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NOTE

THE Council of the Central Asian Society have had under consideration the project of enlarging their publications by the addition of short articles and notes on current events in the East. It is hoped to present four parts in each year, commencing with the present issue.

A VISIT TO MONGOLIA*

BY E. MANICO GULL

THE Chairman (Sir MORTIMER DURAND) said that Mr. Gull had spent many years in China, and having visited Mongolia he was thoroughly conversant with the subject on which he had kindly undertaken to speak to them.

The European resident in China has the choice of three routes to Urga, the capital of North Mongolia. He may travel over the Gobi desert from Kalgan, follow the Kerulen River from Hailar, or journey by rail to Werkne Udinsk, just east of Lake Baikal, and then strike south. I aimed originally at the first and most ambitious of the three; I ended by taking the third and easiest. The circumstance that altered my plans was war. Breaking out some months before along the Manchurian border, it had spread westwards, and the Chinese Government had refused in consequence to issue passports. The southern Mongol who had promised to accompany me backed out of his bargain, and nobody could be found to take his place. I tried first one scheme, and then another, in the meantime learning a good deal about the conditions obtaining in Inner Mongolia—more, perhaps, than I should have learned had I actually crossed it. Eventually, however, I was obliged to turn my back on Kalgan, and to proceed to Werkne Udinsk by rail. How seldom Britishers visit that town is proved by the complete ignorance of English that prevails in it. French it understands a little, German a trifle more, and anyone who can talk Chinese need find himself in no serious difficulty.

Werkne Udinsk sprang from a penal settlement, and a large white prison overlooking the Selenga River is in keeping with the cutthroat character of certain portions of the place. In these it is not well to stray alone after dark, lest some Russianized Chinese who has forgotten the decent traditions of his own country, some needy Buriat, or a broken Siberian colonist, be tempted to hold you up. In the main street, however, and those that cross it at right angles, shops and stores enfold you with prosperous security. Here, if you are robbed, it is in a courteous, civilized way—through artificial prices spelling profits of

* Read December 10, 1913.

between 200 and 300 per cent. A brisk trade in skins, furs, wool, and timber, and the presence of a large garrison, whose officers must either spend money or die of ennui, helps the town to tolerate this form of spoliation with an appearance of reckless good grace. In respect of its gay carelessness, Werkne Udinsk is reminiscent of Harbin; but it is far more picturesque. Pineclad hills hem it in on one side, the broad waters of the Selenga River on the other. Dark brown, green, and white houses framing grey roads throw long shadows over fair-haired women with pink shawls, grouped, basket on arm, amongst pig-tailed Chinese and bronzed Mongols in long red coats. Russian farmers in blue blouses and big top-boots trudge beside ox-carts creaking forward in a low cloud of dust, and now and then a sparkle of silver and steel breaks from a troop of cavalry as it wheels at a canter into the market square. Two steamers ply between Werkne Udinsk and Kiachta, the journey taking about thirty-six hours. It is by no means a comfortable trip, and the scenery of the river is scarcely sufficient compensation for all that one has to suffer. Just at first it is pretty enough, but before half the journey has been accomplished the hills have receded, leaving either bank flat and uninteresting. Here and there the channel narrows dangerously, and a strong current disputes the vessel's progress with such success that she is only got round sharp bends by the use of long poling rods. Thankful for such small excitements, one is still more grateful when a last twist of the river brings Oust-Kiachta into sight. It appears at first to be no larger than a cluster of cottages crowning a low hill. The greater part of the port, however, lies tucked away behind a straggling village dignified by the presence of a large and handsome church.

Kiachta proper lies some ten miles away to the south, and is reached after a pleasant drive first over an open plain, next through a broad belt of pines and silver birches, where in summer the ground is covered with wild-roses, tiger lilies, and iceland poppies. Suddenly emerging from the trees, your carriage sweeps into a semicircular clearing above a valley sheltering a cluster of white houses with green roofs. As the road descends the group scatters, and becomes interspersed with small logwood cottages richly brown. *Troisgesaft*, as this part of Kiachta is called, reproduces all the distinctive features of Werkne Udinsk, with this difference, that it is highly coloured. Here, on the Mongolian frontier, Mongol dresses of orange, scarlet, and turquoise blue, enrich the simpler hues of Siberia. The fact that one is on the frontier is further emphasized partly by the military character of Kiachta proper, where, in anticipation of future—I had almost said coming—events, Russia has completed the construction of barracks to accommodate 4,000 or 5,000 men, partly by the existence of a small Chinese town less than 100 yards south of two stone pillars. These mark the actual boundary. There are not very many places where one

can stand, literally, with one's legs in different empires. Here one can. Mai-mai-ch'eng, as this fourth division of Kiachta is called, is Chinese in appearance and spirit. One might be in a remote corner of Peking. What was the yamen has, indeed, been converted into a Mongolian Government office, and in the square market-place that lies just beyond it; there are Siberian colonists, Mongolians, and Buriats. But all that lies between the two parallel streets composing the town is entirely Chinese.

There was food for thought in this as one took the road to Urga. It led straight out on to the veldt, and soon became nothing more than a rough track, where strings of carts loaded with neatly piled blocks of timber met us on their way to market. Presently the path, broadening a little, rose towards a line of trees, the advance guard of a thick wood, on the other side of which a halt was made at a Russian rest-house. The second stage ended after a pleasant drive through hilly country on the banks of the Ura Gol, where night was spent in a cottage similar to the one we left behind. Rain fell so heavily all the next day that we decided to remain where we were. On the following morning, however, we crossed the river—horses, tarantas, and men—in a broad flat-bottomed barge pulled over by wire hawsers. South of the Ura Gol the scenery becomes typically North Mongolian. You ascend from one broad cup-shaped valley into another, the surrounding hills, grassy and covered with a profusion of wild-flowers, crowned here and there with pine-trees. A large Mongol camp received us hospitably at sunset. A special yourt is reserved for travellers by all encampments near main roads, and once you have learned to keep out of the smoke that rises from the charcoal fire in the centre of the tent you can make yourself very fairly comfortable. There are other troubles besides smoke, and to what extent they bother you depends upon the toughness of your skin. What I myself found most distressing was the tendency of the yourt, cosily warm when first one lay down, to become stiflingly hot after an hour or so. But whatever one's troubles may be, joy comes with the morning—and breakfast. No word picture can convey the glory of daybreak in North Mongolia at this time of year—July and August. The first delicate flush of clear skies, the sparkling silver of grassy plains, the exquisite freshness of the air—these can be seen and felt only, not adequately described. A third day's journey brought us to the Hara Gol. The river was in flood, but a consequent delay of forty-eight hours was enlivened by as good a stand-up fight as I have seen anywhere. Two Mongols fell foul of each other, squared up and fought, until the shorter of the two, finding himself outmatched, dodged, stooped quickly, and picked up a large stone, with which he proceeded to pound at his opponent's head; whereupon a burly Russian, a giant with blue eyes, flaming red beard, and a long pink blouse belted round a stupendous paunch, stepped into the ring,

and, seizing either man by the neck, threw them in opposite directions, rousing such a shout of laughter from the circle of onlookers that the fight came to an end.

Next morning the Hara Gol had fallen sufficiently to enable us to cross without more than a slight wetting. In a couple of stages we reached a last Mongol camp, and early next day a final ridge of hills thickly wooded—a paradise of wild-flowers. Urga lay on the other side concealed from view for an hour or more, until, as the road swept down and eastwards, one caught sight first of a level of grey roofs, then of a white tower, and, hanging from it, of bell-shaped canopies of gilded brass.

The city is divided into two distinct sections, West Urga and Mai-mai-ch'eng, which lies to the east some three miles away. Mai-mai-ch'eng, I should explain, means merely "buy-sell" city, and is only a term for the Chinese quarter. In West Urga, not, at first sight, distinct from it, but in reality forming a separate quarter, is the Lama, or Holy City. Built on a low hill, it consists of wooden houses and of tents partially concealed by palisades coloured brown and dark red. They are grouped round the tower we saw just now, of which this is another view. It houses a gigantic statue of Buddha, a fine image of gilded bronze rising out of a lotus flower. Its head and shoulders reach well above a narrow gallery running round the four sides of the tower at a height of more than 50 feet. On either side of the square pedestal on which the figure stands hang banners of yellow silk, and on the right are two richly draped thrones, used on ceremonial occasions by the Hutuktu and his consort. A wooden altar and incense-burners, bowls and candlesticks of pewter and bronze, stand at the feet of the idol. The doors of the temple—almost as thick as those of a Chinese city—are, so to speak, valves in the heart of an area less than half a mile square, yet concentrating over 80,000 priests who, dressed in togas of daffodil yellow and tulip red, enter and emerge, ascend and descend the slope of the sandy hill, with an effect of colour at once brilliant and restless. At the foot of the hill is the horse market, an oblong space of ground flanked by crumbling camel inns desert-brown, and single-storied Chinese shops with carved lintels of faded gold. It is the business centre of West Urga, and presents each day a scene as vivid and mellow as an old garden in flower. From about ten in the morning until four in the afternoon, the middle of the ground is occupied by a mob of ponies—white, brown, grey—circled and interspersed by buyers and sellers wearing mandarin hats with peacock feathers and dresses of orange, scarlet, yellow, and blue. To and from this richly coloured group, gay parties of Mongol women with head-dresses like flattened rams' horns, from which are suspended ropes of pearls, trot and canter in merry company. To the left of the market-place, and in abrupt contrast with it, lies part of the Russian

settlement. Small wooden houses, dirty and badly ventilated, give dismal shelter to rough-looking men and slatternly women. The streets are filthy. Dirt and rubbish stand in piles, prowled over and gradually eaten away by hordes of diseased dogs. It is a relief to move out into the open again towards the plain that lies along the bank of the Tola River, under the shadow of the sacred mountain Bogdo N'or. On the way one passes the principal Government offices, buildings thoroughly Chinese in appearance. Behind those on the left stands Bogdo's temple, half wood, half canvas, ornamented with small Tibetan cupolas of gilded bronze. Opposite on the right, standing by itself, is Bogdo's house, a wooden structure built in European style and adorned with a square turret painted green. A flimsy red paling encloses it with a number of Chinese pavilions of the conventional yellow-tiled type, grouped round a semi-Tibetan tower.

Farther on, and about halfway between West Urga and Mai-mai-ch'eng, is the Russian Consulate, a large white two-storied house, standing in a small untidy garden behind an imposing stone archway. Close to it is the ugliest sight in Urga—the red-brick headquarters of the Mongolor Gold Mining Company—one of the main factors behind Mongolia's recent declaration of independence. Mai-mai-ch'eng, the Chinese quarter, is enclosed by a stockade about 15 feet high, round which one can walk in less than twenty minutes. Three main streets, with a narrow gateway at either end surmounted by small wooden towers, run east and west. The principal gateway, the Ch'ing Tai Men, facing south, stands opposite the central building of the town, a Buddhist temple, by far the prettiest thing in Urga. The walls of its two small courtyards and the pailou which separates them are decorated with paintings of quite unusual excellence. The temple was built in the time of the Emperor Ka Hsing, enlarged in that of Hsien Feng, and renovated in the latter days of Kwang Hsu. To-day it forms the headquarters of the Shih Erh Chia, the principal Chinese guild in Urga.

As a result of its declaration of independence—an event which you will remember took place at the time of the Anti-Manchu revolution—a new situation has been created in North Mongolia. Let us examine it. According to recent telegrams from Peking, China has agreed to recognize the autonomy of Outer Mongolia, to abstain in future from any interference in its internal affairs, to desist from colonization; she agrees not to station any troops in the country other than those necessary to form a small escort for her representative at Urga. She is to be allowed to appoint agents to protect the interests of her subjects in various localities, but she gives up her right to appoint civil or military officials of the pre-revolution type. In other words, she gives up all claim to be the ruler of North Mongolia, retaining merely a theoretical suzerainty over the country, and in addition she

recognizes the validity of the Convention signed by the Russian and Mongolian Governments at Urga on November 3, 1912. Russia, on her side, agrees to recognize China as the suzerain power; to abstain from stationing troops other than consular guards; not to interfere with Mongolian administration; not to colonize.

On the face of it, this agreement appears to make North Mongolia a buffer State. What it actually does is something very different, for by the Urga Convention Russia has obtained rights which modify her promises not to maintain troops nor to colonize to such an extent as to make them almost meaningless. Her subjects are now at liberty to live and travel in all parts of Outer Mongolia without let or hindrance, to rent vacant land for agricultural purposes, to rent and buy it for purposes of trade. They are entitled to establish trade settlements wherever they desire to do so, and to live in those settlements in the enjoyment of extra territorial rights under Consuls who are either to be sent out from St. Petersburg or selected from men on the spot. There is nothing to limit the number of Consuls; there is nothing in the recent agreement with China to prevent all of them being furnished with guards. Nor does either treaty specify the number of men of which a guard is to consist. With 10,000 troops distributed between Werkne Udinsk and Kiachta, with guards at Kobdo and Ulliasutai, Urga, and the trade settlements that will spring up between them, Russia's promises not to maintain troops do not, I submit, amount to very much. What of her promise to abstain from colonization? Glance first at the Upper Yenisei Basin (which lies between the Syansk Mountains), the political boundary between Siberia and Mongolia—on to the north and the Tannuola Range. Russian penetration of this region began in 1860. By 1869 it had proceeded so far that Russian and Chinese settlers came to blows, and the authorities of either country appointed a commission to settle disputes. The Chinese agreed to pay an indemnity to such Russian traders as had suffered loss, the Russians agreed to prohibit Siberian colonists from settling permanently in the basin. What had happened since then? Let me quote the evidence of Mr. Douglas Carruthers, whose book "Unknown Mongolia" deals in detail with this region. "From all accounts," he says (see p. 164, vol. i.), "the Russians continued to build ranches, factories, and trading-posts. The native Uriankhai neither permitted nor forbade, whilst the Chinese were in no position to expostulate. So the colonists increased in numbers, attracted, in spite of a certain fear as to the attitude of the Chinese, by the offers of new homes in a pregnant land, where fishing and grazing rights were free to all comers. . . ." "Observing the situation at the present time," he continues, "we note that the Russians have won the day, and that the colonists have the advantage of the lands of the Uriankhai without the disadvantage of a foreign Government. It is an altogether unique

position, for the settlers in the basin actually possess the privileges of their own Russian rule."

If Russian promises in 1869 exercised no greater restraint than this, can we suppose that, with the Urga Convention signed, sealed, and delivered, with the right to establish trade settlements throughout the North Mongolia recognized in black and white, Russia really means to desist from colonization? If that is really her intention, why has she insisted on the Convention being recognized? The utmost that we can suppose is that Russia gives a special and limited meaning to the word "colonization." The utmost we can suppose is that, when she promises not to colonize, she undertakes not to support her colonists with Government funds. Now, under the Urga Convention the Russian Bank has the right of establishing branches wherever it sees fit. Is the Russian Bank a purely commercial organization? Was the Russo-Chinese Bank a purely commercial concern in the days before the Russo-Japanese War? Everybody knows it wasn't. Everybody knows that Russia's Manchurian enterprises were inspired, directed, and co-ordinated, from St. Petersburg. Everybody who has been to Urga recently knows that the Russian Government is lending financial support to efforts directed towards obtaining gold-mining and other concessions in the neighbourhood.

In the face of these facts I do not see how it can be maintained that all that Russia is aiming at in North Mongolia is the creation of a buffer State. It seems to me clear that what she is aiming at is, to put it in no stronger terms, the creation of a sphere of special interests which in course of time shall enable her to say "hands off" to everybody else. Moreover, she is doing this with the knowledge and support of Japan. I wish to lay particular emphasis on this point, because the tendency is to regard the Mongolian question as something special and isolated, whereas in point of fact its present phase is the direct outcome of the "entente" arrived at between Russia and Japan in July, 1910.

Let us now turn to the Mongols themselves, and to their views on the future of their country. Our stay in Urga coincided with the Tsam Festival, a Lamaistic ceremony in connection with which there take place annually a number of events semi-religious, semi-athletic. Of these not the least interesting are the archery competitions held on the grassy plain lying along the north side of the Tola River. In the centre of the plain, at one end of a space of ground from 70 to 80 yards long, stand four large tents. At the other are four targets made of small wickerwork bracelets, about three times as broad as napkin-rings, piled in a wall one above the other. At the commencement of the competition the targets are about 15 feet long and a little over 2 feet high. As it proceeds, they are gradually reduced to a foot or so in length and height. The arrow has only to touch them and they fall, but the aim of the competitor is to strike his mark full and low

and shatter it to pieces. No shot that falls outside a line drawn 4 yards from the target, and then ricochets on to it, counts, but any damage done by an arrow falling within the margin is hailed with almost as much applause as that inflicted by a fair and square hit. The competitors advance in pairs, and, kneeling, bow first to the distant targets and then to the tents just behind them. These, dyed light and dark blue, are filled with spectators, whose hats and robes form radiant masses of colour.

The eye travels over rows of tulip red and russet brown, rests on pale violet, purple and smoky grey, leaps from daffodil yellow and flaming orange to scarlet and brilliant blue. Like flowers in the wind, the colours are continually in motion, for the spectators, becoming competitors in turn, rise, disengage themselves, bow their heads to the earth, and stand erect to aim.

As they do so, a low dirge-like chant breaks from the opposite end of the ground, where in front of each target friends and rivals stand in groups. With the bending of the bow the chant dies, ceasing abruptly as the arrow twangs into the air. For a second or two there is silence, all eyes watching the shaft's arching flight. Then, as the ivory-tipped head hits, the group which has scattered quickly re-forms into a semi-circle, and each man, raising his arms and waving them from side to side, advances slowly, chanting applause in loud, deep monotone. Those in charge of the targets rebuild them, and tiny Lama boys, gathering the arrows, scamper back with them to the marksmen like sun-browned amorini.

The annual wrestling competition was held a few days later. At one end of a square, under a tent of yellow silk appliqué with blue, sat the spiritual head of Mongolia, the Hutuktu, with his guards, surrounded by leading Mongol Princes in Chinese official dress and a host of Lama priests wearing mitres and togas of yellow. A dense crowd of spectators surrounded the remaining sides of the square in rows of mulberry red and copper brown. The wrestlers, stripped almost naked, compete in teams; one is surprised at the whiteness of their skin. They are most of them big men, strongly rather than beautifully made, with hard rippling muscles. The shoulders are a trifle too broad, and a life in the saddle has thickened and banded the legs. But their bodies show fitness, condition, capacity for tremendous effort. At a given signal the opposing teams enter the ring. They throw their hands into the air and move in converging files towards the Hutuktu's tent in a slow run, jerking their knees as high as possible, and crying out as they advance. Within a few paces of the tent they stop, drop to earth, and knock their heads on the ground three times. Retreating in the same fastastic way, each man faces his opponent, crouching for a hold. The wrestling begins; each couple is watched by two umpires, who, however, are backers as well,

and encourage their men by administering sounding slaps between the shoulder-blades. In most cases the fall comes quickly; in a few the bout lags on in a series of clinches. This couple, for instance, remained in this position for ten counted minutes. It is a game of patience and tense watching. Presently one of the two relaxes, attempts to shift his hold, or lets his mind for a second wander. In an instant he is bent over, broken, and brought down with a snap. There is a roar of applause, and the victor, throwing his hands into the air, advances, running slowly, to salute the god and to receive the coveted reward of success—some milk and a few cakes blessed by the priests.

