

My companions were my wife and Fräulein von Ficker, a distinguished lady-climber; Lorenz, the Tyrolese guide; and the important Makandaroff, the Caucasian interpreter, who has accompanied me on seven journeys.

Six horses carried the photographic outfit, which consisted of one full-plate and two quarter-plate cameras, and 1,000 glass plates.

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Now exploring with a big camera is beset with difficulties which sorely tax endurance and temper. To get this heavy artillery into position six or ten times during a hot day is a good test of nerves and will. I confess that I could never have done it were it not for the help of my wife and our friend. In the beginning, it took over half an hour to unload the photo-horse to unpack and prepare the camera, to pack and load up again. Later on a record of nine minutes and a half was obtained.

Our first objective was the famous Zarafshan River, which springs from the Alai mountains, runs 200 miles through a ravine and then about 300 miles in open country, ultimately losing itself in the desert, without reaching its destination, the Oxus.

It is the essence of life of Samarkand and Bokhara. Let us begin at the beginning. We issue forth from the busy streets and crowded bazaars of the great City of Bokhara, the noble and holy.

Through the massive gates we go, and through the silent graveyards where the dead lie in tombs of brick. We walk along the shady avenues without, where hostelries and tea-houses are full with the din of caravans. Gradually the rows of shops and houses break up, and we pass between mud-walls of vast gardens, with their mulberry-trees and vines.

Through many villages we travel—around us the thick abundance of a fertile soil, till at last the clusters of dark foliage open out to the streaks of a distant view. The trees are rare and lonely in the last yellow wheat-fields; the canals and runlets vanish one by one and lose themselves in the swampy thickets of huge reeds. Over a bridge we go—it stands on dry land, but near by is a tiny pool with quacking ducks, and maybe a silvery swan will rise to the crack of our gun.

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More dry and bare becomes the ground. It turns into steppe with the cracks in the scorching soil and the scantiest of stunted growth. And then we feel a crunching under foot—sand. Here we may still discover somewhere a darker taint upon the ground—a spot of evanescent moisture. We touch it. It is a faint humidity which fades away in the burning breeze as we spread the sand upon the palm. Beyond is sand, rising in dunes, which retire into the hazy distance like an ocean of yellow waves. That last blush of moisture on the confines of utter aridity is one of the very last drops of water oozing from the last life-pulse of the dying Zarafshan.

The last sigh of a wonder-working slave who has given his best to make a paradise for man. That drop once was ice among the great peaks whence the river came; that very same drop may be one of the snow-flakes which perhaps a hundred years ago alighted on the highest point of the course on the divide of the Zarafshan Pass, 13,000 feet above the plain. This here is the end, that was the beginning, and between them is the life-time and the work of a drop of water; between them are generations of men. We have stood here in the desert, we have stood at the top where the ice-fall thunders, and we have gone along the line. Follow me now to watch again the progress of the water, the magic that shapes the land surface and its destiny.

The distance from Bokhara to Samarkand we skip by taking the train of the Transcaspian Railway through a cultivated, flat country, of the kind we saw during our walk before the city gates. The real journey begins at Samarkand. We ride through the bazaar and past the great buildings of Timur. Outside we meet the wide and slowly flowing river, the Zarafshan, which is to be our guide for the 200 miles, separating us from its source.

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The views now shown at short intervals represent the first section of about fifty miles from the ruined edifices of Samarkand, through the plains and steppes and over the foothills. That is the lowland section of the river's career, and its landscapes are typical of the Duab between the rock and the desert.

Here reigns the yellow clay, called loess, which produces exuberant life wherever water touches it.

The road, covered one foot deep with fine dust, leads through fields and gardens, which are generally surrounded by low walls of mud. Innumerable channels intersect the country, for the water must be brought to every tree and to every blade of grass.

The rivers have cut deep ravines into the loess, and the houses of the natives are sometimes poised on the very edge of the cliffs, the abode of teeming life of insects, reptiles, birds, tortoises, jackals, and other animals which lodge in the many cracks and fissures, or burrow into the soft material. Over this cultivated region is spread a population of settlers partly Aryan, speaking Persian dialects, partly of Tartar origin with a Turkish language. Their mode of life, however, is uniform, the town-dweller and villager, irrespective of race, being known by the name of Sart. He is a product of the loess.

Just as the houses and the men of Scotland have grown from the hard grey granite of the North, so the Sart and his character have risen from the yellow clay. He thrives where the sun shines and water flows, but his progress and destiny are shaped by a few strong men or conquerors. His energy never goes beyond the mere up-keep of a life which allows him as many idle hours as possible. Take away the hand of a good ruler, the main irrigation canals will run dry, and

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the great public buildings will crumble; the Sart and his work return to what they were—dry mud. His wants are few, and the envy of every explorer. Give him a horse, a pair of saddle-bags, a five-pound note, and he will travel 2,000 miles in six months. In his baggage is a bed-quilt, a teapot, and a hooka. He has two or three top-coats, which enable him to adapt himself to every temperature, and which serve as coverlets at night. The turban is his pillow, and innumerable are the uses of the square cotton cloth which he wears round his waist; it is belt, purse, pocket, napkin, handkerchief, table-cloth, horse-halter, and rope. Thus equipped he is able to face any and every emergency; and let me mention that there is no difficulty in this world which a Sart cannot overcome by waiting. If there be no bridge, he will wait till there is one; if his life is a burden to him he waits till it is over. He can work when he must; he can work very hard, and then rests with a vengeance. He can work permanently when it is sitting down and giving orders; for when he is in power he is a great oppressor. And he really loves work—that which other people do for him. Our horse-boys were good examples, quite willing on the whole, but from time to time I had to promise a *tamashá*, a feast with floods of mutton-grease and green tea. Their ideal was quantity, not quality; variety tires their intellect, monotony they enjoy. Of course the Sart has also many qualities which appeal to us, but these are not interesting.

This is the people which lives in the cities and villages, in the fruit-gardens and the vineyards, in the rice-fields of the great plains. It lives on the bounty of the Zarafshan, which has worked hard to collect water and earth in the mountains which are our goal.

Gradually we come nearer, at first meeting the foot-

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hills, the undulating slopes and rounded hillocks, the transition to the massive block. Green pasture in the spring, these foothills dry up later on, for to irrigate them is beyond the technical means of the native. But colour adorns the barren soil, composed of loam, marl, conglomerate, and sandstone. A profusion of red, brown, orange, of subdued tints, is painted in bold streaks or patches across the slopes and hollows; delicate shades of grey and sepia are thrown in between. An effect of artistic distemper with a snake-line of vivid green through the middle, where willows and spiræa hug the river bank.

Then we enter upon the second section of the Zarafshan's course, from the opening of the valley to the glacier, 130 miles between two parallel lines of imposing mountains. Here difficulties begin, and our horses, unaccustomed to the stony tracks, have a hard time of it. The valley is narrow, the sides are precipitous. Sometimes the path creeps along a narrow ledge of rock; then the packs must be carried over the dangerous bit and the horses are led across, two men at the head, two at the tail. Sometimes the great terraces afford a mile or two of level progress until we meet a side valley, obliging us to dive down one bank and up the other by corkscrew-trails cut into the conglomerate. In order to circumvent difficult places, the track gropes about in the most tantalizing fashion. Six times a day it will descend to the river's edge and climb away from it again to some more likely spot 200 to 500 feet higher, not to speak of erratic peeps to the right or left. That is because the natives worm around obstacles instead of making a dash for them and overcoming them by a public-spirited effort. We never find a bridge or balcony otherwise than as a last resort.

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Constant oppression has killed all enterprise in these people. Their experience was that anything permanent only made things more comfortable for the blood-suckers. In this way they have become past-masters in the art of improvisation; their houses, their roads, their institutions, their very lives are improvised. Where no future is visible, the nearest present is enough. Why build a sound bridge? The old one will carry our crops to market this autumn, and if the spring floods take it away, the tax-collector must leave us in peace for three months. Of course Russian rule is now teaching the coming generation a better view of things. Nothing shows better their great skill of improvising than the balcony-cornices which are made to carry the path along a smooth face of rock. The mountain people cannot build iron bridges, but our engineers cannot build cornices out of crooked trees and rubble, without the waste of a single ounce of powder for blasting or a single inch of string for tying. How they cling to the precipice is a mystery, but they do, by a cunning use of the shape and balance of each bough.

As there is but little clay in the valley, the villages are built of smooth water-polished stones, cleverly cemented. Very little wood is used, and the cavernous houses are built close to support each other, only leaving narrow lanes. The nearer we approach the glacier the rarer wood and cement become, until we find hovels consisting of nothing but loosely-piled blocks. The inhabitants are a hardier set than the Sarts of the plains, but suspicious and miserly, the faults of most poor mountain people.

The middle section of the Zarafshan is hot and dry—a veritable mountain desert; but it has its oasis. We ride for many hours through a cañon of forbidding

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severity, where the cruel sun beats on the naked rock during the day, where a silent dread creeps through the shades of night; then suddenly, at a bend of the river, we come upon a vision of the Arabian Nights. From among the gaunt, grey pillars of water-chiselled concrete bursts a thick luxuriance of refreshing green. A wonderful effect of stern beauty mingled with refreshing gaiety. But think of tired feet and weary eyes to fully understand our rapture when these lovely pictures stood before us. Here is water, here is life; here the traveller may stretch his limbs on swelling lawn under the great apricot-trees, where the melodious call of the owl sings him to sleep. These green spots in the desert owe their existence to the water from the side valleys, which is conducted to the level of the terraces in the main valley by elaborate sluices. Water-supply, the question of life or death, is the only thing which makes these people work together towards a common cause without pressure from above. Their aqueducts are constructed on the same principle as the roads, sometimes being carried on cornices and bridges, but much more carefully made, so that but little water is lost.

The Zarafshan Valley is a perfect museum of typical examples of morphology. You see the work of water as a destroyer and sculptor, as a builder and accumulator. There are the huge deposits which the Zarafshan had heaped up in bygone ages and through which later it has again cut deep gorges; there are the curious pillars and flutings which the rain of spring has carved from vertical walls of conglomerate; there are valleys of all sorts to illustrate the erosion of a river-bed; then we find the many shapes of cones and fans of detritus, which streams have deposited at the mouth of their valleys; we have mud avalanches, from the welted furrow, which

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traces elaborate designs upon the cones, to the deep winding channel disgorging waves of semi-liquid material. Indeed, I have become quite a specialist in mud, for the mortars, cements, and concretes formed by moraines, river-terraces, mud-avalanches, or scree-slopes, are represented in the Zarafshan Valley by innumerable varieties in all kinds of positions, often occurring all together and overlaid in the most bewildering fashion.

It is these deposits, and the work which the water has performed upon them, that give to the Zarafshan Valley it peculiar aspect. It is a perfect record of the youngest geological ages. The reason why all these things are so clearly seen, so pure in outline, so typical, is to be found in the dry climate and the consequent absence of distributed vegetation. Grass and forest not only hide the ground, they also protect it from quick destruction. Look at the scarred and furrowed slopes of the Zarafshan; it rains little, but every drop of water takes effect upon these unprotected surfaces; we can clearly see what it has done; its record is finely chiselled, revealing the faintest scratch, and the fragments are piled up below in proper order.

Thus we learn, as a general rule, that a dry climate makes shapes of great regularity with hard clear outlines, whereas moisture gives softness to form, atmosphere, and life. Moreover the processes are intermittent and catastrophal; nothing stirs during many months, then suddenly a great volume of water is set free by rain or melting snows, and within a few hours hundreds of thousands of tons of blocks, rubble, and ooze are poured down the mountain. Dryness gives contrasts, moisture softens them, and nothing is more striking in these countries than the sudden transitions from death to life, from rest to movement.

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After 100 miles of this fantastic wilderness, but somewhat monotonous in the constant repetition of its phenomena, the valley assumes a more Alpine character. The cañons and large terraces disappear and travelling becomes much easier. During the last day we were able to cover over thirty miles. In the upper hamlets we engaged fifteen men as porters and took them to our camp at the foot of the glacier. Here we were at last, at the gate of ice from which a swift volume of slate-coloured water rushes forth, often carrying blocks of transparent ice.

The first thing we saw was that the glacier had evidently retreated, as shown by a broad scar on the sides where it has shrunk back from the mountain slope. At the end is a small lake, which, according to native report, did not exist last season, and which, therefore, proves that the glacier has lost over 100 feet in one year. Altogether the glaciers of the Duab give one a sort of moribund impression; they are flat and loaded with an enormous quantity of stones which they can hardly carry down. This, of course, is due to the dry climate. Mushketoff, who visited the place in 1880, says that one of the side-glaciers was joined to the main stem. If that is true, this small glacier, the Yarkhich, has retired three-quarters of a mile in twenty-seven years. If his descriptions of glacial landscapes are to be taken as correct, very great changes must have occurred since then.

Walking over the Zarafshan glacier in its lower half is far from pleasant; this is a mountain-world of its own, of enormous piles of loose blocks, of cones, falling away in ice-slopes 150 feet long, into deep pools of great size. One has to go continually up and down over sharp blocks of granite and slabs of friable slate, circumvent

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ice-holes or mouse-traps of neatly-balanced boulders. To anyone not accustomed to pick his way among such obstacles this means a very severe struggle and great fatigue.

We reached the Matcha Pass, which is 13,000 feet high, and which the Russians believed to be the true beginning of the glacier. That it is not, but only a snow-saddle in the left boundary divide. We looked over the sea of great mountains in the east and down the short Sardaliu glacier, which is somewhat steep and made Mushketoff's hair stand on end. The mountains around here are up to 20,000 feet high, but, owing to the possible desertion of porters, I was not able to attack the Achun Peak, a fine ice-dome, which looks quite possible. Instead of that we followed the glacier, which curves round to the north-west in a sharp semicircle, and after a walk of two and a half miles, found ourselves at the foot of a dangerous ice-wall which leads up to the real top of the glacier. The entire length is about ten miles. As our present knowledge stands, the Zarafshan is the largest glacier in the Duab, but cannot compare in size and weight of ice to many glaciers of the Alps or the Caucasus.

And so we have stood at the end and at the beginning of the Zarafshan. It is the middle line of the Duab, and can serve as a symbol for the whole. On its banks are greater cities than on the Amu or the Syr. The Zarafshan is history; it runs through the very heart of the country: it is in the midst of its events. Its waters cleave and fissure the rock and grind the mountains to dust; they blast the boulders from the spine of the land and carry them down on a back of ice; they cut the valley and chisel the cliff; they build the terraces with villages and gardens; they bank up the plain and make

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it green with trees and yellow with corn and busy with the throng of men ; they have been the life-blood of an empire, for them the glorious temples, for their sake the clang of many battles ; a new empire watches the waters of the Zarafshan, how they give their last drop to humanity and then die in view of the western horizon. They are in the full throb of nations ; they have seen the glory of Samarkand and the greatness of Tamerlane. The Zarafshan is history—history of landscape, history of man. Will you hear the softly falling snowflake of conception, the majesty of ice-gestation, the thunder of a river-birth, the youthful rush, the manly flow and the last dying murmur? then go and listen to the waters of the Zarafshan.

DISCUSSION

The Chairman: You will agree with me that we have listened to a very instructive and eloquent lecture (cheers). The admirable photographs thrown on the screen have presented to us in a very clear way the characteristics of the country. That country must always be of special interest to us, not only because the region of Russian Turkestan and Bokhara borders on a State whose integrity we are pledged to maintain, but because of the travels and sufferings of heroic Englishmen in that region. I need only recall to you the names of Stoddert, Conolly, and Wolff. Since their days many of our countrymen have followed in the footsteps of those brave men. Now I think I must disclaim the soft impeachment of the lecturer that this society concerns itself mainly with politics. That has not been my experience, and I have been a member and attendant at the meetings now for some years. At the same time I quite agree with the lecturer that a resident or traveller in Turkestan should eschew politics. His advice in this regard is very sound, for obvious reasons.

I also join Mr. Rickmers in deprecating what he calls anti-Russian crusades in the press, which do no good, and I would add on my own account that I entirely condemn the publication of alarmist and quite unfounded estimates of Russian strength

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in Central Asia. I have more than once, not only in this room, but elsewhere, strongly advocated, as many of us have done, that understanding with Russia which we hope is in view to-day (cheers). I have also expressed my abhorrence of that very detestable term, 'a Russian scare'—a term which, I am sorry to say, is still beloved by many journalists. But, having said so much, I may add that I am equally convinced that it is not military weakness on our side, but military strength, which is the best guarantee for peace in the East (cheers).

General Sir Thomas Gordon said: I have listened with very great interest to the lecturer's admirable story, so beautifully illustrated, of a journey through a land where water is such a unique wonder-worker. He showed us how water in Russian Turkestan builds, and carves, and cuts in the most wonderful fashion. I have observed the same effects in Eastern Turkestan, in the high regions of Kashmir, on the mountain route leading from Kashghar to the Russian frontier, and in Western Tibet. At one time you pass from the heights into the valleys by deep cuts with bordering walls of architectural-like shapes formed by the action of water; at another you mount up again to great altitudes of 19,000 feet or more, to find that even there water has made the gradients smooth and easy-going. A 16-hand horse might carry one safely and easily over some of the great mountain passes of Western Tibet. I merely wish to mention that my own observation of similar country to that described by the lecturer has led me to thoroughly enjoy his well-told travel-story (Hear, hear).

Colonel C. E. Yate said: I have never had the luck to get as far as the Valley of Zarafshan. The nearest I got to it was when General Annenkoff was making his railway. He took me across the bridge over the Oxus at Charjui and on to railhead on the way to Bokhara with his Railway Battalion in the construction train, and I need not say I thoroughly appreciated and was interested in the journey. I should like to express my concurrence in what the lecturer has said as to the attractive personal qualities of the Russians. There is no country in the world where I have had greater kindness and greater hospitality than in Russia. In that country an Englishman was always well received. It was only when we got into the countries outside Russian dominions, such as in Persia or China, where our interests clashed, that we found ourselves in opposition. I

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hope we shall soon see a Russian understanding in force, and that in Persia and other countries the two Great Powers in future will be able to work together in complete accord (Hear, hear).

Lieutenant-Colonel R. Manifold Craig, R.A.M.C., said he would like to be permitted to suggest a prolongation of the journey just described to them. From fair Kashmir to the country of which Mr. Rickmers had spoken was, no doubt, a far cry, and yet there was a connecting-link, for Lala Rookh was a princess of Bokhara, and her journey to the 'vale of Kashmir' was probably through scenery very much like that which had been described to them. He trusted that some time, when Mr. and Mrs. Rickmers were exploring in Turkestan once more, they would find their way down into Kashmir by way of Ladakh. He spoke in ignorance of the geography of the country from the point where the lecture left off, but he believed the journey could be undertaken, and he knew no one better fitted than Mr. Rickmers for the task. The lecturer was too true an artist not to admit that there was a certain amount of monotony in the bare mountainous regions he had described. At the same time he would bear him (the speaker) out that there came to be a feeling of breezy freeness about such places, inducing in the traveller an inclination to fight rather shy of cities and the haunts of men. If Mr. and Mrs. Rickmers would journey from Turkestan into Kashmir they would be rewarded by more beautiful and less monotonous scenery.

The Chairman, in summing up the discussion, said: Sometimes it is the duty of the chairman to sum up under rather difficult circumstances—that is, when notes of discord are struck; on this occasion, however, there is but one note, and that is the note of admiration (Cheers). I believe it is the case that Mr. Rickmers is returning to Samarkand, and that he intends to devote at least some of his time to the study of scientific geography in those regions. In according him, with your permission, our hearty vote of thanks for his paper, I will express on your behalf the hope that his future career at Samarkand may be prosperous, and that he will be able to add largely to our information about this region of Central Asia. Some day, let us hope, this society may have the benefit of further lectures from him (Cheers). I have rarely listened to a more admirably delivered, eloquent, and instructive lecture than that given by him.

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PROCEEDINGS OF THE CENTRAL ASIAN SOCIETY

BRITISH INTERESTS IN THE PERSIAN GULF

BY

ARCHIBALD J. DUNN

9th. January 1907

LONDON
CENTRAL ASIAN SOCIETY, 22, ALBEMARLE STREET, W
1907

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Proceedings of the Central Asian Society.

BRITISH INTERESTS IN THE PERSIAN GULF

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MR. ARCHIBALD J. DUNN

READ JANUARY 9, 1907

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BRITISH INTERESTS IN THE PERSIAN GULF

THE CHAIRMAN, LIEUT.-GENERAL SIR EDWIN COLLEN, in introducing the lecturer, said: The subject of this afternoon's paper—which is invested with peculiar and pathetic interest by the death of Muzaffer-ud-Din, the Shah-in-Shah, last night—is 'British Interests in the Persian Gulf.' This important subject will be presented to us by Mr. Dunn, who has been a student of, and writer on, Eastern affairs for many years, and was one of the first members of the International Congress of Orientalists in 1874.

The momentous events which have occurred in the East within the past two years have attracted the attention of diplomatists more than ever before to the great problems which lie before us in Central Asia. The interests of the mighty Empire of India, which has been won for us by the energy of Englishmen, and administered by the wisdom of a long line of illustrious officers, both civil and military, constitute a claim upon our watchfulness which it would be madness to ignore and criminal to neglect. The welfare of 200,000,000 of our fellow-subjects is dependent upon our foresight and our care.

For over half a century we have seen with some

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uneasiness the stealthy but persistent advance of Russia in Central Asia. Step by step she has pushed forward her forces, until they have reached the very frontiers of Afghanistan, steadily building strategical railways, which will enable her when the time is deemed opportune to throw her overwhelming battalions upon the very outwork of our Indian Empire. The disastrous results of the Japanese War, and the internal troubles in her European provinces, have impeded the execution of her plans of conquest in Asia for a time. But it must not be supposed that Russia has abandoned them. At the present time she is said to have an army of 250,000 men in Central Asia ready for action when an opportunity offers to retrieve her disasters. Probably she will find this before long in Persia, where she has secured a monopoly for railway-building, and has already prepared the plans and surveys for a line ending at a port in the Persian Gulf—Bunder Abbas by choice. But probably another generation will pass away before this project can enter the field of practical politics. And before that 'much water will have flowed under the bridge,' as the old proverb has it.

But meanwhile, another danger to British interests, as I think, has arisen in Turkey. Germany has come forward with an ambitious scheme of conquest in the East, and is pursuing it with a skill and energy which betoken success, humanly speaking. The Kaiser has already acquired an influence over the Sultan, Abdul Hamid, which renders him practically master of Asia Minor, and he is pursuing the same policy which the Czar has found so fruitful in Turkestan. This policy consists in the construction of strategical railways, which will confer upon him a vested interest in the districts traversed by them. As is well known, the Sultan has

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granted to Germany a concession for the construction of the Baghdad Railway from the shores of the Sea of Marmora to the Persian Gulf, with a kilometric guarantee from the Turkish Government. Hitherto, there has been a serious financial difficulty in providing this money payment; but it is confidently believed in Germany that this will be overcome shortly—in fact, another section of the line, 200 kilometres in length, is now in course of construction.

About a year ago the German Government sent to Constantinople an official deputation, consisting of sixty persons, bankers, surveyors, engineers, etc., to inspect and report upon the natural resources of the districts to be traversed by the Baghdad Railway. The Sultan gave to the deputation the fullest facilities for their investigations, enjoining the Valis of the different provinces to render them every assistance in their power. The reports of some of the engineers have been published in the German official papers, and fully confirm the astonishing richness of the country, both in agricultural and mineral resources. Professor Rohrbach reports in the *Preussischer Jahrbuch* that the immense plain lying between the Tigris and the Euphrates used to produce annually in the eighth century 10,000,000 tons of wheat, and supported a population of 6,000,000; it now supports little over a million souls. He points out that under German management these lands could be made as productive as those of Egypt. He also says that the oil-fields in the neighbourhood of the Tigris and the Euphrates are as rich as those of Baku and Batoum, and that the oil is of superior quality, a further advantage being that the oil could more easily be conveyed by the Tigris to the Persian Gulf for shipment. He strongly advises his fellow-countrymen

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to turn their attention to the development of these resources, which would very soon provide a revenue which would furnish all the money necessary to complete the Baghdad Railway, besides adding considerably to finances of the Sultan himself. There can be little doubt, I think, that German capitalists will soon carry his aspirations to a practical result.

It must not be forgotten that the proposed terminus of the Baghdad Railway is to be a port on the Persian Gulf—but which port? The German Government have intimated their wish that it should be at Koweit. But the Sultan of Koweit is under British protection, and repudiates the claim of Sultan Abdul Hamid to any authority over his territory, or to grant concessions of any kind within it. We have, therefore, a perfect right to resist to the utmost any attempt of the Sultan or the Kaiser to interfere with Koweit territory. As I have said already, this attempt of Germany to secure a position in the Persian Gulf is the most serious danger which we have to fear. But the question which interests us most is: What does the present British Government think of it? It is little more than a year ago that Lord Lansdowne declared in the House of Lords that 'we could not permit any foreign Power to establish a station on the Persian Gulf, and that we would resist it, if necessary, by force of arms.' This very strong pronouncement created at the time some sensation in diplomatic circles, but the German papers laughed at it as mere 'British bluff.' Now we are told that Lord Lansdowne's successor, a member of the present Ministry, has offered to withdraw his opposition to the German project in consideration of the Kaiser giving his consent to an *entente* between Great Britain and Russia. Can this be possible? It is well to remember

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that Lord Curzon said some time since, that 'he would not hesitate to indict as a traitor to his country any British Minister who would consent to a foreign Power establishing a station on the Persian Gulf.'

Captain Mahon, who is an unprejudiced authority upon international politics, wrote as follows: 'Concessions in the Persian Gulf, whether by formal arrangement or by neglect of the local commercial interests which now underlie political and military control, will imperil Great Britain's naval situation in the Farther East, her political position in India, her commercial interests in both, and the Imperial tie between herself and Australasia.'

Down to the present time our preponderance in, not to say our mastery of, the Persian Gulf has been so complete and indisputable, that it comes with a shock to us to hear that any other nation seeks to dispute it with us. It is worth while, therefore, to examine the circumstances under which we establish our claim to authority in this region.

II

More than a century ago we laid the foundations of British predominance in the Persian Gulf. In 1798 we signed our first treaty with the Sovereign of Muskat, and by it we totally excluded both the French and Dutch influence and commerce, which had previously prevailed. This treaty was confirmed in 1800 by Sir John Malcolm, who placed a British resident at Muskat to advise and assist the Sultan. Later on, when, on the death of Seyid Said, the Sultan of Zanzibar, Muskat became an independent State, we might easily have

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annexed both it and Bunder Abbas, which formed a part of it—any other Power would have done so in similar circumstances—but we abstained, and contented ourselves with gratuitously undertaking the philanthropic duty of patrolling the Gulf, the Red Sea, and the African Coast, with the well-meant object of suppressing the slave-trade. We placed the present ruler on the throne, the Indian Government paying him a subsidy of 7,200 rupees per month. We have often defended Muskat and Oman from the attacks of hostile Arab tribes, and have relieved the Sultan from the tribute formerly paid to Nedjed. Both the Sultan and his people would rejoice if Great Britain would formally annex their country, and give them the protection of the British flag. The Sultan has repeatedly advised us to take possession of the large island of Bahrein, with its rich pearl-fisheries, in the interests of law and order. We should be entirely justified in doing this, since we deposed the former ruler, and placed the present sheikh, Esa-bin-Ali on the throne by force, and freed him from the annual tribute which his predecessors paid to the Arabs of Nedjed. The British Government refused to annex the island, but we have taken it under our protection, and have appointed a resident to advise the sheikh. The island is 25 miles in length by 10 in breadth, with good harbours, and would make an excellent naval station for the Gulf, of which we stand greatly in need.

Bunder Abbas, again, which is situated on the Persian shore, is an important territory which is claimed by the Sultan of Muskat, who would gladly make over his claims to Great Britain if our Government would accept them. Russia has been long negotiating with Persia for its possession as a terminal port for its pro-

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posed railway, although there is as yet no Russian trade there. The British trade, however, is 84 per cent. of the whole.