A third scene was even more instructive—a race meeting, held in the beautiful green valley a little east of Urga. We rode out to it in a merry party of Mongols with their wives, who, though in gala array, all rode astride. There were thirty entries for a race over flat, open country for five miles; the jockeys were little boys and girls, the youngest eight, and the oldest not more than fourteen. The ponies, their riders up and singing in chorus, paraded in a circle between tents coloured light and dark blue. Presently a Lama in flowing robes of yellow, with a pennon at the end of a lance, placed himself at the head of the line, and the slow parade broke into a trot. Four or five times the circle was completed, till the trot, momentarily quickening, became a fast canter. Then, the excitement of the ponies worked up to a pitch, the Lama gave the signal. With a sweep of his lance he shot off at a gallop, the circle behind him uncoiling like a lasso. It spread out across the plain, racing towards a bend in the hills, the actual starting-point. We followed for a little, and then, dismounting, waited until in straggling file, flanked by those who had gone all the way, the competitors reappeared. The first home was a girl with a sash of orange bound round her jet-black hair. A mounted Lama caught her bridle and led her up to each of the tents in turn. Before each he intoned a prayer, and at the last the girl was handed a bowl of milk, and milk was poured over her pony's head. Each of the competitors was then taken up to the tents in turn, and each pony anointed in the same way. At the end of the afternoon the owners and others stripped off their clothes and wrestled until the sun, crowned with a floating splendour of flame, sank behind the hills.

Such are the Khalkhas, or Northern Mongols, accustomed from infancy to a life in the saddle, ready to wrestle or race, or shoot or fight, unused to and incapable of work; children of the mountain and the desert, loving freedom, hating restraint, entirely uneducated, in a sense deeply religious, yet possessing no very definite morality; hospitable, jolly, absolutely fearless and occasionally cruel, fond of money when easily come by, incapable of bargaining except for a horse; fond of dress, colours, and ceremony, yet simple and Spartan in their way of living; rough, undisciplined, unpolished—a people which has never grown up.

They placed themselves voluntarily under the protection of the Manchus in 1688, their reason for this step being that they were threatened with conquest at the hands of their kinsmen, the Eleuths, or Western Mongols. Their Dzassaks, or chiefs, received Manchu titles, and for a time retained all their original power. Gradually, however, these were diminished. By 1756 China had completely defeated the Western Mongols, and had established a Military Governor at Uliassutai, with Assistant-Governors at Kobdo on the one hand and Urga on the other. The men stationed at these latter places acquired independent positions, and took their orders no longer from Uliassutai, but from Peking, so that the Khalkhas were brought more directly than before under Chinese control. Under the last Chinese Amban this control was unfairly exercised, and consequent discontent was increased partly by the methods—not, I maintain, by the fact—of Chinese colonization, partly by the Amban's disrespectful treatment of the god, the Hutuktu. Determination to revolt sprang from the certainty of Russian assistance. Leading men in Urga see, however, that in getting rid of one set of masters they have placed themselves, to an extent far greater than they anticipated, in the power of another. In certain quarters the Urga Convention is regarded as a mistake—a mistake that can only be rectified by inducing Europeans of all nationalities to visit Mongolia and put money into it. The men who entertain this view would welcome British mining experts and wool manufacturers. They would welcome the appointment of a British Consul. For the time being, however, the politics of Urga are controlled by the Hutuktu and one or two Princes who are in receipt of financial assistance from Russia. I refrain from saying that they are in receipt of bribes. A bribe is money received for doing something you would otherwise not do. From very early times, however, the Khalkhas have evinced a desire to rely on Russian support. As long ago as 1719 the Chinese prohibited them from dealing directly with the Russian Government. The pro-Russian party in Urga may be thoroughly genuine in desiring the utmost possible extension of Russian influence. Unfortunately the head of the party, the Hutuktu, is not a man whose moral character inspires any respect. As long as he lives, however, Russian influence will remain supreme. When he dies, it is more than likely that a reaction will take place. It is more than likely, also, that it will take place too late.

Sir THOMAS HOLDICH: I have no hesitation in saying that the lecture to which we have just listened is one of the most interesting ever delivered in this room. Mr. Gull is to be particularly congratulated on the excellent illustrations, which have carried us through his journey and brought home to us the scenes he has visited in the most effective way. Indeed, they fill one with longing to go to a country

which is still so untouched by European influences. We can only hope that British and other miners will not get there just yet, and that the methods and manners of these people will remain uncontaminated by European influences for at least some time to come. There is one question I should like to ask Mr. Gull. Many centuries ago there were in those regions tribes that professed the Christian faith. The Nestorian form of Christianity seems to have taken deep root in Central Asia, and some traces of its existence are still to be found, but they are not many. They are associated historically with that semi-mythical name, Prester John. But Prester John was not a myth; we believe him, at any rate, to have been the head of an influential group of tribes who were federated under the general name of Kara Khitai. One tribe, of whom little has since been heard, was first encountered by Mr. Ney Elias in Mongolia, where they are probably still seated. They seem to maintain some Christian ritual in their observances, and to understand Christian symbols. It would be very interesting, and to a great extent it would illuminate a dark historical period about which we know exceedingly little, if travellers in Mongolia were to seek out information on this particular head, and it would be interesting to us personally if Mr. Gull could tell us that he came across any sort of reminiscence of those days.

Mrs. ARCHIBALD LITTLE said she hoped she would not be out of order in saying how greatly she had enjoyed the very interesting account of his travels given by the lecturer. She had never heard anyone who had visited a country describe it in a manner more calculated to carry his hearers there with him. She was immensely struck by his careful and wonderful discrimination in describing colour effects, and she had never seen lantern views from which she had derived so much pleasure.

Mr. GULL thanked Sir Thomas Holdich for his kind references to the slides, and said that many of them were lent to him by his friend and fellow-traveller, Mrs. Bulstrode. In respect to the question asked him, he was afraid he had no information, for he did not travel in Mongolia farther west than Urga. The particular tribe to which Sir Thomas had alluded must live some 600 or 700 miles farther west than Urga. He hoped, however, to visit Mongolia again, and would bear in mind the interesting point raised.

The CHAIRMAN said they would all agree with him that Mr. Gull deserved the warm thanks of the Society for his lecture. He entirely concurred with the compliments which had been paid him. They had all been intensely interested, and he would say on their behalf that, if Mr. Gull did pay another visit to Mongolia, he hoped he would come and give them the benefit of another lecture.

NOTES AND NEWS

CAPTAIN F. M. BAILEY'S LATEST EXPLORATION

CAPTAIN F. M. BAILEY, of the Indian Army, is the elder son of the late Colonel Frederick Bailey, of the Royal Engineers, who, after prolonged service in the Forest Department of the Government of India, retired, and succeeded Mr. Silva White as Secretary of the Royal Scottish Geographical Society, a post which he held till within a few years of his death, which took place at the end of 1912. Thus the son was brought up in society and surroundings calculated to nurture and develop any natural bent for exploration. The last letter which I received from Colonel Frederick Bailey is dated June 12, 1912, and was written shortly after the Gill Memorial had been awarded by the Royal Geographical Society to his son, who, to quote the terms of the Royal Geographical Society award, "in 1904 was personally attached to Captain Rawlings, the leader of the expedition from Lhasa through Tibet, and has quite recently" (April to August, 1911) "carried out an important journey from China to Assam by way of Batang and Rima on the Upper Lohit, making a careful traverse of the route." Colonel Bailey's letter naturally reflects the pride which he felt in the success of his son's enterprise, and concludes with an expression of regret that the obligatory exclusion of all political matter detracted from the interest of the paper, descriptive of his son's last journey, which appeared in the April numbers of the Royal and Royal Scottish Geographical publications for 1912.

It is a difficult matter for one who has never approached nearer to the borderland of Assam and Western China than the Kunlon Ferry over the Salween, and who has consequently been unable to follow the records of exploration along the marches of South-West Se-Chuan and South-East Tibet with that closeness which personal knowledge facilitates, to weigh with accuracy and impartiality the parts played by a succession of explorers in achieving the solution which has now been effected. Very recently Mr. F. Kingdon Ward has brought out the account of his travels along this frontier from April to December, 1911, in a volume entitled "The Land of the Blue Poppy." Had Captain Bailey been in search of a picturesque title for his monograph on this country, I conceive that he would have blossomed into "The Land of the *Yellow* Poppy"; for I cull the following from the early part of his article: "Below the pass I saw some magnificent yellow poppies, one of which measured 6½ inches in diameter." After some study of Captain Bailey's own paper, of Mr. Bentinck's lecture before the Royal Geographical Society, delivered on December 2, 1912, and the discussion which followed it, and of the information afforded by Mr. Kingdon Ward, I come to the conclusion that the obstacle which stood in the way of the passage of Europeans from China into the valley of the Brahmaputra was the Lamas of South-East Tibet, and not so much the Mishmi tribe. Prince Henri d'Orléans and Mr. E. C. Young, we are informed, took more southerly routes than that followed by Captain Bailey, and did not touch Tibetan territory. M. Bacot and other French travellers are also referred to, but I have not within easy command any record of their journeys. Major

H. R. Davies, of the Oxfordshire Light Infantry, Gold Medallist of the Royal Geographical Society, who, as a very young officer, in 1887 accompanied the Northern Shan Expedition from Mandalay to the Salween, evidently did in 1900 endeavour to cross into Tibetan territory; for Captain Bailey, when speaking of his own passage of the bridge over the Mekong near Yen-ching, adds: "It was at this bridge that Major Davies and his companions were turned back in 1900; the Lamas fired on the party, and eventually cut the rope bridge." It is interesting to note that Major Davies' search for an Indo-Chinese railway route brought him to this point. Ever since the Trans-Persian Railway was mooted, the idea has suggested itself to me that the great trans-Continental railway of the future from Calais, via Constantinople or the Caucasus, and via Calcutta to the Pacific Coast at Shanghai and Canton, would have to follow the Upper Lohit Valley and the route explored by Captain Bailey. But an examination of the heights recorded on Captain Bailey's plan seems to negative altogether this idea. Between the Salween and the Mekong runs from north to south an obviously formidable range of mountains. A careful study of Stieler's map seems to show that Assam is divided from China, as France is from Italy, by mountains which tunnelling alone can render penetrable by railways. The passage of a railway, whether from the valley of the Brahmaputra or the valley of the Irrawaddy to that of the Yangtse-Kiang, is an engineering enterprise of the first magnitude, but, we may reasonably infer, is within the compass of human skill and ingenuity.

It should be noted that Captain Bailey mentions that there is a French mission-station at Yerkals, evidently near the left or east bank of the Mekong. It was obviously from the Tibetans west of the Mekong that opposition was anticipated. There is a sentence at the beginning of Mr. Bentinck's paper which is not to an outsider easy of explanation. It runs thus: "I have nothing to say on the two missions which were working simultaneously with us; the Mishmi Mission on the Upper Lohit covered little ground that had not been previously visited by Mr. Needham and Mr. Williamson, and described by them," etc. Whatever this mission may have been to which Mr. Bentinck refers, it has no bearing on the task which Captain Bailey had to accomplish—viz., that of traversing Eastern Tibet from Yen-ching on the Mekong, through Menkong on the Salween, to Rima on the Upper Lohit. As has been pointed out before, the difficulty lay in crossing the south-eastern corner of Tibet. It was evidently the opinion of one, if not more, of the experienced surveyors and explorers of India, that the concentration and proximity of the Abor Expedition in 1911 had facilitated the passage of Captain Bailey from Yen-ching to Rima. Considering the distance of Kobo and the Abor country from Yen-ching—viz., 250 to 300 miles—we may be excused if we do not attach much importance to this view. A very able explorer and orator at the 1912 anniversary dinner of the Royal Geographical Society put the idea most happily in the words, "thus luck backs pluck"; but even the happiness of the phraseology could not gild the suggestion in the eyes of some people. As a matter of fact, the expedition under General Sir Hamilton Bower turned its attention entirely to the country north and north-west of Sadiya, up the basin of the Dihong River. It must have been a deep disappointment to the survey party, which reached a point on the Dihong some sixty miles north-north-west of Kebang, that they could not push farther to the north-west and solve that problem—namely, the identity of the San-po and the Brahmaputra, the honour of the definite solution of which has been reserved

for Captain Bailey and Captain Morshead. Before embarking on this subject, let me give, for the information of those who desire to study more closely the geography of the Indo-Chinese frontier, references to the *Journals* of the Royal Geographical Society which record the achievements of the principal recent explorers prior to Captain Bailey :

1. *Journal of the Royal Geographical Society* for December, 1896. Account of Prince Henri d'Orléans' journey from Tonkin across Yunnan into Assam.

2. *Journal of the Royal Geographical Society* for December, 1900. Report of the survey of the Burma-Sechuan Railway, by Captains H. R. Davies (Oxfordshire Light Infantry) and E. C. Pottinger (R.A.), and Lieutenants Watts-Jones and Hunter (R.E.).

3. *Journal of the Royal Geographical Society* for October, 1901. Report of Captain Robertson on the Northern Mishmi Country and the Dibang River, supplementing Colonel Woodthorpe's exploration in 1877-78.

4. *Journal of the Royal Geographical Society* for October, 1902. Report on the country of the Mishmis.

5. *Journal of the Royal Geographical Society* for February, 1903. Paper on the "Exploration of Western China," by Captain Ryder, followed by a discussion in which Major H. R. Davies (under whom Captain Ryder served), Sir T. Holdich, and others, take part. Captain Ryder's map appeared with the August, 1903, number of the Royal Geographical Society's *Journal*.

6. *Journal of the Royal Geographical Society* for August, 1907. Report of the journey of Mr. E. C. Young from Yunnan-fu to Sadiya; with map.

7. *Journal of the Royal Geographical Society* for August, 1908, pp. 181-183. Reports on the journeys of M. Jacques Bacot and Captain D'Ollone in South-Eastern Tibet and Western Sechuan.

8. *Journal of the Royal Geographical Society*, vol. xxxiv., 1909 : p. 75, (a) Review of "Yunnan, the Link between India and the Yangtse," by Major H. R. Davies; p. 363, (b) "The Lohit-Brahmaputra, between Assam and Eastern Tibet," by Noël Williamson.

This last journey, undertaken in the winter of 1907-08 by a frontier officer who fell a victim to Abor savagery in 1911, was an important step towards opening up the route between the Mekong and the Lohit which Captain Bailey finally traversed.

Having thus passed briefly in review the performances of those who, within the last quarter of a century, have lifted the geographical veil which formerly overhung the country, mostly mountainous and permeated by rivers of proportions commensurate with the great ranges that separated them, where China, Burma, Assam, and Tibet meet, I propose to summarize with equal or greater brevity the information we possess regarding the hitherto supposed, and now proven, identity of the San-po and Brahmaputra. The address delivered by Mr. Bentinck before the Royal Geographical Society on December 2, 1912 (*vide Journal* for February, 1913), on "The Geographical Results of the Abor Expedition," followed by a discussion in which Lord Curzon, Sir Thomas Holdich, Sir H. Bower, and Captain Bethell, took part, practically enables me, aided by articles which appeared in the *Times of India* of November 19, and the *Scotsman* (Captain Bailey is an Edinburgh man) of November 21 last, to do this. It is interesting to recall that at the close of Sir F. Younghusband's Tibet Mission it was proposed (see his "India and Tibet," chap. xx.) to send Mr. Claude White and Captain Ryder, escorted by the 8th Gurkhas, to follow the course of

the San-po to Sadiya, and, as Sir F. Younghusband puts it (p. 328), "to discover how and where this mighty river cuts its way clean through the main axis of the Himalayas, and to see the falls and rapids which are involved in a drop from 11,500 to 500 feet. . . . All that was wanting was the sanction of the Government of India, and that, unfortunately, at the last moment was not forthcoming. . . . It was a pity, and a sad disappointment to many, for it will be *many a year* before we again have such an opportunity of solving what is one of the greatest remaining geographical problems." Younghusband's expedition to Lhasa took place in 1904, and his book appeared in the autumn of 1910. His "*many a year*" represents a much shorter period than anyone, even the Government of India itself, could have ventured to predict. Of Captain Bailey, the solver of the problem, Sir F. Younghusband thus writes: "Lieutenant Bailey, 32nd Pioneers, a keen and adventurous officer, who had distinguished himself with the Mounted Infantry, and in his leisure moments learnt Tibetan, was also attached to the (Captain Rawlings's) party to proceed to India." We can well understand the disappointment felt both by the Lhasa Expedition of 1904 and by the Abor Expedition of 1911, that circumstances denied to them the honour of solving the San-po-Dihong problem. The 8th Gurkhas accompanied both expeditions, and in the Abor country Lieutenant-Colonel J. A. Wilson's two trained dogs attracted much attention.

It will be noted that, after all, Sir Thomas Holdich's confidence in the accuracy of Kintgup's report is justified. Just six weeks ago an officer who has had a long and close connection with Himalayan travel wrote to me these words: "I am very interested in all (Himalayan) exploration, particularly of the San-po. How is it Kintgup was never questioned about his journey after we found his account did not agree with our experiences? He was still alive in Kalimpong." That seems to be a question for the Survey of India to answer. Mr. Bentinck's scepticism is so frankly and humorously expressed that, even though he be wrong, we readily pardon his error. Lord Curzon was pleased to compliment him on "his vein of subacid humour, which must have rendered him a most agreeable companion of journeys in those parts." He is no less agreeable to read. His testimony to the personality of Mr. Noël Williamson, and to the misunderstandings which led to his murder, move us to mutter, "Oh, the pity of it!" as we did when we heard of the murder of Lieutenant Boyd Alexander, and as I remember doing nearly forty years ago, when Lieutenant William Holcombe, an old Shrewsbury schoolfellow, met on the Assam border the fate that in 1911 befell Messrs. Williamson and Gregorson.

We may dismiss without remark Captain Bethell's theory, sceptically received as it was at the time by the President of the Royal Geographical Society and by Sir Thomas Holdich. What interests us more is the evidence of Sir Thomas Holdich, who quotes and supports Kintgup, and, furthermore, quotes Colonel Waddell, the author of a notable book on Tibet, in support of the native explorer. Waddell states that many Tibetans bore witness to the existence of the falls—falls, however, as Sir T. Holdich adds, "only 70 feet" high. Mr. Bentinck sums up the case in these words: "The river among the snows is said to be deep, narrow, and very rapid, and the banks precipitous; again, *nothing was known of any falls*. It may be remembered that, while on the Dihong the river in a course of not less than 85 miles, from Singging to Gyala, has to drop some 10,000 feet, the Teesta, not so very far west" (about 100 miles), "descends 16,000 feet in a course of 70 miles *without any falls at all*."

Of the rapidity of the Dihong current Mr. Bentinck writes: "The river narrows here"—i.e., at Riga, a little north of Kebang—"to about 120 yards, and the current was approximately $5\frac{1}{2}$ miles an hour, the river being then at its lowest." The geologist of Mr. Bentinck's party could not get exact soundings, but estimated the depth of the river to be not less than 80 feet. "Close under the bank there was no bottom at 60 feet."

Such is the evidence with which geographers were left a year ago, when Mr. Bentinck addressed the Royal Geographical Society; and if we needed any proof of the fitness of Lord Curzon for the post of President of that Society, it would be found in the remarks with which he closed the discussion. He says: "For myself, I have always imagined that the falls do not exist in the form of any substantial cataract, but are probably a series of rapids of no very great elevation, though capable of being misrepresented as, or even of being mistaken for, falls." He then asks Captain Bethell what he proposes to do with the San-po if it is not accounted for by the Dihong. Finally, allowing himself a digression after his own heart, he says, in compliment to Mr. Bentinck: "During the time I was in India I can recall no successful expedition which was not in the main successful because of the abilities of the Political Officer." His lordship, indeed, boldly throws down the gauntlet. The experiences of the Government of India from 1838 to 1842 were such, that General Sir George Pollock was sent up, *with full military and political powers*, to relieve Jalalabad and revenge our reverses at and near Kabul. Since then a Political Officer has, as a rule, been attached to the staff of the senior military officer commanding an expedition, and his position in no sense entitles him to take the credit away from his superior. In fact, the self-assertiveness of the Political Officer has on numerous occasions been a serious embarrassment to the military officer in command of an expedition. On the other hand, the local knowledge of the Political Officer is of great service to his military superior. As a counterpoise to Lord Curzon's opinion, it is well to quote what Sir Mortimer Durand, himself an ex-Indian civilian, says in his *Life of Sir Alfred Lyall* (p. 226) on Politicals in time of war: "It has usually been thought desirable in our Eastern wars to have a staff of Political Officers with our armies. They carry on the dealings between the General in command and the natives of the country, collect intelligence and sometimes supplies, and keep the Government in touch with all that is going on. *They have often been given a position of too much independence*, and their proceedings have been much resented by military commanders; but in countries where military operations are not carried on by regular armies on both sides it has been found impracticable to dispense with them, and many commanders have known how to make good use of their services." This states the case from a different and, in my opinion, more correct point of view. I treated this subject at much greater length in the *Asiatic Quarterly Review* for July, 1900.

Captains Bailey and Morshead have, it would appear, since their arrival at Calcutta on November 17, kept their own counsel. Captain Bailey's mother received on the morning of Monday, November 17, a cablegram from her son announcing his safe arrival at Calcutta. It was not till the 19th that Reuter passed this intelligence on to the British Isles, and on the 20th the same agency falls back on "Captain Bailey's followers" for the information that "they saw no gigantic falls on the Brahmaputra, but that at the spot where the native explorer Kinthap had located the falls the river did drop about 50 feet in

30 yards. The prognostications of geographical experts hereby receive ample confirmation. The very nature of the country and peoples amid which the explorers moved precluded the possibility of communication between them and the civilized world. I gather that Mrs. Bailey heard nothing from her son between June 5 and November 17—an anxious time! Still, on November 2 a friend well qualified to judge wrote to me: “Young Bailey will turn up all right, you will see.” And so it has proved, and we rejoice at his success and safe return.

A. C. YATE.

P.S.—For a most remarkable specimen of an Abor suspension bridge, *vide Journal of the Royal Geographical Society* for August, 1912, pp. 213-215. The first glimpse suggests a spider's web. Scientific and engineering facilities considered and compared, the Forth Bridge would appear to me called upon to yield the palm to that of the Dihong. Further, I appeal to geographers to differentiate between Dihong and Dibong. In Stieler's Atlas, again, they are printed Dihang and Dibang. I feel tempted to murmur, “D—both.”—A. C. Y.

INDIAN SURVEYS: THE LINK WITH RUSSIA.

A connection with Russian surveys has always been the aspiration of Indian surveyors. Both countries; Russia and India, possess a magnificent system of geodetic triangulation. In Russia this system is based on the observatory at Pulkova, in India on the observatory at Madras. Pulkova as a part of the general European system has been linked to Madras by determinations of differential longitude through the telegraph, but the two survey systems have never been brought into the same general geodetic scheme until quite recently. During the progress of the Pamir Boundary Commission, which determined the limits of Russian territory on the extreme north-east of Afghanistan in 1895, triangulation was carried by irregular methods across the Hindu Kush from a Punjab frontier series to Lake Victoria in the Pamirs; and a junction was there effected with the Russian trans-Caspian geographical surveys in order to fix an initial point for the take-off of the boundary work which should be common to both. The agreement as to the absolute position of the pillar at the eastern end of Lake Victoria was very satisfactory, and was quite sufficient to furnish a basis for a scientific determination of the whole line of boundary pillars. Such a result could, however, only be accepted as provisional, and in no way could it answer the purposes of a strictly scientific geodetic connection. During the last five years triangulation has been run by Indian surveyors from Rawal Pindi to Chilas, and thence over the ranges west of Nanga Parbat and the Ladakh range to the Kailas range near Gilgit. From the neighbourhood of Gilgit it has been carried northward by the Hunza-Nagar line of approach over the Hindu Kush into the Tagdumbash Pamir, where, near the Chinese post of Bayik, a junction is effected with two Russian stations, Kukhtek and Sarblok. It is impossible to estimate the value of this northern extension of Indian triangulation as a unit in the general geodetic system of world measurement until we know exactly the value of Russian trans-Caspian triangulation; nor must it be overlooked that much of the Indian series has necessarily been confined within the limits of comparatively narrow mountain valleys hedged in with gigantic ranges, so that the length of the rays, or sides, involved in the figures of the series must be shorter than is usually admissible in first-class triangulation. On the other hand, the scientific value of a series such as this, carried through a mountain

region with stations of observation some of which probably reach 19,000 feet in altitude, must be of supreme value in clearing up many doubtful problems in refraction and other matters incidental to a highly rarefied atmosphere. It is a notable performance, and it will stand as a permanent record of the enterprise of Indian surveyors. Incidentally it shows us what may be accomplished by the use of comparatively small and light and perfectly graduated instruments. The work was commenced by Mr. J. de Graaf Hunter, and carried on by Lieutenant H. G. Bell, R.E., who died on the Pamirs ere it was completed. Lieutenant K. Mason, R.E., was in command of the detachment which brought it to a conclusion last year. The extreme barrenness and the inhospitable ruggedness of the country, the difficulty of finding accessible hills up which the instruments could be taken and from which good figures could be obtained, and the severe task of finding supplies, made the work a good deal more than interesting; it involved strenuous effort equalling that of any ordinary Antarctic exploration. The interests of zoology, botany, geology, and meteorology, were all well cared for by Captain R. W. G. Hingston, I.M.S., who accompanied the party.

T. H. H.

German Railway Construction in North China.—In the *Times* of December 24, 1913, appear the following details of an Agreement arrived at between the German Minister in Peking and the Chinese Minister for Foreign Affairs for the construction of two new German railways in China:

“The Agreement concerns two lines. The first is a railway from Kowmi on the existing Shantung Railway via Ichowfu to a point where the Tientsin-Pukow Railway cuts the Imperial Canal at Hanchwang or at some other terminus on the Tientsin-Pukow Railway and the canal which may be found in the course of the negotiation of the details. Secondly, the Tientsin-Pukow and the Peking-Hankow Railways are to be joined together by a line running approximately from Tsinanfu to Shuntefu, the details in this case also being left for further negotiation. Both railways are to be built as Chinese State railways with German capital, German materials, and a German head-engineer, who will remain in the Chinese service for as long a period as the loan agreement runs. The details regarding the routes and regarding finance are to be settled by German and Chinese special Commissioners, if possible in the course of the next three months, so that the work could be begun next year. If both railways cannot be built simultaneously, the Kowmi-Ichowfu line would be begun first. The German Shantung Railway and the two new Chinese State Railways will co-ordinate their tariffs by ‘friendly’ agreement, so that ‘co-operation of all the railways in the opening up of the provinces that come in question will be assured.’ The capital requirements for both railways are estimated at from £3,500,000 to £4,000,000.”

Railway in Manchuria.—An agreement for the construction of a railway from Taonan to Chinchow in Southern Manchuria has been signed by the Japanese Minister in Peking.

Julfa-Tabriz Railway.—The Julfa-Tabriz line was started in November last from both termini of the line simultaneously. The engineering difficulties are few, and there is, apparently, no reason why the line should not be completed by the spring of 1915.

The Orient Railway.—At a meeting in Vienna on December 15, Count Vitali, President of the Régie Générale des Chemins de Fer, and Dr. von Adler,

the Austro-Hungarian representative on the Financial Commission, discussed, with the representatives of the Austrian and Hungarian banks which hold the majority of the Orient Railway Company shares, the affairs of the company. Four points were raised :

1. The foundation of Servian and Greek companies for the exploitation of the lines which already exist or will eventually be constructed in the new Greek and Servian territories.

2. The capital and management of these companies to be in French, Austro-Hungarian, Servian (or Greek) hands in a proportion which has yet to be fixed.

3. The foundation of a French Railway Trust Company in which the Austro-Hungarian and French shares of the capital of the "national" companies would be deposited.

4. Complete equality between the French and Austro-Hungarian elements in the share capital and management of the Trust Company.

For the time being the Austro-Hungarian Government is believed to insist on the application of the provisions of the *Convention à quatre* to all railways in the new Servian territory.

Asia Minor Railways.—It is reported from St. Petersburg that the agreement arrived at in 1901 between Russia and Turkey with regard to railway construction in Asia Minor has been revised. By this revision Russia retains control over all railways constructed in Armenia in the zone adjacent to the Caucasus. Such railways may be constructed by others than Russians, but only with the consent of Russia.

Baghdad-Teheran Route.—News comes that the great caravan route of the Baghdad-Teheran road between Khanikin on the Turkish frontier and Hamadan is in a troublous and disturbed condition. The unruly tribes have stopped their old methods of plundering the caravans, and have since the autumn taken to levying tribute for safe-conduct. These extortions, though quite variable and capricious, represent something like a 10 per cent. toll on the value of the goods, and the winter trade has in consequence been stopped. The Khanikin-Hamadan road is in the Russian sphere, but it is not the route by which the Russian trade goes. That route is well guarded, and Russian trade is increasing while that of Great Britain is decreasing. Lancashire's interest in the Persian trade and the Baghdad-Teheran route is enormous, the Manchester trade alone amounting in a normal year to some £2,000,000, and the demand of the Manchester merchants is that the British trade route through Kermanshah to Hamadan should be made safe and be protected by the Swedish Gendarmerie rather than by Farman Pasha's police.

Journey across Arabia.—The exploration of the Ruba el Khali Desert, a region of over 600,000 square miles, is the object of an expedition by the Countess Molitor. Although no definite plan can be made before departure, the general plan of the Countess is to proceed by the Medina Railway to Daira, thence to strike east to Teima, a fortnight's journey across the mountains. Thence the traveller will make for Tamreh, another three weeks' mountain journey. No places are marked on the map of the desert beyond Tamreh, and there are 1,200 miles of unexplored desert to be crossed before Muscat, Countess Molitor's objective will be reached.

Turco-Persian Frontier.—The greater part of this frontier was defined under the protocol signed in Constantinople on November 17 by the Grand Vizier, and the British, Russian, and Persian Ambassadors. The Commission

met in Mohammerah on December 10, the British representative being Mr. A. C. Wratislaw, and it is expected that the work of demarcation will take about eighteen months. In cases where the Turkish and Persian Commissioners cannot agree, the points in dispute will be decided by the British and Russian Commissioners, to whom such power has been assigned.

Russia and Mongolia.—An agreement recently concluded between Russia and China recognizes the autonomy of Outer Mongolia subject to the suzerainty of China.

New Land to the North of Siberia.—A large body of land was discovered in September last by the Russian Expedition which annually surveys the northernmost coast of Siberia with the view of rendering commercially practicable the northern sea-route to the Far East. This land, discovered by Captain Wilitsky, extends for over 200 miles about latitude 78 north, longitude 104, coming to an end in latitude 81 and longitude 96 east.

Education in China.—University Extension lines have been followed in China in organizing an educational project under the auspices of the Y.M.C.A. of China. The National Committee of the Association arrange lectures in science, art, sociology, etc., for those who have not had the benefit of University education. The scheme has achieved great popularity, and has done much to enlarge the intellectual outlook of the people.

Anglo-Chinese Friendship Bureau.—This is the name taken by an association formed to promote friendly intercourse between this country and China, particularly through the aid of Chinese students and others during their residence in England. The Chinese students now number several hundreds, and such an association will undoubtedly prove very valuable both to them and to the English people brought into contact with them thereby. The Bureau will also provide information and introduction to Englishmen going out to take up professional or business positions in China. It has opened offices at 17, Bouverie Street, E.C.

The Japanese Diet.—The Rikkendoshikai, the party of the late Prince Katsura, have elected to the leadership of the party Baron Kato, the late Ambassador in London.

Exploration in Chinese Turkestan.—The year 1913 witnessed a renewed activity in the archæological exploration of Chinese Turkestan. Germany was first in the field, Dr. von Le Coq having left Berlin at the end of March. He is expected back in May next. His operations have been chiefly in the neighbourhood of Kuchar, a region so productive previously, whence he will bring back a very large quantity of archæological, if not of literary, *trouvailles*.

From Paris, M. Gauthiot made a journey in the summer to the Pamirs, for the purpose of studying the Yaghnobe dialect. He has now returned. His Soghdian Grammar is now announced.

At the beginning of August, Sir M. A. Stein commenced his third expedition on behalf of the Government of India. He reached the Pamirs by an unexplored route from the Indus Valley via Chilas and the Darkot Pass, and arrived safely at Kashgar. His caravan was organized in due course, and he is now in the desert (see the *Geographical Journal*, December, 1913, pp. 540-599).

Exploration in Western Turkestan.—On May 1 of last year (1913) a party of eight left Munich, under the auspices of the Deutsch-Oesterreichischer Alpenverein, to explore the mountain regions of Eastern Bokhara.

The expedition, which was led by W. R. Rickmers, and included the geologist

Dr. von Klebelsberg, the topographer Dr. Deimler, and the meteorologist Professor von Ficker of Graz, started from Samarkand, and made its way eastwards by Sharshauz, Karatagh, and Garm, to the Range of Peter the Great. Leaving the Surkhob River, they proceeded southwards to the great plateau of Tupchek, whence various minor expeditions were organized for the ascent and study of the mountains and glaciers of this region.

An interesting feature of the journey was the exploration of the Garmo Glacier, the source of the Khingob River, until now unpenetrated by any European. The topographical work done here and elsewhere by the expedition will help to fill up many blank spaces in the map, while the observations on the geology and glaciation of the regions visited are of the highest value.

The Khingob Glacier was the most easterly, the Panj River the most southerly, point touched by the expedition, a part of which made its way back by Kuliab, Kabadian, Baisun, and Karshi, to Bokhara, while the other returned by a more direct route to Samarkand. The journey occupied about six months. In addition to scientific observations, about thirty different peaks were climbed by various members of the party.—C. M. R.

The Island of Rhodes.—We must seek probably in the general ignorance of the past history of Rhodes the solution of the fact that even the most classical of our British journals fail to grasp the idea that the history of the past may possibly, under fostering influences, have some bearing upon the future destiny of this island. Personally, ever since Italy occupied it, I have been allowing my mind to ruminate, academically, upon the possibility of restoring it to the Knights of St. John of Jerusalem. At a time when an ungrateful Europe, headed by Philippe IV. of France (Le Bel—Heaven save the mark!) and his creature, Clement V., were diabolically suppressing the Templars, and doing nothing themselves either to check the Turk or protect the Holy Land, the Hospitallers (*alias* Knights of St. John) were quietly occupying and fortifying Rhodes. The Byzantine Emperor of the moment, *Græculus csuriens*, could not protect Rhodes himself, and refused the Hospitallers' offer to hold it for him, acknowledging his suzerainty. The refusal decided the Grand Master to hold it without permission; and so well did they hold it that it was not until sixty-nine years after the Grand Signor had taken Constantinople that the Turks succeeded in driving them out. To tell the story of the sieges which they underwent, and of the incessant naval warfare which they waged against Turk and corsair, is beyond the scope of this short note. Their defence of Rhodes was magnificent; the history of the sieges must be read. For a time they held Smyrna, but Taimur (Tamerlane) the Lame drove them from it, and also, I think, took their fortified slave-refuge at Budrum, built of the masonry of the ancient Halicarnassus. Budrum for a century was the haven of refuge of the escaped Christian slave. If anyone would read of Rhodes, of the Knights, and of Budrum, I must refer him to the fine library at St. John's Gate, Clerkenwell, the principal remnant of the old Grand Priory of England. If any would know what slavery in the hands of the Turk, or Moor, or Barbary corsair meant, let me refer him to Sir Lambert Playfair's "The Scourge of Christendom." The successful defence of Rhodes by the Knights in 1480 won for them the devotion of all Christendom. Their evacuation of it on January 1, 1523, *with all the honours of war*, after a six months' siege, drew from the lips of Charles V. the words, "Never was a place more nobly lost." Then he gave them Malta. This suffices to justify my contention that, theoretically, no one has a better right to Rhodes

than the Knights of St. John. Since 1523 many are the vicissitudes through which they have passed, viz. : The secession of the bailiwick of Brandenburg at the time of Luther's reformation ; the suppression of the Order in England and Ireland by Henry VIII. in 1539, and in Scotland in 1563 ; and finally the revolution in France (1792) and Napoleon's seizure of Malta (1798). The Order has survived those vicissitudes, and holds a high position throughout Christendom, firstly by the distinction of many of those who are numbered among its members, and secondly by the eminence to which it has attained as a promoter of "first aid" and ambulance work. There exists first and foremost the Catholic Order, with its headquarters and Grand Master at Rome, and its grand priories in Austria, Italy, and Bohemia, and its "associations" in France, Spain, England, and Germany ; secondly, the Johanniter Order at Berlin ; and last, but not least in distinction and power, the Grand Priory of England. Independent as these three actually are of each other at this moment, there seems no reason why a closer union should not be formed. After two centuries of estrangement, the Brandenburg bailiwick returned, some time in the first half of the eighteenth century, into the fold of the Order. The Grand Priory of England has its Ophthalmic Hospital at Jerusalem on a site granted by the Sultan. The Johanniter Order holds the Muristan of Jerusalem, the old site of the Order's *chef-lieu*, presented, I believe, by the Sultan to the Crown Prince Frederick forty-five years ago. The French Republic has just shown that, though its earliest aspirations after "*liberté, égalité, fraternité*" took the form of unfettered madness, the reverence for the great traditions of the past has returned. France, with the consent of Italy and Turkey, has secured possession of the finest of the three old *auberges* (inns or hostels) which belonged to the French Knights of Provence, Auvergne, and France in the fifteenth century. Everyone knows that they stand to-day much as they were left, with the arms of their countries, Grand Masters, Grand Crosses, and Knights carved upon them.

Amid the obvious uncertainty which, owing to the susceptibilities of the Great Powers and the ambitions of Italy, Turkey, and Greece, encircles the destiny of the Ægean Islands, one possible solution of a difficult situation which might satisfy all suggests itself. It is understood that the Ægean Islands, when allotted, are not to be fortified or used as naval bases. Rhodes, administered by the Knights of St. John of Jerusalem—and in making this suggestion I presume the united action of the *chef-lieux* of Rome, London and Berlin—under the guarantee of the Great Powers, would surely be, by the very cosmopolitanism of its administrators, exempt from such temptations as might be calculated to once more sow and foster the seeds of discord. The traditions of Rhodes claim for it emancipation from Turkish rule. If Christendom wills that no one Power holds it, then let the Knights hold it in the name of all the Powers. It has had a great commercial past. It will have a greater commercial future ; for, whatever others may do, the Grand Priory of England will, we trust, extend to them the privileges of the "open door."—A. C. YATE.