The trade of Muskat amounts to £500,000 per annum, of which 11 per cent. is with Great Britain and 63 per cent. with India.

At Bushire, our Consular Report states, that out of 193 steamers visiting the port, 189 carried the British flag.

At Basra, at the extreme north of the Gulf, the same authority states that in 1903, 60 per cent. of the import trade was in British and Indian goods, while the transit trade via the Shatt-el-Arab to Baghdad and the Persian frontier was with Great Britain, India, and British Colonies.

To summarize: the trade of all ports in the Persian Gulf with the outer world was as follows:

Total Exports.

To the United Kingdom ...	£163,716
To India	745,142
To Germany	14,747

Total Imports.

From the United Kingdom ...	£788,114
From India	1,034,821
From Germany	23,078

Total British tonnage, 408,664; Germany, nil.

It must be remarked, however, that Germany has recently started two lines of steamers to the Persian Gulf, heavily subsidized by the Government, so that no

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doubt the statistics of future years will show very different figures, as German merchants abound in energy and enterprise, qualities which formerly distinguished British commerce.

III

Many people think that the Ottoman Empire shows unmistakable signs of finally breaking up by a process of gradual disintegration. One by one her most valuable provinces have been torn away from her. Egypt and Greece, Roumania, Servia and Bulgaria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, have escaped from the direct sway of the Sultan, though they still admit a shadowy suzerainty and pay him annual tributes. But the worst blow of all has been struck at his power by the action of the Arab tribes of the Nedjed and the Yemen, who have now openly thrown off their allegiance to the Porte, and have elected as their caliph the Imam Mahmoud Yahia, who has assumed the title of Hamid-ed-Din, Commander of the Faithful. For the last two years they have ceased to pay Imperial taxes, and have refused to contribute their annual quota of recruits to the conscription. Thus, it would seem, that Arabia is practically lost to the Sultan, for the Arab troops have repeatedly defeated the Imperial forces under Feizi Pasha, with heavy losses. At the siege of Sanáa last year two battalions of Syrian troops deserted to the enemy with arms, ammunition, baggage, and several batteries of artillery. A Reuter's telegram in the *Times* of January 3 announced that 1,000 Turkish troops had just arrived at Bushire—all that remained of 4,000 who were sent to the Yemen a few months ago.

The new caliph, Hamid-ed-Din, has now been

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accepted as leader by the majority of the independent Arab tribes, who hope to install him at Mecca this year as Guardian of the Holy Shrine and the Sacred Kaába.

There is considerable difficulty in estimating the precise number of the population in Asiatic Turkey. Dr. Hubert Jansen, however, who is an acknowledged authority upon the subject, in a work published by him in 1898, gave the following figures as approximate:

Independent Arab tribes ...	3,500,000
Aden Hinterland and Oman..	1,606,360
Hedjaz and the Yemen ...	1,184,000
Mesopotamia (the Nedjed) ...	2,076,280
Syria and Palestine	1,538,492
Or a total of ...	9,905,132

being about one half of the population of Turkey, the remaining half including the large number of Christians in Syria, Palestine, etc., who are exempt from military service. It would have been thought impossible that an army composed of such materials, ill-armed and undisciplined as they must be, could have held out for many months against the well-armed forces of the Sultan, led as they were by the redoubtable General Ahmed Feizi Pasha. Nevertheless, they have held their own stubbornly for two years against overwhelming numbers of Turkish troops. But it must be borne in mind that the Arab forces have had powerful helpers in the torrid and unhealthy climate of Arabia, which is fatal to all but native troops, and also, in the fanatical zeal of Moslems fighting for their independence and their religion.

It is a noteworthy fact that a rumour has been

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current for some time past, both in Syria and the Yemen, that the Kaiser has offered to the Ottoman Sultan the aid of his forces in suppressing the Arab revolt, in return for certain concessions and commercial advantages. 'Si non e vero, e ben trovato.' Such an arrangement, or rather, proposal, would be very characteristic of the impetuous and ambitious Kaiser. It is doubtful, however, whether the Sultan would venture to accept the aid of any Christian Power in fighting against his Moslem subjects, for such a step would alienate from him the sympathies of Mussulmans throughout the world. In 1905 the Ligue de la Patrie Arabe, which represents the national cause, issued a formal appeal to the Powers, announcing their intention to found an independent Arabian Empire, in which they said that its Sovereign would be at the same time 'the Religious Caliph of all Moslems throughout the world.' They promised to respect the interests of all foreigners now in the country and all concessions granted them by the Turks, the autonomy of the Lebanon, the *status quo* in the Christian sanctuaries in Palestine, and also the independent principalities in the Yemen and on the Persian Gulf. They added: 'We do not ask the Powers to make any sacrifices in our favour; we only beg the humane States of Europe and North America to favour our movement by their simple neutrality, and to encourage us by their sympathy; then we shall know how to complete our holy and glorious enterprise.' This appeal was published in many of the French newspapers with favourable approval. The reference in it to the United States and to the tribes on the Persian Gulf is worthy of attention.

The position of Aden and Perim at the mouth of the Red Sea, and the fact that the coast of Southern

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Arabia, from Akabah, faces Egypt, give to Great Britain a prescriptive right to see that these regions shall not fall into the possession of any possibly hostile Power, as Germany would certainly be if allied with Turkey against the Arabs. It is a time for much watchfulness, which is necessary on the part of the British Government, and of firmness in maintaining our position in these regions, so important to British interests. Unfortunately, our present Cabinet act as men to whom the burden of Imperial responsibility is so irksome that they would gladly rid themselves of it if possible.

This is evident from the announcement recently made in the Press that the Government of India had given orders for the abandonment of the town and district of Dthala in the hinterland of Aden. We occupied this district about four years ago at very great expense, as it was thought that our presence there would be a protection for our position at Aden. It is hard to understand the attitude of statesmen who could recommend a policy of surrender at such a time. What can be their reason for this in face of the strenuous attacks of rival Powers upon British interests in the East? Is it from motives of economy? or is it owing to a determination to undo the work of their predecessors in office? One cannot help remembering the precedent set by Mr. Gladstone upon one memorable occasion, when he declared that his policy was as far as possible to undo what his predecessor, Mr. Disraeli, had done.

IV

Mighty political changes seem to be impending in the East—changes such as the world has never seen before. Nations, apparently dead, have come to life,

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like Japan, and have taken up all that Western civilization had attained in science and arts during 2,000 years. China is seething and fermenting with unseen forces, the outcome of which no man can see. It is for us to hold what we have acquired, and not to lose the prestige which we have gained, and which must be maintained at all costs. The Oriental respects us because he has found us honest and fair-dealing, but, above all, because we are masterful, have a firm hand, and do not interfere with his religion. Hence our predominance in the Persian Gulf.

The death of the present Sultan will probably be followed by a total reorganization of the Ottoman Empire, perhaps in the form of a Federation of States. We may also anticipate a revolution in Persia in consequence of the reforms introduced by the new Constitution and the inevitable conflict between Russia and Germany. If either of these Powers should secure an influence over the new Shah, similar to that gained by the Kaiser over Sultan Abdul Hamid, it will be of paramount importance to us that we shall have retained our predominance in the Persian Gulf.

It has been my purpose in this paper to make it clear that this predominance is of the highest importance to British interests, both political and commercial, and to offer for your consideration a suggestion as to how it may be maintained.

Great Britain has been for a great many years the recognized friend and protector of the native sheikhs, whose lands lie along the coast from Aden to Oman and from thence to the head of the Persian Gulf. We have signed treaties with them guaranteeing them our protection in case of need; we have freed them from the exactions of the warlike Arabs of the Nedjed;

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we have appointed British Residents at their Courts, through whom all foreign political correspondence must take place, and formal notice of these arrangements have been duly notified to the Powers. The sheikhs like us better than other Christians, for they have found in us some of the virtues which other countries lack: truthfulness, honesty, and justice. It has always been a marvel to them why we have spent so much money in suppressing the slave-trade and destroying their slave-markets in the Persian Gulf, seeing that we have no personal interest in it and gained nothing by it. Many devout Arabs believe that it is a kind of madness with which Allah has afflicted the English as a punishment for their infidelity. 'Bismillah! and they actually refuse to take possession of our lands when we offer them.' Such altruism is never found in any sane Arab, but nevertheless, the English are recognized as being harmless.

My suggestion, therefore, which I put forward with timidity for the consideration of the members of this Society, so many of whom have left enduring evidence of their wisdom and thoughtfulness in India, is as follows: I would suggest that the Government of India should show a desire to open negotiations with Hamid-ed-Din when the proper time comes to acknowledge diplomatically the formal establishment of the new State. I have reason to know that such an informal intimation would be welcomed by the Ligue de la Patrie Arabe on behalf of the Federated States. That it would be welcomed by the sheikhs, whose territories adjoin the Persian Gulf and who are already under our Protectorate, is certain. I am informed that some of these sheikhs have hitherto declined to join the forces of the new caliph until they know the attitude

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which will be adopted to them by the British Government.

A curious illustration of the feelings of some of the rulers of these States was given during the campaign of 1905, when a battalion of Turkish troops crossed the frontier of Lahedj in pursuit of the Arabs. The Sultan of Lahedj at once sent a protest to the Turkish commander, with an intimation that if he did not withdraw his troops forthwith, the Sultan would apply to the British Governor at Aden for assistance, and that, if necessary, he would place his territories under the British flag. It is needless to say that the Turkish troops were immediately withdrawn.

If the Arab forces succeed as they expect in occupying the Holy Cities of Mecca and Medina, the custody of the Sacred Shrine and the Kaába would be fittingly entrusted to the Imam Mahmoud Yahia, as the descendant of the daughter of the Prophet; and it is probable that this fact would be hailed with satisfaction by all sons of Islam throughout the world—certainly, I should think, by the sixty millions of our Moslems in India, who would feel more confidence if the safety of the cradle of their creed enjoyed the guarantee of their own British Empire.

An Arabian Empire or a Federation of Arab States would mean comfort and happiness to millions of the population; the corruption and oppression of Turkish officials, and the blood-tax of the annual conscription would cease, and, perhaps, the old civilization which distinguished Arabia in the Middle Ages would reappear.

The difficulties of our position are many and serious, but it is of vital importance to India that they should be faced and overcome. Both Germany and Russia

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covet the establishment of stations or ports on the Persian Gulf, but notwithstanding the protests of British Ministers in the past, the Kaiser, with the consent and assistance of the Sultan, is pushing forward the construction of the Baghdad Railway towards the Persian Gulf. Unlike Germany and Russia, Great Britain has no wish to acquire territory or to extend her liabilities in these regions. All we want is protection to our commerce and the open door. Germany could have no genuine cause for complaint if we provide these desiderata for her also, by continuing to maintain our Protectorate over the riparian and independent States; nor, indeed, if we should enter into friendly arrangements with the new Arabian State, if and when, it establishes its independence. On the other hand, we wish to continue our friendly relations with the Sultan, although we do not feel called upon to fight his battles with his Moslem subjects.

It is highly probable that within a few years the trade in the Persian Gulf will be considerably increased. By a recent *irade* the Sultan has directed that the magnificent canals and irrigation works on the Tigris are to be restored and repaired, and that the lands in the plains of Mesopotamia are to be brought into cultivation again. In an able report by Sir William Willcocks, published at Cairo in 1903, it was shown that these works would cost in all about £8,000,000, and that the lands irrigated by them would yield a net revenue, after allowing for the cost of upkeep, of £2,000,000 yearly, or 25 per cent. upon the capital invested. He stated further that the soil is quite equal to that of the irrigated lands in Egypt, and would be fairly valued at £30 per acre.

It will be said, of course, that the chief difficulty in

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cultivating the lands would be to provide sufficient labour. This could be easily surmounted, however, if the development of the country were to be entrusted to British enterprise, for we could supply any quantity of coolies from India, or fellahin from Egypt for the purpose, most of whom would probably become settlers. The Germans, with their usual intelligence, have carefully studied and appreciated the future value of this district to themselves. Dr. Hugo Grothe in his work, 'Die Baghdadbahn,' says of it: 'May the new century not finish without a proper settlement of the colonization question in Mesopotamia, so that near German villages German ploughs and spades may do their work; that in the plains which adjoin the Euphrates and the Tigris, and in the country lying between Aleppo, Urfa, Mardin, and Nisebin, German hands may raise cornfields, such as those in the South of Russia; that German vineyards may be cultivated in the valleys of the numerous rivers which flow from the Taurus Mountains, similar to those in Palestine and the Caucasus, and may it help to the economical welfare of Turkey and our own progressive growth.'

With regard to the oil-fields in Mesopotamia, Dr. Rohrbach states that they are richer both in quantity and quality than those of Baku and Batoum, besides having the advantage of cheap carriage to the Persian Gulf by the Tigris. The *Frankfürter Zeitung* announced last year that a Berlin syndicate had asked for a concession to work these deposits, but no concession to them has as yet been granted. Probably the uncertainty as to the power of the Sultan to protect the workers from the Arabs was the cause of this. For, as the fields are in the territory of the revolting tribes, it would be a risky thing for the Turks to guarantee their safety.

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It is doubtful whether the new caliph would allow so valuable an asset to pass out of his own hands, especially into those of the Germans, who are looked upon as foes.

The development of the resources of Mesopotamia would mean an increase of Indian and British commerce, to which we should not be insensible.

I submit, therefore, that some such steps as I have indicated should be taken to protect British interests in the Persian Gulf.

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DISCUSSION.

THE CHAIRMAN, LIEUT.-GENERAL SIR EDWIN COLLEN, said: Mr. Dunn has delivered a very interesting and suggestive lecture. But he has covered a very wide field, and I am sure he will forgive me if I do not follow him in all his political excursions, especially that which relates to the state of parties in this country. The first consideration for us, of course, is that England is an Asiatic Power. When you glance at the map and look at the position Persia occupies in relation to India, you see at once how necessary it is for us to closely concern ourselves in the state of Persia, in order to safeguard the defence of our great dependency and Empire. Persia, as Lord Curzon has said, is at the gates of India, and it follows that the Gulf occupies a position of great importance from the strategical point of view. We have long looked upon it as almost an English sea, although rather a hot one, and to the ports of the Gulf go the merchandise of India, of England, and of other parts of the world. As to the trade statistics with which we were favoured by the lecturer, I should be very glad if any one here who is more cognizant with the subject than I am, would give us some explanatory details, more especially with regard to the important question, whether Russia is ousting us in any degree at the present time from the position our commerce has hitherto maintained in Southern Persia. I have understood that, although in the North Russian trade has been predominant, yet within recent time there has been a certain amount of set-back to the trade of our rivals even in that part of Persia, and that we have held our own in the South. In relation to Persia we have to pay regard to the position and ambitions of two great military powers—Russia and Germany. With regard to the former, I hope and believe an understanding is possible. I cannot follow the lecturer in his estimate of the military power of Russia in Central Asia, nor can I join with him in his critical comments on the advance of Russia southwards. I believe we should have done exactly as Russia has done if we had been in Russia's place. The time is ripe for an understanding with

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her, and I trust that it may come to pass before very long. As to Germany, the lecturer has dealt at some length with the subject of the Baghdad Railway. I may venture, by the aid of the map before us, to recall to your minds the proposed course of the railway, so far as I can. The line starts from Koniá, the terminus of the Anatolian Railways, and the first section—to Eregli—has been opened for traffic. The next section to be constructed is from Eregli to Adána, across the Taurus, and an immense amount of work has to be done before it can be completed. I believe there are some fifty or sixty miles of rock-cutting and tunnelling to be got through. From Adána the line will come down to a place called Piyás or Bayás, and then to a point to the north of Aleppo, to which town there is to be a branch. Taking a course due east, the projected line reaches Mosul on the Tigris, and then runs down the right bank of that river to Baghdad. It will already have crossed the higher waters of the Euphrates, and near Baghdad it will cross a second time, on the way down to Kerbela. From thence it will proceed along the right bank of the Euphrates to Koweit, or some other point on the Gulf near Koweit; for, as you know, the question of the Gulf terminus remains still to be settled. Only this morning there was a most admirable article on the Baghdad Railway in the *Times*, and I would venture to commend it to the perusal of every one present. It dwelt plainly and in detail on the financial aspects of the undertaking, and these appear to be very complicated. The only solid fact which emerges is, apparently, that every one connected with the railway had derived a very substantial profit therefrom. (Laughter.) With regard to Persia, I will only say that the death of the Shah may or may not cause disturbance there. I know that many people consider that the recent reform under which a National Assembly or Council has been constituted is inapplicable to a country like Persia. But I think we must allow the possibility of some good coming out of the new institution, which, if it works as well as we hope it may, will certainly deserve our respect. The proposals of the lecturer, if I may say so, with all due respect, are rather far-reaching. In the first place, he proposes the annexation of Muskat. In the past we have had more than one opportunity to adopt this course, but we have refrained on adequate grounds, and I should say that our policy of non-annexation will be maintained in future. Then Mr. Dunn

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supplied some very interesting information regarding the Arab revolt, and advised that we should recognize the revolted tribes as independent of their suzerain, the Sultan of Turkey, and that their nominee to the phalicate should be supported. I do not think that such a course would square with our avowed policy towards the Sultan of Turkey, or that we should do otherwise than endeavour to support the Sultan whenever we legitimately may do so. My own views of policy to protect our interests in the Gulf are less ambitious than those of Mr. Dunn. They are in the direction of encouraging British commerce in the Gulf and in Persia by more direct means than have hitherto been employed. But, if you will allow me, and time and occasion permit, I will expand them at a later moment, when I have had the advantage of hearing what may be said in the discussion which I now invite.

Mr. J. D. Rees, C.I.E., M.P., said: In the speech you have just made, sir, you have given expression to views which many of us will adopt. There is one measure which Great Britain might take just now to protect the interests which the Baghdad Railway may hereafter menace. Our Government might refuse to allow the three per cent. enhancement on Turkish Customs, unless it is accompanied by satisfactory guarantees that no part of the money raised by the enhancement will be devoted to the kilometric guarantee of the line. I don't think that anyone can doubt that all that has been happening of late in respect to the Customs enhancement has had Germany at its back. But unfortunately the matter is regarded with indifference by the British public, and when anything is said about it in the House of Commons, where I have on more than one occasion called attention to the matter, members will say, 'Oh, So-and-so is up, and he's getting excited over something that has happened, or may happen, at Baghdad.' It is very difficult to persuade the public that this Baghdad Railway is equal in importance to our Imperial interests with the Suez Canal, and that if the line is once carried down the route you, sir, have described, to the Gulf without previous internationalization of the line, we shall have a foreign power installed in the Gulf. We shall eventually find warships and naval stations there, and the whole of the defences of the North-West Frontier, with which our Chairman has been so closely connected, will be short-circuited, and the conditions of the problem of Indian defence will be entirely

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changed, to say nothing of the existence of an alternative route to India being under the control of foreign powers. How this matter can be treated as of slight importance I do not understand; but I do not accept for one moment the estimate of our present Foreign Minister which the lecturer has put forward. He has preserved the continuity of our foreign policy, and has dealt with matters as they have arisen in a wise, deliberate manner which does credit to himself and to the party in power. But in one respect he does fall a little short of my ideal. He has not cut himself adrift from that concert or agreement of the Powers which has given assent to this extra three per cent. on the Turkish Customs. Herein, too, he is only following the policy, indeed, carrying out the pledge, of his predecessor. But why should we enter into this agreement? It belongs to the same category as the Sugar Bounties Convention and the Wireless Telegraphy Convention. It would seem as though we seldom entered into a convention except for the purpose of being plundered by those who have not so much at stake as we have. On the very last day of the session I asked for information, and begged Sir Edward Grey to receive some of us in deputation on this subject. I quite realize that the Foreign Minister has so many differing factors to take into account that perhaps an irresponsible member is not justified in taking too much upon himself in this behalf. But it is a hard case that we should be entirely and irrevocably committed to this three per cent. increase upon which the advance forward of the Baghdad Railway really hangs. The engineers have an exceedingly difficult piece of work in the section crossing the Taurus, as you have pointed out; but we are precluded from making the Gulf section, at least until the Germans have reached Baghdad. They would then be in a position to go down to the Gulf, and our hands would be forced. I hope that this meeting will come to the conclusion that the most practical measure to take in defence of British interests in the Middle East is for the Central Asian Society to add its powerful voice to the voices of the one or two humble individuals who have brought this matter forward in Parliament, like Mr. Lynch and myself, and that the opinion of the meeting will be forwarded to the Foreign Secretary, with a view to getting him to give the utmost consideration possible to the objections that have been raised to the sanctioning of this three per cent. increase. I will not attempt to go over the wide

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field covered by the lecturer, but I should like to say that when he describes the Sultan as very ready to put his hands on Koweit and various other places he cannot justly claim, it seems to me, that His Majesty is not without the example of some of the Christian Powers in this respect. They have put their hands on various parts of his dominions, and it is not at all surprising that we should see something in the nature of retaliation. I sincerely hope we shall not set the Sultan a further bad example by associating ourselves with the rebel Arab tribes, and acknowledging them as independent, as Mr. Dunn has suggested. I hope there will be in this country no false feeling of sympathy with a people 'rightly struggling to be free'—to use a famous phrase—as though the Arabs were not the freest people in the world, and subject to no kind of restraint and supervision under the Sultan as it is. I cannot believe that the learned lecturer really believes that the Arab tribes are subject to any tyranny on the part of the Porte. Why, even in the vilayet of Baghdad the authority of the Vali over the Arabs is almost nominal. The Arabs of the more remote interior have the freest life possible, and I believe that is the case in almost all parts of the Turkish Empire. The people are left alone provided they keep their hands off politics, in which case they are, no doubt, severely treated. As to affairs in Persia, I have made some inquiries to-day, and I understand that the death of the Shah Muzaffir-ud-Din has been followed by no commotion at Teheran, and that everything is as quiet as possible. I believe that the accession of His Majesty Mahomed Ali Mirza will be fraught with no disadvantage to this country, and that he will be at least as good a friend to England as his father was. His reign begins with a clearer understanding between England and Russia as to Persia than has existed for some years past. To this favourable position of affairs Sir Edward Grey has greatly contributed, and I feel sure the lecturer errs in suggesting that in any respect the Foreign Office is undoing the work of the preceding Government for the maintenance of British interests in the Middle East. I understand that Sir Edward Grey is following to the letter the policy of his predecessor, that admirable Foreign Minister, Lord Lansdowne. I cannot believe for one moment that Sir Edward has committed himself to the arrangement with Germany indicated in the lecture, whereby the railway is to be allowed

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to extend to the Gulf, in return for the Kaiser's assent to an agreement between England and Russia.

Mr. Chirol: It cannot be seriously believed that any bargain has been made, or was necessary, with the German Emperor for England and Russia to come to an understanding on Asian questions. We have had the most formal and solemn and, I should like to think, sincere assurances from the German Imperial Chancellor that nothing would be more welcome to Germany than an agreement between England and Russia. Therefore I cannot imagine any necessity for the Foreign Secretary to go, cap in hand, to Germany to ask permission to come to such an agreement. With regard to the main question we have met to consider—our position in the Persian Gulf—I confess that I have been cherishing the belief—never challenged till this afternoon—that the present Government has no intention to depart from the principles laid down by its predecessor. Our chairman has inquired whether there has been any serious diminution in late years of British trade in Southern Persia, in consequence of the influence wielded by Russia in Teheran. As far as my information goes there has been no such diminution. Notwithstanding the very unpleasant form which the revision of the Persian tariff took about four years ago, the effect upon British trade in the South has been less prejudicial than had been anticipated. In the north of Persia Russian trade has benefited very largely, and it was, no doubt, with the object of assisting commerce across the northern land-frontier that the changes in the tariff were mainly made. The only change that was likely to affect us in the South was the increased duty on British tea, and that has apparently not had such bad consequences as were anticipated. Our position in the Persian Gulf is built up in a large measure upon our relations with the local Gulf chiefs. Our influence in the Gulf has been a moral influence, backed by material resources. This influence we have exercised between the chiefs themselves and the Persian or Turkish authorities, as the case might be. It is by these means, and by maintaining peace and security in the Gulf, that the great political position we have acquired there has been achieved. Our trade has hitherto exceeded that of all foreign countries put together. No doubt it will be difficult to keep foreign commercial enterprise out of the Persian Gulf in the future. Indeed, I do not think it is reasonable to expect that we should keep it out. So

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long as foreign commercial enterprise remains pacific, I see no reason why we should attempt to exclude it, except, of course, by the perfectly legitimate means of British competition and enterprise rendering the markets of Southern Persia unprofitable to others than ourselves.

With regard to the acquisition by any other Power of a territorial base in the Gulf, the country so far stands to the policy laid down by the late Government. The present Government will, I trust, remain stanch to the policy of its predecessors in this matter, as it has adhered to that policy in many other important matters. I entirely agree with the criticisms Mr. Rees has passed on the projected increase of the Turkish Customs by three per cent. But it seems to me difficult for Sir Edward Grey to adopt any other course than that which he has taken. He has made all the conditions upon which our consent is given as stringent as possible, having regard to the fact that our conditional consent was promised by his predecessor in office. I think Sir Edward Grey deserves very great commendation for the enormously improved conditions which he has so far obtained—conditions far more satisfactory than might have been acceded to a year ago. I sincerely hope that he may be able to make them even more stringent. If by any chance the Sublime Porte should harden its heart and refuse those conditions altogether, and so render an agreement impossible, nobody will be more pleased than myself. (Cheers.)

Mr. Ian Malcolm: I think the pith of this lecture has had relation to the ambitions of Germany in the Middle East, and this, no doubt, is a matter of immediate interest and importance. Mr. Rees has suggested that the society should throw its influence on the side of checking those ambitions. He may not know that the hands of the Central Asian Society are clean in this matter. I remember, I think about two years ago or more, I took the chair in this room when Mr. Thomas Gibson Bowles gave us a lecture on the Baghdad Railway, and the feeling of this society was unanimous that under no circumstances whatever should we support the Baghdad Railway, or allow a terminus on the Persian Gulf to be in any but British hands. We as a society, at any rate, stand where we did in this matter. With regard to Germany itself, I don't think I quite take the alarmist view of the learned lecturer, partly for this reason, which has not been mentioned, that elections are taking place in that

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country at the present time which are likely to turn upon the financial advantages of Germany undertaking any more of those colonial expeditions, alarums, and excursions, which have in the past yielded little benefit to the Empire. From time to time it has been pointed out what a paradise is within reach of the German taxpayer, if he will only find the coin for the Baghdad Railway and the regeneration of Mesopotamia, and I know not how many other far-reaching schemes. But the prophecy does does not seem to have come off in South-West Africa, where much money has been spent and immense dissatisfaction has been created. I do not think that the new Reichstag is likely to encourage these aspirations, or that there will be much in the way of popular support if the Kaiser should propose to come with political schemes towards the Persian Gulf. As to the rumour that Sir Edward Grey has given assent to the German objective of a port in the Gulf, I confess it struck me, as it has struck previous speakers, with profound astonishment. No doubt the lecturer will tell us in his reply what the statement is based on; but the suggestion that Sir Edward Grey is to go, cap in hand, to Prince von Buelow, and say, 'In return for your kindness in allowing us to come to an amicable arrangement with Russia, we are quite willing for you to acquire a port in the Persian Gulf,' is incomprehensible. I should like either to disbelieve it altogether, or to have some solid basis for its belief. If it be true, then I think Lord Curzon's words may be taken as expressing the views of this society—that a British Minister allowing a foreign Power to establish a station in the Gulf would deserve impeachment as a traitor to his country. I am afraid, also, I cannot agree with the view of the lecturer that perhaps the best plan for maintaining our predominance in the Gulf will be to support the rebel Arab tribes, and to open up diplomatic relations with some new caliph. I was a few years in the Foreign Office, and I must say it sticks in my official gullet to think that Great Britain should do anything of the kind. We have understandings with the present Sultan which seem to me altogether to preclude such a proceeding. Very serious complications might arise from carrying out the lecturer's suggestion. Our strength and interest lies in the maintenance of the *status quo*. We have close relations with many of the chiefs of the Gulf littoral; they are our friends, and will be prepared to help us if we maintain our present relationships with them. If we

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take a firm stand, and say that no other Power shall come in and take our place or share its benefits with us, except the benefit of the open door for trade, I think our position will be recognized and respected. Certain annexations in and about the Gulf have been suggested in the paper. Well, I am not sure that the days of annexations by Great Britain are not over for the present; our hands are full enough already. Of course our arrangements with the tribal chiefs depend for their success in some measure on a generally strong foreign policy, and such a policy is being pursued, I believe, by the present Foreign Minister. I believe that under his charge our position in the Gulf will be maintained with credit to the country which has been so intimately connected with the Gulf, with most beneficial results, for a century past.