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NOTE

THE Council of the Central Asian Society have had under consideration the project of enlarging their publications by the addition of short articles and notes on current events in the East. It is hoped to present four parts in each year. The current issue forms the second number.

PERSIAN FAMILY LIFE *

By Miss SYKES †

THE Chairman (Sir MORTIMER DURAND) said there was no necessity to introduce an authority on Persia so well known as Miss Sykes.

A few months ago I was asked to read a paper on the subject of "Persian Social Life," and began it by saying that if the expression "social life" meant the meeting together of men and women for mutual entertainment, there was emphatically no such life in the Land of the Lion and the Sun.

People often inquire whether the Persian woman is emancipating herself; and certainly, according to all accounts, the rise of the Nationalist Movement was the occasion of a wonderful awakening on the part of the women of Tehran. In his book, "The Strangling of Persia," Mr. Morgan Shuster affirms that without the moral support of the "weaker sex" the movement would, in all probability, soon have vanished into a mere protest. He speaks in the strongest terms of the courage and patriotism of the veiled inmates of the "auderoon," saying that these women became "teachers, newspaper writers, founders of women's clubs, and speakers on political subjects." On one occasion they actually prevented the Medjlis from yielding to Russia's demands by marching in procession, three hundred strong, to the House of Assembly, many carrying revolvers, with which they threatened to kill their husbands, sons, and themselves if the Deputies failed to stand firm. The newspapers related that they sold their jewels freely to help the Cause, and again and again gave the men striking examples of devotion and self-sacrifice.

I myself was at Meshed for some months during this time, but, as far as I could learn, the anxiety of the women of Tehran for a Constitution and a social freedom borrowed from the West had not spread through those other parts of Persia which had not had intercourse with Europeans as has been the case at the capital for many years.

It still seems to me that the great mass of Persian women will wait upon their sisters in Turkey for their emancipation. The latter, from their position, are in touch with the West; they have made great

* Delivered January 14, 1914.

strides of late years, and when they succeed in shaking themselves free of the shackles imposed upon them by religion and by custom, the women of Iran will follow their example, and gain a measure of liberty.

It may be interesting to compare the lives of a Persian man and his wife, starting from their birth, and glancing at their probable experiences up to their death and future existence; and I think that it will be conceded that the man has the best of it both in this life and in the next.

When a child is about to be born, if the parents are well-to-do, two cradles are prepared and two suits of baby clothes, the one of silk and satin, and the other fashioned of common cotton material. All goes well if the new arrival be a boy. He is bedded in the silken cot; his nurse hastens with the joyful tidings to the father, confident that she will receive a gift; and a big feast will be held in the baby's honour, at which musicians and dancers will entertain the guests and many beggars will be fed.

But supposing that a girl makes her appearance, things are very different. "He that has no son, has no light in his eyes," runs the saying, and the poor mother feels that she may be divorced for failing to present her husband with an heir to carry on his name. The cotton cradle and common clothes are used for *this* baby, and the nurse approaches the father nervously, knowing that, instead of a gift, it may be her lot to receive the "bastinado." Of course there are no feasts and no congratulations in the case of one of whom it is said, "Woman is a calamity, but no house can be without this evil," and usually the little girl will grow up almost unnoticed, her inferior position being impressed upon her from the first.

When the baby boy is carried out for an airing, elaborate precautions are taken to shield him from the evil eye. The smart clothes, in which he is swaddled so tightly that he can only move head and hands as he lies on a cushion, are exchanged for those worn by poor children. This is done that he may attract no notice. If passers-by saw him arrayed like a young prince, they might express their admiration, and forget to couple "Mashallah" (God is great!) with their remarks, in which case the luckless infant would assuredly be visited by sickness. He is also hung with amulets, chief among which is a turquoise stuck into a sheep's eye, brought from Mecca at the time of the annual sacrifice. The turquoise (so named because it reached Europe by way of Turkey) is, owing to its colour, a wonderful safeguard against the "evil eye," its Persian name "firuza" meaning good luck or victory, and the mines, which it is believed were worked in the time of the Achæmenian dynasty, are near Nishapur, where Omar Khayyam lived and sung. Those who cannot afford to wear turquoises have to be content with blue beads, with which they guard their animals and themselves against misfortune.

When little Hussein, as I will call him, leaves babyhood behind, his education begins, a "mulla," or priest, instructing him in reading, writing, learning his prayers, and reciting the Koran. As the sacred book is written in Arabic (a Persian translation having been produced comparatively recently), the boy will shout the "suras" in a kind of sing-song, without understanding what he is saying.

Writing is one of the fine arts in Persia, and Hussein will rest a piece of very shiny paper on his right knee, and begin on the *right*-hand side of the page with his reed pen, carefully drawing the letters and licking off the Indian ink with his tongue when he makes mistakes. He is now put in the charge of a couple of men-servants, and spends most of his days in the "biron," or men's apartments, with his father, copying the manners of the latter to the best of his ability. His dress is that of a man in miniature, with its full-skirted frock coat, European trousers, and high astrachan hat, and he is taught that to run and romp is undignified.

At daybreak the muezzin rouses him by calling men to prayer from the minaret of the mosque, and Hussein, rising from his padded quilts, washes his face, hands, and feet, and then prostrates himself in adoration on his prayer-carpet. He turns in the direction of Mecca as he recites the "fatiha," or profession of faith, his forehead resting on a fragment of earth brought from the holy city, and the rosary he holds reminding us that the Crusaders are said to have introduced this aid to devotion into the Churches of Europe. His breakfast consists of bread, sweetmeats, and sugary tea, after which he is ready for the day's work. When his manners are formed, he will accompany his father on a round of visits, dealing out compliments in proportion to the rank of the recipients, such as "May your nose be fat," "The place of the Gaiety of the Empire has been vacant far too long," and so on; also he will learn the etiquette connected with the passing of the "kalian," or water-pipe, and the proper position to take if asked to seat himself upon the carpet. As chairs are a foreign innovation in Persia, all kneel and sit back on their heels, to the great detriment of the fit of their trousers, and they enter a room in stockinged feet, leaving their shoes outside the door.

At noon Hussein will partake of an ample meal served on a leather cloth spread on the carpet, cakes of the thin Persian bread being used in lieu of plates. As there are no knives and forks, the "pillau" (a mound of rice and chopped-up meat and vegetables cooked with clarified butter), is eaten with the fingers, and the boy will be shown how to take food with his right hand from the common dish, mould it into a kind of sausage, and eat it without dropping a single grain of rice; he must also be able to take a ladleful of the fruit syrup from the big sherbet-bowl, and toss the contents into his mouth without touching the spoon with his lips. At the close of the meal he will hold out his greasy

right hand (it would be very bad manners to use his left), to the servant, who will pour rose-water over it and wipe it with a towel, and then he will throw himself upon the divan for a siesta.

Lessons in riding and shooting will complete Hussein's education. He will probably ride as if born in the saddle, but will have no idea of saving his horse, loving to race at full tilt, spurring his mount with his shovel-shaped stirrups, and when in mid career pulling the unlucky animal sharply back on its haunches with the cruel bit. He will greatly enjoy hunting the gazelle, or shooting partridge in the hills, and will go hawking. No game will be too insignificant for him, and he will keep in practice by letting off his gun at any cockyolly bird that he may come across.

In his hours of ease Hussein will sit with his friends sipping endless glasses of tea, smoking Shiraz tobacco, and capping quotations from the poets with them if he has a taste for literature. If he is a devout follower of the Prophet, he will refrain from alcohol and games of chance, though the *jeunesse dorée* of his city will look upon him in consequence as being very strait-laced. As for his "career," he will probably follow the calling of his father, or try and get some small official post that entails little work.

In common with all his family, Hussein will have a firm belief in such unpleasant creatures as ghouls, jinns, and agrits. He will never sleep alone, as demons are popularly supposed to make away with youths during the hours of darkness; and he will be warned that it would be sheer madness to whistle at night, as a demon might construe this into an invitation to strangle him. Ghouls haunt graveyards, ruins, and lonely places, and such apparently simple acts as flinging away hot water or throwing a stone may bring down the wrath of a jinn upon the heedless boy, as the water can scald and the stone injure the malignant spirit. Hussein will learn a great deal about lucky and unlucky days, the taking of lots, and the meaning of dreams. If he is starting on a journey and one of the party happens to sneeze once as they are setting forth, it is a sign that disaster will befall if the expedition is persisted in; and it is only common prudence to insure safety by giving money to the beggars that haunt a rich man's door. He will also be told the importance of looking at a "lucky" face as he opens his eyes in the morning, the good and bad fortune of the day depending on this, and Persians never, if possible, engaging a servant who has an "unlucky" visage.

Meanwhile, how fares little Fatima, as I will call the other child? It is improbable that she will know how to read and write, and her attainments will consist in making sweetmeats and sherbets, in embroidering, and little else beside, presuming that her parents are rich.

The Persian house is divided into two sets of rooms opening upon courtyards, the rooms nearest the street being the "biron," or men's

part, and the inner courtyard, the "auderoon," being devoted to the women. Here Fatima spends the greater part of her life, gossiping with the female servants, her chief amusements being the bath or rare outings to some garden outside the city. As she may never show her face to any man save her relatives, there are naturally no amusements in which both sexes join.

To the Persian *man* Friday means the public bath and a service at the mosque ; but as Fatima can see and hear very little of the proceedings in the part screened off for women in the places of worship, she seldom goes. However, she looks upon a visit to the bath much in the light that an English girl would regard a party, and joyfully accompanies her mother and the servants. A black "chadar" covers her from head to foot, leaving only a small strip of white lace-work visible, through which she can see, her costume being completed by green or purple trousers and stockings combined. No one could possibly recognize her as she shuffles along in her heelless slippers ; but when her outer wraps are removed, we see her in a short, very full skirt, that does not reach to the knee, and a little gauze jacket. After a prolonged immersion in the hot tank, followed by cold ablutions, the servants will dye Fatima's hair with indigo and henna, tint her nails and finger-tips scarlet with the latter dye, outline her dark eyes with kohl, and rouge her cheeks, and she will talk to the children of her mother's friends.

Of course marriage is the great event of her life, but she will have practically no choice in the matter. Her parents will arrange the whole affair, often betrothing her to a cousin or near relative in order to keep the property together. If not, her mother will be assisted by a "go between," some old woman who makes it her business to describe the charms and dowries of eligible daughters to the mothers of eligible sons. There will not be much delay in the matter, for the saying runs : "To do things quickly is of Satan, as God works slowly. But haste is permissible in three things—viz., to get a husband for your daughter, to bury your dead, and to set food before a priest."

When a suitable bridegroom is found, his mother and sisters come to inspect the bride, and now Fatima has her one chance of refusing the match. If she hands tea and sweetmeats in a rude manner to her would-be relatives, it is a sign that she objects, and the negotiations are broken off abruptly.

This, however, seldom happens, and probably Fatima and her mother pay, in their turn, a visit to the house that will be her home in the future ; and as she sips her tea she will wonder whether Hussein is hiding behind some curtain in order to get a glimpse of her charms.

The next step is the public betrothal by the priest, and now the couple see one another for the first time, and Hussein has the opportunity of breaking off the match if he dislikes the rouged and powdered visage of his "fiancée." If, however, in the words of the Persian poet,

"Her face is like the full moon, and she waddles like a goose," Hussein will be charmed, and declare that she has "made roast meat" of his heart, and the wedding takes place with much feasting and music.

It does not occur to Hussein that Fatima is his equal, for he has been instructed in the wisdom of Saadi, who says that "to consult women brings ruin on a man," and he has often heard the proverb, "God is a man, therefore women must obey men."

He looks upon a wife as a chattel, a possession; and as his religion permits him to have four wives, Fatima is never certain that she may not be supplanted by a rival. If she displease her lord, he can be freed from her legally by saying "I divorce thee," three times, and if of a tyrannical disposition, he will be gratified to see her tremble in his presence. She will never feel really safe until she is the mother of a son, and in no case can there be real companionship between husband and wife in the Western sense, as they can never be seen together in public, and usually spend their days apart.

And even when the end comes, Hussein has apparently the best of it. If he has observed the times of daily prayer, has fasted during Ramazan, and given alms to the poor, he may die assured of Paradise, whatever his moral character may have been.

When he has breathed his last, in a room crowded with relatives and friends, his burial is hurried forward, as the corpse must be laid in the grave within twenty-four hours. Many will take turns in the meritorious act of carrying the bier to the cemetery, and the procession will go at a great pace in order to give the righteous man happiness as soon as possible. As soon as the earth is shovelled over the remains of Hussein, Munkir and Nakir, the black angels with blue eyes will appear to question him as to his orthodoxy, and he will raise himself by means of the sticks placed under his armpits in order to answer them. If they are satisfied as to his orthodoxy, he will triumphantly cross the bridge of Sirat, "finer than a hair and sharper than a sword," and enter the Abode of the Blest. To all eternity he will drink of the River of Milk, and as he lies in a mansion, surrounded by lovely gardens, a tree laden with his favourite dishes will thrust its branches through the windows, and at his desire will provide horses ready saddled and bridled; moreover he will be tended by houris of surpassing beauty, who sing ravishingly and make him forget the women he has known on earth.

But it is otherwise with Fatima. At one time it is said that the Prophet doubted whether women possessed souls at all, and we are told that he only conceded the point owing to the persuasions of Ayesha. He was once permitted a glimpse into hell, and said that the majority of those writhing in torment were women; and the Paradise he somewhat grudgingly granted them is apparently quite separate from that inhabited by the men, and not very easy of attainment.

As old age draws on, Fatima may be haunted by the terrors of a hell that sounds like the fantasy of a nightmare, and will sell her jewels in order to raise enough money to go on a pilgrimage. As Mecca is far away, and the journey costly, her thoughts may turn to the shrine of the Imam Reza at Meshed, and she will heroically endure the discomforts of the journey. Unless rich, she will spend many hours of each day crouched in a "kajaveh," or panier, on one side of a mule and her nights will be passed in the dirty and noisy rest-houses, until she sees the golden dome of the "Glory of the Shia World" glittering miles away in the translucent air. She and her party will prostrate themselves in joyous adoration, and she has the blessed certainty of going straight to Paradise if she dies in the holy city. Perhaps she will pass away at home, and the hired mourners will cry: "Weep for the sister who is lost—lost!" striking their breasts until the relatives and friends take up the dreary refrain: "Weep for the sister wandering in space—weep, weep, weep!"

Certainly, from an English point of view, the Persian woman, as compared with the Persian man, has the worst of it from the cradle to the grave and in the Hereafter, and one wonders whether a race that keeps its women in such bondage can make real progress in civilization.

There is, and has been, a "stirring of the dry bones" among the women of Tehran, and any steps that they may take in the direction of freedom will be watched with keen and sympathetic interest by their fortunate sisters in Great Britain.

Sir THOMAS HOLDICH said that his expectation of hearing a good many things that were new and a good many things that were most interesting had been fully realized. Once before, some years ago, he had the privilege of hearing Miss Sykes, in a lecture to the Society of Arts, recount her thrilling experiences in Canada and in the interests of a scheme she had at heart for the employment of the surplus womanhood of England in Canada. At the close a rather distinguished gentleman said to him: "Now, that's exactly what we want. Why don't more young women go out to Canada and imitate Miss Sykes?" It struck him then that there were not many women who possessed the requisite qualifications for following in her footsteps. It required a peculiar combination of physical endurance and energy, together with a determination to look all difficulties straight in the face and make the best of them. He hesitated, as a very old friend of Miss Sykes, to say much of her; but perhaps she would forgive him telling one little story about her, because it illustrated his point. It was a wild and windy night on the borders of Baluchistan, when they were in camp engaged on a delimitation, in accordance with a boundary settlement. They had been out all night struggling with

tent-ropes and other camp necessities against the storm, and were only able to crawl in in the early morning, battered and dishevelled, to get a little sleep under such limited shelter as was available. Rising early, he found Miss Sykes wandering about near the place that had been occupied by her demolished tent, looking for combs, tooth-brushes, and other articles for the feminine toilet. The loss of such things would be most annoying to most ladies, especially when no other lady was in camp to replace by loan the scattered articles. But, so far from being annoyed and distressed, she might have been picking primroses and hyacinths in an English garden on a spring morning, to judge from her manner and appearance. This was typical. She was always cheerful; she was their photographer, their mess manager. She was more generally useful than anyone else in camp, and its only ornament.

He doubted whether any lady had ever succeeded in getting so far into intimacy with the domestic life of Persia as Miss Sykes. She could not have lifted the veil so much if she had not been on good social terms with the people of the country. That raised the question whether we had done anything at all yet to bridge over the almost impassable gulf which existed between Oriental and Western thought; whether we really had succeeded in getting on anything like social equality with the Oriental. What Miss Sykes had done in Persia had been done more or less by many notable women in India, who had given their lives to the work; but what had been the outcome of it all? Were we a bit nearer to understanding the native? or did they understand us better? For his part, he could not say that this was so. Whatever progress there was, was certainly the result of our educational system in India; but it appeared to him that one result had been to make a small but very noisy section of the Indian community discontented with our rule and inclined more or less to promote sedition. That was a very unsatisfactory position. He thought the only people who were ever likely to succeed in getting on level terms with the domestic life of the East were ladies who, like Miss Sykes, would take a brave heart to the task of cultivating good fellowship with the people and trying to make friends amongst them. Possibly they might see some good results from the educational reforms now in process of evolution in India, although just now things were unsatisfactory. What the future might hold for us in this connection we could not possibly tell, but perhaps, when they had succeeded in spreading right education among the masses, they might see some good effects. But even this was uncertain, for he observed in the paper only on the previous day that one authority had argued that the proper diet of mankind was man.

Lieutenant-Colonel P. M. SYKES gave an account of a dinner party, an invitation to which he received unexpectedly from a Persian lady

when staying at Shiraz many years ago. The dinner was given in honour of the British Resident, and there was serious discussion in the Persian home whether he (the speaker) should be asked, objections being urged that he was too young, and unmarried. But as they understood that he possessed a steady mind (his position as a Consul presupposed a serious bent), he was included in the invitation. The lady possessed two beautiful daughters, but they were not at the table. The hostess did the honours with the most perfect grace. He saw her looking frequently at an upper verandah, and concluding that the daughters were hidden behind the folds of the curtain, he caught a glimpse of them now and then. They went back to the Residency after having enjoyed a very novel experience. By way of returning the hospitality, he invited his hostess and her lady friends to witness a polo match. A tent was fixed up and everything was arranged for the convenience of the ladies secluded within. He was told that it would be etiquette to send a note to them. With the help of his Persian secretary he wrote two lines on the model of the "Shahnama." The match being between reds and whites, he wrote: "When the reds appeared on the polo ground, encouraged by the sighs of fairy-faced beauties, they won the match." The note, which was most artistically written, was presented by a good-looking boy on a silver tray, on which a beautiful Kerman shawl was placed, and was received with ripples of merry laughter.

The CHAIRMAN: You will all join with me in thanking Miss Sykes for her lecture and the pictures she has shown. I spent some six years in Persia, and during that time I had the happiness to make the acquaintance of Miss Sykes and her distinguished brother. They are the greatest living authorities on Persia. Major Sykes, who has spent a good many years in the country, has distinguished himself by the remarkable activity and skill with which he has applied himself to his work, and has learned more about the country than any living man. Miss Sykes, who was with us at the Legation in Tehran for some time, went with her brother across Kerman, and took the life of Persia very much in the same spirit as he did, learning more about the country than any other woman probably knows. Hence the delightful lecture to which we have listened to-night.