Colonel C. E. Yate, C.S.I., C.M.G., said: With reference to what has been said about the suggested annexation of Muskat, there is one consideration of importance which has not been mentioned. We concluded a treaty with France in 1863, by which both Governments agreed not to annex Muskat, and so long as that treaty is in force the question of annexation does not come within the sphere of practical politics. I should like to associate myself with previous speakers this afternoon, as to the statement that Sir Edward Grey has offered a port in the Persian Gulf to Germany, on condition of Germany's assent to an understanding between England and Russia. I hope the lecturer will give us his authority for the statement he made, and will show us on what it is based. With reference to the proposal that the British Government should come to terms with Hamid-ed-Din, this so-called new caliph and coming Emperor of Arabia, I should like to hear something more about this chief. I should also like to ask the lecturer whether he considers that the social and political organization of the bedouin and Arab tribes in Arabia is such as will admit of the formation of the Arab Empire that he has proposed. At the end of his paper Mr. Dunn referred to the possibilities of economic regeneration in Mesopotamia under the new Emperor. Does he consider that the new Arabian Empire is to have control of Mesopotamia and all the country between the Tigris and the Euphrates, through which the Baghdad Railway is to pass, as well as of Arabia proper? We have been told nothing as to the limits of this proposed confederation, and I should like to know what power

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the lecturer supposes the new Emperor will have, and how he is to consolidate this Empire.

Mr. Herbert Sykes: In regard to our supremacy in the Persian Gulf, there are a few points which ought not to be overlooked. Our political influence in the Gulf and our trade there are two important but distinct questions which are very apt to be confounded together. The first of these questions is, I consider, infinitely greater in importance than the last. The reason why we must not lose our supremacy in the Gulf, is that Persia lies on the flank of India, and this is a reason why, in my view, we have a great deal more to fear from Russia than from Germany. In the Far East, Russia has been thwarted in her desire to secure a warm-water port, and naturally she will seek to secure one in the Gulf; and I believe her final objective is India. Germany, on the other hand, appears in the Gulf more as a commercial competitor than as having designs upon India. Germany in the future—and I believe in the near future—will probably wrest a great deal of trade from us. As to Persia, my own idea is that it is a country where trade will not increase very much, and therefore railways, if built at all, will have to be strategic railways. There is very little wealth in the country, and, excepting in the case of minerals, I do not see that there can be very much increase of trade in the near future. Mineral wealth is, of course, dependent on railways, and if railways are built by ourselves or Russia they must be strategic railways. Our primary duty, however, is to safeguard the Empire of India by absolutely forbidding any other Power providing itself with a naval base in the Persian Gulf, and I do not know that we should have so much to fear from Germany at Koweit as from Russia at some other point on the Gulf.

Sheikh Mushir Hosain Kidwai: I quite agree with the prevailing view this afternoon that it is necessary and desirable to keep foreign Powers out of the Persian Gulf, in order to safeguard India from possible invasion. But that does not mean a policy of aggression or annexation in Arabia, or that we should join hands with Russia in dividing Persia. Without adopting such measures, we can see to it that no other Power gets any chance of approach to India, either by land or sea. ('Hear, hear!') I have lately been to Constantinople, and I must confess with regret that Germany has established a position of great influence there. But I do not think the Sultan is to blame for paying greater

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attention to Germany than to Great Britain. Is it not the fact that in every demonstration of the Powers against Turkey England has taken the leading part? Not only so, in the instigation or encouragement of rebellion in Macedonia or Crete the British Government seems to have taken the leading part. ('No, no!') I may say that the policy of Great Britain towards the Arabian sheikhs has been viewed with the greatest suspicion, not only by the Mussulmans of Turkey, but by Mussulmans all over the world. The followers of the Prophet are very touchy on religious matters, and they would view with great disfavour the passing of the protection of their holy cities to any non-Moslem Power. There is a suspicion that British statesmen have been playing into the hands of the rival Power by giving Turkey reason to doubt Great Britain's friendship towards her. British commerce and British influence have suffered in Turkey as a consequence of British policy. The lecturer has suggested that Indian Mussulmans would like to see a new Arab State under the protection of Great Britain. I think I may claim to know the opinion of the Indian Mussulmans better than the learned lecturer; and I boldly state that it would be difficult to find a single Indian Mussulman who would like to see anything of the kind. I need not enter into the reasons for our objecting to a non-Moslem Power exercising protectorate over Mecca and Medina; I can only remind you of Lord Kitchener's desecration of the tomb of the late Mahdi in the Soudan, a proceeding which did England a great deal of harm in Moslem eyes. We do not want any Christian Power even to approach the places which we venerate more than any others on earth, and we welcome the evacuation of Dthala.

I would lay stress upon Great Britain adopting a policy of perfect friendship towards all Moslem States in general, and towards Turkey and Persia in particular, if, for no other reason, only out of regard to the sentiments of 70,000,000 of her Moslem subjects.

Mr. Archibald Dunn, in reply, said: I am pleased to be able to answer some of the questions which have been asked, and which have been due to the omission from my paper of some details I should have liked to put there had time permitted. In writing the paper I was most careful to verify my quotations and to consult my authorities. As to the three per cent. enhancement of Customs duties in Turkey, I understand that all the Powers

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have assented, including Great Britain; but the latter has done so under certain reservations ensuring the payment out of the proceeds of the expenses of the Macedonian occupation. I do not think it would be possible for us to now turn round and make the fresh stipulation that no part of the proceeds of the enhancement should go to the kilometric guarantee of the Baghdad Railway. I do not think we have any right to make this stipulation, however strongly we may feel in the matter. The oil-fields of Mesopotamia are believed to be as rich as those of Baku and Batoum, and from the development of these wells and the construction of irrigation works there will be immense profit, out of which the necessary kilometric guarantee can readily be paid. With these potentialities to deal with, the line will in certain of its sections be a very paying concern. Even as far as it has gone it has paid well, and is developing the resources of the country through which it passes. I have been asked where I got my information that Sir Edward Grey had condescended to have any traffic with Germany with regard to an Anglo-Russian *entente*. My information comes from the St. Petersburg correspondent of the *Standard*, who wrote several letters a few weeks back describing the progress of the Anglo-Russian negotiations.

Mr. Malcolm: That is to say, you based the statement on a newspaper rumour?

Mr. Dunn: Yes, but the letters indicated access to special sources of information. It was implied that the consent of Germany would be required for the *entente*. It did not actually say that Germany would be allowed to establish herself at Koweit, but it spoke of a port in the Gulf, and I do not see any other port there that would be suitable for the terminus of the Baghdad Railway. If the Germans are allowed to go to the Gulf, then I agree with the speakers who say that this would be a betrayal of the interests of this country. With regard to the Arabian States, the authorities for my statements are what I have read in the French press. Meetings have been held in Paris respecting the confederation; and I have been in correspondence with Negib Azoury Bey, who is president or secretary of the Ligue de la Patrie Arabe. He tells me that Mahomed Yahia has been elected caliph under the title of Hamid-ed-Din, Commander of the Faithful. It should be understood that I am not speaking now of the tribes along the Arabian littoral, who are simply Bedouin, and very different from the Arab communities who are

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forming the confederation to which I have referred. They are a small number now; many of those who were formerly wandering bedouins have settled down now in the Nedjed. The tribes are not very favourable to us; they profess a more strict form of Islam. They condemn the Sultan of Turkey on account of his laxity, and regard as one of his greatest faults his truckling to Christian Powers. Another fault is the allowance of intemperance, which is a great crime against Islam, and they have been greatly scandalized by the prevailing life at Stamboul. They have refused for two years past to pay any taxes to the Porte. They have refused conscription, and, what is more than all, they have beaten, with overwhelming disaster, the forces of the Sultan. One of the Mussulman regiments sent against the tribesmen revolted, and handed over their guns to their fellow-Mussulmans. It seems to me a very likely thing that they will be able in time to establish their independence. They say to Turkey: 'Leave us alone; leave us to go our own way, to found a new Mussulman Empire or federation of States.' It was suggested that a chief of the Royal Egyptian house, of the Khedivial house, should be their caliph, but the Mushir must be a Mussulman belonging to the strict sect. Sheikh Kidwai seemed to think that I had suggested something akin to annexation in Arabia. All I suggested was that the protectorate we have over the Arab tribes of the Gulf littoral should be somewhat extended to other tribes more or less intimately connected with them. These tribes have suffered greatly from incursions from the interior in the past, and we should extend our protection to them, at the same time diplomatically recognizing the new Arab confederation when the proper stage in the evolution of their new political life has been reached. I put forward the suggestion, as I said in the paper, with diffidence, and the criticism it has evoked has been most instructive. In no circumstances would the recognition I propose involve a Christian protectorate of Mecca and Medina. I can understand the objections Mr. Kidwai urged against such protectorate, but I would remind him that our own sacred shrines in Palestine have been under the control of a non-Christian Power for many centuries. I do not think that in these days this is regarded as a great grievance. I think Mohamedans generally would be willing to see the custody of the sacred places passing to the Imam Mahmoud Yahia, as descendant of Fatima, the daughter of the Prophet.

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Lieutenant-General Sir Edwin Collen: I believe I am voicing the sense of this meeting when I say that we cannot accept the report which has been communicated to us by the lecturer in regard to Sir Edward Grey's attitude on the Persian Gulf question. The statement was admittedly founded on a newspaper report, and much as we respect the Press we are certainly unable to accept every statement made therein. I think, too, that we are agreed that it is impossible to support the proposal to recognize the Arab tribes in revolt against the authority of the Sultan of Turkey. I believe with Colonel Yate that the tribes in question are not in a political condition to establish and maintain independence of external power. As to the annexation of Muskat, that is a policy we certainly should not follow. My own view is that in considering the question of British interests in the Persian Gulf it is of the highest importance to settle with Russia, if it be possible, the great question of railways. Russia has an agreement with Persia, which holds good, I believe, until 1910, under which concessions for railways are barred. The thing to be done is for us to build railways in Southern Persia under Government guarantee whenever this bar is removed. If a calculation is made of the capital we should have to invest in this way, the amount would, after all, be small for a country whose trade is in hundreds of millions, and even, as we have been told lately, in billions. Then, as to the Baghdad Railway, ought we not to insist on its internationalization? At all events, let us strongly support the attitude which has been taken up, as explained by Mr. Rees and others, in the matter of the kilometric guarantee. Another point to which I wish to draw attention is whether it would not be possible to establish the Persian finances on a sounder footing, either by agreeing with Russia, and by assisting the Imperial Bank to provide a loan. We should assist the Imperial Bank to develop British commerce in the country, just as the Russian Bank has been assisted by the Russian Government to develop commerce between the two countries. Of course, as a corollary of these measures, we should assist the Persian Government to reform the land revenue administration. Again, it appears to me that a practical measure to undertake is to improve the Gulf ports, and that we should assist in the work of further development those who, like Messrs. Lynch, have done much to improve land and river communications. I had hoped that Sir Lepel Griffin

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would have been here to speak on these subjects, with which he is so familiar, but unfortunately he has had an attack of fever and is unable to come. Another point, to which I referred at a previous meeting of the society, is that we should increase the numbers and influence of our Consular service. The cost of these measures would not be really heavy. Hitherto, we have done little or nothing for Persia, notwithstanding the transcendent interests involved to our Eastern Empire in the future of Persia. Is it not a reproach to us, ladies and gentlemen, that a great Asiatic Power like ourselves should allow a Frenchman to build the Suez Canal, and that Germans should be constructing the Baghdad Railway? Many people will regard the idea of the need to safeguard our interests in Persia, to avert danger to India, as a dream. But we must remember that the dreams of to-day are the facts of to-morrow. We must remember also that our efforts for safeguarding India, for developing our commerce in Persia, and for preserving peace, must be based on the possession of a superior navy, and of a strong army at home and in India. Unfortunately, it is most difficult to get people at home to pay attention to or to understand Eastern questions. It is one of the aims of our society to explain those questions, and although our audiences may not be large, I hope and trust that every one present will be a missionary for disseminating useful information regarding our duties and responsibilities in the East. (Cheers). Before we separate I should like to read to you an extract from the speech which Lord Curzon delivered to the chiefs of the tribal coast of the Gulf, in November, 1903, because it seems to me to entirely express the views which are held by many who have spoken this afternoon and who are perfectly cognizant with the subject. Lord Curzon told the tribal chiefs:

'We were here before any other Power in modern times had shown its face in these waters. We found strife, and we have created order. It was our commerce as well as your security that was threatened, and called for protection. At every port along the coasts the subjects of the King of England still reside and trade. The great Empire of India, which it is our duty to defend, lies almost at your gates. We saved you from extinction at the hands of your neighbours. We opened these seas to the ships of all nations, and enabled their flags to fly in peace. We have not seized or held your territory. We have not destroyed

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your independence, but have preserved it. We are not now going to throw away this century of costly and triumphant enterprise; we shall not wipe out the most unselfish page in history. The peace of these waters must still be maintained; your independence will continue to be upheld; and the influence of the British Government must remain supreme.'

It now only remains for me to propose a vote of thanks to Mr. Dunn. Much difference of opinion has been expressed, and this is inevitable in dealing with a controversial topic. A lecture of this kind would be very dull if there was not some disagreement with its conclusions, and if it did not evoke a good deal of discussion. Therefore we may present our most hearty thanks to the lecturer for his very instructive paper. (Cheers).

EDITOR'S NOTE

Owing to the number of speakers, Mr. R. W. Lobo was unable to take part in the actual discussion, but his remarks are included in the publication. Mr. Lobo spent twenty-five years in the Persian Gulf.

Remarks: 'I think we require lighthouses. There is not a single lighthouse from Karachi to Busreh. At the bend of the Gulf (or straits) between Huijam and the Arabian Coast it is only some twenty miles across. Higher up there are numerous islands in the path of vessels. The atmosphere is nearly always hazy. There is now an accelerated British mail service between Bushire and Bombay, and the number of ships coming to the Gulf is increasing yearly. A lighthouse in Cape Mussendum is absolutely necessary, and one in one of the Taub Islands. The approaches to Bunder Abbas and Bahrein are very dangerous. Steamers at the former place have to anchor now outside the anchorage buoy, and at Bahrein a steamer has to almost touch a small buoy before she can get into the right channel.

'Something should be done with regard to drinking-water. This is very scarce and impure along the Persian Coast—Bushire is said to be rapidly drying up—are artesian wells practicable? In Bunder Abbas, Kishm, Huijam, and Basidu their water is stored in reservoirs. This water is insufficient and undrinkable in summer. The result is fever and guinea-worm. I would suggest condensing sea-water the same as at Aden.

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'Persian villages are unspeakably filthy, and Bunder Abbas the port of Southern Persia, especially so. More charitable dispensaries, with a European officer in charge and native (Indian Mahomedan) assistants are a necessity at all Gulf ports.

'Post Office Savings Banks should be opened at all Gulf ports. There are Savings Banks (Postal) at Gwadur, Jusk, Bushire, and, I think, Busreh. The people trust us, and look to us to help them, as they have long since lost faith in Persian methods, and pray that the time will not be far distant before they have British rule! The peasants and fishermen go over to the Arabs from the Persian side in thousands yearly to escape Persian oppression.

'Good roads are absolutely necessary, and one from Bunder Abbas to Kirman most of all. There is not a single road in Southern Persia—merely tracks.

'More Consuls, as you mentioned, are necessary. All the ports, Bahrein and Dhobai (the new port on the Arabian Coast), should be in telegraphic communication.'

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PROCEEDINGS OF THE CENTRAL ASIAN SOCIETY

TRIBES ON THE FRONTIER OF BURMA

BY

SIR FREDERIC FRYER, K.C.S.I.

February 13, 1907

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TRIBES ON THE FRONTIER OF BURMA

THE CHAIRMAN, LIEUT.-GENERAL SIR EDWIN COLLEN, after making announcements as to the future programme of the Society, said: Very few words indeed will be necessary by way of introduction of the lecturer, for Sir Frederic Fryer is known to us all as a distinguished administrator, whose early years of service were passed in the Punjab, and who has been connected with the great province of Burma for more than twenty-one years. His first service there dates, I believe, from 1886, and although he returned for a short time to the Punjab, where he filled high offices with great distinction, the services of his later years were chiefly in Burma, where he presided over the administration for an unusually long period.

THE popular conception of Burma is, no doubt, that of a flat, level country cultivated with rice, with here and there groves, mostly of teak or palm trees, villages with houses built of bamboo, pagodas and monasteries and wonderful rivers, from which the fertility of the country is derived. This country is supposed to be inhabited by a gay and interesting race called the Burmans, who form the mass of the population. This conception is, no doubt, in a measure correct as regards Lower Burma, except that even in Lower Burma many of the inhabitants are not Burmans, and even in Lower Burma there are two districts, the Salween Hill tracts and the Arakan Hill tracts, which are inhabited, the former by Karens and

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Shans and the latter by Chins. On the boundaries of Lower Burma, both east and west, there are chains of mountains, inhabited by hill tribes—Karens, Chins, and others. When you come to Upper Burma, the mountains which form the boundaries of Upper Burma proper on the north, east, and west become plainly visible, and the tribes who inhabit those mountains, though they generally owed allegiance to the King of Burma, are not Burmans at all.

The province of Burma includes, besides Burma proper, the northern and southern Shan States, the small States of Möng Mit, with its dependency Möng Lang, the States of Hkamti Löng, Hsaung Hsup, Sinkaling Hkamti, and the Chin and Kachin Hill tracts, all of which are under the administration of the Government of Burma. Some of these States are small, but the area of the Shan States is 59,915 square miles, and the area of the Chin Hills is 10,250 square miles. The area of the Kachin Hill tracts is computed at 20,000 square miles.

I propose to tell you something of the tribes that inhabit these mountainous regions on the frontier of Burma. The subject is a long one, and I have found some difficulty in compressing my remarks into a paper of moderate dimensions.

In Burma proper there are several non-Burman tribes. The principal of these is the Talaing tribe. They are supposed to have come from South-Western China, and are the earliest representatives of the first of the three known Indo-Chinese immigration waves—the Mon-Annam. Until recently it was supposed that the Talaings were the only representatives of the Mon-Annam people within the limits of Burma. Recent researches have, however, shown that the Palaungs, the Was, and the Riangs or Yins, wild com-

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munities inhabiting the north and east of the province, are almost certainly Mon-Annam tribes, who have been forced into the hills by the progress of more recent tides of immigration. The Talaings, who have a language of their own, though it is dying out, were at one time masters of the south of the province, but have had to give way to the more strenuous onrush of younger races, and, being without the refuge of the hills, have been largely absorbed by their Burmese conquerors.

The second of the principal Indo-Chinese waves was the Tibeto-Burman. To it belong the Tibetans, the Burmans (with their comparatively recent offshoot, the Arakanese), the Kachins in the north and north-east, and the Chins on the western hills, and probably also a host of hill tribes, such as the Szis, the Lashis, the Marus, the Lisaws, the Akhas, and the Lahus, who are found scattered over the uplands on the extreme north-east of Upper Burma, and in the north and east of the Shan States. In the case of the Burmans and the Chins, the migratory instinct which brought them from the North has long since died out, but the Kachins are still a useful object-lesson to the student who wishes to realize with what resistless force the prehistoric migration streams must have swept over the face of the land. The southern movement of the Kachin tribes must be a phenomenon of comparatively recent development. Where the wanderings of the race are to terminate remains yet to be seen. The most modern of the three Indo-Chinese immigration waves is that of the Tai, which swept down the valley of the Salween and the Mekong to the east of Burma, to find its ultimate goal on the southern seaboard of Indo-China. To it belong the Siamese, the Laos, several of the hill tribes of French Indo-China, and in Burma the Shans, who, starting

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from the valley of the Shweli, have spread out during the past fourteen hundred years over the Shan States and across the northern area of Upper Burma westwards to beyond the border of Assam. In Burma proper the Shans have during the last century become to a great extent Burmanized, but in the Shan States they have succeeded in maintaining their identity unimpaired.

Of the origin of the Karens, who now occupy the whole of the eastern frontier of Lower Burma, and are found in large quantities in the region of the deltas, nothing definite is known. Their prehistoric home seems to have been, like that of the other Indo-Chinese races, in or in the neighbourhood of South-Western China. It is beyond doubt that their presence in the country dated back from a very early period, though whether their arrival was before or after the arrival of the Mon-Annams is by no means certain. These are the sole known relic of one of the less defined Indo-Chinese immigration waves, and ethnically occupy a position of singular isolation. It seems probable that they must at some comparatively remote period have undergone an intimate fusion with some of the Mon-Annam tribes. On no other hypothesis is it possible to account for the genesis of the Taungthus, who, though speaking a language which has many affinities with, and has been looked upon as a dialect of, Karen, claim a connection with the ruling class of Thaton, who from time immemorial have been Talaings.

This account of the waves of immigration into Burma I have extracted from the Burma Administration Report of 1901-1902, where it is abstracted from the report of the census taken in 1901. It seems to me to give a very excellent account of the successive waves of immigration which have swept over Burma, and left the races that

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inhabit it in the position in which we now find them.

Karens.—The first of the hill tribes with which we came into contact was the Karens. This tribe, as I have said, occupy the whole eastern frontier of Lower Burma, and are found also on the western frontier and in the deltas. According to the last census, the Karens number 727,325 persons, exclusive of the Red Karens, Bres, Padoungs, and Zayeins, who are estimated to number 46,937 persons.

The Karen race is divided into three branches—Sgaw, Pwo, and Bghai or Bwe. The language of each of these three branches is different.

The Karens are spirit-worshippers, though they have traditions of a lost religion. They have readily been converted to Christianity, and when they have adopted the Christian religion they show great self-devotion in subscribing for schools and colleges and for the maintenance of their pastors and teachers. The American Baptist Mission have made, I think, the largest number of converts, but there are many Karens who belong to the Church of England and to the Roman Catholic religion. They are bitterly hostile to the Burmans, who in the days of their ascendancy treated them with harshness and contempt. In the troublous times which followed the annexation of Upper Burma the Karens took the side of the British Government and did very good service.

A battalion of Karens was raised for the military police. They were stationed at Toungoo, but it was found that their pay nearly all went in entertaining friends and relations, who visited them from the hills, so, with their own consent, the battalion was transferred to the Chindwin, where they became restless, and ultimately

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the battalion was dispersed as a unit, though there are still companies of Karens serving in different battalions of military police.

The non-Christian Karens believe in good and bad spirits, auspices, and omens. To propitiate and influence the spirits they sacrifice pigs, dogs, and fowls to them. From the bones of the sacrificial fowls they derive omens. Like all hill tribes, they lead unsettled lives. They annually clear patches of jungle, which they cultivate after burning the trees and underwood, and when the land becomes exhausted they move to fresh patches of jungle. This method of cultivation is, of course, very wasteful and destructive to the forests.

The Pwo and Sgaw Karens are gradually becoming more settled under the guidance of their pastors, but the Bghai or Bwe Karens, who are commonly known as the Red Karens, are very wild and lawless. Every male belonging to this tribe has the rising sun tattooed in bright vermilion on his back, stretching from side to side across the shoulders. Hence the name of Red Karen.

The Red Karens are diminishing in number owing to the ravages of small-pox. They are ruled by hereditary chiefs. They have given no trouble to the Government since 1888-1889, when an expedition was sent against them, and their then chief, Sawlapaw, was replaced by his next heir, Sawlawi, who has kept very fairly to his engagement with the Government.

The Karenni women wear strings of beads round their neck, waist, and calves, and these strings of beads are so large and stiff that the women can only walk with their legs wide apart and cannot bend their knees to sit down.

The Padaung women wear bands of brass in place of strings of beads, and add to these bands year by year, till

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their necks become unnaturally elongated. By the time the women are fully grown they carry from 50 to 60, and sometimes over 80, pounds of brass. They wear similar coils of brass on their legs and arms. Round the neck the usual limit of coils is twenty-one. Thus weighted they do all the household work.

It is doubtful whether the Padaungs are really Karens. They are probably hybrids.

SHANS.—North of the Karen country come the Shan States. The Shans, or Tai, are divided into numerous tribes, and they speak different dialects. They have six separate written languages. In none of them are there any Chinese roots.

Their original location was in South-Western China, and they at one time were independent and had a king of their own. Their kingdom, which was called Möng Maolong, was a powerful one. They were conquered by the Burmans as far back as the year 1604. They are now split up into distinct groups, which may be styled the Northern, Southern, and Middle. There are five Northern Shan States, administered by the Superintendent of the Northern Shan States, who is stationed at Lashio.

There are twenty-five Southern Shan States, administered by the Superintendent of the Southern Shan States, whose headquarters are at Taungyi. There are besides fifteen States in what is known as the Myelat, administered by an Assistant-Superintendent, who lives at Thamakan, and who is under the orders of the Superintendent of the Southern Shan States.

The size of the Shan States varies very considerably. The area of Kengtung is 12,000 square miles, whilst the area of Kyong is only four square miles. There are ten States which have an area of less than fifty square miles.

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Kengtung is the largest State, but North and South Hsenwi and Hsipaw have also large areas. The rulers of these States are styled Sawbwas, Myozas, and Ngwekunhmus. The title of Sawbwa denotes the highest rank, that of Myoza the second, and that of Ngwekunhmu the lowest rank. The Northern States chiefs are all Sawbwas. In the Southern States there are eleven Sawbwas and fourteen Myozas. In the Myelat there is one Sawbwa and fourteen Ngwekunhmus.

Besides these States there is a Shan State, Möng Mit, under the Commissioner of the Northern Division, and two small States, Hsawng Hsup and Singkalin Hkampti, under the Commissioner of the Central Division. The Shans are all Buddhists, though their Hpongyis, or monks, are singularly lax according to orthodox Burman ideas.

After the death of King Mindon the Shans broke into open rebellion against the rule of King Thibaw. The Kengtung Sawbwa expelled the Burmese garrison from his State, and the Möng Nai Sawbwa overpowered the garrison of Möng Nai. The Shans then plunged into internecine war, and the whole country was a prey to rapine and disorder. After the annexation of Upper Burma, the British Government turned their attention to the Shan States, and by June, 1887, the Southern Shan States had been reduced to order. The Northern Shan States took a little longer to bring into order, but the Hsipaw Sawbwa, the most powerful of the chiefs, was the first of all chiefs to submit. He came down to Mandalay early in 1887, and as an acknowledgment of the example set by him, all tribute from his State was remitted for ten years.

The civil, criminal, and revenue administration of the Shan States is vested in the chiefs of the States, sub-

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ject to the restrictions specified in the orders of appointment which each chief receives on his recognition or succession. The law to be administered in each State is the customary law of the State, so far as it is in accordance with justice, equity and good conscience, and is not opposed to the law in force in the rest of British India. Power to appoint officers to take part in the administration of any State, and to regulate the powers and proceedings of the chiefs, is vested in the Government.

The Shans are great traders, and bring the produce of their hills down to the plains on pack bullocks. Of late their cattle have suffered from a severe epidemic, and they have been partly deprived of one of their main sources of revenue. A railway to the Southern Shan States, which is much needed to open out the country, has, I hear, been sanctioned. Wheat and potatoes have been introduced successfully into the Shan States, and if a railway is made, supplies sufficient for the whole of Burma can be grown in these States.