Miss Sykes has got the idea that the position of women in Persia is not altogether desirable. I don't know; that is a woman's point of view. One thing is certain: ladies in England ought to be satisfied with their position. I think that is a moral we are entitled to draw from what we have heard to-night.

SIX MONTHS IN THE TIAN SHAN MOUNTAINS*

By C. HOWARD BURY

SIR EVAN JAMES presided, and while expressing regret that the Chairman (Sir Mortimer Durand) was unable to be present, said it gave him great pleasure to introduce Mr. Bury, who had spent some adventurous months in a very secluded part of the Chinese border.

The accounts that I had read, the glowing descriptions of the flora and fauna of the Tian Shan Mountains, and the wonderful scenery there, had long given me a desire to travel in this part of China, but circumstances did not permit of it until last year. Originally I had intended to work my way north from India, but owing to various difficulties and objections, I determined instead to come south from the Siberian Railway. The main difficulties are to obtain leave from the Russian Government, first to travel in Turkestan, then to import fire-arms into the country. Thanks to the kindness of friends, and to His Excellency Count Benckendorff's assistance, the permits were obtained, and towards the end of May I reached Moscow. Finding the International Express full, I left by the ordinary daily train which, though it takes longer and meals have to be snatched hurriedly at the buffets of the railway stations, yet on the whole the travelling was more comfortable, and more typically Russian. On arrival at Omsk, the drive from the station to the town gave me a foretaste of what to expect in the long drive before me; the road was, as usual, unmetalled and full of enormous holes, with a choking dust inches deep everywhere. In the spring and autumn, owing to the mud, this road is often impassable. At the best hotel in Omsk there was some difficulty about getting a bath, as the key of the bathroom had been lost. However, importunity was at last successful. Omsk lies on the right bank of the Irtysh, which is nearly three-quarters of a mile wide here; and every day during the summer months steamers ply from Omsk to Semipalatinsk laden with agricultural implements and with emigrants on their way south. The steamers are large, burn wood, and though of rather a flimsy make, yet are very comfortable. After five days of the dullest of scenery we reached Semipalatinsk, where the long

* Read March 11, 1914.

drive of 1,100 versts to Kuldja began. The moment I stepped ashore, I was stopped by police, who inquired after my object in coming here. However, the permits satisfied them, and I was allowed to proceed. Here, after much bargaining, I bought a Tarantass for the journey in order to avoid unloading the luggage at every post-station, and also to avoid travelling in some of the antediluvian baskets that are kept on the road for travellers, and which must have been almost existent in the time of Marco Polo. The next nine days were spent travelling day and night, whenever horses were procurable. As there are fewer travellers on this road than on the southern road, we were able to get along pretty fast. No attempt has been made to build a road. The most that has been done is to build a bridge over an impassable river. The driver goes where he thinks the ground is likely to be smoothest. As all officials, officers, or Government clerks, together with their wives and families, take precedence of the ordinary traveller, and as scarcely any Russian out here is anything but an official, the time spent in enforced waits at the various post-stations is very considerable. The post road, after leaving Semipalatinsk, went almost due south, and after some 200 versts, passed through Sergiopol, a small garrison town, then on to Kopal, where there were more soldiers. The latter place is very prettily situated at the foot of the Alatau. With the exception of a few willows at Sergiopol, here were the first trees that we had met since leaving Semipalatinsk. The whole country up to now had been a treeless steppe, with patches of desert. From now on we were in one of the finest grazing parts of Asia. All along the road, and throughout the province of Semiretchinsk, the Government are forming settlements of Moujiks from Russia, giving them a grant of land and paying most of their expenses out here. They seem already to be doing well, though they have only settled here a short while. The settlers have driven over into China great numbers of the nomad Kirghiz and Kazaks, who formerly used to inhabit this country, and who are now having their lands appropriated by Russian Moujiks. The post road now kept between four and six thousand feet, until it dropped suddenly down into the Ili Valley. Here the soil was a fertile loess, and the vegetation was completely altered. Passing through Jarkent, a large military station near the Chinese frontier, we were delayed by a lengthy examination of passports. However, the next morning, crossing over the mile-wide stony bed of the Khorgos River, and passing through a big castellated gate, we suddenly found ourselves in Chinese territory. A sleepy Chinese official, surrounded by some slovenly looking soldiers, demanded my passport; and after copying it down with great labour into a book, we were allowed to proceed, and after travelling all day through deserted towns and villages, through what had once been a well irrigated country, we arrived at Kuldja. Kuldja is a town rapidly

increasing in size, and very prosperous. Wages are extremely high, and Chinese and Sarts come here from all parts, work for a month or so, and then live for the rest of the year on what they have earned; or else, working here for three or four years, they can then retire with a comfortable fortune and spend the rest of their days in ease. There is a Russian post office here, and a branch of the Russo-Chinese Bank, which was here issuing its own notes for local currency, as owing to the Chinese revolution the value of the Chinese money had dropped enormously, and the Chinese notes were of practically no value. There is a Russian Consulate, with a large Cossack guard of three hundred men. The Russian Consul, Monsieur Brodianski, and his wife were most charming and hospitable, and I spent many pleasant hours in their house. There is also a Belgian Mission under Father Raemdonck, who was always most kind, and who arranged to send out my letters, and also fresh vegetables whenever it was possible. I only stopped long enough at Kuldja to collect a caravan, which consisted of ten ponies, with Rahmah Khan and Ashim to look after them. These two men proved most excellent workers, and never gave me the slightest trouble; so that it was with real regret that we parted five months later. The most important man in the caravan was John Pereira, who was not only a very good cook, but also knew all the local languages, and had a great way of getting on with the local inhabitants.

After leaving Kuldja, we passed through numerous opium fields—such a gay scene with all the poppies in flower—until, after going about sixteen miles, we came to the ferry-boat across the Ili. All the luggage was packed on board; some of the horses went on the ferry-boat, others were tied in front to drag it across as they swam, and the remainder were being driven into the water to swim across, when one broke away, and an hour was wasted in getting him back again. By this time a violent gale from the west had sprung up, which here they call a *buran*; we all cowered at the bottom of the boat, as it was impossible to cross. Everything was blotted out by sand. This continued till after dark, when the wind dropped, and with great difficulty we managed to put up the smallest tent, as it began to rain, and continued to do so all night. The morning, however, broke fair, and we got across without difficulty. The caravan now headed nearly due south to the mountain range which divided the Ili Valley from the Tekes Valley. This range was crossed by the Su-assu (river-road) Pass, so called because the path crossed and recrossed the little mountain torrent hundreds of times; the scenery was very pretty; we kept in a narrow gorge, where wild geraniums, campanulas, yellow and white roses, wild apricot-trees, spiræas, and aquilegias abounded. There was also a very pretty garlic like a miniature agapanthus, and of a glorious blue colour. On the summit of the pass we passed some

Kirghiz, who had come over from Russian territory to settle in China. Then followed a long descent to the Tekes Valley, which is from thirty to forty miles in width. The next day we crossed the river by a cantilever bridge. This bridge had been built for twenty years, but this summer, in August, it was washed away for the first time. It is only in autumn that the river is fordable, and so the bridge earns a large revenue, as out of every hundred sheep that cross, one is taken as a toll.

Just as I was leaving Kuldja, some hunters had caught and brought in a baby bear only a few weeks old. This I persuaded them to sell to me, and the bear accompanied me in all wanderings, riding on the back of a pack pony between the loads.

After crossing the Tekes, I called on the mandarin in charge of the valley, who was very civil and obliging, and who promised every assistance. After crossing the Koksu by another cantilever bridge, camp was pitched in the Little Kustai Valley by the side of a rushing stream. The head man of the *aul* here, a Kirghiz, insisted on my drinking large bowls of koumiss—mildly fermented mare's milk, and not at all a bad drink on a hot day. He then came and watched camp being pitched. Desirous of showing his prowess at fishing, he called for his fishing-rod, a stout pole, over an inch in diameter at the top end, and on this was a piece of string, to which was fixed a large iron hook without a barb; on this was put a worm, and the whole gently lowered into a pool. In about a minute he felt a pull, and raising rod and all with a sharp jerk, the fish was deposited on the bank. In a very short time he had caught eight fish, which he presented to me. The fish were mostly about half a pound in weight, prettily coloured, and covered with curly marks of brown and gold; but they were bottom-feeders, had their mouth underneath, and were armed with two suckers. Wishing to take a photograph of the fisherman, I was just about to do so, when he stopped me, and producing two medals out of his pocket, given him by the Chinese Government, he pinned these on, and then submitted to be photographed. We had now entered an upland country between 6,000 and 8,000 feet in height, covered with the most luxuriant grass; nearly every flower that is grown in gardens in England seems to exist in its wild state here. On these plateaux the Kasaks and the Kirghiz have their summer camp, and at every *aul* that I passed the owner insisted on my coming in and drinking bowls of koumiss, milk, or cream. Sometimes, as a great treat, it was tea, prepared with salt and sour milk. The lady of the house would make the tea, then stew it for a bit over the fire, while a bowl was passed round, and everyone washed their hands. To clean the cups the hostess poured a little tea into each cup, swished it round, and drank it up afterwards; salt was then added, followed by tea and milk, and flat bread, rather like giant chupatties, was then handed

round, and the guests broke off pieces, softening them in their tea. If the hostess saw that my cup was not emptied after some while, she would insist on drinking it up herself, and pouring me out a new lot. The mixture was so nasty it almost used to make me ill every time I had to drink it. We now began to get higher up, and made our way through magnificent fir forests of the *Picea schrenkiana*, many of these trees being, I am sure, over 200 feet in height. I measured one fallen giant, by no means a very big one, and found his girth to be 20 feet and his height over 165 feet. The undergrowth was composed of willows and mountain ash, the latter at this time of year being covered with white flowers, and forming a delightful contrast to the sombre green of the fir-trees. We passed the valley of the Big Kurstai and numerous aïuls on the way, then, rising through the fir forests, we came into the most delightful meadows, covered with every species of wild Alpine flowers. Fields there were of red phloxes, Japanese anemones, snapdragons, the big double yellow ranunculus, {edelweiss, calculated to make a German green with envy, marsh marigolds, great yellow poppies, flaxes, sweet-scented aquilegias, and many other varieties. At the lower heights, white and yellow were the two commonest colours, but between 8,000 and 10,000 feet blues and purples took the place of white. On some of the Alpine meadows, over 10,000 feet in height, we came on masses of iris and primulas; at times for many miles we used to ride over pansies, blue, yellow, white, and every shade up to deep purple. The views here were now superb in this extraordinarily clear air of Central Asia, right across the Ili and Tekes Valleys to the great snowy range that lies to the south of Manass.

That evening we dropped into the Kurdai Valley, and next morning, in unsettled weather, started to cross the Kurdai Pass. The Russian maps marked this as 6,700 feet in height, and I was still wearing fairly thin clothes, not expecting to find the pass only just under 13,000. All the way up, with the exception of the last 1,000 feet, the flowers were magnificent; anemones and primulas covered the ground the moment the snow had disappeared. The day grew worse as we proceeded, and snow fell heavily, and it was only with considerable trouble that, after floundering in numerous drifts, we reached the summit of the pass. Our difficulties, however, instead of being over, were now to begin, for on starting to go down we were faced with a 25-foot snow cornice. We therefore scattered along on either side to try and find a way down, and eventually we found one across the snow, but the snow was soft and the horses stuck; they all had to be unloaded, dug out, and were only rescued with great trouble and long delay. At last, just as it was getting dusk, we got out of the deep snow and came into a blinding snowstorm, which made the going very slippery. After dark we reached a place where there were some bushes, and camped there.

My camera I discovered then had been left, in the excitement, on the top of the pass; so next morning Kulde Beg, whom we had engaged temporarily as a guide, was sent back to retrieve it. He found it buried under the snow, but none the worse for the exposure. The following afternoon we crossed over the Sarytur Pass and camped on the far side, at a height of just 11,000 feet, near the sheep ground.

The country to the east side of the Sarytur Pass was completely different to that on the west. We had left behind the deep valleys and rocky peaks, and were now on a great plateau, covered with rounded hills, clothed with grass, that extended right away to the Yulduz Plains. Riding over these hills on the lookout for the wild sheep, the *Ovis Karelini*, the horses kept constantly getting bogged, and my shikari and I would both be dismounted somewhat ungracefully. These bogs are caused by the water from the melting snow sinking into the ground and remaining there in places where there was insufficient drainage to take it away. It was often quite impossible to distinguish these treacherous places from the solid ground, so the horses were constantly getting bogged. The next day came one of those sudden changes of weather, and everything was covered with a fresh mantle of snow some 8 inches deep. Having exhausted all the firewood that we had brought with us from the last camp, as there is none here, a march was made to a lower camp. The new camp was pitched at the foot of a very curious hill, called by the local people *Karagai Tash*, which means stone fir-trees, so called from their resemblance to trees in the distance. The whole hill is composed of a conglomerate of rounded pebbles, and patches of this, probably from being of a harder composition, have escaped complete erosion, and this has resulted in a series of the most extraordinary rock shapes—thin walls only 5 or 6 feet thick, and 300 feet in height, pinnacles and towers of the most fantastic shape. At times, when among these pillars and battlements of stone, it seemed almost as if they were of human creation, so regular were they in appearance.

Not finding the sheep here, Tola Bai, the Kazak hunter, thought that we had better first try lower down the Koksú Valley, so we moved two marches lower down the valley, getting once more among the lofty snow and rock peaks. On the way, and, in fact, all over this country, there are curious spikes and clubs of thorns growing, covered with white flowers, which give a weird appearance to the landscape.

In the Kinsu Valley we failed to find any sheep, but there the sheep ground bordered on the ibex ground, and I was able to shoot two of the large Tian Shan ibex. The scenery and the views were glorious from here; the days were brilliantly clear, and the lofty snow-peaks of the main chain of the Tian Shan stood up with unrivalled beauty to the south of the Koksú. Camp was now moved some three marches up to the head of Koksú Valley, where the river takes its rise

in a glacier. Here in some of the smaller side valleys, among the moraines below the glaciers, were herds of wild sheep; there was at least one herd in every valley, and many an exciting stalk I had after them, some of which ended successfully. After several camps near the head-waters of the Koksu, I moved over on to the Yulduz Plain; but not finding much game there, and the climate being extremely cold and windy at those heights, with no fuel beyond what we carried with us, we moved down to the left bank of the Koksu and camped a little way up the Mustamas Valley. The scenery now was very grand, lofty rocky peaks hemmed in the two valleys, and the gorges up the eastern and western valleys were very imposing. During the first week in August a heavy fall of snow of 13 inches delayed matters considerably, and shooting was impossible, as avalanches were coming down all round. From this camp two bears were shot, several roedeer, and some ibex; but it was ibex that I was chiefly after, and day after day in search of them we rode up the eastern valley, fording and re-fording the icy waters of the river. Tola Bai refused every time to go up the west valley, saying that it was quite impossible to get up it, until I went there one day and, after searching for some hours, found a ledge round the cliffs which had been built up with old poles, and on which we were able to lead our ponies. I found out later that there was a pass up this valley which led to Kuchar, and which, owing to the raids made by horse-stealers into the plains, the Chinese authorities had closed. Nearly three weeks were spent in this camp, and then towards the end of August camp was gradually moved down the Koksu Valley.

Tola Bai and I rode over the intervening ridge between Mustamas and the first side-valley called Kair-Bulak, or the Whetstone Springs. The ponies and baggage had a long march round to get there. It was on this day that luck enabled me to shoot the finest ibex I ever saw. On the way up we passed quite close, not a hundred yards, from a herd of ibex, but as there was nothing very big among them they were left alone; but on crossing over the ridge, high up on the far side of the valley, with the telescope we made out a big herd in which there were several very large heads. Then the clouds came down and hid them from view; however, that evening we got the two largest heads out of the herd, one of them measuring 58 inches in length. Camp was now moved every few days a little lower until we were among the fir-woods. From the beginning of September the wapiti, who inhabit these forests, are supposed to start calling, and it is then possible to locate them. Until they start calling it is almost impossible to find them, and many weary weeks were spent among the thickest of undergrowth, chiefly willows, looking for these elusive beasts. The horses had, of course, to be left behind, and day after day was spent in searching these forests for a sign of a stag. The search, however, led me into some of the

most beautiful scenery in the Tian Shan, and, indeed, I might say in the world. Every few days a new valley was tried, for it was impossible to know where the stags might be; some valleys had forests clinging to the mountain sides, and above them towered precipices of immense height. Sometimes these valleys dwindled into the narrowest of gorges, with only a thin undergrowth at the bottom. Everywhere nearly were traces of the wapiti, but those that were seen were only small and immature stags. At times the chase would lead us into broad flowery meadows, with belts of trees dotted about here and there as though in a park. Always somewhere far away near to the sky were glaciers to complete the beauty of the picture. In one valley, called Akbulak (White Springs), where I had several camps (so called from the extraordinary whiteness of the water), the scenery was exceptionally fine. The vegetation was most luxuriant, and on the grassy meadows within a hundred yards of camp one evening, just as it was getting dusk, I came across two stags, but they were both small. Hearing that there was a big lake up the valley, I went up one day to visit it; it was caused partly by immense rock-falls, and partly by an old moraine which had filled up the valley to a depth of 700 feet. On the far side among the débris I came across a bear digging, and shot him. At this time of the year the bears remain high up above the tree-line, as a rule, and spend their time in digging out the marmots which abound everywhere throughout the mountains. At this time of year, just before their winter sleep, the marmots get very fat, and the bears promptly go to enormous trouble to dig them out. They have many enemies besides. The Kalmuck will lie for hours close to their holes, and shoot them as soon as they come up. An eagle I saw carry one off one day in its claws as it skimmed over the ridges in search of prey. Another time I watched for hours a wolf digging up a marmot, until he had completely buried himself, so that it is no wonder the poor marmot is always whistling in fright. Other animals, however, take but little heed of his cry of alarm, for I often frightened them when stalking sheep; the sheep would, however, as a rule, only look up and then go on feeding again.

Near the head of the Akbulak Valley we came across the most beautiful mountain lake; its colour was of the blue of the old Persian turquoise. The lake was from two and a half to three miles in length, and in the shape of a half-moon, with an extreme width of about a mile; it lies at a height of about 11,000 feet. All round were magnificent snow-peaks and huge cliffs, that came sheer down into the lake from immense heights, while here and there were hanging glaciers and shining cliffs of ice. It is impossible to walk round the lake, as the cliffs everywhere come sheer down into its blue waters. At times the lake is much fuller, as the high-water mark extended about 10 feet above its present level. I climbed some 1,700 feet up a great spur

that projected into the lake, and from there had a superb view. From here I could see the pass across the main chain of the Tian Shan, over which hunters, in the spring, come from Kuchar, in Chinese Turkestan, to hunt the wapiti in these valleys for their horns, which when in velvet, have for the Chinese a great value as medicine, and which fetch as much as £10 to £12 a head. At my feet lay this superb lake, and beyond were the countless peaks of the central range of the Tian Shan. From the far side were rolling up dense clouds in grand masses—clouds that I should not be surprised to find connected with the monsoon in India. The moist current, if it is so, must have passed over the Himalayas and then across the deserts of the Tarim basin before striking the Tian Shan, but throughout the summer all the bad storms seemed to come from the south, while local thunderstorms and light showers came up out of the west.