The Shans are not the only people who inhabit the Shan States. There are numerous other tribes interspersed in the States, and I will proceed to give a necessarily brief account of some of them.

I must first observe that the inhabitants of the Myelat are not Shans. They are the descendants of Burmese colonists, voluntary or forced. The inhabitants of the Yawng Hwe Lake, who are an amphibious race of men who live on the shores of the lake and on the floating islands formed of reeds in the bosom of the lake, are descendants of a colony of prisoners brought from Tavoy by a King of Pagan many centuries ago. They row their boats in a standing position, holding the paddle with the right leg, which is encircled round the handle.

The Loi Long State is inhabited by Palaungs. Their

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villages are always situated high up in the hills and are very secluded. They are supposed to be connected with the Was. The men dress as Shans, but the women wear dark blue cutaway jackets, skirts, and leggings, large hoods with a border of blue, scarlet, and black velvet.

WAS.—The Was, who are of the same stock as the Palaungs, inhabit the country on the north-east of the Shan States. Their location runs for 100 miles along the Salween River, and extends for fifty miles inland from that river up to the watershed between the Salween and Mekhong Rivers. Beyond this watershed, too, they occur in scattered villages. The Was are nominally our subjects, as their country fell to us as a result of the boundary demarcation between Burma and China, which was carried out in 1897-1900. The actual demarcation of the border in the Wa country was not carried out on the ground because of the hostility of the Was.

The Chinese had endeavoured for some years to establish their authority over the Was, who several times appealed to the British authorities to assume control over their country and protect them from Chinese aggression. These appeals were not entertained at the time, owing to the magnitude of the task and the expense which would have been entailed upon the Government should it have placed a permanent garrison in the Wa country. I do not know what the present temper of the Was may be. If, however, it be decided to prolong the Mandalay-Kunlong Railway to its proposed terminus to the Kunlong Ferry, it would be necessary to reduce the Wa country to order ; otherwise there would be danger that the Was would attack the railway.

British columns have several times traversed the Wa country. The first visit paid to it by a column was in 1897. The Was were always believed by the Burmans

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to be cannibals, and, though this belief is now held to be unfounded, there is no doubt that they are keen hunters of human heads.

Their villages are all perched on the slopes of hills or in ravines. Round each village is an earthen rampart from 6 to 8 feet high, overgrown with cactus and other thorny bushes. Behind this rampart is a ditch. The only entrances to the villages are through long tunnels, and there are not more than one or two to each village, and they are secured by doors at either end. Leading to each village, after emerging from the tunnels, are avenues of stakes, to each of which a human skull is affixed. There are often as many as 100 to 200 skulls.

The Was believe that their well-being is entirely dependent upon the possession of skulls, without which they would not be able to grow any crops and would be liable to every sort of misfortune. The head-hunting season is in March and April. Head-hunting must be pursued out of their own country, and the greater the prowess of the tribe from which a skull is procured the greater is its value. It may be easily understood that the Was are not pleasant neighbours. The Was grow buckwheat, maize and beans. Rice they grow only to manufacture it into liquor, of which they are inordinately fond. They wear the scantiest of clothing. The States of East and West Mainglong, which are administered by the Superintendent of the Northern Shan States, are principally inhabited by Was, who are considered to be tame in comparison with their more independent brethren. Nevertheless, they have given considerable trouble from time to time, and their Sawbwas have anything but an easy time. Other tribes who inhabit the Shan States are:

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RIANGS, OR YINS, as the Burmans call them. They are supposed to be Karens.

HKA MUKS, HKA METS, AND HKA KWEMS.—These also are supposed to be Karens. They all speak different dialects. The men now dress like Shans. The women wear petticoats with horizontal strips of colour.

These tribes are usually found in forests.

TAUNGTHUS.—The Taungthus form about one half of the population of the Myelat. The State of Hsahtung (Tbaton) is almost entirely inhabited by them. The Sawbwa is a Taungthu.

The women wear a peculiar dress, with their hair dressed very high on the head.

TAUNGYOS.—The Taungyos live in the south of the Myelat. They are allied by descent to the Taungthus, only the Taungyo women wear red camisoles, whereas the Taungthu popular colour is black.

DANUS.—The Danus live on the borderland between Burma and the Shan States, and are more or less Burmanized.

INTHAS.—The Inthas, who, as I have mentioned, originally came from Tavoy, live on the Yaung Hwe Lake and its borders.

HPONS.—The Hpons live between Bhamo and Sinbo, and in the Namkam Valley, south-east of Sinbo.

KADUS.—The Kadus are half-breeds between Burmans and Shans.

LAHUS.—The Lahus live in Kengtung and Kengcheng. Their peculiarity is that they use the crossbow as a weapon and shoot poisoned pellets.

Then, there is a tribe called the LISHAW, who live in the North Hsenwi, and another tribe of AKHAS, who live in the Kentung State.

PANTHAYS.—The Panthays come from China, and their

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principal town is Pan Long, in the Sonmu State. They are Muhammedans, and their chief industry is carrying. They own large numbers of mules, and are very sturdy and independent. The Panthays rebelled against China, and were not subdued till after a war which lasted from A.D. 1855 to 1873. At one time they had a Sultan of their own, and the last Panthay Sultan's heir is an exile in Rangoon.

I have mentioned all these tribes, of some of whom but little is known, to give you an idea of the great diversity of tribes inhabiting the Shan States, and it is a curious sight to see the representatives of so many different tribes assembled together on a market day in any of the Shan towns. As the women of the different tribes all wear a distinctive costume, the sight is an interesting one.

KACHINS.—The next tribe I will mention are the Kachins, otherwise called Chingpaw or Singhpo. They are so numerous as to form a small nation.

The area of the Kachin Hills under our administration is 19,177 square miles. Further north, latitude 28°, the country is unexplored. The Kachin Hills range from 1,000 to 12,000 feet in height above sea-level. The Kachins live mostly in the hills to the north, east, and west of Bhamo and Myitkyina districts, and in the Ruby-mine district. They also occupy the Hukong Valley, which is fifty-four miles long and thirty-five miles broad. The main road between Burma and Assam lies through this valley, in which there are many rubber forests. The rubber is extracted by the Kachins for sale to Chinese merchants, and the method of extraction is so wasteful that the trees are fast being destroyed. The Hukong Valley is as yet unadministered.

The Kachin administered country is under an Assis-

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tant-Superintendent, whose headquarters are at Sinlumgaba, in the Kachin Hills above Bhamo, and who is under the orders of the Deputy-Commissioner of Bhamo. For administrative purposes the Kachin Hills are divided into forty tracts. The law in force is the Kachin Regulation. The Kachins were a very wild and savage people when we first came into contact with them, occupying the hills between Burma and China; they raided both countries impartially. They levied blackmail on all traders passing through their country, and thus greatly impeded trade. They were also continually at variance with each other, and there was no law or order in their country. The Kachins are of Tartar origin. They are short and sturdy.

The Kachin tribes are numerous, and the principal are:

Marip	Lahtaung	Lepai	Maru
Nhkum	Marans	Sassans	

There are two divisions of Kachins—Kamsa Kachins, who are ruled by chiefs called Duwas, and Kamlao Kachins, who are republicans and recognise no chiefs.

At the death of a chief he is succeeded by his youngest son. The elder sons generally move away and found villages of their own. Their houses are substantially built with teak posts, bamboo mat walls, and thatch roofs. The houses are very large, extending from 100 to 150 feet in length, and often contain three generations of the same family. The roof at the general entrance extends over an open enclosure, in which pigs are penned at night. The Kachins wear dark blue or blue and green check, and every man carries a small bag slung over the left shoulder. The bags are of dark blue, or red cloth embroidered with red, green, and yellow. The women wear a skirt formed of broad alternate bands of dark

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blue, red, and white stripes, with prettily embroidered borders. They wear their hair in knots, covered by a coloured cloth, and in their ears they wear cylinders of silver or amber, from 4 to 5 inches long. The men are armed with guns, crossbows, and spears 6 to 7 feet long. Each man carries a formidable *da*, or sword (*linkin*) squared off at the end and narrowing to the top. It is carried across the right shoulder and hangs on the left side. There is a flat sheath, on which the weapon is kept in its place by bands of cane. The Kachins are very superstitious, and their only religion is spirit-worship. Their priests are called Dumsas, and are supposed to be inspired by spirits.

Blood feuds are kept up for many years, and unless settled by payment or compensation, are never forgotten.

The pacification of the Kachin country was not achieved without much fighting, and requiied considerable perseverance.

In 1888 the Kachins attacked Mogaung, but were repulsed with loss. In 1888-1889 the Kachin country was visited by several columns, and military posts were established at important points to dominate the country. In 1889 General Sir George Wolseley commanded an expedition against the Ponkan Kachins. There were various encounters with the Kachins up to 1893, when the construction of a post at Sima met with much opposition, and it required a concentration of three columns of military police to subdue the Kachins and complete the building of the post. Since 1893 the Kachins have behaved well, and are now fairly quiet, but are often difficult to restrain from attacking the Kachin tribes subject to China. These Kachins raid the Kachins who are subject to Burma, and our Kachins can never understand why they are prevented from retaliating.

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A conference with the Chinese authorities was held in 1890-1891, and an agreement arrived at by which the officers on both sides meet every year and a general settlement of disputes between the Kachins on opposite sides of the border is arrived at.

The Chinese Kachins are under little restraint, and are almost invariably the aggressors. Our officers were instructed to assist the Chinese in preserving the peace whenever help is asked for and can be usefully given.

THE CHINS.—The Chins occupy the mountainous region on the west of Burma. Their country lies to the west of the Chindwin River, and is about 250 miles long and from 150 to 100 miles broad. Its approximate area is 10,250 square miles. The Chins were estimated in 1898 to number about 89,620 souls, and the numbers of the different tribes are as follows:

Tashons	39,215
Hakas	14,250
Soktes	9,005
Tlangtlangs	4,925
Yokwas	2,675
Siyins	1,770
Independent Southern Tribes ...	17,780
	89,620

According to the census of 1901, the number of the Chins was taken at 95,497. The Chins are of Tibetan origin, and are allied to the Nagas and Kukis of Assam.

The different tribes of Chins have each a separate dialect. The Chin Hills range from 4,000 to 8,000 feet in height. The villages are usually built on terraces, and surrounded with bamboo or thorn hedges. The approaches to the village are spiked with sharp bamboos.

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Water is brought to the villages by aqueducts made of bamboo. The houses are built of pine planks and roofed with thatch. They generally consist of three rooms. The principal room is a half-closed porch, adorned with skulls of animals killed in the chase, or of domestic animals which have been slaughtered in sacrifice.

The Chins are well-built, muscular men, and average 5 feet 6 inches in height. They are very much given to drink. They distil beer and spirits from millet, which they place in an earthen vessel and drink through long straws. The Chins are not given to much washing, and wear the merest apology for clothing. When at work in the fields they divest themselves of even that apology.

Amongst the Southern Chins the women's faces used to be tattooed black. This was to prevent their being carried off in raids by marring their beauty. This beauty I did not observe myself amongst the Chin women, even when not disfigured by tattooing. The habit is now dying out, as liability to be carried off in raids is much reduced under the British Government, except amongst the independent tribes

The Chins were the terror of the Burmans who inhabited the country at the foot of the hills, which was almost depopulated. I remember when I was at Kindat, on the east bank of the Chindwin, in 1886, the Chins attacked a village on the west bank at dawn. By the time the troops could cross the river the Chins had killed all the men and carried off the women and children, and the troops were unable to overtake them. Such raids as this were of constant occurrence. The Chins are spirit-worshippers, and all their ceremonies conclude with a feast, at which there is much drinking, and the drinking often terminates in a fight, which is frequently deadly, as all the Chins are armed.

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When we took the country every man had a gun —usually a Tower-stamped flintlock. They also carry swords, spears, and bows and arrows. They have a nasty habit of taking nicotine, obtained from the bowls of pipes, into their mouths, and any tribal arrangement come to is concluded by taking of nicotine into the mouth. This custom has had very alarming effects on British officers, who have been offered nicotine to seal a treaty, and have taken it in ignorance of what it really was.

It took the British Government from 1887 to 1894 to pacify the Chin country, and this result was only achieved by withdrawing the guns from the Chins. The Chin Hills were not considered part of British India until they were so declared for the first time in 1895.

The Chin Hills are administered by a superintendent with five assistant-superintendents. The law in force is declared by the Chin Hill Regulation of 1896. The law in force is the same as the law in Burma, so far as persons other than Chins are concerned. As regards Chins, the criminal law is the same as the law in Burma, with necessary modifications. The civil and revenue law of Burma does not apply to the Chin Hills, as the Chins are at too low a stage of civilization to require it. A few simple provisions of the Chin Hills Regulation and the rules thereunder suffice for the Chins.

The Pakokko Chin Hills are not under the Superintendent of the Chin Hills, but are administered by an Assistant-Superintendent under the orders of the Commissioner of Minbu.

The Chin Hills are a most trying country to travel in. The hills are very steep, and are separated by deep valleys. You see a village on an opposite hill, which seems to be a few hundred yards off, and have to travel up and down steep hills sometimes eight or ten miles to get to it. In

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many instances it is impossible to ride, as the roads are so steep. The country is, however, often well wooded, and in the spring, when the rhododendrons are in flower, it is well worth a visit.

Of late years much has been done to improve the road, and road-making has been a great factor in the pacification of the country. The Chins, who were considered so terrible by the Burmese, are now ordinarily law-abiding and well-behaved. Schools have been started to educate them, and they are being encouraged to take to trade and cultivation. A few guns have been left them for the purpose of sport and keeping down wild beasts, but all such guns are registered and stamped. The Chins submitted very badly to being deprived of their guns, and even after they were first taken from them they replaced them by purchases from Assam and Manipur Chins. The freshly-acquired guns were again taken, and they have now realized that they will not be allowed to retain firearms.

The Chins' method of warfare against our troops was to fire from an ambush, and then disappear down a steep hill, where our troops found it difficult to follow them, and this mode of warfare was exceedingly harassing to the troops, as may be imagined. The revenue paid by the Chins consists of a small sum per house, and is very inconsiderable. There are no troops on the Chin Hills now, which are held by the Chin battalion of military police.

I have now told you as much as time will allow about the tribes on the frontiers of Burma. I am afraid you may have found the subject wearisome, but I trust I have given you an idea of how very varied the tribes of Burma are.

In course of time the peculiar customs and dress, and,

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I suppose, many of the languages and dialects now in use, will disappear, and I think much useful work has been done by our officers in preserving records of the distinctive characteristics of the tribes. Much information has been collected by Sir George Scott, Mr. Carey, C.I.E., and others.

There is, of course, a great deal more that I could have told you about these tribes, but my time is limited, and I have made my remarks as short as possible. If anybody should wish to learn more about these tribes, the 'Gazetteer of Upper Burma,' by Sir George Scott, and the 'Gazetteer of the Chin Hills,' by Mr. Carey, might be studied, as they contain most of what is known as yet of the tribes who have been so briefly mentioned to-day.

Sir George Scott has recently published a handbook of Burma, in which he gives a great deal of information about the tribes, accompanied by photographs of many of the most interesting types. Any of my hearers who wish to pursue the subject further might study this book with advantage. It is published by Alexander Moring and Co., of 32, George Street, Hanover Square.

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DISCUSSION.

The Chairman said: We have listened to a very admirable paper, put before us by one whose long experience of Burma, both as Chief Commissioner and more recently as Lieutenant-Governor, entitles him to our absolute trust in the facts which he has enumerated to us. I can only hope that the paper, especially when it is published in our 'Proceedings,' will correct wrong impressions of Burma which are current in this country. As Sir Frederic Fryer pointed out in commencing his paper, the usual idea in England is that Burma is a land of rice and rivers, and that the inhabitants are a people who are remarkable chiefly for their gaiety and their picturesque attire. It is quite true that a bountiful Providence does supply Burma, particularly Lower Burma, with food obtainable with a minimum amount of labour, thus enabling its men to lead a happy life, to wear very gay clothes, to smoke long cheroots, and to leave most of the work to their womenkind. No doubt this is esteemed an earthly paradise—I mean for the men. (Laughter.) But Sir Frederic Fryer, by telling us so much of the frontier tribes of Burma, has enabled us to form a truer and more complete picture of the province. He has given us some conception of the difficulties we have had since the annexation of Upper Burma in settling the wild tribes, and he has shown the great measure of success achieved in these efforts. Sir Frederic alluded to some aspects of the subject more than once, but I could have wished that there had been time for him to have entered into more detail as to the simple protective administration we maintain over those interesting tribes, the Shans, the Chins, and the Kachins, in whose country our officers, civil and military, work together at what we may call the outposts of Empire. You will agree with me that there is no finer example of the work performed for civilization than that which is afforded by the sight of our civilians and soldiers working together for the benefit of these wild tribes and the inhabitants of Burma generally, and for the maintenance of the *pax Britannica*. (Cheers.)

Major-General M. W. E. Gosset said: Having held a command in Burma some years ago, I may, perhaps, give you a few traits of native character which came under my experience.

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The Karens and other border tribes are not bad material for soldiers, and are amenable to discipline, whereas the Burman proper is not so constituted. When I was at Mandalay there were some companies of Burman sappers and miners, among which there were many men who would absent themselves for days together, and be recorded accordingly as deserters; they would then, as a rule, turn up, and when brought before their commanding officer and asked the reason for their absence, would often say, 'I went to a *pwè*' (a theatrical performance), which they seemed to think was quite an adequate and reasonable explanation for unauthorized absence. They were surprised under the circumstances that they were not let off, and could not understand that discipline must be observed.

With regard to the fighting capacity of the Kachins, we had good opportunities of testing it when, during my first year in Mandalay, I had four columns out doing very difficult work in mountainous country thickly wooded, where there were no roads, only narrow, rocky paths, often on the edge of steep cliffs. It is not easy for armed men to make their way along these mountain paths, particularly when the natives have built stockades to obstruct the passage. If it was not that they never very bravely defended these stockades we should have had much more difficult work than we had. One of the most remarkable instances of their giving way was when Lieutenant MacMunn, R.A., had to march with a convoy to a fort at Sadōn. On arriving at a river some seventeen miles from his objective, he found that the Kachins had put up stockades on the opposite bank, from which they opened fire on his small escort, comprising only thirteen Goorkhas and a native Punjabi officer. They had with them some twenty mules, carrying ammunition and supplies. Lieutenant MacMunn gained a small island on the river, and opened fire on the Kachins, who promptly bolted up their mountain path. The convoy pursued them for the whole seventeen miles, taking one stockade after another. At the village of Sadōn, half a mile from the fort, the young officer was shot through the wrist, and the Punjabi officer through the chest; but he carried his mules and supplies along, with the loss of a few mules. I think it was one of the finest achievements of a small party I ever heard of. The incident shows that even in their own country, where they have great natural topographical advantages, the Kachins did not make a very determined stand.

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Sir Frederic Fryer alluded to spirit-worship among the Shans. On one occasion on tour I stayed at a rest-house in the vicinity of works in progress for the construction of a road. The natives of the village had built a dam across the river for the irrigation of their fields, and at each end of the dam was a little bamboo erection for the abode of *Nats*, for the Burmans, though nominally Buddhists, are really worshippers of *Nats*, or spirits. The Hindustani coolies, road-making under the Public Works Department, used the dam as a short cut. The headman of the village came to me and said if people were allowed to walk across the dam the *Nats* would be angry, the dam would break, and they would lose their crops. I interviewed the superintendent of the work, and told him the dam must not be used as a pathway, much to the relief and gratification of the villagers, who were very pleased that the anger of the *Nats* had been averted.

Dr. Cotterell Tupp, I.C.S., said : I only wish to say a few words about the Singpho Shan and Kachin tribes on the extreme north-east frontier of Burma, opposite to China. There is between the British frontier at Bhamo and the Chinese frontier near Manwein a strip of rugged mountainous country, inhabited almost entirely by Kachins, and to the north by Singphos. These people are, or were till quite recently, tribes of the most savage and barbaric kind. All our explorers who have penetrated to Burma from the north-east, either from China or from French Indo-China, say that by far the most difficult part of their journey was the strip varying from 40 to 150 miles between the Chinese and British frontiers. Nearly all these explorers were reduced to the last stage of misery and destitution, and were constantly in imminent danger of being murdered as long as they were in the Kachin territory. Margary and Colquhoun from China and Prince Henri D'Orléans from Tong-king all travelled in comparative peace and comfort in China and in Indo-China till they came to the Kachin frontier. From that time all their accounts are full of the miseries they suffered, the starvation they endured, and the constant threats of violence and murder which they encountered. Margary, the first European (at any rate, in modern times) to cross from China to Burma by this, the old trade route, which had been used from time immemorial for trade between China and Burma, travelled in 1874 under the protection of Chinese passports from Pekin, and was not only safe, but was well-treated till he came to Manwein. Thence to

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Bhamo he was plundered, ill-treated, and constantly threatened, and escaped with difficulty across the frontier to Bhamo. He returned a month later as an *avant-coureer* to Colonel Horace Browne's exploring expedition to China, and was brutally murdered near Manwein. This murder was inquired into by Colonel Browne, and afterwards by the Grosvenor Mission, and all agree that it was committed by the Kachins, and not by the Chinese. In 1882 Mr. A. R. Colquhoun travelled safely with his friend Wahab all through Yunnan from Canton to Manwein, but when they got into the Kachin country between Manwein and the Irawadi they were plundered, delayed, badly treated, and expected to be murdered every minute till they crossed the British frontier. Prince Henri D'Orléans coming from Tonking in 1895 was very nearly starved to death and murdered in these same savage territories. Indeed, every traveller has the same story to tell of barbarity, truculence, dishonesty, and savagery. Prince Henri came out at Sadiya in Assam, much further north than Bhamo. The reason why I have drawn your attention to this savage strip of territory and its inhabitants is that it is the only obstacle to opening up the old trade route from Burma to China, viâ Bhamo and Manwein. I am glad to learn from Sir F. Fryer that military posts have now been established in these regions, and they should do much to remove the hindrance to the re-establishment of the trade route. No doubt, however, much remains to be done, and I can scarcely credit the statement made by the *Globe* newspaper in May last that a light railway had been sanctioned from Bhamo to Momein. The construction of such a line would not be possible until the savage tribes on the Yunnan frontier had been subdued. Apart from the question of the trade route, it is to be hoped we shall take all the Singphos, Kachins, and Shans definitely under our control, not only for the purpose of civilization and good government, but in order that we may join our territory to the Chinese frontier without any gap between, and that, in case the French extend north and north-west through the Siamese Shan States, we may have a strong and defensible frontier there, including all the tribes which used to be called the Independent Shan States. Now that the borders of Burma, Siam, and French Indo-China are rapidly coming to a meeting-point far west of the great River Mekong, it is our evident destiny to govern among us —divide them how we may—the savage and unruly tribes on these important frontiers. (Cheers.)

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Colonel Bingham said: I lived amongst the Karens for many years, and I am inclined to think that their good qualities have been generally overlooked. They may not be good fighting material, such as is obtainable in India, but I consider that they have a place to fill in the defence of the north-east frontier. They are excellent scouts, and with discipline and training we could make very reliable bodies of Karen scouts. The Karens are the only wild race of people in that part of the world that I lived amongst for any length of time, and therefore know really well, though, of course, my work brought me into contact with most of the other tribes.

Sir Thomas Holdich: I have never had the pleasure of serving in Burma, and therefore cannot give any personal reminiscences. The lecturer has well illustrated to us the extraordinary complexity existing in the ethnographic conditions obtaining on the Burmese frontier, but I think you will find corresponding complexity along the whole frontier of India. He has shown us that the original stock from which these different tribes are derived apparently came from the East—*i.e.*, from China—or from the North, and I take it that so far as the tribes of the northern and eastern frontier of Burma are concerned that must be so. But (a little apart from the subject of this paper, perhaps) I should like to ask if there is no evidence in Burma, and particularly Lower Burma, of immigration by sea, of either Malay influence or Tamil influence. And there is one other point about which I should like to have the latest information. You will see by the map that the head of the Brahmaputra in the Assam Valley is parted by only a very small distance indeed from the Upper Irawadi. Some time ago an expedition was formed to explore the intervening country, to discover whether there was any possible crossing of it, with a view to the construction of a railway between Assam and Upper Burma. The country was precisely what Sir Frederic has described—chains of high mountains, with deep and narrow valleys in between, presenting altogether insuperable obstacles to the advance of an army, and almost barring anything in the shape of railway construction. But since then great progress has been made in the surveys of Upper Burma, and I should like to know whether, within the last ten years or so, any better way of communication between Upper Assam and Upper Burma has been discovered. That, to my mind, is one of the most interesting problems of the future in connection with Burma. (Hear, hear.)

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In replying to the discussion, Sir Frederic Fryer said: I should first like to reply to the interesting remarks of Dr. Cotterell Tupp. The Kachins have now been brought into such a state of tranquillity that they have abandoned attacking travellers and traders. From Bhamo to Tengueh there has been made a mule-road, along which mules or pack-bullocks can pass. This road is patrolled, and traders can now pass along with perfect safety. We made the road a few years ago as far as the limits of British territory, and the Chinese applied to us to carry on the work across the border. When I left Burma we were awaiting the Chinese contribution to carry out the work. They said they were perfectly willing to provide all the labour required, and would allow our engineers to make the road for them. I think the road is probably completed now. Since I left it has been decided to make a light railway along the road. The line can easily be constructed—there are no very difficult gradients—and I should think that in the course of a few years we shall see a railway from Bhamo to Tengueh. I forgot to say in my paper that the Kachins, of whose unruliness we have heard this afternoon, make excellent soldiers under proper training. We raised two companies of them for the Bhamo battalion of the military police, and one of these companies was sent as escort to the British representatives on the Burmo-Chinese Boundary Demarcation Commission. During this demarcation three of our officers went without a proper guard into a Wa village on market-day, and the Was turned upon them, killing two, while the third only narrowly escaped death. With the Chinese troops and the military police there was a detachment of the Durham Light Infantry. There was a sharp battle with the offending Was, in which the Kachins very much distinguished themselves. Meanwhile the soldiers of the Durham Light Infantry and the Kachins had become bosom friends, and nothing delighted the Kachins more than to get some of the Durhams to drill them. The men are very good fighters, and they readily submit to discipline, and I think we shall find that the Kachins will contribute a very considerable contingent to the military police before long. (Hear, hear.) As to a railway between Assam and Upper Burma, a survey was made—or, rather, a reconnaissance—through the Hukong Valley, and it was found that a railway could be made through that fertile valley without any great difficulty. But, of course, it would involve a very wide circuit to

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come from India right up the North of Assam, and then down the Hukong Valley, and then down from Mogaung, where there would be connection with the existing railway giving access to Rangoon. Lately there was a survey for a line from Burma to India coming east of Nimbu, but that was found to be very difficult and expensive. The last idea when I left was to make a railway from somewhere about Prome, past Akyab, to join up with the Chittagong Railway. A survey was started to ascertain whether a line was possible. It was feasible, but, owing to the number of rivers which come down along the coast, the line would have been a very expensive one indeed. In answer to Sir Thomas Holdich, I may say that there has been very little migration into Burma from India or the Malay States. Large numbers of Madrasis do come to Burma, but they generally come only for a season's work of gathering in the rice or working in rice-mills, and when they have made a sufficient sum of money, they generally go back to India. The Malays do not seem to have any great tendency to come to Burma. On the other hand, a good many Burmans are settled in the Malay States. There has been a large migration from China into Burma, and there are many Chinese in Burma, Chinamen having come from the province of Yunnan and settled in Upper Burma. I had several applications from Chinamen for grants of land. We were rather reluctant to meet these wishes, owing to the character of the Kachins; but now the tribes have been got into something like order the Chinese might, I think, be encouraged to come. They are very good and industrious cultivators, and orderly as a rule.

The Chairman, in concluding the proceedings, said: Sometimes we have discussions which are somewhat controversial in character, but there has been nothing of the kind to-day. The remarks made have been in expansion of the facts brought out in the paper, and we are unanimous in our appreciation of the lecture. Burma must always be a land of the deepest interest to us. As you know, the annexation of Upper Burma was forced upon us by circumstances on which I need not dwell. A point to remember, however, is that in these regions British and French interests meet, and our territories touch. Those who wish to add to their information on the subject of French interests in that part of the world may be referred to Dr. Cotterell Tupp's lecture in this room only last May. In a very interesting paper he dwelt upon the French in Indo-China. The annexation of 1886

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took place in the vice-royalty of that wise, brilliant, and splendid statesman Lord Dufferin. The forebodings heard at that time, and which were uttered by many who perhaps did not know much of the subject, have been proved to be ill-founded. In Upper Burma both revenue and population have increased under the Governments of Sir Charles Bernard, Sir Frederic Fryer, Sir Hugh Barnes, and the present Lieutenant-Governor, Sir Herbert White. At the Mandalay Durbar in 1901 Lord Curzon, speaking of the stages of development from conquest to order and peace in Upper Burma, and of the way the more recent stages had been supervised by Sir Frederic Fryer, said: 'I cannot conceive a prouder reflection with which an Indian administrator can leave these shores than that he has nursed so sturdy a child of Empire from childhood to adolescence.' I think our society is to be congratulated upon having had from the administrator of whom this was said a paper so full of detail on an aspect of Burmese affairs but little known. In preparing such a paper there is a vast amount of labour in the way both of collection of material and of compression. I propose, therefore, that we should accord Sir Frederic Fryer a cordial vote of thanks for his excellent and informing paper. (Cheers.)

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CHINESE TURKESTAN

BY

MAJOR C. D. BRUCE

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CENTRAL ASIAN SOCIETY, 22, ALBEMARLE STREET, W.
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Proceedings of the Central Asian Society

CHINESE TURKESTAN

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MAJOR C. D. BRUCE

READ APRIL 24, 1907.

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CHINESE TURKESTAN

General Sir Thomas Holdich was in the chair, and in opening the proceedings said: In the absence of your chairman, General Sir Edwin Collen, who has written to say how extremely sorry he is not to be able to be present, I have the pleasant duty of introducing Major Bruce to you. Not very long since Major Bruce described his most interesting journey across China and Turkestan to the members of the Royal Geographical Society, and some of us may be familiar with his story from the geographical point of view. But that story is still so full and interesting from so many other points of view, that we cannot fail to derive further profit from what Major Bruce has to tell us to-day.

One of the chief characteristics of those who live in this strenuous century is a distinct impatience with the older nations of the world in that they are not more modern. Whether we are watching the adoption of any up-to-date constitution, as in Persia, by a nation whose political organization has hardly changed in the course of some 2,000 years, or the final disruption of a corrupt and worthless bureaucracy, as in Russia, the uppermost thought in the mind of most onlookers is that the change does not come as rapidly as they would desire. In the present day not many of these ancient and interesting countries have been left to be studied, but among them, itself a dependency of the hoariest among nations, is Chinese Turkestan. It is of its present and past condition that I propose to speak this afternoon, in hope that the long and close connexion Chinese Turkestan once bore to India may cause some interest to be extended

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to a country in which singularly little has up to the last few years been taken.

Invariably known to the Chinese as the Hsing Chiang, or new frontier, the name given to this area on European maps is a somewhat vague one. For present purposes the general boundaries of Chinese Turkestan may be defined thus:

On the south it is bordered by an almost impassable wall formed by the Kuen Lun mountains; on the north by the Tian Shan mountains and their eastern offshoots; on the west by the Alai mountains, the Kizil Art, and the great Pamirs. On the east no natural boundary exists, but an artificial one is found in the main north-west road leading from Peking to Kashgar, which here crosses the desert at its narrowest point from An-Si-Chou to Hami.

More interesting than the geographical boundaries are the political areas which surround Chinese Turkestan. Throughout the greater part of its length the frontier of Northern China marches with that of Russia. From the Tugdambash Pamir for some 3,000 miles north and east Chinese territory is coterminous with that of its ever-expanding neighbour. In the south-west corner lies one of the most debatable lands in Asia, what is commonly called the roof of the world, where three Empires meet. To the south lie Kashmir—otherwise British India—and Tibet, whose suzerain is China. On its eastern side Chinese Turkestan is physically open all round, but actually the only approach to it is through a thin strip of semi-cultivated territory in North-West Kansu.

One of the main points to be studied in examining the future of any country, whether from the commercial, military, or administrative point of view, is that of its communications. The subject of roads cannot but lead to that of influence and privilege. The area under dis-

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cussion is traversed by three main routes—two of major and one of minor importance. All three start from An-Si-Chou, on the Kansu border, and run west to the Russian frontier. As far as Hami the two northern tracks have together formed the great north-west road from Peking. At Hami, which town stands ten stages distance across the desert from An-si-Chou, they bifurcate. After dividing, the northern branch is known as the Tian Shan Pei Lu, or north road. This runs from Hami viâ Urumtsi, the capital of Chinese Turkestan, to Kuldja, close to the Russian frontier. Urumtsi is always known to the Chinese as Hoong Miao Tzu, or the red temple, from the fact that there is a notable temple there.

Kuldja was well known in Europe at the time of the Yakob Beg rising, being then occupied, as was the whole of Ili, by Russian troops. On account of its geographical situation it may not improbably be heard of again, though whether as once more containing a Russian garrison, or as one of the new defensive outposts of a regenerated China, time alone will show.

The other branch of the two main routes is called the Tian Shan Nan Lu, or south road. This runs west from Hami along the northern border of the central desert to Kashgar, passing through towns and oases of varying importance, the chief of which are Karasha, Aksu, and Maral Bashi.

The third and little used of the main routes, after quitting An-Si-Chou, runs south of the Takla-Makan desert along the lower spurs of the Kuen Lun main range, at a height of between 4,000 and 8,000 feet above the sea-level. This track also divides into two at Cherchen, a well-to-do oasis 200 miles west of Lopnor. From Cherchen one branch runs direct through the desert to Kiria, and the other to the same town, but along the

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northern base of the Kuen Lun. After uniting at Kiria, these two tracks lead on as one to Yarkand, Kashgar, and the Russian frontier.

So much for the lateral communications which traverse the Hsin Chiang, but we must not omit to notice that these three routes are also connected across the desert from north to south by lesser tracks. The most important of these is a caravan track between Urumtsi and Chakalik, which runs viâ Karasha and Koria down the Tarim River past Lop Nor. The second cross communication is maintained between Khotan and Ak-Su, where a track follows the Khotan River in about twenty-three marches to the latter place.

Having dealt with the interior routes traversing Chinese Turkestan, a few words may be said of some of the most important roads which lead out or into that country.

1. The first, though perhaps the least important, except to us as a nation, is that from India viâ Leh and the Karakoram Pass, by which most of the communication and all such trade as there is passes to India. An alternative route to this, but one seldom used, is that viâ Gilgit, Hunza, and Tashkurgen.

2. The second is the main road connecting Eastern, or Chinese, with Western, or Russian Turkestan, which from Kashgar follows the Kizil-Su over the Terek Pass across the frontier to Osh.

3. The third is a caravan route from Ak-Su up the river of the same name over the Tian Shan mountains, thence across the Russian frontier viâ Issikol to join the present post-road and future railway line at Pish Pek.

4. The fourth is a continuation west of the Tian Shan north road, which leads up the Ili River over the Russian frontier on to the post-road between Vernoe and Kopal.

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It may be of interest to state that in the course of a journey through Central Asia made in 1902 I passed through Pish Pek and Vernoe. The country surrounding the latter place is as rich an agricultural district as could be desired. No finer country for colonization exists than some that will be traversed by the new Tash Kent-Omsk railway. Why, then, do we hear of new and extended schemes for settling such inhospitable and far-away regions as East Siberia or the Amur country?

5. The fifth of the exterior main routes leading into Chinese Turkestan is in some ways the most important, for it connects Chakalik near Lop Nor with Lhasa. From Lhasa to Chakalik the journey can be made in two months by well-mounted travellers; the usual time occupied by the many pilgrims who pour that way is three months.

Between Urumtsi, the capital of Chinese Turkestan, and Peking on the east, is a space of some 2,000 miles. Of this distance, at the present moment, not one mile is linked by rail, although it is hoped that Si-An-Fu in Shensi may soon thus be connected with Peking. The great highway connecting Chinese Turkestan with the capital is throughout most of its length a mere track, which passes over a succession of rugged passes as high, in the case of the Wu-Shi-Ling, the best known, as 10,000 feet. A road, in the European sense of the word, it is not. For hundreds of miles it is merely a track, worn throughout twenty centuries by the wheels of countless Chinese carts, untouched from year to year, unless rendered actually impassable owing to climatic disturbances; such is the only communication uniting this far dependency with Peking. To the west, Urumtsi stands within 400 miles of the Russian border, with which it is connected, as already stated, by the Tian Shan north road. Beyond this frontier the lines of

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modern railway, made and in the making, which connect European Russia with Chinese Turkestan, are too well known to require to be mentioned here.

Having endeavoured to indicate briefly the present general aspect of the communications which unite Chinese Turkestan with the outside world, let us now turn to another connexion which has strong claims to your attention.

Among those who have devoted time to a study of the area under review, it is well known how intimately connected in the past Chinese Turkestan was with India. But by people less interested, this important point is not, perhaps, fully realized. It is a matter of history that it was from our great Asiatic dependency that the teaching of Buddha first entered China. It was also from the same direction that the early Græko-Buddhist art, relics of which Dr. Stein has been chiefly instrumental in disinterring, reached Chinese Turkestan: and we now also know, without any doubt, that it was from Northern India that the western end of this area was at one period colonized, and, in addition, received a language, a literature, and a script. The first reliable evidence of this latter was discovered by Colonel Bower in his well-known find of birch-bark leaves in 1890, and since that date Dr. Stein has largely increased the debt, owed to him by all students of Central Asian history and archæology, by other and even more valuable discoveries.

At what exact date intercommunication between China and India first took place is still a debatable question. Chinese records place the event about 100 years B.C., when commercial relations with Shintu, or Thian Chu, as India was first called by them, are on record.

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Sir Henry Yale, however, gives reason for supposing that the Hindus knew the Chinas, as they were called in the laws of Manu, as degenerate Kahatriyes centuries before the date assigned by the Chinese themselves. Pauthier, in his edition of 'Marco Polo,' also says 'that people from India passed into Shensi, the westernmost part of China, more than 1,000 years before our era, and at that time founded a state named Tsin, the same word as our China.'

The story of the actual introduction of Buddhism into the latter country is not without interest, for Chinese Turkestan was the channel through which it flowed.

In the reign of the Emperor Ming-Ti, one of the Eastern Han dynasty, that potentate dreamed a dream. In his sleep, it is related, he imagined he saw a golden figure floating in a halo of light across the room. Unable, like Pharaoh, to conceive what meaning to place upon his dream, Ming-Ti assembled his wise men and astrologers, and from them invited suggestions as to its interpretation. Unpleasant as such a call upon their inventive faculties must have been, it is probable that the wiseacres were sufficiently in touch with the thoughts and hopes of their noble master to be able to assume with some certainty what was expected of them. They hinted in reply that the figure seen by the Emperor was probably that of Buddha, for with the new religion, it must be remembered, they were already familiar; and the result of their explanation was the despatch of a special envoy to India to investigate the truth. After a considerable period of absence the envoy returned, having obtained not only the necessary sacred books, pictures, and imigria of the new religion, but having also been fortunate enough to persuade some Indian priests to accompany them to the home of their ruler. It was after this

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manner that a faith as fine as any the world has known was introduced to China, a people and country by whom, for nearly 2,000 years, it has since been neglected and debased.

After having dwelt somewhat fully upon the introduction of Buddhism into China, the question may naturally be asked, what effect this has had upon the moral well-being of the millions, who have at various periods professed its obligations. Ethically one of the purest and most elevated forms of religion the world has known, it was at one time the state religion of China. That it may in its early time have answered the purpose of a moral force is probably true. That it does so now I am afraid is not the case. In the present day it retains no inward vitality, nor is it a religion any longer in the broadest meaning of that word. Impossible, even impertinent, as it may seem to attempt to judge the hidden forces which guide the conduct of an alien race, there is no room for such an imputation here. If religion means anything, it means some moral force by which men shape their daily conduct through life, one which is sufficiently strong to enable the willing spirit to overcome the weak flesh. Can it be maintained that Buddhism in China still retains this power? I fear not. Interesting as it might be to follow the gradual decay of this almost divine faith, it is altogether beyond the scope of this paper.

Let us turn to more prosaic matters while I endeavour to offer you information of a lighter and more mundane kind.

Present-day administration in Chinese Turkestan varies little from that in force in China proper, except that for the head-men of villages, so great a factor in Chinese rural organization, Begs and native heads of

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tribes are substituted. Wise in their generation, the Chinese are content to supervise and control, leaving to their own chiefs the immediate supervision of the home life of village communities and that of nomad tribes. As mentioned previously, the centre of administration is at Urumtsi, where the Fu-Tai, or governor, resides.

Below the governor are three Tao-Tai intendents of circuit, who are stationed at Kashgar, Aksu, and Kuldja. Lower again in the official scale come the Ambans, answering to district magistrates. Attached to all these officials are the army of clerks, interpreters, and functionaries always considered necessary to uphold the dignity of magisterial life in China.

The above officials constitute that portion of the administration which is in the hands of Chinese. Under them again are the actual working heads in touch with the people, and these are all natives of the dominion. The most important in rank are the Begs, heads of districts, for they are the responsible go-between where the administration and the natives come in contest. Under the Begs, where necessary, come the tribal head-men, such as the ming-bashis (heads of thousands), yuz-bashis (heads of hundreds), and on-bashis (heads of tens).

In addition to the civil officials, there are also military commandants of grades according to the size of the garrison they command. Unlike those who serve in China proper, who are rarely allowed to remain more than three years in one place, both civil and military officials have usually served most of their time in Chinese Turkestan. The civil magistrates appear to be drawn from no particular part of China. During the course of our journey throughout the southern portion of the dominion we met men who by birth came from Honan, Hunan, and Hupeh.

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Of intercourse, other than what is absolutely necessary, between Chinese and native officials we found no trace. The former look with undisguised contempt upon the latter, whom they invariably refer to contemptuously as Chan-Tou—turban-headed. The manner assumed by an Amban in speaking to his native *entourage* would, if used by an Englishman to a native in India, be described at least as 'unconciliatory'—by the native press probably in far stronger terms. The Ambans either did not, or pretended not to, understand a word of Turki. Considering that many of them had spent the greater portion of their lives in the dominion, this can only be attributed to a wilful desire to keep aloof from all intercourse with the subject race. Judged by our own method of treating Asiatics, this must tend to weaken the central authority by preventing mutual understanding. It is, however, open to argument whether such a method is not more suited to subject Eastern races not highly developed. There would seem to be occasions in our own dealings with Asiatics when we are prone to sacrifice the authority while drawing no nearer to the mutual understanding. One curious point in the Chinese administration of Eastern Turkestan is in the financial arrangements, which provide, in a far-off dependency, a regular monetary system, with coinage complete, while withholding any such system from China itself. The question of currency in the latter country has long been calculated to drive the would-be reformer to despair.

It is unnecessary here to do more than remind you that in the interior of China to-day there is no current coinage. The medium of all barter is the tael—a weight of silver, not a coin. For the masses, copper cash of various degrees of debasement are coined by provincial mints. These circulate within confined limits all over

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China, but for trade purposes and for travellers lumps of solid silver are still necessary.

In Chinese Turkestan, on the contrary, the system is, comparatively speaking, modern, though not simple. They have there a common coin answering to the dollar of the China coast. This coin is the miskal, which circulates in one, two, or three miskal pieces. These have the appearance of a clumsily made florin. Ten miskal are equal to about three shillings. Other monetary terms are used, though there are no equivalent coins such as the pung (equal to five copper Chinese cash) and the tengeh (eight of which go to one sär), which latter is also worth about three shillings. Copper cash of Chinese pattern (ta-chien, or man-chien as they are called) and yamba (large silver shoes worth about £7 10s.) also circulate—the former among the poorer natives, the latter only among the wealthy merchants.

It is no easy matter to state definitely the system of taxation in any Eastern country, especially where Chinese administration is in force. But the basis of the one in use in Chinese Turkestan is that of a capitation tax, with certain tithes upon produce.

I regret being unable to state the amount of the capitation tax with absolute exactitude, but such information as could be obtained shows that it is levied in sums varying from fivepence to elevenpence per male head only. With regard to the tithes, the following lump sums were given me as specimen payment, and may be of interest although not tabulated.

At Polu, a well-to-do village situated on the northern slopes of the Kuen Lun mountains, 2,000 tengeh (about £37) is paid per annum as a tax to the Chinese Amban at Kiria. At Cherchen, the fairly rich oasis already alluded to, 8,000 tengeh (about £150) is the annual land

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tax chargeable to the revenue. In addition to this sum, an amount equal to 4,000 tangeh (£75) is paid by the shepherds and nomads of the surroundinng district. As if this were not enough, incredible as it may sound, the townspeople are subjected to still another tax. I was assured by various sellers in the bazaar—though under solemn pledge of secrecy, for breaking which I ask their pardon—that the Amban took for his own 'squeeze' two tengeh out of every ten tengeh worth of goods sold on market days in the bazaar. As this sum roughly represents ninepence out of every four shillings, it is apparent that even an Amban must live, and that right well.

The military organization of Chinese Turkestan is rather worse than that of most parts of China in the present day. Putting on one side the new foreign-drilled army nursed by the well-known Viceroy Yuan Shih Kai, in the vicinity of the capital, the remainder of the imperial forces scattered throughout the various provinces are still quite ineffective, that is, should they be called upon to meet European troops.

In spite of what has been lately heard of the high pitch to which Yuan Shih Kai's troops have been trained, I have no hesitation in saying that even they, unless officered by or mixed with Japanese troops, would make a poor show against good European soldiers.

From Kiria in Chinese Turkestan to Tai Yuan Fu in Shansi province, 250 miles from Peking, altogether a distance of some 2,000 miles, including such towns as Su-Chou, Kanchou, Liangchou, and Lanchou, no soldiers were seen either in numbers, quality, or armament, that a single foreign brigade with field artillery could not account for. In Turkestan, such garrisons as there are occupy either small forts in the vicinity of the town, or

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the towns themselves. The latter are usually built on the lines of a Chinese city with, in some cases, the addition of a surrounding moat. The garrisons vary in nominal number, from the 3,000 at Urumtsi to a few score at such places as Toksu, Koria, and the frontier post of Tashkurgan towards the Pamirs. In *actual* numbers they vary still more. At Kiria the Amban himself informed me that the garrison consisted of one liang of infantry, 500 men, and some ma-ping, cavalry. No discourtesy to him is intended when I say that, after being there three days, I do not think there were fifty men all told.

At Chakalik the same story was again repeated. Putting the actual number of Chinese troops garrisoning Eastern Turkestan at 8,000, it may be safely inferred that barely 5,000 would be found present in an emergency. And of those 5,000 a medical inspection upon European lines would suffice to case 50 per cent. for old age, opium-smoking, and other causes. Were Chinese official statements as to the number of troops present accepted as facts, no doubt the garrison would be put at 15,000 or 20,000 well-armed men. The troops who form the garrisons are drawn chiefly from the provinces of Hunan and Hupeh. Spending, as they do, years in one place, the men eventually deteriorate even more than their provincial brethren-in-arms in China proper. Of local Turki troops there are none, nor would they make soldiers under Chinese instruction.

The internal political relations of Chinese Turkestan are probably in as close touch with Peking as are those in such provinces as the Kwangtung, Yungn, or Sze-Shuan. During the course of our journey a considerable number of officials were met with in the great north-west road which traverses Kansu province. These were either

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proceeding to or returning from Urumtsi. The telegraph line from Peking to Kashgar is the one outward sign of imperial interest which Eastern Turkestan enjoys. It is kept in repair, well staffed, and in good working order. In addition to the telegraph, the imperial courier post still survives. By it the transfer of information or special orders is extraordinarily rapid. An imperial despatch wrapped in the well-known yellow silk and tied round the waist of a succession of mounted couriers will reach Liangchou, in Kansu province, under nineteen days from Peking. The time usually taken for the same journey by well-equipped travellers is forty-three days.

The external political relations of the dependency are confined, of geographical necessity, to two foreign powers. From the situation of Chinese Turkestan this will, in all probability, always be the case. Of the two powers, it should be apparent, even to Celestial obtuseness, that from Russia there is everything to fear, from England nothing. Yet the closest scrutiny is necessary before any sign can be observed that this fact is realized. Before proceeding to discuss the present position of these two powers in the area under notice, it may not be amiss to glance for a moment at their importance as apparent to natives on the spot.

The visible authority of Russia is for ever held prominently before the eyes of the inhabitants, both in the position occupied by the Consul-General at Kashgar, and by that of his colleague at Urumtsi. The very real local power exercised by these two officials is made to appeal to Asiatic notions of authority in its most practical form when required—viz., that of force. On the other hand, the position occupied by the British representative at Kashgar is looked upon by those who are accustomed to compare such details, where they never cease to be dis-

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cussed, as inferior in every way. There may possibly be sufficient reasons for the continuation of this state of affairs, but they are not apparent to the man on the spot. However good they may seem to be at a distance, few who have travelled in Chinese Turkestan, or who possess even an elementary acquaintance with Asiatic methods of thought, will agree with them.

Though no direct reference has hitherto been made to the neglect on the part of China to safeguard her most distant colony, the fact cannot be overlooked in any allusions to Chinese Turkestan.

There are two reasons which suggest themselves for the apparent apathy of the Imperial Government. The first is, that it is aware of the hopeless nature of the task should it endeavour to take the necessary precautions; the second, and probably the true one, that it is too apathetic, and having been accustomed for so long a period to trust to the forbearance of its neighbours, will not now arouse itself. It may also be that the retrocession of the Ili province in 1882, after its temporary occupation by Russian troops, may have helped to lull Chinese suspicions. Be the reason what it may, there is no slight chance that the future will bring forth a rude awakening. It is acknowledged that Russia holds Chinese Turkestan in the hollow of her hand, and, with no intention whatever to suggest immediate or even likely action on the part of those who guide the Asiatic policy of that nation, it may be of interest to indicate future possibilities.

In the event of such action being taken as the absorption of Chinese Turkestan, it is probable that Russia might be content merely to overawe at first Kashgaria and Ili. The former territory was still considered as belonging to the Kokhandian Khanate after the Russian

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conquest of Kokhand in 1864. The Mohamedans there did, in fact, pay tribute amounting to some thousands of pounds a year, and such a gradual advance would be more in keeping with traditional Russian policy. The aim of those answerable for that policy has always been to secure as far as possible the toleration of the Mohamedan element in previous Central Asian conquests, for, as they are well aware, in the feelings entertained for Russia by the faithful, lies one of the chief dangers of Russian expansion in Asia. It is difficult to say if we ourselves suffer in less degree from the same feeling at the hands of Mussulmans. It is usual to suggest that we do, partly on account of the well-known toleration shown for the religious feelings of all our subject Asiatic races, more, perhaps, on account of the facilities provided under government auspices for the millions of devotees who make the pilgrimage to Mecca from our Eastern possessions.

In discussing the political relations of Chinese Turkestan, it is unavoidable not to include in any such review those of the neighbouring territories which border that country. The future of Tibet is another eventuality which cannot but affect the political relations of Chinese Turkestan with whoever is the dominant power of Lhasa.

Although at the present moment China is once more acknowledged to be in full possession of her authority at the capital, it is impossible to say how long it may be before fresh schemes for upsetting that authority may not be set on foot. Last time the efforts of Dorjief, the Buriat, were sufficiently near to being successful to give cause to ponder what the sequence might have been had an open adoption of the wishes of the Dalai Lama been forced upon the Tibetan Council. It does not require much prescience to suggest that the triumph of the pro-

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Russian party in Tibet would probably have been followed at no remote date by the proclamation of a Russian protectorate over Chinese Turkestan. In whatever form Russian interests were expressed, the results would have been most serious to ourselves, even though no open attempt was made to enter Tibet. In drawing attention this afternoon to some of the more interesting questions connected with the future of the area under discussion, no attempt is made to suggest novelty. None of the questions are new, all have been possibilities ever since Kokhand was absorbed by Russia over thirty years ago, but there has been a perhaps unconscious neglect of Chinese Turkestan as a factor in Central Asian politics. Events which have happened during the last few years in the Far East have recast most of the political problems which they affect, and it behoves those interested to reconsider their own judgment and opinion in the light of the entirely new perspective through which these problems must be viewed.

There is one point which cannot be too strongly insisted upon when one remembers very recent events both in Manchuria and Tibet, and that is, the danger of reckoning upon either the intention or ability of the present Chinese Government to carry out its undertakings.

Recent utterances, both in the press and verbally to Imperial Chinese edicts, are calculated to inspire confidence that at last the Golden Age has come, and that China has arrived at the point when she may be left alone to safeguard her own and foreign interests both at home and abroad.

Nothing could be more opposed to facts, and unless due precautions are taken to safeguard the interests of individual nations, instead of trusting to Chinese

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authority to do so, we, for one, may find ourselves severely handicapped when the occasion for action suddenly arises.

In conclusion, I would like to lay before you two points of view bearing, though indirectly, on the future of Chinese Turkestan. Concerning neither will I offer my opinion; at the same time, both are worthy of earnest consideration.

Now the first point of view. There are to-day distinct signs that a more hopeful era is about to dawn in Asia, heralded, perhaps, by an Anglo-Russian *entente*. Few political movements would be more welcome to those interested in the East, but we may not forget that international agreements, though a sign of mutual good-will, are not binding for all time. And now for the head point of view.

In defending the increased military expenditure in India as late as March, 1906, the present Viceroy made the following remarks in answer to protests by a member of his Council against any increased expenditure. This member was a well-known native gentleman. 'I am afraid,' said the Viceroy, 'that I cannot follow the hon. member in his conclusion that these dangers—our Asiatic differences with Russia and the dismemberment of China—have disappeared for ever. He has told me that the tide of European aggression in China has been rolled back for good, that the power of Russia has been broken, and that her prestige in Asia has gone.

'I am afraid these are mere assumptions, which I can hardly accept. I am afraid I feel more impelled to consider what effect the Russian reverses may have on the pride of a high-spirited race, and I wonder in how long or how short a time she may feel confident of recovering her lost prestige.'

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DISCUSSION

General Sir Thomas Holdich said: In listening to this very interesting paper, one cannot but be struck by the great variety of points which Major Bruce has opened up for discussion—too many, almost, to be dealt with on a single afternoon. I am not quite sure from his paper what his estimate of the capabilities of the Chinese soldier may really be. I do not think there is any question affecting Eastern military power which has had such variety of opinions expressed about it as this. So far as history can enlighten us, the Chinese soldier has certainly distinguished himself in a very remarkable way. It is not so very long ago that in this room I had an opportunity of calling your attention to the fact that at one time a Chinese army of invasion passed from China into Tibet, and after encountering almost incredible obstacles in the way of high mountain passes, every one of them higher than Mont Blanc, they finally met and defeated a large Gurka force sent against them, and they left such a record of uprisal behind them that the lesson is not forgotten in Nepal to this day. That was a remarkable performance; indeed, I do not know any in history, not even Napoleon's crossing the Alps or San Martin's crossing of the Andes in South America, so remarkable from the point of view of the physical obstacles overcome. That the Chinese can fight under certain conditions there can be no doubt whatever, and they have succeeded in impressing this fact on the populations of Chinese Turkestan and of Tibet. For, as Major Bruce has explained to us, the amount of force at the disposal of the authorities of Turkestan is extremely small—much smaller than the officials admit. A mere handful of soldiers—not more, perhaps, than 4,000—has always succeeded in maintaining Chinese authority over that

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huge area. We have never heard of any serious difficulties encountered in this task. This is a good deal owing, no doubt, to the system of administration which the Chinese maintain. They leave the people almost entirely to themselves in local administration, merely exercising control in matters which we should describe as Imperial.