From this point of vantage there was a fine view of the Akbulak Pass, and even at this time of year, mid-September, there was no snow on the north side; the pass must be about 13,500 feet in height, and somewhat trying for animals, owing to the steep shale slopes. The reason why neither this pass nor the Alpes Ochak ones are used for traffic is that for the greater part of the year the Koksus is unfordable, and there are no bridges over it.

The next camps were in the Alpes Ochak Valley (Sixty Fireplaces) so called because, many years ago, a body of Chinese soldiers passed through, and in one place kindled sixty fires for cooking, and this has given the valley its name for ever afterwards. This valley, a tributary valley to the south of the Koksus, had in turn many tributary valleys, thickly wooded. In most of these I had bivouacs. It was now getting towards the end of September, and the nights were becoming chilly with constant falls of fresh snow; but here luck befriended us at last, and two good wapiti heads were secured. One bivouac, which I called Eagle's Nest Camp, in Kenbulak Valley, was perched on the top of a ridge, with grand views down into the valley on both sides; but though it was very pleasant to get down into the valleys, yet the 3,000 to 4,000 feet climb in the evening, after a long day, was most exhausting. Once the second wapiti, which was a very fine specimen, had been secured, we turned our footsteps back towards Kuldja. On October 1 we started to leave the Koksus Valley; this was a day of disaster, which I shall not soon forget. Soon after starting a blizzard came on, then John had a touch of mountain sickness; one of the ponies slipped in a very steep place on the frozen ground, covered as it was with a few inches of fresh snow, and disappeared out of sight. On getting to a smoother place, two men were left behind to pick up the remains, while the others went on towards the pass. Tola Bai, however, in the mist and snowstorm lost his way, and we wandered all over the place, and it was not till just before dark that the summit of the pass

was reached. The cold was considerable now, and one's beard and moustache were frozen together. The descent on the north side of the pass appeared at first quite impracticable as the snow was over 3 feet deep, and the descent was extremely precipitous, with great rocks sticking up here and there out of the snow. Tola Bai started down, but after going a few yards his pony stuck and broke a leg, and had to be killed. The others managed to glissade down some 300 feet; but all the loads nearly came off, and were scattered in the snow. Here the ground was a little flatter, and as it was now quite dark we had to stop. The horns helped to anchor the tents in the snow, but we all passed a most unpleasant night here in the snow, at a height of nearly 13,000 feet. The next day the weather cleared up, the various loads were collected, and that evening we got down to the fir-trees, and were able to light big fires to thaw out the frozen garments and dry them, as well as to cook some food.

The next day's march was all through fir-woods, rendered very slippery by the melting snow. Towards evening we came out into the grassy plateau just below the tree-line. The summer camping-grounds here were mostly deserted now, as the Kirghiz and Kazaks had moved lower down to their winter camping-grounds. There was, however, one aul left, where there was a very fine hunting golden eagle, that had been caught the year before, and which had been trained to catch roedeer and foxes. The latter especially abound in these parts. We now gradually descended into the Tekes Valley, passing many fields of millet, which had just been cut and which were full of pheasants. When people are not rich enough to own sufficient horses, the children and women especially are mounted on oxen, which are saddled just as though they were horses; their speed, however, is not great. A poor man cannot marry; but if he has a sister or two, with the dowries that he gets for these, he can then buy and marry a wife himself.

Finding that the fields near the broad bed of the River Tekes were morning and evening full of pheasants, I stopped to have a couple of days' pheasant-shooting. The river bed is filled with a prickly shrub, with grey leaves and orange berries; here at night the pheasant roosts, and in the winter, when the ground is covered with snow, they feed on these orange berries. Finding that the pheasants, whenever disturbed, used to fly down to these bushes, I used to walk along the bank of the river under cover, while a couple of men in the fields sufficed to put the birds up, and afforded many a sporting shot. It was quite useless to attempt to walk them up in the fields; the pheasants could be seen running along about 200 yards ahead in tens and twenties. They were of the ordinary Mongolian variety, with broad white rings round their necks. During the time that I was in the mountains I caught a couple of young Brahminy ducks, which I kept for some time, and which were becoming quite tame, when, on moving camp one day, a

horse fell and they were crushed under the loads. I also caught a couple of the young snowcocks, and tried to bring them up, but, unfortunately, without success.

On return to Kuldja, the place was found to be in an uproar, as there had been a kind of revolution. Two of the head mandarins, Fungtoming and Li, had their heads cut off and exposed outside their Yamen, and the heads of some twenty smaller mandarins had also been removed.

Only a week before this Yuan Shikai had been elected President of the Chinese Republic for a term of six years, and this was one of his first acts. Three times when he was only Provisional President had he summoned the offending mandarins to Peking, and three times had they refused. Yuan Shikai now proved that even in the most distant province of China it is not permitted three times to disobey orders from Peking. These mandarins during the revolution had appointed themselves to office. Fungtoming was only a small tailor by trade, but a very ambitious man. These two men then started to issue a paper currency without any reserve of silver or even copper to back it up. The result was that the value of this paper fell every week. Several million seers of it were issued during their rule, and at the beginning of the revolution the seer and the rouble were approximately the same value; but by the autumn of 1913 the value of the seer became only a quarter of a rouble. People were forced to accept this paper currency; most, when they could, changed it into Russian roubles, but many held on, hoping that the Government would eventually redeem this paper currency either at its proper value or a little below it. As matters are at present, many people have lost three quarters of their money, and among these are a good many Russian subjects. It is quite possible that if the Central Government at Peking do not take some action to guarantee this currency, the Russians will have a pretext for interfering, for as matters stand many of their traders are losing heavily at present.

It was curious to remark that during the quasi-revolution, when these two mandarins had their heads cut off, the value of the Chinese paper currency suddenly rose from 4 to $3\frac{1}{2}$ seers to the rouble, though at the time the people had no idea that it was done under orders from Peking. That Russia would like to have a pretext to enable her to regain this province is certain, as the country is extremely fertile and rich. Within twelve miles of Kuldja there are some five coal mines being worked, and the coal, too, is very near the surface. The soil is everywhere a loess, and only wants water to enable it to grow almost anything.

It was on November 1 that I finally said good-bye to Father Raemdonck, who rode out several miles beyond Kuldja to see us safely off. We had tried to start the day before, but the driver going too recklessly

in the city had got caught between two Chinese country carts, and had smashed the axle. The recollection of this drive of 1,140 versts to Tashkent, along the southern road through Semiretchinsk, is not a pleasant one, as we spent no less than twenty-three days on doing it. The weather was at times bad, the roads were worse, and the horses kept at the post stations quite insufficient for the traffic. It took two days to get to the Russian frontier, a distance which had been covered in one before. Then came a snowstorm, and though in the valley there was little snow, yet on the higher ground there was a considerable amount of wet snow which made the going very heavy indeed. The snow lasted as far as Ilisk, where the Ili River is crossed by a fine wooden bridge. As we approached Verny the roads became worse and worse; owing to there being more traffic here, they became more and more cut up, and the soil being of a more clayey nature made the going exceptionally difficult. In Verny itself the mud was beyond description. At the corners of the streets there were high stepping-stones to enable the pedestrian to cross the streets. Here, in the main street, our cart, though drawn by three horses, stuck in the mud, and had to be dug out. How on earth the Russians living in Verny—a large town and the capital of the province of Semiretchinsk—can continue to endure such an abomination is not easily to be understood. The place is full of engineers, but there does not seem one that is capable of making even a passable road. There are a few well-built and well-kept houses here, but most of them are of wood and one-storied. The town is prettily situated, with plenty of fine trees all round, and to the south lie a lofty range of snowy peaks. Verny is renowned for its apples, which are large and of a very good flavour. They are exported as far as Moscow and St. Petersburg, where they fetch very high prices.

All along the road we passed strings of camels, of the Bactrian variety, which do not seem to mind the awful mud. The next town was Pispek, where again the muddy roads were worse than ever. Whenever I grumbled I was told this was nothing to what they were in spring; if the mud was a foot deep now, it was 2 feet deep then, and it was often difficult for the post to cover twelve versts in a day.

After Pispek, for nearly ninety versts, we passed through a continuous series of new colonies that had been planted here, and houses lined the road on both sides almost the whole distance. The houses were well built, with thatched roofs, and the peasants, though they had not been here long, seemed prosperous. The winter in these parts is short. It is not very cold, though the snowfall is often considerable. In a few years' time a railway is to be built from near Kabul-sai, a station north of Tashkent through Chimskent and Aulieta to Pispek. Local gossip estimated the time of completion from two to five years; the latter estimate would be the most accurate I should think. From Pispek the line is to be produced to Verny, and then on to Kapal and Semipalatinsk

and eventually to Barnaul. The money for the railway comes from France, but very little has been done so far beyond surveying the line.

There are but few engineering difficulties, and it ought not to be a costly line to build. No doubt some day a branch line would be produced to Kuldja, and possibly even farther into China. After a few years the railway ought certainly to pay, as the country through which it will pass is an extremely rich one.

For the last 400 versts to the railway station the Government runs the post road, and only keeps sufficient horses for the post and for a few Government officers ; the other travellers have to hire at exorbitant rates. Some Russian engineers that I met constantly on the road, as we were going in the same direction, were most hospitable, and insisted on my taking my meals with them, as they had laid in proper supplies of food for the road.

At Aulieta we were delayed a day by heavy snowstorms, and the going was terribly heavy, as it invariably thawed during the day, but froze at night. At one place I was much amused watching some Cossacks, evidently very hard up for cash, who sold my driver a regimental shirt for half a rouble, and another one sold him a pair of gloves. Soldiers are very much the same all the world over. On the twenty-third day after leaving Kuldja we reached the railway station at Kabul-sai, and on the following morning arrived at Tashkent. The remainder of the journey was then plain sailing—first to Samarkand for a few days, then to Bokhara, and then on to Krasnovodsk, and across the Caspian Sea to Baku ; by train over the Caucasus to Batoum, and on by tramp steamer to Constantinople, and once more to Western civilization and its luxuries.

To me at any rate, and, I think, also to most people, whether we walk, or whether we ride, or whether we drive, the most abiding joy of travel will always lie in the retrospect. The memories of some days, of some scenes where the world appears altogether too beautiful for us, where we can only gaze in awe and rapture at some marvellous creation of the Almighty, such memories as these are truly a possession which we can treasure as our own, and which will remain always to us as a source of inexhaustible pleasure and delight when we look back upon the days of our travelling.

COLONEL PEMBERTON said he had the good fortune to go over most of the ground described by the lecturer some twenty-three years ago, and could vouch for the accuracy of the descriptions they had heard. In a great many respects he had recalled to him most vividly the features of the country, but in Central Asia changes were evidently taking place, for the lecturer mentioned not a few civilizing developments on the Russian side of the Russo-Chinese border. When he travelled in those parts in 1891, and again in 1892, the country was open prairie land

awaiting development, and was inhabited by nomad Kirghiz. It was extremely rich south of Kopal, being a loam soil with beautiful wild vegetation, such as the lecturer had described. That it would become a productive country when duly peopled could not be questioned. But in this connection there was an extremely interesting point. For many years writers on Central Asia, of various nationalities, including the Russians themselves, held that it was doubtful whether Russians would ever be able to colonize the country to the south of the Irtysh River—that is, whether Russian children could be reared there. But now it appeared that emigration was taking place into those regions, which meant that the trend of population was no longer exclusively westwards toward the Amur, but was also towards the south, indicating that the Russians were finding that they could live and breed healthy children in these hotter regions. The recognition of this fact would ultimately mean a filling up of the empty spaces in Russian-Turkestan, and a consequent development of the resources of the Russian Empire, and increased populations from which to recruit the army. But he personally doubted whether the Russians would be able to settle in Central Asia so far south as Tashkent, Samarcand, and Bokhara. The roads in the regions described by the lecturer still seemed to be as bad as in his day, but with the building of railways the backward condition of things in respect to communications would be greatly altered.

COLONEL A. C. YATE said that the lecture had recalled to his mind a journey by tarantass which he took with General Sir James Hills-Johnes in 1890 from Samarcand to Tashkent. They lay side by side in the tarantass with their heads pillowed on bags and rugs, through heat by day and cold by night, and dust which, with a following wind, threatened to suffocate them. One curious incident was that they were held up for a time. The Tashkent Exhibition was in progress, and a general invitation had been given for all comers to attend it, otherwise no English officers would have been permitted to travel by the Trans-Caspian Railway at that time. So they were not greatly surprised to be stopped. But they wired to General Annenkoff, who made the Trans-Caspian Railway, and who was then at Samarcand, and he telegraphed to the post-house authorities to let them proceed.

Mr. Bury's experience of tea-drinking among the Kirghiz reminded him of offers of refreshment he had had in Burma or the Shan States. There, too, the natives drank tea with salt, and, like the lecturer, he had left most of it in the cup. He wished to congratulate the lecturer on his illustrations and on an address to which they had listened with very great interest and instruction, and on the pluck and endurance with which he had carried out his plans of sport and travel. He had been watching for twenty years for the linking up of the Trans-Siberian and Trans-Caspian Railways, and the

lecturer had showed that that junction by rail and steamboat was gradually being carried out.

COLONEL P. M. SYKES said that he would like to supplement Mr. Bury's modest references to his big-game shooting by congratulating him on obtaining a record ibex with a measurement of 58 inches. He had had the pleasure of seeing Mr. Bury's large and beautiful collection of heads at Mr. Rowland Ward's, in Piccadilly, and he congratulated him heartily on these trophies. He had the pleasure of making Mr. Bury's acquaintance at Bokhara on his way back from his journey, and when he saw that he had made so great a bag, he promptly bagged him for the Central Asian Society.

Mr. Bury had mentioned the considerable distance of the Russian railways from some of places they should serve. There was an explanation for this which he had been given by Russians, but he could not vouch for its accuracy. He was told that when the engineers were surveying for a line they went to the mayor of a town and entered into a deal. If a substantial amount of money was given them, they made the alignment suit the town, otherwise they kept it a considerable distance from the place. This was the possible explanation of the railway station being situated some eight miles from Samarcand. He congratulated Mr. Bury on his lecture, and hoped that in time it would develop into a book.

The CHAIRMAN said they thanked Mr. Bury most warmly for his excellent lecture. Mr. Bury might say with Lord Byron, "description is my *forte*." He had seldom heard a lecture so clear, or with better descriptions of natural scenery, nor was it possible to imagine more beautiful photographs. He (the Chairman) went over similar ground some years ago in the recesses of Manchuria with Sir Frank Younghusband, and he had been reminded of that journey by the descriptions of the wonderful flowers to be found in the Central Asian mountains. What he had told them of Russian colonization showed the wonderful organization of Russia in transferring the peasantry thousands of miles, planting them in colonies, and making them prosperous. Sir Frank Younghusband and he found in a valley at Novaviesk, not very far from Vladivostok, but before the railway was there, several such colonies. At that time they were not prosperous, and Government had to feed them for several years before they were able to sufficiently develop cultivation to keep themselves. But it was to be gathered from Mr. Bury that the colonists now planted by the Russians, at any rate in the Tian Shan region, were likely to furnish the Government, not only with proofs of material prosperity, but with contingents of good fighting Cossacks.

The achievements of Mr. Bury were rendered possible only by his willingness to undergo hardship, and therefore one could congratulate him the more on having had such very fine sport. Only a thoroughly

determined man disregarding hardships could have reached those mountain-tops and have had such good sport. They were glad he had returned with the record ibex. In the name of the Society he thanked him very much indeed for the lecture.

Mr. BURY, in acknowledging the vote of thanks formally put from the chair, said he hoped that some day he would have the pleasure of again lecturing to the Society.

GENERAL SIR THOMAS EDWARD GORDON, K.C.B., K.C.I.E., C.S.I.

By the death of Sir Thomas Gordon on March 23 the Central Asian Society has lost one of its oldest and most distinguished members, for he was among those who joined in founding it, and he became its first President. He afterwards contributed more than one valuable paper to its records, and until his death he was one of its Vice-Presidents. If he had not been disabled by ill-health, he would in all probability have been asked to resume the Presidency on the retirement last year of the Earl of Ronaldshay.

My object in this paper is rather to speak of Gordon as I knew him than to give a detailed account of his career. It was long and honourable, for he joined the 4th Foot as Ensign in 1849, saw much fighting on the North-West Frontier, in the Mutiny, and in Afghanistan, and held many commands, staff appointments, and "political" posts. The last of these he did not vacate until 1893, after forty-four years of unusually varied service.

I made Gordon's acquaintance in 1874, when I had just joined the Indian Foreign Office as an attaché, and he had been appointed to command the Mewar Bhil Corps, one of the regiments then administered by the Foreign Department, but I did not get to know him well until five years later, in September, 1879. Gordon was then commanding at Ali Khel, from which point General Roberts was about to march upon Kabul to avenge the slaughter of the British Mission. On the advance of the field force Gordon was to remain in command of the Kurram Brigade, holding a long and exposed line of communications through a difficult country. I was then only a young civilian, attached to General Roberts as Political Secretary, but I well remember the kindness and courtesy with which Gordon treated me, taking me with him round the position at Ali Khel, and showing me the various points where night attacks by the mountain tribesmen were most likely to take place. As we went from point to point we talked over the attitude of the Amir and the political situation generally—matters upon which his thirty years' experience of affairs on and beyond the frontier made his opinions specially interesting. Then, as always, I found him wholly free from any assumption of superiority, or impatience for the views of others. He seemed to me a typical Scottish gentleman, with a pleasant northern speech, and the quiet humour which, whatever Englishmen

may think, characterizes so many of his countrymen. In after-years he was consistently the same, ready to talk over anything and give one the benefit of his wide experience, but never laying down the law, or showing the smallest sign of temper, and, above all, never saying an ill-natured thing about anyone. This unfailing good humour and kindness were of the essence of his character. Possibly the Spanish blood which he had inherited from his mother helped to give him his pleasant manners and readiness of speech, and to soften the dourness of the Scot; but the same quiet humour was always present with his friend and countryman Donald Stewart, and William Lockhart and many others of the Scottish officers of their day.

Early in his career Gordon had made himself a good Persian scholar, and this, among other things, soon marked him out for political service. He was employed in 1869 with the Amir Sher Ali, when that ill-fated ruler came to meet Lord Mayo at Umballa; and afterwards he was several times selected for duties of a similar kind. In 1873 he was second in command of the mission to Kashgar, after which he published his well-known book, "The Roof of the World." In 1879 he was political officer in Kurram. In 1885 he was in attendance upon the Amir Abdurrahman at Rawal Pindi. From 1889 to 1893 he was Oriental and Military Secretary to the Tehran Legation, under Sir Henry Drummond Wolff and Sir Frank Lascelles. In all these positions, and others, Gordon did excellent service. He was in many respects peculiarly fitted for dealing with Oriental rulers, and Orientals generally. Not only could he speak Persian—the *lingua franca* of Asiatic Mahomedans—but his character and manners were of great advantage to him. No one perhaps appreciates as thoroughly as an Oriental ruler does unfailing courtesy and good temper on the part of an Englishman. I have once or twice heard men who ought to have known better criticize Gordon's innate pleasure in conversation as a love of "gossip." But, in truth, there are few things more useful for a political officer than a capacity for "gossip" of that class. Only by being always ready to talk pleasantly, and listen with patience to others talking—sometimes not very pleasantly—can an Englishman get upon friendly terms with Asiatics. And it enables a man to acquire much valuable information which is to be acquired by no other means. Both in 1885 as Foreign Secretary in India, and later as British Minister in Persia, I had special opportunities of understanding the value of Gordon's work in that respect. At Rawal Pindi I saw the excellent relations he had established with that "strange strong creature," Abdurrahman—to quote the words of Lord Dufferin. Though the Amir was then in a very suspicious frame of mind, and apt to take offence, it was evident that he liked Gordon, and was inclined to trust him more than others. So much was this the case that if it had been decided to send another British Resident to Kabul at that time, Gordon would, I believe, have been selected by Lord Dufferin for

the post. Nine years later, when I went to Tehran, Gordon was no longer in the Legation, but I found many traces of his good work. Twice after that he paid a visit to Persia and stayed some time in Tehran. It was most interesting and satisfactory to see the welcome which he then received from high and low. One could not fail to recognize the fact that he had made himself greatly liked, and also that he knew the country and the people as few Englishmen knew them. He was a storehouse of information on all sorts of matters, and his judgment on any doubtful point was of exceptional value.