There must be remarkable power in a people which has succeeded in impressing itself and leaving its mark over such a huge extent of country as the Chinese dependencies; and I think that in the problems likely to arise in the future relative to supremacy in the East, China is a factor which cannot possibly be left out of account. What the effect of the Japanese influence may be upon China we cannot possibly tell; but of this I feel quite sure, that the recent war between Russia and Japan and its results constitute a distinct challenge to the West. It is a recurrence of an old historic challenge. Whatever way we choose to look at it, the glove has again been thrown down. I cannot help thinking that in the future it will really not be so much a question, as in the past, of Western nations fighting for European supremacy on Asiatic fields, but of Asiatics fighting for supremacy on their own fields. At present we hold the position of directors of military strategy in the East. We have a fine army in India composed of men of all shades of Eastern religious opinion, and I believe that army to be thoroughly loyal and devoted. It is entirely under English leading, and you may say that it is only under such leading, that the strength of that force can be maintained and developed. But will this state of things last? We have seen an Asiatic force directed by Asiatic minds prevailing in a most remarkable way against another Asiatic force—for we cannot call the Russian forces anything else than Asiatic—directed by European minds. So that we have now to consider, not so much what lies between ourselves and Russia as another European nation, but what lies before the two nations combined in balancing the Great Powers of the East.

This leads up to what I am convinced is coming—an Anglo-Russian agreement, probably founded on some sound commercial basis which shall be of equal advantage to both countries. This will mark a new political position in the East; and, looking beyond that, again, I think we shall find in years to come that such an agreement will become a political necessity.

I have heard more than once the opinion to which Major

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Bruce has given expression as to the general weakness of our representation in Chinese Turkestan. Mr. Macartney, our agent there, whom I know very well, ranks simply as an assistant to our Resident in Kashmir, which is not a very prominent position to hold. (Dr. Cotterell Tupp: He is made consul now.) If that is so, it is a distinct step in advance. But I was impressed, during the period I was on the borders of Chinese Turkestan during the delimitation of the Pamir Boundary, with the deference always accorded to Russian authority in Chinese Turkestan. If the problem is to be regarded as a military one, we cannot forget that the *whole* of Turkestan, Afghan as well as Chinese, is, in Major Bruce's phrase, in the hollow of Russia's hand. Under such conditions it is not likely that we shall succeed in altering native views on the subject of the relative importance of Russia and England, except by such a strong military demonstration as is beyond the intention, if not, indeed, the power, of the Government of India to make in such remote countries. As I said before, there are so many questions, all more or less speculative, arising out of an examination of the political status of Chinese Turkestan that it will be interesting to hear the views of others who may have a better acquaintance with the subject than myself.

Colonel E. St. C. Pemberton, R.E., said: It is fifteen years since I was in Chinese Turkestan, and I do not, therefore, feel qualified to express an opinion in regard to present-day conditions there; but there is a point of some interest which has been referred to incidentally by the lecturer, the possibility of Russian colonization in Central Asia.

Now, the Russian advance into Central Asia, as is known, was in earlier times by way of Western Siberia, their border being gradually pushed southwards from Omsk to the line of the Irtish, on which river a frontier post came into existence, which by degrees grew into the Russian town of Semipalatinsk. This was for many years the southern limit of Russian dominion in this direction, and I have on more than one occasion heard Russians express regret at the circumstance that climatic conditions seem to preclude European settlement of the regions situated to the south of the Irtish.

Of course, one knows there are European children in Russian Turkestan, and it is probable that those who live in the elevated regions in Semirechensk and Ferghana thrive well. All the

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same, Russian colonization on any extended scale in Russian Central Asia would seem to be unlikely owing to climatic conditions. And in regard to Chinese Turkestan, I think we are all agreed that in the event of its conquest by Russia, it could not become an integral portion of the Empire in the sense of being peopled by the Russians themselves.

Major Bruce has referred to the small number of Chinese troops in Turkestan, a circumstance which I, too, noticed when travelling through in 1892. Their military weakness in the Western portion of their Empire is, indeed, a matter of history. As is well known, they failed utterly in 1865 to cope with the rebellion of the Tarantchis and the Dungans in the province of Kuldja, which was occupied by the Russians in consequence, and held by them for twelve years. And did not Yakub Beg turn them out of Kashgar, defying during his lifetime their efforts to reconquer it?

Whether in the future the Chinese will be able to strengthen their position in the West of their Empire must depend upon the degree to which they as a people become regenerated in spirit. If there is real regeneration, the morals of their soldiers will be much higher than it is to-day, and organization, training, discipline will follow.

But even granting this, one must remember how poor are the lines of communication between the heart of the Chinese Empire and its distant Western provinces, traversing, as they do, vast sands, deserts without railways or waterways. Certainly it is true that at the present time no power confronting Russia in these parts in support of China could look to receive effective military support from the Chinese.

Mr. David Fraser: Having recently been in Chinese Turkestan, I can bear out what Major Bruce has said as to the small number of Chinese troops and officials who hold this large country in subjection. This is one of the most noticeable things in travelling through the country, and Sir Thomas Holdich has also rightly referred to this feature in relation to Tibet. A Russian traveller has stated that there are two divisions of Chinese troops in Turkestan stationed at various places. So far from there being 20,000 men, however, I believe there are not more than 2,000, spread over some twenty different detachments. At Kotan, according to this Russian writer, there should be 300 infantry and 200 cavalry. I called on the Chinese military

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Amban there, who holds rank equivalent to that of general. He kindly asked me to breakfast and to a review of his troops. On the parade-ground, instead of 500 men, there were not more than fifty, and I am quite sure a good number of these had been scraped out of the bazaar for the occasion (Laughter). There were five officers, and when I wanted to photograph the force, the only way in which they were capable of parading the men for the purpose was in two lines facing each other. In order to take the photograph I had to instruct them where and how to stand (Laughter). I was interested to hear from the general that he had recently received a large consignment of Mauser rifles for the re-armament of his men. I imagined that this was in accordance with the recent decision to arm the Chinese forces throughout with a new Mauser rifle of very small bore, so I asked to see the new rifles, and on their being brought out for my inspection, I found I could get my thumb down the barrel of any one of them, which does not say much for their value.

Major Bruce has discussed the possibility of Russia making an extension of her borders into Chinese Turkestan. Well, after seeing the country and its defenceless state, I cannot but agree that whenever Russia chooses to make an advance in that direction the Chinese will be powerless to stop her. But there is, in my opinion, a reason which will operate to prevent a move of this kind on Russia's part, and that is the small economic value of the country. Its area is very immense, and the only populated parts are those where cultivation is possible. Cultivation is confined to a series of oases lying at the foot of the mountainous regions which Major Bruce has described as bounding the country. These cultivated areas seem to me to be of such small dimensions and their productive capacity so limited, that I do not believe they are worth annexing in view of the small margin of surplus commodity available for export. From an economic point of view, then, it is hardly probable that Russia covets possession of Chinese Turkestan. If she ever does advance in this direction it will be for strategic reasons, though it is difficult to see how it would profit her to approach more closely to the Tibetan and Kashmir borders. But experience has proved to Russia how timid is the British Government in regard to operations in Central Asia, and the annexation of Kashgaria would certainly prove an excellent political weapon.

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It would be interesting to know if the powers that have guaranteed the integrity of the Chinese Empire regard Eastern Turkestan as within the scope of their guarantee.

With regard to the British Agent at Kashgar, he labours under the ponderous title of 'Special Assistant to the Resident in Kashmir for Chinese Affairs.' Every time he signs his name this long sentence has to appear after it, and every time he receives a letter he has to be so designated. Not long ago he was gazetted consul, but the Chinese declined to recognize the right of the British Government to gazette a consul to any place in the Chinese dominions which is not an open port by treaty. So Mr. Macartney's position is not officially recognized, and he may be said to be in Kashgar on sufferance. But it is a remarkable thing that the influence he wields with the Chinese is probably greater than that of the Russian consul. As is well known, he is a son of the late Sir Halliday Macartney, who was one of the ablest and most faithful servants the Chinese Government ever had, and he is also a descendant of that Lord Macartney who was the first British Ambassador to the Court of Peking. Mr. Macartney has been in Kashgar for fifteen years, and he is held in the greatest respect by the Chinese. If it came to a diplomatic tussle in Kashgar, I think most people who know the position would put their money on the British agent rather than on the Russian. (Cheers.)

Mr. C. Black: As so much has been said respecting Mr. Macartney, I should like to call attention to his views on one of the subjects mentioned by the last speaker—that of the economic value of Chinese Turkestan. These views were set forth in a valuable trade report. While not depicting the country as a rich one, Mr. Macartney considers that the opportunities of trade between us and Kashgar are worth appropriating. I remember that thirty years ago a great deal of attention was drawn to the subject of trade, and a mission to Kashgar was sent under Mr. Forsyth. A treaty followed, but with the fall of Yakub Beg the treaty fell through. I think that if the Indian Government devoted rather more attention to the subject of trade routes, and to explorations of alternative routes, it might give opportunities for increased trade, and, generally speaking, for better understanding between the two peoples.

Sir Thomas Holdich: I would ask you to thank Major Bruce for his valuable paper. (Cheers.) I regret that some members

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are absent to-day who might have added considerably to the interest of the discussion. Still, I think we have heard a great deal this afternoon which is of considerable interest, not only to ourselves, but also to the country at large.

Major Bruce having acknowledged the vote of thanks, the proceedings terminated.

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PROCEEDINGS OF THE CENTRAL ASIAN SOCIETY

ANNUAL MEETING OF THE CENTRAL ASIAN SOCIETY

Wednesday, June 12, 1907

THE STRATEGIC POSITION OF RUSSIA IN CENTRAL ASIA

BY

MR. DAVID FRASER

Read June 12, 1907

LONDON
CENTRAL ASIAN SOCIETY, 22, ALBEMARLE STREET, W.
1907

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Proceedings of the Central Asian Society.

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ANNUAL MEETING OF THE CENTRAL ASIAN SOCIETY,

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 12, 1907

GENERAL REPORT FOR THE SESSION 1906-1907.

THE Hon. Secretary read the following report:

The session of 1906-1907 commenced with a meeting on November 7, at which Mr. Valentine Chirol read a paper on 'Panislamism.' This was followed by papers from:

- Mr. F. A. McKenzie, December 12, 1906: 'Colonial Policy of Japan in Korea.'
- Mr. A. J. Dunn, January 9, 1907: 'British Interests in the Persian Gulf.'
- Sir Frederic Fryer, K.C.S.I., February 13, 1907: 'Tribes on the Frontier of Burma.'
- General Sir Thomas Gordon, K.C.B., K.C.I.E., C.S.I., March 13, 1907: 'Reform Movement in Persia.'
- W. Rickmer Rickmers, March 27, 1907: 'Impressions of the Duab, Russian Turkestan.'
- Major C. D. Bruce, April 24, 1907: 'Chinese Turkestan.'

These papers have all been published and circulated amongst the members.

Since January, 1906, the beginning of our financial year, we have elected twenty-seven new members—

Colonel Bailward.
Major R. A. E. Benn.
Sir W. Cunningham, K.C.S.I.
The Right Hon. Lord Curzon of Kedleston, G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E.
H. R. E. Dobbs, Esq.
The Right Hon. Sir Mortimer Durand, G.C.M.G., K.C.S.I.
Captain Elsmie.
Sir Frederic Fryer, K.C.S.I.

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Colonel St. John Michell Fancourt, C.B.
General Sir Matthew Gosset, K.C.B.
T. O. Hughes, Esq.
The India Office.
Sir Walter Laurence, Bart., G.C.I.E.
Colonel Sir H. McMahon, K.C.I.E., C.S.I.
Captain W. E. O'Connor.
Colonel Pemberton.
G. J. S. Scovell, Esq.
Captain C. B. Stokes.
E. J. Salano, Esq.
Major Percy Sykes.
Hugh Rose Troup, Esq.
Lieutenant-Colonel Sir Henry Trotter, K.C.M.G., C.B.
Sir Arthur Trevor, K.C.S.I.
General Sir J. Luther Vaughan, G.C.B.
Major Clive Wigram.
Lieutenant-Colonel Wingate.
Mrs. C. E. Yate.

But we regret that we have in the same period received seven resignations—

Mrs. Barnard.
A. R. Colquhoun, Esq.
Sir Reginald Cust.
F. Gillett, Esq.
W. Merk, Esq.
The Hon. A. Pelham.
Major Tighe.

In this report mention must be made of the first annual dinner, which took place on May 16 at the Imperial Restaurant. Our chairman, Sir Edwin Collen, presided, and twenty-four members dined. Miss Hughes, Secretary of the Royal Asiatic Society, and Dr. Scott Keltie, Secretary of the Royal Geographical Society, to whom the Central Asian Society owe a debt of gratitude for their ever-ready help, honoured us by being our guests on that evening. The chairman (Sir Edwin Collen), Sir Alfred Lyall, Sir Mortimer Durand, Sir Thomas Holdich, Dr. Scott Keltie, Lord Ronaldshay, and Dr. Cotterell Tupp, were among the speakers.

Our members now number 118, and it is gratifying to note that we are gaining in strength.

The publication of papers, which has been regular during the past session, adds an attraction to the Society. We feel that if it is widely known, many who take an

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interest in Eastern politics would be glad to join. The co-operation of members in obtaining recruits for the Society is very desirable.

A new move has been made in the general meeting this year, and Mr. David Fraser will show us after tea some photographs which should be of interest to the Society.

The Council nominate the following gentlemen to form the Council for the coming session:

CHAIRMAN.

Valentine Chirol, Esq.

VICE-PRESIDENTS.

Lieutenant-General Sir Edwin Collen, G.C.I.E., C.B.
General Sir Thomas Gordon, K.C.B, K.C.I.E., C.S.I.
Colonel Sir Thomas Holdich, K.C.I.E., K.C.M.G., C.B.
Right Hon. Sir Alfred Lyall, G.C.I.E., K.C.B., D.C.L.
Lord Lamington, G.C.M.G., G.C.I.E.
Colonel Sir Francis Younghusband, K.C.I.E.

HON. TREASURER.

A. Cotterell Tupp, I.C.S., LL.D.

HON. SECRETARY.

E. Penton, jun., Esq.

MEMBERS OF COUNCIL.

Earl of Donoughmore.
T. Hart-Davies, M.P., I.C.S.
Right Hon. Sir Mortimer Durand, G.C.M.G.
W. Irvine, I.C.S.
H. F. B. Lynch, Esq.
Ian Malcolm, Esq.
Earl of Ronaldshay.
Colonel C. E. Yate, C.S.I., C.M.G.

The Hon. Treasurer, Dr. Cotterell Tupp, then presented the statement of accounts for the year 1906-1907.

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CENTRAL ASIAN ACCOUNTS, 1906.

Receipts.

	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
Subscriptions	94	0	0			
,, in arrears ...	6	0	0			
,, in advance ...	3	0	0			
,, in error ...	1	0	0			
By sale of *Proceedings* ...	3	11	6			
				107	11	6
Balance at bank, January 1, 1906 ...				37	4	1
,, petty cash, January 1, 1906 ...				1	8	10
				£146	4	5

Expenditure.

	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
Rent...	20	0	0			
Salary	25	0	0			
Proceedings—Printing ...	28	11	0			
,, Reporting ...	16	7	0			
,, Illustrations, maps, etc.	6	16	0			
Miscellaneous printing, stationery, etc.	10	18	0			
Subscriptions refunded ...	1	0	0			
Bank charges	0	7	4			
Petty cash	15	2	8			
				124	12	0
Balance at bank, December 31, 1906 ...				20	16	3
,, petty cash, December 31, 1906 ...				0	16	2
				£146	4	5

Compared with the vouchers and accounts, and found correct,

WILLIAM IRVINE.
J. KENNEDY.

June 12, 1907.

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THE CHAIRMAN (Lieutenant-General Sir Edwin Collen) said :

It is sometimes the case at the annual general meeting of a society that the chairman delivers a long address, reviewing the state of affairs and the progress of knowledge in respect to the particular objects of the body over which he presides. But on this occasion I shall only claim your attention for a few moments. And I think you will agree with me that there are several excellent reasons for brevity, the chief one being that we have a lecture awaiting us after a short interval.

I venture to hope that we may consider that the good work which has been done by this Society in the past, has been well sustained during the session which is now coming to a close. We have had many admirable and instructive lectures. The great subject of Panislamism was dealt with by Mr. Chirol; the Reform Movement in Persia and British Interests in the Persian Gulf by Sir Thomas Gordon and Mr. Dunn respectively; papers on Russian and Chinese Turkestan were read by Mr. Rickmers and Major Bruce; and we are now about to listen to one by Mr. Fraser on the Strategic Position of Russia in Central Asia; and if we have gone farther afield in those by Sir Frederic Fryer on the Frontier Tribes of Burma, and by Mr. McKenzie on the Policy of Japan in Korea, we must remember that our somewhat wide and comprehensive title embraces many matters connected with the supremacy of British power in the East, and that Japan is responsible with us for the peace of Asia.

Our discussions, too, have been of remarkable interest, and I desire to tender to all who contributed papers or took part in our debates a most cordial expression of our gratitude.

It has not been our ambition to make this Society a

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large one, but to strengthen its position we require more members, and I trust that in the coming year we may receive an accession of numbers from statesmen, administrators, soldiers, and travellers, and others who are interested in our Eastern power.

I count myself extremely fortunate in that Lord Curzon, who has the highest knowledge and greatest grasp of what we comprehensively term Central Asian politics, has joined our Society during my year of office, and I know that this announcement will be received with extreme satisfaction by all of us. It is also a matter for congratulation that we can reckon among our new members men who have distinguished themselves in diplomacy in East and West, in administration, and in arms. I trust that every member of the Society will endeavour to extend our usefulness by increasing the numbers in our ranks.

I wish, in conclusion, to take this opportunity of expressing my grateful thanks to my colleagues in Council and the hon. secretary and treasurer, to the secretary, and to the members generally for their valuable assistance during my term of office.

Our new chairman, Mr. Valentine Chirol, is well known as a traveller, writer, and student of Eastern affairs, and as holding an important post in connection with foreign affairs, and we may all confidently look forward to the continued progress and development of our Society under his rule.

The report was then put to the vote and carried.

A vote of thanks to Sir Edwin Collen for his very efficient services as Chairman during the session was proposed by Mr. Irvine, and carried unanimously.

After an interval for tea the meeting reassembled, and a paper was read on 'The Strategic Position of Russia in Central Asia.'

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THE STRATEGIC POSITION OF RUSSIA IN CENTRAL ASIA

BY

MR. DAVID FRASER

THE CHAIRMAN, LIEUTENANT-GENERAL SIR EDWIN COLLEN, said: Mr. David Fraser, who is about to give us a short paper on 'The Strategic Position of Russia in Central Asia,' and afterwards to illustrate his travels through Central Asia and Persia by means of lantern-slides, has certainly had a varied experience. He went with Lumsden's Horse from India to South Africa, and he may claim to have made a very rapid and practical acquaintance with military affairs. He had his horse killed in action by a shell, a second horse was shot under him, and he was then taken prisoner while senseless from the fall of the second horse. He represented the *Times* with General Kuroki in 1904 and General Nogi in 1905, and his excellent letters on the fighting in Manchuria must have been read by many present. He has also recorded his war experiences in a very interesting and well-written book entitled 'A Modern Campaign.' I will now ask Mr. Fraser to read his paper.

The paper was as follows:

MR. CHAIRMAN, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,—As the time at my disposal is limited, I will refrain from any description of the journey in Central Asia, from which I have recently returned, and will merely remark that it included the countries of Thibet, Chinese Turkestan, Russian Turkestan, and Persia. These regions constitute what might be termed lines exterior to the defences of India, and upon their importance to our

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great eastern possession it is unnecessary to dilate. My excuse for presuming to address you upon so large a subject is that it is some considerable time since a British traveller has been allowed to enter Russian Turkestan, and that even confirmation of what is already known may be welcomed by those who closely follow events in Central Asia. In the briefest manner, then, I propose to recapitulate the situation as I personally understand it, mentioning at the same time a few items of information which may be new to members of the Society.

So much has been written about Thibet in recent times that it is not necessary to enter into a discussion of the strategic facilities which it offers to a Russian army. A squadron of Cossacks might easily reach the banks of the Tsang-po, the Thibetan name for the Brahmaputra River, and from there operate against the plains of Bengal. In the same way, perhaps, a regiment of Cossacks might come down the trade route through Ladakh and threaten the Punjab. From the Pamirs a handful of men might advance through Gilgit and make a demonstration against Srinagar. An attempt to invade India by any of these three routes need not, however, cause any more anxiety to India than would be caused to the man in the moon if some belligerent person on earth pointed a gun at him. Trifling outposts in time of war would be quite sufficient to prevent any military activity in these regions, and as regards their practical value as factors in the Russian strategic position in Central Asia, they may be left out of consideration. Russia's position on the Persian frontier is almost of equally small value as regards any schemes which may be afoot for the conquest of India. There was a time when Khorasan, that province occupying the extreme north-east corner of Persia, lay directly in the line of the Russian advance

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towards Herat and Kandahar. But the extension of the Transcaspian Railway has left the Persian frontier far in rear, and Khorasan is no longer any more than a minor factor in the situation. Nor need the case of Seistan be considered, for it is valueless to any army in its present condition, and could only become important were a great strategic railway constructed, and after years spent in the development of its resources.

Nothing could be simpler than the broad strategic problem that presents itself in Central Asia. Every thing east of the Pamirs, and every thing west of Merv, may be left out of consideration altogether, and it is necessary only to concentrate attention on that portion of Turkestan which directly faces the Afghan border. It is only from this section of her frontier, about 600 miles long, that Russia can hope to operate. An examination of the conditions proves not only that she is completely committed to this front, but that she cannot well diverge from lines of advance beginning at two particular and easily ascertainable points.

It is hardly necessary to explain the significance of the Russian railway system in this region. Central Asia is a vast desert in which water is extremely scarce, where proper roads are non-existent, and where oases of cultivation occur at rare and distant intervals. I venture to express the opinion that Central Asia twenty-five years ago was quite impracticable to any army of a size sufficient seriously to threaten our frontier in India. I am aware that distinguished people have held different opinions, among them Napoleon, Skobelef, and others. Unfortunately, there is not time now to present arguments in support of this view, and I will content myself with bringing to your remembrance the history of the Russian conquest of the Turcomans, which culminated in

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the Battle of Geok Teppe in the year 1881. Twice before the expedition which ended so successfully had Russia endeavoured to crush the Turcomans, and twice she had failed, not because her forces could not beat the Turcomans in battle, but because she was not able to bring her troops into the field in a proper state of equipment. Skobelef saw that the difficulty was transport, and it was he who asked for a light railway, and with its aid gained a brilliant victory where formerly every attempt had ended in disaster. If a nomad tribe could not be brought to bay without a railway to back up the expeditionary force, how much less could the Russians, unaided by railways, expect successfully to invade India?

That light railway from the Caspian to the scene of the Geok Teppe tragedy has grown and grown, until to-day it looms large and ominous in the eyes of India. The economic value of Russian Turkestan is very small, and it is perfectly clear that the millions of money that have been spent upon railways were expended for strategic purposes. Expressed briefly, the effect of these railways has been to bridge every difficulty and overcome every obstacle which lies between Russia proper and the Indian political frontier. It is a fact that but for one short section of railway, which might be built in a few months, Russia is able to put on the Afghan border an army of almost unlimited dimensions. When we think what the single line of the Siberian Railway did in the late war, we cannot afford to ignore the potentialities of the Central Asian system.

Within the last few years there has arisen from time to time rumours of heavy reinforcement of the Russian army in Turkestan. The declaration of war between Russia and Japan, the latter an ally of ourselves, was the signal for alarmist reports regarding the massing of troops

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where their presence, if those reports were correct, could have no other object than the menacing of our position in India. As there has always seemed to be some doubt as to the exact numbers of the troops in Turkestan, I am glad to be able to show you a table which sets forth not only the numbers, but the location of practically every Russian soldier in the country.

In the beginning of 1904 it was obvious that trouble with Japan might spread until the ally of Japan was involved, and so the garrison of Central Asia was slightly augmented as a precautionary measure. From the tabular statement it will be seen that, to bring the forces in Turkestan up to war strength, an increase of 40,000 men from the reserve is necessary. Of these, half were available from the settled Russian community in Central Asia, and as they were practically already on the spot, they were not called upon. The other 20,000, however, were actually brought from Russia and attached to their respective battalions, a proportion of which were thus brought up to war strength. It was, however, quickly realized that the belligerents were to be allowed to fight it out alone, without the intervention of European Powers, whereupon Russia ceased to reinforce the garrison of Turkestan. The maximum number of troops was reached in the spring of 1904, and probably never exceeded 75,000. By the summer of the same year the 20,000 men brought from Russia were absorbed in the regular establishments, and the total had sunk to the original level of some 60,000. At no subsequent period has the garrison of Central Asia been augmented. The question of the troops now in Central Asia, however, is of comparatively minor importance. What is evident to the student of the situation is that the present garrison is a factor of small importance, and that the railway system

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is the supreme factor in any schemes which may exist for the conquest of India.

The railway question may easily be comprehended by a glance at the map. From Krasnovodsk, on the eastern shores of the Caspian Sea, to Orenburg, in the extreme south-east of Russia proper, extends a single line measuring 2,300 miles in length. From Merv, on the main railway, depends a branch-line terminating at Kushk. From Cherniaievo, on the main line, another branch runs to Andijan. The significance of the system lies in the fact that it is directly connected with the railway systems of European Russia, and that troops from any part of the Empire can be railed and landed absolutely upon the Afghan border. Orenburg is the point of junction between the railway systems of Russia proper and the Trans-Siberian Railway, so that the new line to Tashkent not only brings European Russia into touch with Central Asia, but forms a link with the Far East. Krasnovodsk, on the Caspian, has steamer communication with Baku, which is in direct railway communication with Moscow, and is also connected by rail with Batoum on the Black Sea. Krasnovodsk is thus within two days' journey of the large Russian garrison in the Caucasus, as well as being conveniently connected with Russia proper. Taking Merv as the centre of military possibilities in Central Asia, we find that it is distant from Moscow by the Orenburg-Tashkent line 2,700 miles, and by the Caspian Sea route 2,200 miles.

A study of the railway system shows that it is incomplete, for the branch from Merv to Kushk would be quite incapable of dealing with arrivals from both ends of the main line. The Kushk branch can deal with men and supplies from the Caspian, but another advanced base must be found for arrivals from Orenburg. The Oren-

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burg-Tashkent line having been opened quite recently, it has not yet been supplemented by another branch from the main line to the Afghan border. It is practically certain that Termez must be the other point at which Russia will establish an advanced base. At present Termez is connected with Samarcand by a good military road, as well as by the water route on the Oxus. But the latter is of very small practical value, and it may almost certainly be assumed that until Termez is linked by rail to the main line Russia could not deploy her full strength on the Oxus. Several schemes for construction of a branch to Termez have been mooted, one running along the Oxus from Charjui, another from Samarcand through Karshi. The latter, I believe, is the one that has been decided upon, but I have very good reasons for stating that not a single rail of this line has been laid, and that there is no immediate intention of commencing construction.

Nevertheless, the Samarcand-Termez extension is the natural consequence of the Orenburg-Tashkent line, and its construction doubtless waits only upon financial considerations. It is extremely improbable that Russia would attempt any southward movement while this branch remains unbuilt. Whether Russian aggressiveness is dead, or only sleeping, will be infallibly indicated by the progress of events in respect of the Termez line. At present the project, so far as I could gather, is dead, and has ceased to be a subject of conversation in Turkestan, though at one time the matter was eagerly discussed, and the construction of the line supposed to foreshadow military activity in the near future.