Nor had he ingratiated himself by shirking his duty when it was right to speak the plain truth. His training as a soldier was of much use to him there, and on occasion he could speak as plainly as anyone. It was done pleasantly, in considerate language, and with the touch of humour which never deserted him, but there was no shirking of facts. I can say this with certainty, because he more than once gave me an opinion which he knew to be distinctly opposed to my own views, and he stuck to it, politely but firmly.

Gordon wrote several books which attracted and deserved attention. He could express himself clearly, and what he wrote was always easy reading, with trustworthy information underlying it. He had also some skill with the pencil, and could illustrate his books himself.

I have said nothing about Gordon's love of sport. He did much shooting in his Indian days, especially when in command of the Mewar Bhil Corps, the country about his headquarters at Kherwarra being one of the best in India for tigers and other game. As a younger man he was fond of pig-sticking, and at one time "ran" the Poona Tent Club. To the end he had a good seat on a horse, and when he was staying with me in Tehran, though considerably over sixty, he enjoyed a gallop across country as much as anyone.

In short, Gordon was an accomplished soldier political, of a type which will not, I hope, become extinct in India. Such men are of great value to England, and it would be well if there were more of them. The training of a soldier, with the high sense of honour and loyalty which it fosters, is a fine foundation for an Englishman who has to deal with Asiatics—or, indeed, with any men. I have often thought that our diplomatic service all over the world would gain materially if it were more largely recruited from the same source, and from the Navy.

The "gay Gordons" have always been proverbial for cheery courage. And none of them ever faced death more gallantly than the old soldier, who, feeling its hand upon him, sent word to his friends one by one, and sadly worn, but pleasant and interested as ever, spent a few minutes with each in quiet impersonal talk "before I leave." It was like Tom Gordon, and it was an example which his friends are not likely to forget. He had always lived like a gentleman, and he died like a gentleman.

H. M. DURAND.

NOTES AND NEWS

THE CHUYAN ALPS.

IN the course of a journey in Mongolia, made in the spring of 1913, I had occasion to visit Kiachta, Urga, Uliassutai, and Kobdo, crossing the north-west frontier of Mongolia into Siberia at Kosh Agatch. It is here that the Chuyan Alps may be said to commence.

Kosh-Agatch are two Kirghiz words, which mean "Good-bye Trees." The name is well chosen, since the thickly forested Altai Mountains, stretching west, give place abruptly to the treeless Chuya Desert.

The town of Kosh-Agatch is but a collection of log-houses, comprising the Customs station, post and telegraph office, a depot for Government horses, a few merchants' stores and houses, the posting-station, church, and the residences of the priest, doctor, police-officer, and veterinary surgeon. It is situated on the River Chuya, at the north-west end of the Chuyan plain, or desert, as it is called, owing to the desolate nature of the surrounding country. In this plain the Chuya River has its origin, completely encircled by snow hills and mountains, which form the connecting link between the Northern Altai system of Siberia and the Southern Altai Mountains of Mongolia.

These hills are the beginning of the Chuyan Alps, which extend beyond Kosh Agatch nearly as far as Engudai ("The Seat of Ten Gods"). The scenery is very grand, and it is said by competent judges who have travelled both in Switzerland and the Altai district to be as fine as any in the Swiss Alpine region. Coming from the bitter, barren, wind-swept plateaux of Mongolia, I was very appreciative of such a complete change of scenery.

The River Chuya flows at the foot of these beautiful mountains, until, joining forces with the Katoon, they force their way through the mountains to Katoonsk. Just below this town the Biya River, which gives its name to the city of Biisk, joins them, and together, under the name of Ob, the united rivers flow northward to Siberia.

The Chuyan Mountains, frequently styled the Chuyan Alps—mere snow-hills in the neighbourhood of Kosh Agatch—gradually increase in size and grandeur, until they culminate into range after range of beautiful snow-capped peaks. The lower extremities are in places screened by dense forest foliage, and in other places stand forth, grey and dark, in bold bluffs of rugged precipitous rock.

The road itself follows the telegraph posts, that have their termination at Kosh-Agatch, and passes such varied obstacles as icebound rivers, snow-drifts, and morasses. Ascending and descending the road winds round mountains in places almost vertical, and the rivers, often in full flood, have to be crossed by bridges, sometimes in bad repair, and ferries worked by men, horses, or steam.

Particularly dangerous places are denoted by stakes fastened to the ground, which form a railing to guide the horses and also prevent the carriages from

falling over the precipices. At one such place, in addition to a precipice, there was a deep snow-drift, and the tops of the stakes could only just be seen over the snow. The driver had been walking, to encourage the horses, when the road abruptly narrowed. He, quite undisturbed, leapt on to the stakes and drove over the drift, jumping from post to post. The least slip on his part might have been disastrous to him and us, as the snow was quite twelve feet deep on the other side of the stakes. The narrowest escape that we ourselves had was in the vicinity of Engudai. We were winding along a road by the side of the River Ursul, a tributary of the Chuya, where, before we or the driver realized it, the road suddenly became narrow, and the river bank on our right developed into a steep precipice. In front of us, on the left, was a rock abutting on the path, and on the right the path had crumbled badly. There were no protecting posts. We called on the driver to stop, in order to get out of the carriage, but he had whipped up his horses, and took us at a gallop over the break in the road. The right wheels literally went over space. I was sitting on the right side of the carriage, carefully watching the wheels, and we barely missed dashing into the rock on the left. It was not a pleasant experience, and if we had gone over the precipice we should have been dashed to atoms.

H. G. C. PERRY-AYSCOUGH.

March 14, 1914.

NORTH-WEST FRONTIER OF INDIA.

For some years past the turbulent voice of the Frontier has been comparatively hushed and still—comparatively, but not absolutely. The calm has been superficial, the result of a brave determination on the part of the Indian Government to ignore such minor issues as raids and robberies in order to maintain a dignified assumption of a condition of “peace, when there is no peace.” There never can be peace so long as robbing and raiding is attractive and easy to the uncultured, but physically splendid, races of Pathan tribesmen of the North, and the way of escape is certain. The call of heredity is too strong, the excitement of the pastime too alluring to the young untamed mountaineers of the long valleys of the Hindu Koh, to be abandoned for any other reason than that of swift and certain punishment. There will never be any other condition of frontier existence so long as the wild wilderness of mountains is open to the retreating tribesmen. Where the way of retreat has been closed, or flanked, by British posts, as in the frontier hills south of the Gomal River, these periodic and local disturbances of the peace of the borderland have practically ceased. But no such command of the back doors of turbulent districts is possible in the North, and the militant clans of the Boner Valley have lately been making things very hot indeed for the Hindu traders of the Peshawar Frontier. In these activities the Mohmands have apparently assisted, no doubt with considerable profit to themselves. Kidnappings, robberies, and assassinations have been pretty frequent lately in this lively corner of the North-West Frontier, and at last it has been found necessary to resort to energetic measures for their suppression by means of a counter raid into Boner territory. This appears to have been promptly and successfully carried through, and it should have an excellent (if temporary) effect on the whole Northern Frontier. The destruction of a few villages and the capture of a number of prisoners, who will probably be held as hostages for a considerable fine in hard

rupees, without the occurrence of any loss to the counter raiders, is a useful lesson not only to the Bunerwals, but to the administrative authorities who have at their command a thoroughly efficient punitive force and don't use it. It is not on the parade-ground, nor even by the practice of periodical military manœuvres (valuable as such practice undoubtedly is), that rapidity, secrecy, and endurance can be ensured such as is essential to the success of a raid into the difficult territory of trans-frontier tribespeople. It lies in the quality of the troops employed, and what that quality is every old frontier soldier knows. We may not have a John Nicholson on the frontier now (although, without opportunity, it is impossible to say whether we have or not), but we may be certain (as the *Homeward Mail* puts it) that the officials of to-day, "if assured of adequate support in the highest quarters," will always be found equal to the restoration and the maintenance of order.

T. H. HOLDICH.

PERSIA.

Reuter's agent telegraphed from Delhi on March 24: "Speaking in the Legislative Council to-day, Lord Hardinge, the Viceroy, said the only alternative to the appointment of the Swedish officers and the establishment of a gendarmerie in Persia, would have been the despatch of a British expedition. To this action, however, the Government of India would always be firmly opposed." We are not always sure that the opinions or decisions to which Lord Hardinge gives expression accurately reflect the consensus of opinion of his colleagues of the Viceregal Council. The Government of India may be firmly opposed to the despatch of a British Expedition to Persia, but in the opinion of many who are fully as, if not more, conversant with Persian affairs than Lord Hardinge, every sign of the times is pointing to the early need for British intervention in Southern and South-Eastern Persia. It is understood that, in or about 1906, preparatory to the conclusion of the Anglo-Russian Agreement of 1907, Viscount Kitchener advised the limitation of the British sphere to the line Bandar-Abbas-Kirman on military grounds; but, since then, British troops have occupied Bushire, Shiraz, and Ispahan, and British enterprise is busy in all the country from the Shat-el-arab to Ispahan and Khoramabad. It is not to be supposed that Lord Kitchener's successor as Commander-in-Chief, however gallantly he won his V.C. in 1879, and however eloquent his memoranda, as Chief, on the way that the British subaltern should treat his Aryan or Dravidian brother, had either the knowledge or the statesman-like grasp of policy which would make his opinion of any value on questions affecting Persia. To him Lord Hardinge could certainly not look for counsel on that point. We have always understood that the India Office desired a period of grace after a strenuous administration, and, to that end, "no more" judicious selection could have been made than the Chief whom Lord Morley selected and to whom Lord Hardinge bade adieu in India with so much unction a month or so ago. If energetic action is now needed in Persia, we have, at the head of our army in India, a man who has been throughout his career in touch with the centres of Indian administration, and who was, in his day, Lord Kitchener's right-hand man. Despite Lord Hardinge's vigorous assurance of the Government of India's firm opposition to the despatch of a British expedition to Persia, there are only too many grounds for anticipating that the despatch of such a force will, ere long, become obliga-

tory. The very journals which publish the pith of Lord Hardinge's address to his Legislative Council advise us of the recommencement of fighting between the Swedish gendarmerie and the Persian brigands and malcontents, and, further, we are threatened in Northern Persia with an increase of the Cossack Brigade at the expense of the Swedish gendarmerie. England cannot shut her eyes to that example and hint. Have we not been receiving, for the past four or five years, reports of the absolute insecurity for trade and travel of the routes from Shiraz and Kirman to the Persian Gulf? Will a handful of gendarmes safeguard a tract as big as England? What is the Government of India, what is the Chief Commissioner of Baluchistan doing, on the Indian side of the Perso-Baluch border, to second Persian efforts to restore order and safety of life and property? Nothing, as far as we know. For years past the Government of India has not been doing half—nay, not a tenth part—what it might have done to make its power on the east of the Perso-Baluch border seriously influence the anarchy prevalent on the west of it. Nay, more! when, ten or twelve years ago, an Anglo-Persian Commission delimited a hitherto-neglected portion of that border, it was the opinion of experts that the interests of the Province of Baluchistan had been gravely neglected, in that Persian territory was allowed to cut into a most important trade-route from Pasni, a port on the Arabian Sea littoral, to Sistan. As for making any due use of the Baluchis and Brahuīs for military purposes—and better material for "Irregulars" could hardly be found—suggestions on that point have been simply ignored and shelved.

We have to go far back to trace the progress of Persian decadence. Pressure from Turkey, Persia, and Afghanistan, coupled with internal corruption and maladministration and national moral decay, must sum up in a few words a story which to-day seems to be nearing its catastrophe. Sir John Malcolm a century ago found Persia but a wreck of its old self, and embodied his thoughts and feelings anent it in blank verse, privately printed and circulated among his friends, mostly, I think, fellow-Scotsmen. Now and again a copy of these verses finds its way into the catalogue of a second-hand bookseller. A great crisis has now come upon this country, but no Persian rises equal to this crisis. Could one great strong man be found at this juncture, verily! as the Lord Almighty promised to spare Sodom and Gomorrah, so, we may believe, He would spare Persia. In regard to vice there is no choice between the two. But He would seem even to have roused their co-religionists against them, if indeed Shia and Sunni can be termed co-religionists. When the stability of the centre of the Muhammedan world can scarce be guaranteed, is it wise of Turkey not to give its fullest support to its Mussulman neighbour? We are led to reflect on the possible issue of German influence at Constantinople on the future of Persia. There cannot be a shadow of a doubt that, as far as lies in the power of Germany, backed up, doubtless, by its allies of the Triple Alliance, Russia will never be allowed to control the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles. We leave time to decide whether Greece, or Bulgaria, or Roumania will relieve Turkey of the responsibility for policing those straits. Whatever happens, as far as lies in the power of Germany, the Chief Constable of the Straits will be that Power's friend. German trade is becoming more and more important in the Black Sea, and it is perfectly conceivable that every effort of Germany will be directed to connecting Trebizond on the Anatolian Coast of the Black Sea with the Baghdad Railway. That Russia will, if possible, thwart. It is her clear

purpose to mould railway construction in Armenia and Azerbaijan entirely on her own lines, and so as to further her own purely selfish aims and interests. Turkey and France, at present, are conforming to that purpose; but, at least, on the part of Turkey, we can hardly believe with goodwill. It is here we have the second—Persian incompetence being the first—enemy of Persian unity. We can trace now, ever since the deposition of the late Shah, the clear indications of the Russian design to sever Azerbaijan from Persia and annex it to the Czar's dominions. Nothing can save Azerbaijan, unless some force—such, for instance, as a Turco-German combination—should be strong enough to say to Russia, "Hands off Azerbaijan and Armenia." If that were to happen, then we believe that the "firm opposition" of Lord Hardinge's Government to the despatch of a British expedition to South-Eastern Persia may remain unshaken in its firmness. Failing that, my firm opinion is that a British occupation of Fars is not far distant.

The Trans-Persian Railway is probably dead for the present. Not that I entirely rejoice in its death, for, as I said three years ago when I lectured on it, it is a "fascinating project." But after what I saw—being in a small degree behind the scenes—of Russian ambitions and of the readiness of British and French finance to pander to those ambitions, I came to the conclusion that the Trans-Persian Railway no longer was a "fascinating project." I do not desert without a qualm my once-cherished vision of a Calais-Calcutta-Canton Trans-Continental Railway, but I readily sacrifice it, if it can punish Russia for her breach of the Treaty of Berlin, and her, as I surmise, obvious intention of disregarding the Anglo-Russian Convention of 1907, which guarantees the integrity and independence of Persia. At the outset of the negotiations between Great Britain and Russia, the Indian Government exhibited a perfectly extraordinary disposition to accommodate itself to Russian schemes. Indeed, that Government seemed to think much more of safeguarding Afghanistan than of safeguarding India. Fortunately, however, the British Foreign Office, as may be judged by speeches made in Parliament by Sir Edward Grey and the Marquis of Crewe, were far from disposed to endorse the accommodating attitude of a Viceroy who would seem, while Ambassador at St. Petersburg, to have fallen, equally with his predecessor there and successor at the Foreign Office, under the spell of that Russian optimism which assumes with a charming air of confidence that the Central Asian question is dead and buried. Russian action in Mongolia, the financial and administrative straits of Persia, the recently revealed breakdown of Amir Habibullah's rule over Afghanistan, the contemplated junction of the Trans-Siberian and Trans-Caspian Railways, the branch-line under construction from Samarcand to Termes on the Oxus—weigh all these facts and then say if that question is dead, far less buried!

A. C. YATE.

THE FUTURE OF RHODES.

To Part I. of the Journal for 1914 of the CENTRAL ASIAN SOCIETY I contributed a short note, giving a brief summary of the close ties which, from a historical point of view, entitled Rhodes to the strongest sentiments of sympathy and interest on the part of the Christian nations of Europe. I pointed out the magnificent part which the old Order of the Knights Hospitallers had played in the retention of this island in the face of Islam from A.D. 1310 to 1523. I then

drew attention to the fact that there existed to-day in Europe three branches of this great Order—the Roman, with its “Cheflieu” at Rome; the “Johanniter” at Berlin; and the Grand Priory of England at Clerkenwell. I pointed out that there was no unity between these branches, no sign of initiative on the part of any one of them, and that, while their great social influence might enable them to appeal to the courts, aristocracies, and Governments of almost all the Christian nations in Europe, not a thing was being done, not a move made. A sentimental interest was affected in an old Hospitaller castle in Cyprus—whose Lusignan Kings bullied the Knights—but for Rhodes not a hand was moved.

Although I got little encouragement and scarcely even succeeded in rousing a feeble interest, I however, with the kind assistance of one or two friends whose sympathies were not lukewarm, pursued my aim until I was able to ascertain, on the authority of the Foreign Office, that it has been decided by the Six Great Powers—“*Les Six Grandes Impuissances*,” as some diplomatic wag has christened them—that Rhodes was to go back to Turkey. Italy holds it at present, and Italy will not part with it till she gets all she wants in return. So there is still hope. When the Six “*Grandes Impuissances*” cannot agree, an international agent, like the Hospitallers, may step in.

I forgot to add above that the great affection for and interest in the Order displayed by Paul the First of Russia one hundred and fifteen years ago, is by no means dead. There exist in Russia to-day “*Hereditary*” Knights of the Order of St. John of Jerusalem. These men are undoubtedly adherents of the Eastern or Greek Church. No such thing as a “*Hereditary*” Knight of the Order of St. John is known elsewhere. Russia, without the authority of the Order, invented it. We presume that these “*Hereditary*” Knights hold the hand of St. John the Baptist, the most treasured relic of the Order, presented to the Grand Master about 1485 by the then Sultan of Turkey and shamelessly despoiled by Napoleon in 1798. The Knights took the relic, shorn of its jewelled casket, to Russia, and there it still is, if report be true. And yet not all the sympathy and sentiment which unites Catholic, Protestant, and Greek Churches to the hallowed memory of Rhodes in the fourteenth, fifteenth, and sixteenth centuries, can move Christendom to emancipate Rhodes!

A. C. YATE.

THE KING OF SIKHIM.

THE death of the King of Sikhim, Sir Thot'ub Nam-gyal, K.C.I.E., on February 10, at the age of fifty-four, removes an interesting personality, whose name at various times has figured prominently in Indian Frontier politics, and who was to some extent, by his intrigues with Tibet, responsible for the Young-husband Expedition of 1904 to Lhasa. His name also recalls our acquisition of the important Himalayan district of Darjiling or British Sikhim.