As regards the present condition of the Central Asian railways, it is evident that Russia is keeping them up to standard. Many sections of the line are being re-

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embanked, culverts are being fitted where experience has shown them to be desirable, and sleepers are being renewed at a very great number of points. But we need not forget that the standard of efficiency in Central Asia is very different from European standards, and that the weight of the rails and the method of fixing them to sleepers, the ballasting of the line, and the quality of the rolling-stock, is all very far below what is regarded as necessary to a railway in Europe. The condition of the permanent way will always militate against high speed and heavy traffic, but the question of rolling-stock is unimportant, for the whole resources of the Russian Empire are available to Central Asia, via Orenburg. There is a great deal to be said about the low carrying capacity of the railways in Central Asia, but when allowances have been made for all contingencies, there remains the outstanding fact that it will be possible in time of war for at least twelve trains per diem to arrive at each of two points of concentration. One requires to have very small knowledge of military affairs to realize that twenty-four trains per day will bring into the field, and maintain there, an army of many hundreds of thousands of men.

Speculation in regard to the future is always attractive, and in connection with war it becomes positively fascinating. In view of recent political developments, war is a remote probability in Central Asia; but if, unhappily, events should ever lead up to it, we may be tolerably certain that Russia would be the aggressor, and that her first step would be a dash upon Herat. The garrison of Herat consists of six battalions of infantry, plus a fair proportion of artillery. From all that can be heard of the Afghan army, we may conclude that its fighting value is much below that of any European army, and we may also assume that the best organized, best armed, and best

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disciplined troops of the Ameer are not stationed so far away from his capital as at Herat. At Kushk, on the other hand, the whole of the garrison of Central Asia is within thirty hours' journey by train, and a column could be concentrated there, flung upon Herat, and have commenced shelling the citadel before it was known in Kabul or Quetta that the Russians were on the move.

Who can doubt that the Afghans would be driven out long before reinforcements could reach them? At Kushk there is stationed a field railway company, and stored there are materials for the construction of a light railway to Herat. From Kushk to Herat there is no obstacle to the speedy establishment of a small line, and there can be no doubt that within a few days of the appearance of the Russian forces their position would be strengthened by through railway communication. The people dwelling in Afghan Turkestan are known to be akin to their neighbours north of the Oxus, and they are also known to cherish a deadly hatred of the Afghans, who rule over them with a ruthlessness entirely Oriental in character. Russian rule in Turkestan is easy and tolerant, and an army in the field would have nothing to fear from the natives in rear, or from those encountered on the northern slopes of the Afghan plateau.

At Termez, in the east, there exists an immediate obstruction to advance, for here the Oxus runs too wide and deep to be forded. But the Russians have stationed at Termez a pontoon train, and the throwing together of a bridge would only be a matter of a few hours. How long it would take a column to dash forward and secure a position on the Hindu Kush, which would command Kabul, is a matter for conjecture. But we cannot look at the map and remain satisfied that British columns would be certain to win the race that must ensue for

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possession of the all-important strategic line formed by this range of mountains.

What we have to contemplate in regard to the defence of India is that the initial advantages must lie with our enemy. It is perfectly apparent that Russia can occupy Herat whenever she chooses, and my humble opinion is that, once Russia is established there, we can never turn her out. If India were solid behind us, we could look upon the occupation of Herat with equanimity, and wait contentedly at Kandahar for the Russian forces to exhaust themselves marching 400 miles across deserts to attack us. But we are pledged to fight for the integrity of Afghanistan, and all Asia would be watching to see if we were able to fulfil our pledge. While we remained quiescent at Kandahar—for it would be absolutely futile to attempt to recover Herat—the power of the Ameer would crumble away before Russian intrigue; that hornets' nest of brigands upon the North-West Frontier would be buzzing about our communications; and behind us there is India, seething with sedition, and, in some parts, ripe for mischief.

The problem before our military authorities is not so much how to defend India from Russian armies, but how to deal with the situation that would arise were Russia to seize Herat and commence mobilizing in Central Asia. We are the legatees of a policy that pledges us to non-interference with, and yet to the defence of, the same State. This same State will not allow the nose of an engineer or an intelligence officer to cross the border. Yet the moment Afghanistan feels the pinch we must up and protect her. Even to get to her we must pass through a region over which we have almost no control, and which is inhabited by hordes of warlike, treacherous and bloodthirsty ruffians, who would require to be

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watched by a large army. If what we have recently seen of the temper of some of our subjects in India may be considered as an earnest of what to expect in the future, then in time of war every outlying station in the country will require military protection, and every railway will have to be patrolled throughout its length. There will, indeed, be no end to the opportunities for employment of troops in duties far other than fighting the enemy.

We have, however, two reasons for thankfulness. When the Russians have gained their initial successes so soon begin their difficulties, for in front of them lie desert regions devoid practically of everything required by a marching army. A long time must elapse before our defensive line could be attacked. Then there is the agreement between ourselves and Russia, which has been so long in the hatching. This document will probably be signed within the next few weeks, and we may be confident that its terms will include provision for the amelioration of a situation that in itself is of the utmost gravity, both to Russia and to ourselves.

Mr. Fraser then exhibited and briefly described nearly a hundred lantern-slides of photographs taken during his recent travels in Central Asia and Persia. At their conclusion,

The Chairman said: We have listened to a paper which has compressed, and I venture to think very successfully, some of the leading points of this great subject. And the value of the paper has certainly been enhanced by the series of interesting pictures which has just been shown. I am very much in agreement with many of Mr. Fraser's statements and opinions, and I think we may sleep in peace, and may run the risk of a squadron of Cossacks operating on the Brahmaputra from Thibet, or invading India through Ladakh or Gilgit. Last year I read a paper before the Society on 'The Defence of India,' and those who have read it will readily understand that I agree with Mr.

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Fraser in regard to the contraction of Russia's strategic front. It is long enough, in all conscience, and we need not extend it by suggesting—as I have seen it gravely stated to be the opinion of 'high military authority'—that Chitral is the vital and dangerous spot in our line of defence. Mr. Fraser has given a concise account of the Russian railways, and a fair appreciation of their strength and weakness. I am very glad, as I am sure you all are, that he has exposed the fallacy of recent extravagant estimates of Russia's military strength in Central Asia. I hope we have now done with 'Russian scares' when we hear of troops being moved in relief on the Russian side of Afghanistan.

On the other hand, there are some points upon which I do not entirely agree with the lecturer. I think he has not done justice to our position should war break out, nor does he seem to sufficiently count on the fact that in our alliance with Japan we have a very strong guarantee for the maintenance of peace in Asia. Then, I am inclined to think he was rather too uncomplimentary when he described the frontier tribes of the North-West. It is true, of course, that they are 'bloodthirsty,' and so are a great many other semicivilized people. At any rate, we draw some very admirable soldiers from these tribes. They should be a source of strength rather than of weakness to us. As to the large army which the lecturer suggested we should have to place on our communications if we occupied Afghanistan—that is to say, if we went forward to meet the Russians—I need only remind you that when we were fighting the Afghans thirty years ago a division of about 15,000 men kept the whole of that very long line from Peshawar to Kabul. But perhaps on this matter, and on the question whether Mr. Fraser is right in his exclusion of Persia as a factor in the strategic problem, some members acquainted with local conditions will speak.

Dr. Bullock Workman said he had no intention to criticize the admirable paper to which they had listened; all he wished to do was to say a few words in regard to the illustrations which touched upon people and scenes with which he and Mrs. Bullock Workman were familiar. In one of the photographs they had seen yaks going over the Khardung Pass. This was one of the highest passes in the world, and it would be interesting to know the effect of the high altitude upon the yaks as compared with the men of the party. Their natural habitat was in these mountains at heights of from 10,000 to 15,000 feet. He and Mrs.

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Bullock Workman found in crossing the pass that the yaks suffered a great deal more from the rarification of the atmosphere than themselves or their party. The yaks had to stop every few minutes to recover their breath, although they travelled with extreme care. In the region of the Saseri Pass, which was a huge desert area, but which in summer was a caravan route between Leh and Central Asia, they found the route a veritable equine graveyard. They saw hundreds of skeletons of beasts of burden, and the country looked as though it might have been a huge battlefield. The region was some 15,000 or 16,000 feet high, and there was very little water.

Mr. H. R. Sykes said: I was rather struck with the way in which the lecturer passed over the possibility of a Russian advance by way of Persia. When I was in Seistan some three years ago I met a Russian officer there, and he gave me to understand that the Russians had an elaborate system worked out for a railway from Herat, down the Afghan frontier and through Seistan, to terminate on the coast, somewhere near Gwadar. The line had been surveyed and worked out, but no doubt the McMahon Mission rather put an end to this scheme for the present. There is, however, the question of a line of advance through Persia itself. I do not think there would be great difficulty in parallel columns marching down the country by way of the Gulf. It is essential for us to hold the Gulf in our own hands, for if once the Russians secured a port there it would be a very serious menace to India. If they were to do that, I do not see that there would be any great difficulty in marching through Persia in the same way as marching through Afghanistan, for although you have a series of mountain ranges to meet, they can all be passed, and there are plenty of places on the plateau, such as Kermanshah, Shiraz, etc., where troops could concentrate, and from which they could gradually move forward. Then there is the course on the other side of the Lut towards Seistan. Some time ago Sir Thomas Holdich told this Society that he thought it would be possible to approach India with an army either on the east or the west of Persia.

Mr. Fraser: With regard to the point raised by the last speaker, I would point out that I had no intention of suggesting that it was impossible for a Russian army to advance through Persia. I dealt in my lecture with the strategical position as it exists at present. I think that, as things are now, Russia

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is most unlikely to contemplate a forward movement except across the northern frontier of Afghanistan. Everything has been reduced to the simple problem of this frontier, and to approach India through Persia would be to double the distance from existing railway bases. I do not see how Russia could ever think of this route without entire reconstruction of plans, involving the building of a new set of strategic railways. Until she makes new railways she cannot diverge from the line of advance to which she is already committed.

Lieutenant-General Sir J. Hills-Johnes said: If Russia made an advance by way of Thibet she would not have any railways there, and could construct none in any reasonable time. I understood, however, at the time of the Thibet Expedition, that we should not have entered upon that campaign had not India really been threatened from that frontier. Is the line of route from the Russian frontier so difficult as to make it impossible for them to send four columns down there, provided we allowed them to do so? We have stopped their doing so by the Treaty of Lhasa; but why did we go to war with Thibet if the Thibetan frontier can be excluded from consideration in dealing with the safety of India from external invasion?

Lieutenant-Colonel Sir Henry Trotter said: It is thirty-three years since I had the good fortune to follow the greater part of the route described by the lecturer when he gave us the lantern views. We went from Leh over the Khardung Pass to the Russian frontier. There were fifty-seven of us, and about a hundred horses, and three or four months before our visit the Maharaja of Kashmir had sent out supplies to all the different points where we should have to halt. But for these arrangements made beforehand it would have been impossible for our large party to have got across at all. It took us nearly a month, marching as hard as we could, although for a great part of the way supplies had been provided months beforehand. Judging from this experience, it would be very difficult to bring troops in any number across these mountains through Leh into Kashmir.

The Chairman: We have had a very interesting paper, and the discussion, though not so extended as I had hoped, has been of considerable importance and interest. Such discussions are, I think, extremely valuable. Of course, it may be said that when we are at peace with a great military power we have no business to publicly consider questions as to what would happen were we

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at war with them. But that is an abstract theory which is not, I think, followed by any powerful nation in the world; and however friendly we may be with Russia, we should be wrong altogether not to consider the state of things which would exist supposing our relations were strained and their interests were in conflict with ours. I am one of those who believe practically in the possibility of a good understanding with Russia; but at the same time I am a firm believer in the necessity for military preparation, and for the maintenance of the integrity of Afghanistan. Mr. Fraser has drawn a somewhat gloomy picture of what would happen in the event of hostilities, and it is somewhat too gloomy in my view. I do not think it would be possible for Russia to 'dash up' from the Oxus to the Hindu Kush. The difficulties would be enormous, and I am inclined to think that we are apt not to make enough of the power of the Afghans in a position of responsibility. We should give the Afghan army its proper fighting value, and I believe this to be considerable. There can be no doubt that the problem of the defence and security of India is the greatest Imperial military question we have to face. The stronger we are, the greater is the chance of permanent peace. The whole thing, to my mind, resolves itself into the power of this country to reinforce her garrisons in the East. If a nation which a century ago stemmed the tide of Napoleonic victory over Europe cannot produce a sound military organization, or muster sufficient numbers to defend her oversea dominions, then, indeed, we might despair of her destiny. It now only remains for me to convey to Mr. Fraser on your behalf our grateful thanks for the excellent lecture and admirable pictures he has presented to us. (Cheers.)

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PROCEEDINGS OF THE CENTRAL ASIAN SOCIETY

THE AMIR ABDUR RAHMAN KHAN

BY

THE RIGHT HON.
SIR H. MORTIMER DURAND, G.C.M.G., etc.

Delivered November 6, 1907

LONDON
CENTRAL ASIAN SOCIETY, 22, ALBEMARLE STREET, W.
1907

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Proceedings of the Central Asian Society

THE AMIR ABDUR RAHMAN KHAN

BY

The Right Hon. Sir H. MORTIMER DURAND, G.C.M.G., Etc.

DELIVERED NOVEMBER 6, 1907

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THE AMIR ABDUR RAHMAN KHAN

MR. VALENTINE CHIROL, the chairman, in opening the proceedings, said: I think it is almost superfluous for me to introduce to you so distinguished a public servant as Sir Mortimer Durand, who has kindly undertaken to speak to us this afternoon. I can recall the name of no public servant whose diplomatic activities have covered a wider range than those of Sir Mortimer. Those activities began, as you know, in our Indian Empire, where for two centuries the genius of our race has been striving to reconcile the West and East, the past and the present. His work brought him into contact with such primitive and semi-barbarous types of society as those which still prevail in Afghanistan, and later on with the great, if decadent, monarchy of Persia. Thence he passed as Ambassador to Spain, whose historical distinction it has been to bring the old world into contact with the new. Finally, Sir Mortimer went as Ambassador to Washington, to that new democracy which prides itself on representing the most modern and most up-to-date type of civilization. I will now ask Sir Mortimer to favour us with his lecture. (Cheers.)

When I left India, in 1893, the throne of Afghanistan was held by a very remarkable Sovereign, a born ruler of men, to whom I think history has not yet done full justice.

As I had the good fortune to be thrown into close relations with him on two occasions, and got to know him intimately, I have thought it possible that you might be interested in hearing from me some account of his person and character as they struck me at the time.

Of course, anything that I can say will only serve to supplement the eloquent testimony borne to him already by Sir Alfred Lyall, Sir Lepel Griffin, Sir West Ridgeway, and others; but I should like to say what I can.

I am not going to enter into any general discussion of our policy towards Afghanistan. It is now fourteen years since I left India, so that I have no special knowledge of recent developments beyond the North-West Frontier, and if I had such knowledge, my mouth

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would be closed on the subject. I want to speak to you of Abdur Rahman Khan, and to touch upon the question of our relations with Afghanistan no more than may be necessary to bring out his character.

You know, no doubt, that Abdur Rahman was the son of Sirdar Afzal Khan, who, on the death of the great Amir Dost Mahomed, disputed with Sher Ali the throne of Kabul. I need not go into the details of this long conflict. Abdur Rahman was the Hotspur of his father's party. Being eventually defeated, he was obliged to leave Afghanistan, and then followed 'the years of dolorous exile' as a refugee with the Russians in Tashkent. In 1880, when the Amir Yakub Khan had resigned his throne, and had gone away to India, leaving British forces in possession of Kabul and Kandahar, it became necessary to provide for the future government of the country, which we did not want to keep, and Abdur Rahman, being regarded as the strongest and most promising of the several candidates, was invited to take over the rule of the Kabul province. At first he was not recognized by us as Amir of all Afghanistan, but gradually one province after another came under his rule, and before many years were over he was the undisputed master of the whole country.

During the Viceroyalty of Lord Ripon, in the early eighties, the Russian frontiers in Asia were pushed forward across the Turkoman Desert, and before long Geok Tepe fell before the fiery energy of Skobeleff. 'From Merv, last home of the free-lance, the clansmen were scattering far, and the Turkoman horses were harnessed to the guns of the Russian Tsar.' It was then decided by Her Majesty's Government that the northern frontiers of Afghanistan, where they touched the newly acquired Russian territory between Persia and the Oxus, ought to be delimited, and after some negotiations with the Russians and the Amir, an Anglo-Russian Commission met on the disputed border. At this juncture Lord Ripon handed over the Viceroyalty to Lord Dufferin.

Lord Dufferin's first act of importance, after he took charge, was to invite the Amir to India, in order that our relations with Afghanistan might, if possible, be placed upon a thoroughly satisfactory footing. The Amir accepted the invitation, and in the spring of 1885 he was received by Lord Dufferin at Rawal Pindi.

The whole position of Afghanistan was then discussed in detail, and arrangements were made to meet the future situation.

It was at this memorable interview, twenty-two years ago, that I first met Abdur Rahman. I was then Foreign Secretary to the Indian

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Government, and in that capacity was present at all the negotiations which took place.

At this time the Amir was a stout, burly man of about forty-five, with a heavy black beard and a deep sonorous voice. He impressed one from the first moment with a sense of power. He seemed to be what Lord Dufferin called him—a "strange, strong creature," self-possessed and resolute, with great ability and confidence. In appearance he reminded me of the pictures of Henry the Eighth, but Henry the Eighth in long Russian boots and a lambskin kullah.

Abdur Rahman was a great talker, but, unlike many great talkers, he spoke well and to the point. He conducted the negotiations entirely himself, his ministers being mere ciphers, without the smallest power or responsibility. He knew his own mind, and wanted no help from anyone. It was very interesting to see the two men together—Lord Dufferin and the Amir: on the one side, the spare polished diplomatist, with his wide experience of foreign countries, his gentle, slightly lisping speech, and his delightful manner, just touched with the best kind of Irish blarney; on the other, the thick-set, bearded Afghan, ignorant of all countries but Central Asia, blunt in speech, with ready frown and boisterous laugh, but proud and dignified, and in his own way perfectly courteous. There could hardly be a greater contrast. Yet each knew his business thoroughly well, and it is difficult to say which came best out of the friendly encounter. They parted with mutual respect, and I think with mutual admiration. The Amir wrote very warmly of Lord Dufferin in his autobiography, and I have often heard Lord Dufferin speak of him in similar terms.

This autobiography, by the way, is an extremely interesting book. I have heard people assert that it was not really the Amir's writing. All I can say is that it expressed the Amir's views with singular accuracy. Many times in reading it I came upon passages which were word for word what he said to me verbally in the course of some of our interviews.

Of course, Abdur Rahman was not altogether easy to deal with. He was intensely jealous of his independence, and resented the slightest sign of interference in his internal affairs. So far one could not but sympathize with him. But the feeling made him at first extremely suspicious, and sometimes his suspicion misled him into an attitude which was rather exasperating. As an instance of his suspicion, I may mention that he never would have anything to do with the telephone, which had been installed between his house and Lord Dufferin's camp. He was determined not to have any

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railways or telegraphs brought into his country by us, and he steadily declared that he could not hear a sound from the telephone, and that it was a most useless contrivance. Standing at the other end, three miles off, I could hear him saying so. He was also misled in some degree by his sublime self-confidence. For example, though he had no knowledge of modern war, he was fully persuaded that he was much more competent to organize an army against a European enemy, or to plan the defences of a fortress against modern guns, than any of the military advisers of the Indian Government. He had *les défauts de ses qualités.*

But considering what his life had been, and what had been our dealings with Afghanistan, these things were natural. On the whole, he came out of the discussion remarkably well, holding his own with surprising ability, and impressing us all with the clearness and force with which he explained his point of view.

While the Amir was in Rawal Pindi the news arrived that there had been a collision near Panjdeh between Russian and Afghan troops. An Afghan general and 200 men had been shot down. The incident very nearly led to war between England and Russia. I well remember how the Amir met the news. The telegram announcing it came to me one evening just before a state dinner in Lord Dufferin's camp, and I walked over with it to Lord Dufferin's tent. He was dressing, but he asked me to come in, and I read out the telegram to him as his valet was fastening on his multitudinous stars and collars. After a few minutes' conversation on the subject, Lord Dufferin asked me to go over and tell the Amir, and bring back word as to his views. I drove over to the house the Amir occupied. The present Sir Adelbert Talbot, a great linguist, and one of the most trustworthy men I have ever known, accompanied me. When we arrived the Amir was lying on some quilts on the floor, where he was probably about to eat his dinner, but he got up and had some chairs brought in. When I told him what had happened, he took it very coolly. 'Two hundred men,' he said; 'that is nothing, and I have plenty of generals. If the Russians give trouble, the Afghans can send two hundred thousand against them. Gham na khured, sahib; gham na khured (Don't worry about it).' We talked on for some time, and the Amir seemed quite unconcerned. When I got back to camp I found dinner was over, and every one was outside near a bonfire looking on at a Khatak dance. After some time Lord Dufferin came away, and I told him what the Amir had said, which greatly relieved him, and enabled him to relieve the tension in England.

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It was horrible weather most of the time during the Amir's stay in Rawal Pindi—a bitter wind, and heavy rain, which flooded our tents and turned the camp into a marsh. At one time there was a deep running stream down the middle of the camp, and I well remember wading through it, almost up to my knees, on the way to dinner.

The Government of India had brought together a large number of troops to show the Amir, but for several days a review was impossible. At last the weather cleared, and a review was held. I was to accompany the Amir, and rode over to his house. An officer who was with me got a fall in front of the house, his horse suddenly taking fright and rearing at the salute of the guard of honour. The Amir condoled with him, but could not help laughing, and as we drove to the parade-ground his politeness was struggling with his amusement.

Abdur Rahman was a very keen soldier, and when the troops began to march past his attention became fixed, and his comments were most interesting. He seemed specially struck by the elephant battery, which was new to him, and remarked on the great advantage of being able to bring heavy guns into the field. He admired the little Gurkhas, which surprised me; for they are very different from Afghans, and there is an old feud between the two. He said the Gurkhas were so level in height, and looked like soldiers. He was astonished at the contingents of the Native States, but did not think us wise in allowing the chiefs to have such forces. 'Their interests and yours can never be the same,' he said. 'You can never trust them.' I explained that this was not our view, that some of the Native States had done grand service in the Mutiny, and that we regarded them as among the most loyal of the population of India. His answer was: 'You ought to know best; but, at all events, when war comes push them up to the front. There it will be a case of "pusti khar dandan i sag" (the skin of the donkey, the teeth of the dog). Whether they kill the Russians or the Russians kill them will matter nothing to you.'

During the review the Amir gave me his opinion about the Russian troops. He had seen nothing but the troops around Tashhent, but I give you his views for what they are worth. He said their cavalry was very poor, and that the Afghan horse would ride over them. Their artillery, too, was not good, badly horsed and equipped, traces always breaking, and so on. But the infantry he greatly admired, describing them as hardy men, who could march all day, and wanted nothing but a little black bread and an occasional drink of vodki.

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Towards the close of the meeting there was a great Durbar, at which Abdur Rahman made a very striking speech in Persian, announcing his intention of standing shoulder to shoulder with us for the future, and drawing his sword, if necessary, in our cause. It was delivered with force and eloquence, and created a great impression in India. I was called upon by Lord Dufferin to translate it to the assembly, and I remember that at the most critical moment, when I was choosing my words with anxious care, there occurred one of those ludicrous incidents to which all ceremonials are subject. A quantity of presents had been laid on the floor of the Durbar tent. Suddenly the lid of a musical-box opened, and there sprang from it a small mechanical bird, which flapped its wings and broke into a torrent of song. The ladies, who have no respect for solemn things, burst out laughing, and I felt inclined to do the same.

The Amir's reception altogether gave rise to much criticism abroad, and it is said that Bismarck's comment was: 'C'est Offenbach tout pur. Il ne manquait pas même le sabre de mon père.' But Lord Dufferin knew his business, and the great ceremonial had an excellent effect.

When the Amir first arrived he told me he had never seen a train before, and did not like the motion. 'Sar i ma migardad,' he said (My head is going round from it). But when he was going back he took the train in preference to marching,

His last act was to give us advice as to the proper construction of suspension bridges. The bridge over the Indus at Attok was not, he thought, all that it might be, and he sent back a sketch with suggestions for its improvement.

After the Amir returned to Afghanistan I did not see him again for some years, and in the meantime the relations between him and the Indian Government became rather complicated. A variety of troublesome questions arose with regard to the frontier tribes and other matters. Abdur Rahman acted upon the traditional policy of Afghan Amirs—always steadily opposed by the Government of India—of trying to establish a sort of indefinite suzerainty over these tribes, and he wrote a great deal on the subject. He was a good letter-writer. His style was trenchant and effective. He went straight to the point, and at times hit very hard. But correspondence of this kind does not tend to improve the relations between two Governments.

In 1888 I was to have gone up to Kabul on a mission to try whether I could smoothe away some of the difficulties, but a

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rebellion was raised by the Amir's cousin, Ishak Khan, and the mission fell through. A year or two later it was decided that Lord Roberts should go up with the same object, but this plan also fell through, as the Amir was not disposed to let any mission come into his country with a large escort, and the Commander-in-Chief in India could not well be sent up without one.

Matters were in this state when, in 1893, the Russians demanded that the Afghans should retire from some districts to the north of the Oxus, which they had occupied, and as the occupation seemed to the Home Government to be inconsistent with an agreement made by the Amir Sher Ali twenty years before, it was decided that a mission should be sent up to explain matters, and induce the Amir to give up these outlying possessions. I was selected for the duty of making this communication to the Amir—a communication which every one knew would be very unpalatable to him.

I was informed that the Amir might take the opportunity to discuss with me some other questions about which he had had differences of opinion with the Government of India. If so, I was to endeavour to come to an amicable understanding with regard to them. But I was told that this was a matter of secondary importance, and that I was not to press these questions if the Amir showed any unwillingness to discuss them.

When the Amir was informed that the mission proposed going to Kabul without any British escort, trusting entirely to him for protection, he returned a most friendly reply. By the middle of September all was ready for our start. There was a good deal of criticism at the time about our going without any escort, but on this point the Indian Government was perfectly right. An escort strong enough to protect us would have been an invading army, which the Amir would never have admitted; and an escort not strong enough to protect us would have been worse than useless. Personally I felt safer without any, for I knew that we could rely upon the Amir's power, and upon Afghan hospitality to a guest.

I may, perhaps, relate here as illustrative of the Pathan character in this respect an anecdote which was told me by a distinguished frontier officer, the late Sir Robert Warburton. When he first went up into the hills near the Khyber as a guest of the tribesmen he carried a revolver with him, and put it under his pillow at night. He woke in the morning to find it gone. When he had dressed and come out of his tent he found awaiting him some of the tribal headmen. Foremost among them was a fine-looking man wearing

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a kamrband, in the front of which, conspicuously displayed, Warburton saw his revolver. The man took it out of his kamrband with a smile and presented it to his guest, saying, 'Sahib, when you trust us, trust us altogether.'

I will not enter here upon any details as to the composition of the mission. It will suffice to say that the Government of India sent with me a military officer, Colonel Elles, now Sir Edmond Elles; three political officers, one from each great section of the North-West Frontier, Messrs. Manners Smith, McMahon, and Donald; the Viceroy's medical officer, Surgeon-Colonel Fenn; Mr. Clarke, of the Foreign Office; and two Mahommedan officers, Khan Bahadur Ábdur Rahim Khan, and Khan Bahadur Ibrahim Khan. All were picked men, and all did excellent service.

On the 15th of September I left Simla, Colonel Elles having gone on in advance to Lundi Kotul, and on the 18th the rest of the party left Peshawar.

How well I remember our start. The 9th Bengal Lancers and Artillery had kindly offered to take us out as far as Jamrud in their drags, and at six o'clock in the morning we climbed into our seats. It was a beautiful morning, cool and bright, with a soft easterly breeze, and I had never seen the Peshawar Valley looking so green and prosperous.

But there was a storm brewing over the hills to the westward, and as we passed the half-way post, Hari Sing Ka Burj, it began to look threatening. It was a fine sight. Dense masses of black cloud lay on the hills to north and south of the Khyber, the mouth of the pass itself and Jamrud Fort lying in sunshine under a patch of blue sky. We hoped to get through unscathed, but soon the storm broke on both sides of the pass, thunder and lightning and heavy rain, and then the dust 'devils' began to spin out across the plain to right and left of us, and curved streaks of rain broke across the blue patch in front, and finally the two storms fairly met and covered up Jamrud and fell upon us. It was a bad omen.

We had rather a bad half-hour, for the rain and hail were very heavy, and the wind strong, and we could hardly get the horses to face them, particularly across the rough ground near Jamrud, which soon turned into a network of small torrents. However, we got to the fort at last, and in an hour or so the sun was out again, and we had got some of our clothes dried and pushed on. The drive up the famous Khyber was very enjoyable, and by half-past eleven we were in the fortified Serai at Lundi Kotul. We halted there a day to get everything shipshape.

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On the morning of the 20th we rode down, escorted by the tribal levies of the Khyber, to the Afghan frontier at Lundi Khana, and were there met by the Afghan Commander-in-Chief, Ghulam Hyder Khan, a man of colossal size, whom the Amir had deputed to meet us with an escort of Afghan troops. Nothing could have been more friendly and pleasant than the reception accorded to us by Ghulam Hyder. With him we marched along the stony, cliff-bound pass until we emerged into open ground near Dacca, where we found that tents had been pitched for us by the Amir.

We were most carefully guarded. Afghan soldiers were about us at all times. I remember that in the evening we went out for a stroll before dinner, Ghulam Hyder having assured us that we were free to ride or walk where we pleased. When we came out of our tents in our flannels we found a troop of red-coated cavalry and half a company of infantry ready to accompany us. We got rid of the cavalry, but the captain commanding the infantry, a nice young fellow, insisted on taking all his men with us. Part of them spread out in skirmishing order ahead of us, and every one we met was forced away round one of our flanks, 200 yards off. At night I had an Afghan sentry on the front of my tent, one on the rear, and one over the door of the side-room in which I slept. The last was almost standing over me. On the hills round the camp were pickets of Afghan troops. The Amir was determined to run no possible risks.

The next morning we made our first march on Afghan soil, along the southern bank of the Kabul River. The sky was cloudless and the water very blue, and the bare, rugged mountains about us had taken to themselves all manner of delicate shades of colour. As we rode away from our camp, the advanced guard of Afghan cavalry galloped out in front of us, and spread over the plain, their scarlet coats making a very brave show, and their sabres flashing in the sunlight.

Ghulam Hyder turned out in a light blue frock-coat, which showed up his ample figure. He had baggy blue trousers, and a gold sword-belt and English sword. Instead of his lambskin kullah, he wore an English felt helmet, with grey and blue pagri, rather on the back of his head. He rode a strong roan Waler, whose neck was adorned with a handsomely chased silver collar.

For the next fortnight we were marching by shortish stages to Kabul, and a delightful march it was. The weather was perfect throughout. There was not a drop of rain, and we rarely saw a cloud.

On the line of march we used, for the look of the thing, to wear

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khaki uniform and sword. At the end of the day's march we changed into flannels or other loose garments, and never carried any weapon but a walking-stick. The keynote of the mission was confidence in Abdur Rahman's power and goodwill. That confidence proved to be thoroughly justified.

The Amir had arranged to send down a daily post to the frontier, so that our letters and telegrams were regularly despatched. At distances of five miles or so along the road one came upon stone huts, inhabited by small parties of postal runners, whose spears, with their attachment of jingling bells, were stuck in the ground outside. These men trotted through with the mail-bags at the rate of eighty miles a day, and we never lost anything.

The huge Commander-in-Chief was a most pleasant companion, and interested in all sorts of things. As we rode side by side we talked about the size of London and how it was supplied with food, about the nations of Europe and the Triple Alliance, about the differences between Sunnis and Shias and Catholics and Protestants, about the Reformation and the Inquisition, about the Mussulman and Christian accounts of Christ's life and death, about the Spanish Armada, about Napoleon and his wars, about the Somalis in Africa, about tiger-shooting, and all manner of other things. I was surprised to find how much he had read and understood. Ghulam Hyder could talk Persian fluently.

We had a most luxurious mess, under the charge of Sir Robert Sandeman's old khansama, 'Mr. Bux,' a well-known character on the frontier, and as we rode in to our advanced camp every morning we used to find him standing at the door of the mess-tent, breakfast-bell in hand.

My companions were, as I have said, a picked set of officers, thoroughly efficient, and always cool and cheery. They were soon on the best of terms with the soldiers of the escort—a most willing and good-tempered body of men, always ready to climb hills with us or beat for game. There was never a sign of hostility or sulkiness about them. Altogether we were all as happy as the day was long. It does one good to look back on those days.

The drawbacks were few. One was that we could never go out of a walk, which was slow work, and rather wearying. The Amir, it was said, had warned the Commander-in-Chief that his life was too valuable to be risked; and his great bulk—he must have weighed over twenty stone—certainly made him ill-adapted for fast riding. Another little contretemps was that while we were on the road some enterprising Russian frontier officers marched

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a force into the disputed districts north of the Oxus. This disturbed the Amir greatly, and might have led to trouble; but the country was very difficult, and the Afghans stopped the column by breaking down the cliff galleries over which its road lay. So a collision was avoided, and the incident came to nothing—in fact, it was useful to me as an illustration of the disadvantages which the holding of these districts entailed. A third drawback was that the Amir was really too lavish in his hospitality. Every day enormous quantities of meat and grain, fruit and sweets, were deposited in the camp, and in spite of all we could do, the camp-followers over-ate themselves, and suffered in consequence.

On the 23rd we rode into Jellalabad, where Sale and his 'illustrious garrison' had been besieged fifty years before. The Amir wished us to halt a day here in his fine new palace. The town was a dirty little place, surrounded by dead donkeys and camels, whose essences made the live air sick. But it was delicious weather, cloudless, with a soft easterly breeze, and in the palace garden the blue air was full of swallows, skimming over the water, or in and out of the veranda arches.

The Afghans seemed less nervous about our safety as the march went on. Occasionally there was some shooting at pigeons and quail and woodcock, the escort acting with much apparent enjoyment as beaters. And our advanced camp marched at night, which showed that the Amir had his people well in hand, or felt they were not hostile.

On September 27 the English engineer Pyne, now Sir Salter Pyne, came into camp. He reported the Amir very friendly, full of pleasure and excitement about the arrival of the mission. I found that this young Englishman had achieved a remarkable position in Kabul. The Commander-in-Chief and other officials treated him with the greatest deference, and he was evidently in high favour with the Amir. He was an amusing companion, with an acute sense of the ludicrous and a great fund of anecdote, and at the same time with much common sense and self-restraint.

On October 2 we marched into Kabul, and the Amir gave us a magnificent reception. Troops were under arms in all directions. Some miles out, at the Logar Bridge, we found awaiting us the Amir's carriage and a large escort of his household cavalry. As we drove into the city a salute of twenty-one guns was fired, and the bands played 'God save the Queen.' Every possible civility was shown in the way of inquiries and good wishes, and we were given as quarters a fine house on a mound near the western

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foot of the Kabul range. The climate was ideal, not a cloud in the sky.

Here, in our pleasant quarters in the Chardeh Valley, we remained for six weeks, until the 15th of November.

My first interview with Abdur Rahman himself was on the 5th of October. We drove over to the garden in which the Amir was living, and were received inside it by the Shahgassi, a tall, fine-looking Afghan, very carefully dressed, and bearing a gold wand of office. By the side of the path were drawn up a number of Hotchkiss and Gardner guns, made in the Amir's workshops. The present Amir, then a smooth-faced, pleasant-spoken young man, was standing outside the Amir's house, wearing a red coat and broad G.C.S.I. ribbon. Inside the Durbar room stood the Amir, leaning on his stick.

I was much struck with the change which eight years had effected in him. He looked well—better than in 1885—though thinner. He seemed more contented and easy in mind. The look of power was still there, but the Abdur Rahman of 1893 was a quiet, gentlemanly man, with a much softer and more refined voice and manner. He seemed to suffer much from gout, and walked with difficulty, leaning on a stick. He shook hands with each of us in turn. Nothing could have been kinder and more cordial than his manner to us all. He held my hand for a long time, saying more than once that I was an old friend, and that now I had been sent to Kabul all would go well.

The real business began a day or two later, and, on the whole, it would have been hard to find a more satisfactory person to deal with than Abdur Rahman. He did all the negotiating himself, sitting at the end of a long table in a room of his garden-house in the Chardeh Valley. This room was almost a veranda, for the outer wall was pierced by five large windows, which were always open. In spite of the cloudless sky, it was often very cold. We sat on his right, looking out across the garden to the blue Pagman range; his own staff, including the Englishman Pyne, sat on his left. The discussion went on in Persian, the Amir objecting to an interpreter on the ground that interpreters only confused business, and were no good. He never consulted any of his people; as in 1885, he did everything himself, personally discussing each point involved to the minutest detail. At times he would take a sheet of foolscap and a box of coloured chalks and dash off, in his swift, imperious way, a rough sketch map of some country we were discussing. Sometimes he would begin our sittings, which lasted from about eleven till four, by relating experiences in his life, and telling us anecdotes.

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He was an excellent raconteur, with a fund of ready humour and much natural eloquence, and long as our sittings were, I thoroughly enjoyed many of them. From beginning to end they were interesting, and enlivened by much 'chaff' and laughter.

The Amir's sense of humour was keen. He had a way of making a joke and looking at you with eyes and mouth open, to see if you had caught it, and then going into a roar of laughter, which was very infectious. His changes of mood were rapid. He would suddenly stop laughing and look down on the ground with a deep sigh, remaining silent for a minute or more; after which he would, perhaps, break into a dignified and pathetic lament over the fallen fortunes of his country, or the sorrows and humiliation of a life of exile.

At times he was very touching. There was something which went to one's heart about the man, standing there between England and Russia, playing his lone hand. Like all men who have got accustomed to unlimited power, he was impatient of opposition, and his temper was quick; but it was easy to bring him round, and he was soon laughing again.

Often blunt, and occasionally ignorant as to details, he was consistently courteous and pleasant. What was best of all, he thoroughly knew his own mind, and once he had accepted a thing, he never went back from his word. One felt one was dealing with a man of business, and a man one could trust, I have had some thirty years' experience now in dealing with diplomatists, Eastern and Western, and I can confidently say that among them all the most satisfactory negotiator I ever had to do with was the Afghan Amir.

Of course, as I have said, the negotiations, like all negotiations, had their ups and downs, and at times it seemed as if we had come to a hopeless *impasse*. But the primary object of the mission was attained with no great difficulty or delay. Abdur Rahman hated retiring from any position he had taken up, but he was too shrewd and sensible not to see that by occupying the districts north of the Oxus the Afghans had put themselves in the wrong, and, like all really strong men, he was not afraid of admitting a mistake. After a week of discussion he agreed to withdraw from Roshan and Shignan, and then turned to the question of his frontier towards the east. Far from showing unwillingness to discuss the matters connected with this frontier, he pressed me to take them up, and, indeed, wished to consider them before taking up the Oxus question at all. They were, of course, rather complicated, and it took us a long time to thresh them all out. Abdur Rahman, though

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he knew his frontier country well, knew it from personal visits or hearsay, not from the study of maps; consequently, he was at times at fault regarding the position of places. It was no use producing a map, for he would say, 'That is no use. It is all wrong. I *know*. I have been to those places. Your maps are guess-work.' Chageh, for example, a name which often came up, was, according to him, quite wrongly placed in our survey map, which made it twice as far from the Helmund as it ought to be. 'Whenever you are dealing with one of my alleged encroachments, it is made very big on the map. When you are dealing with one of your own, I notice, it is quite a tiny little thing.' It was no good arguing the point, so I could only shake my head and laugh, and try to put the matter in a different way. Then at times he would stand on some point of dignity. Once I said to him: 'After all, Amir Sahib, if there is so little population and wealth in the country you describe, what good will it do you?' His answer was one word. He turned upon me slowly with a very steady look into my eyes, and said: 'Nam,' (name, honour). On such points he was inflexible.

So the negotiations went on for some weeks, and in the end all was settled to the satisfaction of both sides. When they were over the Amir held a great Durbar in his citadel, to which we were invited, together with some 400 Afghan notables. Abdur Rahman made a long speech, summing up the course of the negotiations, expressing his great pleasure at the results, and exhorting his people to remain henceforward true to the British alliance. The assembly replied by presenting to him an address on the part of the tribes and people of Afghanistan, approving of all he had done. The Amir read out this address, dwelling upon his position as the chosen representative of the Afghan nation.

The Amir asked me to address the assembly also, and declined to let me do it through an interpreter. 'You do not speak Persian perfectly,' he said with characteristic frankness, 'but they will understand you better than an interpreter. If you are at a loss for a word I will help you.' The ordeal proved less formidable than I had expected.

In the course of his speech Abdur Rahman disclosed for the information of his people, and incidentally for the information of the Indian newspapers and the world in general, the true objects of the mission, which had till then been kept secret. But this did no particular harm.

On the 15th of November we said good-bye to the Amir. There had been a smart shock of earthquake, and he had been sleeping in a felt

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kibitka in his garden. He was most cordial in his messages to various people in England, and most friendly to us. I said good-bye with real regret. I never saw him again.

Our march down was uneventful, and the only thing which struck me was the increased freedom accorded to us and the extreme friendliness of the people, which was unmistakable. All along the road they crowded about us, bringing presents of fruit and flowers and showing every sign of goodwill, and the escort no longer kept them at arm's-length. Word had come from the Amir that for the future the English and Afghans were friends, and they seemed really anxious to prove that they heartily accepted the situation.

I have seen it stated more than once since that time that the agreement at which Abdur Rahman arrived about his frontier towards India was forced upon him against his will. Nothing can be farther from the truth. The settlement was, as I have said, entered upon at his own pressing request, and the conclusion was accepted of his own free-will, with the fullest expressions of satisfaction and pleasure. It was his wish to obtain a definite frontier all round his country, and it is not the least of the many benefits conferred on Afghanistan by his far-sighted statesmanship.

It has also been stated that the arrangement was a dangerous step in advance on our part, the embodiment of a reckless, forward policy. That also is wholly untrue. The arrangement merely embodied the principle asserted over and over again by successive Governments in India and in England—the principle that for the peace and security of our own border we must be free to deal direct with the various independent tribes from Chitral to Baluchistan, and could not recognize any claim on the part of the Afghan Amirs to suzerainty over them. Abdur Rahman had the good sense and the strength of character to accept that principle, and to undertake that he would leave the tribes alone for the future. This is a plain question of fact, and the fact can be proved beyond the possibility of denial from the contents of many Blue books. There was nothing new in the arrangement, except that for the first time the principle was definitely and formally accepted by an Amir who was strong enough and wise enough to prefer peace and goodwill with us to the maintenance of shadowy and dangerous pretensions.

Before closing this paper I will mention one or two further points about Abdur Rahman unconnected with the frontier negotiations.

The foundation of all things is physical courage, and Abdur Rahman possessed it to a degree which made him a marked man even among

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the Afghans—an exceptionally brave people. He showed it on innumerable occasions. I will refer to one which I have often heard cited. He was seated in a chair watching a regiment march past when a man dropped back from the rear rank of a company, and, taking deliberate aim, fired at him from a distance of a few yards. The bullet grazed his coat, and killed a man behind him. It is said by the Afghans that Abdur Rahman never took the slightest notice, not even raising his hand from the arm of his chair.

Abdur Rahman preferred to be addressed simply as 'Amir Sahib,' not by any lofty Oriental title. He prided himself on being the fighting chief of a fighting people, and despised all hyperbole. His dress and Court were very simple. He was essentially a personal ruler, with much thought for business and little for form. I was much struck by his patriotism. He was very proud of his country, and really anxious to carry the Afghans with him in all he did. He was a despotic ruler, no doubt, and cared little for individual opinion. I should have been sorry for any man who ventured to differ from him. But he was not, I think, insincere in putting forward Afghan sentiment as a force to be considered. He watched it carefully, and often deferred to it.

His great desire as regards military matters was for money and big guns for the defence of his northern frontier. He wanted no advice or other help from us. Breech-loading rifles and Hotchkiss guns he could manufacture or buy. He had a curious belief in the usefulness of forty-pounders. With them and money he thought he could organize his country for defence much better than we could. A European adventurer once brought him a large telescope for sale, and told him it would show him the whole geography of the moon. His answer, as repeated to me was, 'Oh, blow the moon! What is the use of the moon to me? Can't you make a gun of the thing?'

He disbelieved in trying to turn his Afghans into a standing army on Sher Ali's pattern. For the defence of their country against a foreign enemy he believed in their national methods of tribal warfare, supplemented by modern weapons. He had some regular regiments, but even these were mostly territorial, consisting of men of one tribe or district. They were quartered in parts of the country at a distance from their homes, but this was for reasons of internal policy.

Throughout his reign Abdur Rahman was occupied in strengthening his rule over all parts of the country, and it must be admitted that he had great success. Tribe after tribe which had maintained

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some sort of independence was reduced to order, and scattered in colonies all over the country. Many nests of freebooters were extirpated, some of them very formidable strongholds. One large band, for example, holding a mountain fastness near Jellalabad, harried the country for years, and was only reduced after twenty-six days' continuous fighting by a force of 12,000 men. Roads were cleared in all directions, and safely held. Altogether Abdur Rahman established a very firm grip on his turbulent kingdom.

As an instance, I may mention that on our return march from Kabul we spent two days on bullock-skins floating down the Kabul River. At one point where a river passes through a gorge in the mountains, we found ourselves carried by a rapid close under a rocky cliff. Among the rocks above us, within the few yards we saw some Momund tribesmen armed with jezails. One of our rafts carried some Afghan soldiers, who called to the Momunds to put their arms down on the ground. This was done at once, though the escort could not possibly have got at them.

Wherever we went cultivation was increasing, and the people seemed prosperous and contented.

In matters of trade Abdur Rahman was, to our views, not enlightened or liberal. He said his people were so poor and ignorant that he was obliged to manage their trade himself. He created numerous monopolies, and acted in defiance of recognized commercial principles. It must be added that he showed remarkable interest in developing on his own account certain branches of industry. The workshops he erected in Kabul were a striking feature. In them he manufactured everything necessary for the armament and equipment of his army. Guns, rifles, ammunition, saddlery, all were of excellent quality. The mint turned out coins of accurate weight and good finish. The coins of former Afghan Amirs had been chunks of silver chopped off a rough bar, and flattened and stamped by hand with one blow on a rickety anvil. Soap, candles, brandy, and other things were also manufactured in considerable quantities. The machinery, including heavy steam-engines and a massive steam-hammer, had all been brought from India over difficult mountain passes, and most of it in pieces not too heavy for a camel to carry.

There was one thing for which Abdur Rahman was often and severely criticized—the terrible nature of his punishments; and it must be admitted that he did at times inflict upon his subjects punishments which to the European mind appeared to be cruel and barbarous. The Government of India felt strongly about this, and

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let its feelings be known. But Abdur Rahman cannot be judged by European standards. His punishments were, after all, no worse than those inflicted to the present day in other Oriental countries. He had to deal with a very turbulent population, and his argument was that he must make examples or he would have disorder all over the country. The Afghans, the Ban-i-Israel, were fierce and fickle, like the people from whom they claim descent. He was merciless, but he said, and I believe with perfect truth, that he took no pleasure in cruelty. In the latter part of his reign barbarous punishments on a large scale were much less frequent than when he was stamping out disloyalty and rebellion.

Taking him altogether, Abdur Rahman was a very striking figure, and did very remarkable work. It was his personal character and reputation among the Afghans which really brought him to the throne of Kabul. When he came to it he found his country disorganized by war, and split up into fragments, with several other claimants in the field, and the tribes completely out of control. Gradually, with some little help from us, but chiefly by his own courage and capacity, he reunited Afghanistan and established his rule over every part of it. When he died he left to his son a comparatively well-ordered and prosperous kingdom, with definite frontiers and a fixed policy. To that inheritance the new Amir succeeded in peace. Long may he and his heirs continue to enjoy it!

Of course, Abdur Rahman had his faults and his limitations. He was not modest or self-denying or pitiful. But he was brave, and able, and resolute as few men are. His shrewdness and power of work and sense of humour were unfailing. In essentials he was faithful to his engagements. He was proud of his country and jealous of its independence and honour. To those whom he liked he was generous and affectionate. Of all the men with whom I have had to deal he was unquestionably the strongest. If he had been born under a luckier star, in an age which allowed free scope for the display of his high qualities, he would, I believe, have achieved a great renown. Fate set bounds to his ambition, and now, after life's fitful fever, he sleeps well. But to my eyes at least he will always stand out as a great ruler and a great man.

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DISCUSSION

Sir Thomas Holdich took the place of Mr. Chirol in the chair at the conclusion of the lecture, and said: The deeply interesting account we have had of the late Amir Abdur Rahman Khan recalls many things to me which I had somewhat forgotten. I think, perhaps, the most important service he rendered to Great Britain was the calm attitude he assumed, as Sir Mortimer has told us, when he heard that the Russians had actually transgressed his territory, at the very time when we were delimitating the Russo-Afghan frontier. Of course, we who were engaged on this work knew nothing of what was going on in India at the time. We could not tell what might eventuate from the Rawal Pindi Durbar, and it concerned us very much to know what view he might take of it. Day by day we were in expectation of seeing the Cossack Lancers appearing on the skyline of the northern hills, and we really did not know whether we should be asked to fight side by side with the Afghans, or whether we should have to beat a somewhat ignominious retreat into India. I do not pretend to know whether we were quite as near war as has been usually supposed. I think, however, the critical character of the situation was somewhat exaggerated in this country. Since those days I have had opportunities now and then of conversing with Russian officers who were on the frontier at the time, and I have asked for their own views as to the possibilities of an immediate advance into Afghanistan for the possession of Herat. There is no one I know of so candid and frank as a Russian officer when he has nothing to conceal, and one and all have told me that under no circumstances could they have made that advance. They were not in a position to do so. But although we may not have been so near war just then as was usually supposed, I am quite certain that the Amir's attitude saved an immense amount of trouble. Had he received the information in any other manner than he did, it would have been impossible for us to proceed with the work of demarcation; we should have been compelled to return to India and leave the boundary alone for an indefinite time.

Sir Mortimer has brought before us the characteristics and the idiosyncrasies of the Amir in a very interesting way, and there are several little points on which I can bear out what he has said, although my own acquaintance with the late ruler of Afghanistan was not of the same intimate kind as his. One trait was his overweening pride in anything and everything Afghan, an admirable trait, perhaps, but one

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which led him to believe that under no circumstances could anything better be done than was done in his own country. When I was associated with his Commander-in-Chief, General Ghulam Hyder, in delimitation work, we had many interesting conversations about the Amir, for whom he professed the deepest reverence. He asked me whether I could sketch and send to the Amir a picture of Asmar, showing the fine bridge he had built over the river there. It was only an ordinary Afghan cantilever bridge, of no great importance, bnt he was aware that the Amir looked upon our methods of bridge construction with a certain amount of contempt. I made a sketch of the bridge and sent it to His Majesty, remarking that I was only an amateur at that sort of thing, but I had done the best I could. In reply he thanked me most courteously for the sketch, and said he had the pleasure to send for my acceptance two pictures from Kabul, which, he observed, were the work of professional artists. One was a portrait of his son, the present Amir, and the other was a very delightful little piece of ordinary illustration, more of a geometrical design than anything in the shape of a landscape, but it showed to very good effect the best qualities of Persian art. The portrait was a stiff and remarkably unpleasant likeness, which, I regret to say, was lost in the Kabul River by the capsizing of a boat in which I was crossing the river. But the small illuminated picture, which I have always regarded as a Christmas card from the Amir, I have still, and it is certainly a very pretty piece of work. His object in sending it was undoubtedly to show that he had better artists in his capital than we could produce.

There is a sequel to the story of the famous bird at the Rawal Pindi Durbar, which possibly Sir Mortimer Durand's politeness prevented him from giving. I should like to tell you the story as I heard it. I have been told that when the irrepressible bird began to sing, and the ladies all round tittered, the Amir was rather disturbed. I am told that he remarked to Lord Dufferin that he noticed the English people allowed very great liberties to their ladies; 'but,' he added, critically looking round the assembly, 'I see you keep all your good-looking ones at home.' (Laughter.) Now, whether the story is true or not, it was decidedly *ben trovato*, and characteristic of the Amir's plain-spokenness.

I should also like to know from Sir Mortimer Durand what were the views of His Majesty in reference to the origin of himself and his people. His Commander-in-Chief, Ghulam Hyder, was an ardent believer in their being Ben-i-Israel, and he maintained that the Amir accepted the common tradition that the true Afghans represented those lost tribes of Israel who left Syria some 700 years before Christ. Ghulam Hyder was very fond of speaking on this point, and he argued the case exceedingly well.

We have heard a most interesting account of a striking personality given us, probably, by the one man in all the world not of his own race

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who could tell us most about him. I think that this class of lecture (one that reveals to us on excellent authority something of the characteristics of Eastern potentates ruling countries contiguous to our Asiatic possessions) cannot fail to be most useful. I am sure you will join me in heartily thanking Sir Mortimer. (Cheers.)

Mr. Henry Crossfield said he had taken a great deal of interest in the relations of the British race with the Mahommedan world. What had been said as to the theory of the Afghans being Ben-i-Israels and as to the remarkable personality of the Amir seemed to him to point to the desirability of opening up somewhat more friendly relations with the general world of Islam than was possible from mere diplomacy. He understood that in his own dominions the late Amir claimed the Kalifate, and disputed the right of any other Mahommedan potentate to be so regarded within the limits of his dominions. He believed that closer associations with the Mahommedan world than those of diplomacy would make for the solidity and permanence of the British power.

Mr. J. D. Rees, M.P., said: Did time permit, it would be tempting to refer to some of the interesting political problems on which so much light has incidentally been thrown, but at this late hour I must content myself with a single story. When the tunnel was made through the Chamar range, in order to facilitate, if need be, the laying of rails to Kandahar, the Amir, as is well known, was very angry at what he regarded as a violation of his territory. The Viceroy invited him to the opening ceremony, but he wrote back asking whether it was the custom of the English people when they bored a hole in a man's stomach to invite him to come and see the opening made. (Laughter.)

Sir Mortimer Durand, in reply to a vote of thanks, said: I am much obliged to you for listening to me. I am afraid I was a great deal too long, and I will only say now that I have no particular recollection of the incident at the Rawal Pindi Durbar to which Sir Thomas Holdich has alluded. I am sure, however, that had the Amir made any such remark about the ladies as has been attributed to him, I could not possibly have endured it. (Laughter and cheers.)

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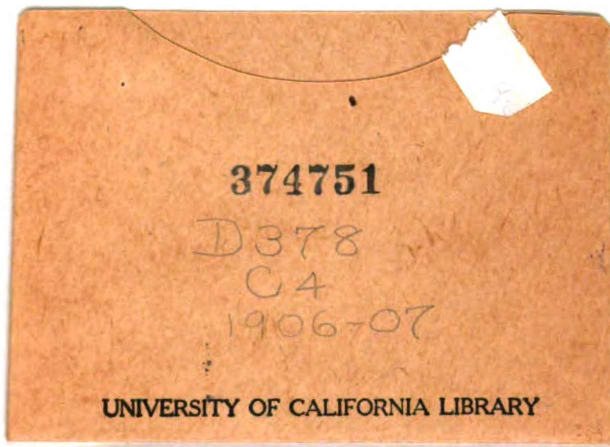

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