Of royal Tibetan extraction, he was hereditary ruler of the small mountainous principality of Sikhim, wedged in between Nepal and Bhotan, in the Eastern Himalayas, and he owed his throne remotely to the active assistance of the British Government of India. For when, on the break-up of the Moghul Empire towards the end of the eighteenth century A.D., the small tribe of Gurkha soldiers seized Nepal and, establishing itself there, overran the whole stretch of the Himalayas from the Sutlej to Bhotan, they annexed the greater part of Sikhim up to the Tista River, leaving the nominal sovereign of that

country with merely a narrow strip of mountains around Gangtok, on the slopes leading to the Chumbi Valley, and forced him also to pay tribute. Emboldened by their easy successes, the Gurkhas raided down upon the British territory in the plains, and, failing to give satisfaction, in the hostilities which ensued they were signally defeated by General Ochterlony in 1816, and ejected from Western Sikkim, which was then restored to the Sikkim Prince by the British Government, though apparently without imposing any formal suzerainty.

Some years later, in 1830, when a hill sanatorium was required for Calcutta, a tract on the outer Sikkim hills, as far as the hamlet of Darjiling, was leased from the then Raja, and this was opened by Dr. A. Campbell, of the Indian Medical Service, as "Superintendent," in regard to whose achievement Sir Joseph Hooker wrote: "He [Dr. Campbell] raised British Sikkim from its pristine condition of an impenetrable jungle, tenanted by half-savages and mutually hostile races, to that of a flourishing European hill-station and a rich agricultural province." He also introduced the tea industry, which has since assumed vast dimensions. When in 1849 Dr. Campbell visited Upper Sikkim to see the Raja with reference to the systematic kidnapping by Sikkhimese of British subjects as slaves, he was captured and imprisoned with indignity, along with Dr. Hooker who accompanied him, as is recorded in the classic *Himalayan Journal* of the latter. As a punishment for this outrage, all Outer Sikkim, including the station of Darjiling, was permanently annexed to India as a British district, and the annual subsidy was withdrawn. The Lhasa Lamas, the spiritual advisers of the Raja and his Tibetan wife, excited him to hostilities, which were suppressed in 1861, and a new treaty dictated and the subsidy restored.

The late "Gyal-po," as the king is called by his Bhotiya or Tibetan subjects, succeeded his brother in 1874, at the age of fourteen marrying the widow of the latter; and after her death he married in 1885 another Tibetan lady, the daughter of an official of the Dalai Lama's Court. Personally of an amiable and devout character, he spent his time mostly as a monk, and left the management of his state affairs to his ministers, who were of strongly pro-Tibetan proclivities. They induced the king to desert his country, and reside more or less permanently in the Chumbi Valley of Tibet, and the remonstrances of the Government of India had little effect in inducing him to return.

The Tibetan invasion of Sikkim in 1886 brought matters to a climax. An army of several thousand Tibetans advanced into Sikkim, and built a fort at Lingtu, actually within sight of Darjiling town, and naturally causing a panic amongst the European residents there. The writer of this note remembers having seen them from Darjiling through field-glasses, swarming over the heights like bees. The invaders refused to withdraw, and were eventually expelled in 1888 by a costly little expedition under General Graham, and the king compelled to reside within his own territory under the surveillance of a British Resident, who was instructed with the task of developing the neglected resources of the country. For this post Mr. J. C. White, of the Public Works Department, was appointed, and he carried out the Government policy effectively, opening up the country by magnificent arterial roads and bridges, and attracting thousands of Hinduised settlers from Nepal to reclaim the forest tracts, as the Sikkhimese themselves, both Lepochas and Bhotiyas, were not systematic or enterprising cultivators. As a result, the revenue of the country has enormously increased, and vast tracts of hillsides, which formerly

were impenetrable and uninhabited forest, are now covered by the homesteads of a thriving, industrious peasantry, and form already an important recruiting-ground for our Gurkha regiments. The eventual loyalty of the chief to the Indian Government was rewarded by the title of K.C.I.E., and a personal salute of fifteen guns.

He is succeeded by his son Sid-kyong Tu'lku, who has enjoyed the advantage of an English education, having, in addition to several years' schooling at Darjiling, spent two years at Oxford and travelled round the world.

L. A. WADDELL.

THE JAPANESE BUDGET, 1914-1915.

THE Budget for the year 1914-1915, which was presented by the Japanese Government to the Imperial Diet in the beginning of this year, fell through owing to a disagreement between the two Houses. This is the first time in the Parliamentary history of Japan that a Finance Bill voted by the House of Representatives has become inoperative owing to the attitude of the Upper House. As to the finances of the Government in such a case, the Constitution, however, provides for the Exchequer to have recourse to the previous Budget.

It would be recalled that when the Yamamoto Cabinet came into office the principal planks of its platform were Administrative Reform, Retrenchment and Economy, and the avowed object of providing for a replenishment in the defence forces, for the development of national resources and for a reduction of taxation and at the same time to strictly maintain the sinking fund. The Cabinet, however, having only taken office in the middle of the session of 1913, was unable to embody all of these measures in the Budget for 1913-1914. But within a very few weeks the necessary steps were taken for a complete reform, more thoroughgoing and far-reaching than any ever undertaken within the last twenty years. This resulted in curtailing the expenditure by £6,600,000 out of a total of £58,680,000. The greater portion of this reduction (£3,900,000, which would rise in the next years to £4,300,000) was in the ordinary or recurring expenditure, and therefore represents a sum which can be counted as a permanent reduction. With this basis of permanent retrenchment the first instalment of the programme for reduction of taxation was effected in 1913, to be followed by others in the coming years.

The Budget for the year 1914-1915 provided for the total expenditure of £64,100,000, the total revenue balancing at the same figures. In framing this Budget, the Cabinet embodied in it the principles on which this administrative reform was based, thus applying the same standard of retrenchment in the normal expenditure as in the last year, cutting down the capital expenditure for various works by 30 per cent., and allowing no fresh outlays except of an urgent character. The estimates on this basis would permit the Government to reckon upon a net saving of £4,300,000 for this year, which could provide for a further reduction of taxation or a fresh increase of expenditure of recurring nature.

On the revenue side, the Finance Minister had a net balance amounting to £7,500,000 available for the year. This balance consists partly of the surplus arising from the normal increase of revenue in the actual operation of the Budget for the year 1912-1913, out of which £3,600,000 was available for the present Budget, and partly of the savings amounting to £3,900,000 secured through the

administrative reform effected during the year 1913-1914. The normal increase in the tax revenue and other incomes for 1914-1915 over the figures of the last Budget was estimated at £1,500,000. These two sources added to the administrative economies of £4,300,000 above mentioned would make a total margin on the year's revenue of £13,000,000. The Finance Minister proposed to be on the safe side, and counted upon a surplus only of £11,600,000, and proposed to dispose of this in the following manner :

| | |
|---|-----------|
| To provide for | £ |
| Reduction in taxation | 1,000,000 |
| Reduction in monopoly revenue | 900,000 |
| To additional expenditure | |
| Navy | 1,000,000 |
| Telephone and other public works | 1,400,000 |
| | 4,300,000 |

To reinstate the reserve funds which have been drawn upon during the last war :

| | |
|--|-----------|
| | £ |
| Navy fund | 4,670,000 |
| Education fund | 1,050,000 |
| Currency fund | 230,000 |
| Forestry fund | 500,000 |
| To increase the contingency and river improvement funds | 800,000 |
| | 7,250,000 |

The sinking fund was maintained at the time-honoured amount of £5,000,000, out of which £1,000,000 was to be devoted to the foreign markets.

Bills for a further reduction in taxation were brought in at this session of Parliament. When these Bills come into force in 1915, the amount by which the taxpayers should be relieved will be about £1,500,000.

The new navy programme which was submitted for approval was to involve the expenditure of about £16,000,000, to be spread over six years, out of which was to be taken the appropriation for this year, £1,000,000, above referred to.

It was on this last measure that the Parliamentary deadlock arose. Since the Budget was introduced the Lower House passed two amendments on the Budget. It reduced the expenditure of the navy programme by £3,000,000, but as this reduction was in that portion of the expenditure which was allotted to the years 1916-1920, it did not affect the actual operation of the Budget for 1914-1915. Another proposal of the Lower House was to divert £4,670,000, provided for to reinstate the navy reserve fund above mentioned, to a new fund to be created for the development of national resources.

The House of Peers, however, decided in favour of a further reduction in the navy programme of £4,000,000, making a total curtailment of £7,000,000 on the Government proposal, which would operate from the year 1914-1915. As both Houses would not agree, the whole Budget came to an end. The administration tendered its resignation, and the next Cabinet would finance the Government by the Budget of the year 1913-1914.

The fall of the Budget does not affect the proposed reduction of taxation, which was embodied in separate Bills and which passed both Houses. Nor does this situation alter the amount of sinking fund above mentioned, which was also provided for in that Budget to which the Government has now to go back.

In operating the Budget of 1913-1914 for the year 1914-1915, the Government,

however, has to follow exactly the basis of curtailment effected in the actual operation of that Budget in the year for which it provided. Thus, on the one hand at least, the net saving of £4,300,000 above mentioned will automatically be realized for the year 1914-1915. On the other hand, all the fresh appropriation or new expenditure which was provided for in the Budget for 1914-1915 becomes inoperative. Another sum of £7,500,000, out of which various reserve funds were to be reinstated or increased in the year, will remain intact in the Exchequer. Therefore, the Government will be left again with an enormous balance at the end of the financial year 1914-1915, much greater than what was the case in the financial year just closed.

K. MORI,

Financial Attaché of the Japanese Embassy.

EXPLORATIONS IN CHINESE TURKESTAN.

A letter received from Dr. von Le Coq, dated April 23, from Berlin, gives the following interesting account of the success of his recent expedition to Central Asia :

“The results of this journey are, I am happy to say, very satisfactory both in quality and in quantity; indeed, we have got away with the largest number of cases ever yet exported from that land—152 cases and packages.

“I worked mainly at Kuchā and at Tumshuq, near Maralbashi. In the latter place I was so fortunate as to find quite a number of *true* Gandhāra ‘sculptures,’ some being exact counterparts of some of the sculptures, in slate, in our Gandhāra collections; only these Tumshuq finds were not carved from Himalaya slate, but moulded, in clay *and* in plaster, in moulds some of which were found alongside. Many of these ‘sculptures’ still were covered with paint and leaf-gold, and I hope they will not lose this embellishment on the dreary roads they have to come by. Seventy cases are already here, but eighty-two are still on the road.

“I have also been so fortunate as to find MSS. at Tumshuq, the first, I think, ever discovered there. Some are in Sanskrit, others (and these are in a perfect state of preservation) are in an Iranian language of interesting type.

“A very fine but small cornice, decorated in pure Sassanian style, and a number of heads of Sassanian knights, come also from Tumshuq, some good bronzes, painted or enamelled glass (one fragment only), statuettes in wood, etc.—altogether it is an un hoped-for addition to our collection of Central Asian things.”

Dr. von Le Coq writes enthusiastically of the kindness and unstinted help he received in many ways from Sir George and Lady Macartney.

While away in the desert the explorer was attacked by severe illness, which nearly cost him his life, and Sir George Macartney, hearing of it through the telegraph, sent his own physician a journey of about thirty days to his assistance.

Chinese Railways.—The Chinese Government and the British and Chinese Corporation have signed a railway loan agreement, one of the most important for British enterprise that has ever been concluded in China. By this agreement the Shanghai-Nanking Railway is extended through Nanchang to Pinghsiang, and includes the already constructed Pinghsiang-Chuchow line linking up the Canton-Hankow branch lines with those to Wusu and Kuangtechow. The

new line will be easy of construction, and will run through a well-populated, fertile country. The loan required will be £8,000,000, and for forty years will be at £5 per cent. on the security of the railway, guaranteed by the Chinese Government. The fact that the engineer-in-chief, chief accountant, and the traffic manager are British, are additional safeguards that the railway will be developed on sound business lines.

Exploration in Siam.—Dr. W. E. Geil, the well-known American explorer, who has lately returned from the Near East, is about to start on an expedition to Northern Siam and to the country of the Shans—a people who have retained many of their primitive customs.

Gun-Running in the Persian Gulf.—An agreement between France and Great Britain has finally put an end to the extensive gun-running at Muscat, which has armed the Afghans and Indian border-tribesmen as well as the nomad brigands of Southern Persia. It has been estimated that the trade in arms at Muscat exceeded a quarter of a million sterling each year. In one year alone the import of rifles was 85,000, and of cartridges 12,000,000.

The Agreement by which France forgoes her treaty rights to trade in arms at Muscat has but crowned the successful measures taken by the Indian Government to stop this dangerous traffic.

The East Indies Squadron had practically ruined the trade by, year after year, intercepting the boats and seizing the cargoes, thus making the risks too great.

Jerusalem.—Jerusalem is to be modernized. Tramways, electric light, and waterworks will complete the transformation of the city, which during the last half-century has been slowly enlarging its borders and drawing closer to modern civilization. The opening of the railway to Jaffa was the prime factor, opening, as it did, the way to a considerable tourist traffic, and making easier the large immigration of Jews, who now number some 50,000 in the city alone, whereas some fifty years ago they were a negligible quantity.

Bethlehem, some six miles to the south, is to be linked up to Jerusalem by an electric tramway line from the Jaffa Gate, and three other lines are to run through the city to the suburbs. This tramway system and the electric lighting is in the hands of the French Périer Bank, to whom a concession has been granted by the municipality. The same Company have also in view a proper water-supply—more needed, perhaps, than the other two. Hitherto the ordinary inhabitants have been content with the rain-water supply from their own storage cisterns, and the wealthier people have received theirs daily in sealed barrels by railway from the spring at Bittir.

French Interests in Syria.—In addition to the religious schools already established, the French Government are promoting the establishment of two professional schools at Damascus and Mosul.

There is to be also a new French Vice-Consulate at Homs, and the port of Juneh, north of Beirut, is opened to France.

Baghdad to Beirut by Motor Omnibus.—Motor omnibuses sent out by an English firm are in future to carry the Turkish mails from Baghdad to the coast via Damascus. The distance of over 500 miles across the Syrian desert will be traversed in six days instead of the twenty days now taken by horse carriage.

Albania.—Equality of religion and speech has been guaranteed throughout Albania by the International Commission at Avlona.

Turco-Servian Treaty.—The Treaty of Peace between Turkey and Servia was signed on March 14. There had been considerable friction, and negotia-

tions had been interrupted. There were four chief points of difference which were settled as follows :

First, with regard to Moslem cemeteries in the annexed territories : although Servian law does not admit of their being treated as Moslem religious foundations, Servia undertakes to respect them.

Secondly, while the Servian Government has been unable to accede to the Porte's request that the service of the shrine of the Sultan Murad the Victorious, who fell in the moment of victory at Kossovo-Polye, should be entrusted to Imams appointed and paid by Turkey, full concessions to Turkish historical sentiment have been made.

Thirdly, Servia has agreed to make no distinction as far as the franchise is concerned between her new Moslem and Christian subjects in the annexed territories.

Fourthly, on the question of nationality, Servia has agreed to allow former Ottoman subjects resident in the new territory three years in which to opt for Turkish nationality. Moslems, moreover, are not to be liable to conscription for three years. Original inhabitants of the annexed territories now resident elsewhere are to have three years in which to opt for Servian nationality, on condition that they quit the Ottoman Empire in order to exercise their right. The Porte, in a letter appended to the Treaty, undertakes to grant Christians in the annexed territories now resident in Turkey every facility compatible with the existing régime to opt for Servian nationality.

Diplomatic relations between the two States have been renewed. M. Georgevitch has been appointed Servian Chargé d'Affaires, and Hrant Nuradunghian Turkish Chargé d'Affaires.

The Baghdad Railway.—The working section of the Baghdad Railway, east of Konia, now extends to 400 miles, including the Toprak-Kaleh-Alexandretta branch line, whilst good progress is being made in the railway northwards from Baghdad, where it is expected that by the end of 1914 some 100 miles will have been completed, and east from Jerablus about 125 miles.

The control of the line is now practically in the hands of Germany.

England has withdrawn all opposition to the line being extended from Baghdad to Basra, on the understanding that it does not proceed beyond Basra to the Persian Gulf without her consent. On the other hand, she agrees to keep the Shatt-el-Arab navigable as far as Basra.

France, in return for railway concessions in Syria and elsewhere, is offering to cede her rights in the railway to Germany, and the opposition of Russia was withdrawn some three years ago.

Education in Egypt.—A society called the Women's Educational Union has just been formed in Cairo under the patronage of the Khedivah Mother, the wives of the Ministers, and of the chief European and native residents. Two meetings have already been held at the University. The society should meet with great success, as it has been called into being owing to a widely felt want. For some years past it has been recognized in Egypt, as well as among other Moslem nations, that the future of these nations will depend largely on the education and emancipation of their women, and this feeling resulted in Egypt in a demand for elementary and advanced schools for girls. The vernacular press did good service in pressing the question, and the Government responded by establishing a number of schools, but the supply does not as yet come up to the demand, and in addition no provision was made for the very large class of

youthful wives whose education was by no means finished when their school days ended. The new society, which has received numbers of adhesions, lays down in its statutes the following objects :

1. To unite in a common bond women of all nationalities interested in education, and thus promote the cause of female education in Egypt.

2. To assist mothers and teachers to understand the best principles of education, and afford them opportunities for consultation and co-operation, so that the wisdom and experience of each may be profitable to all.

3. To provide for this purpose lectures dealing with education in its physical, mental, and moral aspects.

4. To afford to girls and young women who have been well educated an opportunity of maintaining their interest in intellectual and literary matters, and to publish for that purpose a magazine dealing with educational subjects in a language understood by the majority.

RECENT BOOKS ON THE EAST

Far East.

- THE CAMPAIGN OF LIAO-YANG.** By Major H. Rowan-Robinson. (Campaigns and their Lessons.) pp. 284. 6s. 6d. net. (Constable.)
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- THE CHINESE PEOPLE.** By the Ven. Archdeacon A. E. Moule. 5s. (S.P.C.K.)
- ON CHINESE CURRENCY.** Preliminary Remarks on the Monetary and Banking Reform in China. By G. Vissering. 8vo. (J. H. de Bussy, Amsterdam.)
- A WOMAN IN THE ANTIPODES.** By Mary Hall. (Methuen.)
- MANCHURIA AND CHŌSEN (KOREA).** An official guide to Eastern Asia. Vol. I. (Published by the Imperial Government Railways in Tokyo.)
- JAPANESE FLOWER ARRANGEMENT (IKE BANA).** By Mary Averill. With Illustrations. 6s. net. (John Lane.)
- MISSIONARY JOYS IN JAPAN.** By Rev. Paget Wilkes. 7s. 6d. (Morgan and Scott.)
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- SIAM AND CHINA.** By the late Salvatore Besso. Translated from the Italian by C. Mathews. pp. 287. 30s. net. (Simpkin, Marshall.)
- DURCH KÖNIG TSCHULALONGKORNS REICH SIAM-EXPEDITION.** Von Dr. Carl Curt Hosséns. pp. 220, 4to., with 125 Plates and Illustrations and a Map. 15s.; bound, 18s.
- MALAY GRAMMAR.** By R. O. Winstedt. Crown 8vo. 7s. 6d. net.

Central Asia.

- NOTES ON THE PHYSICAL ANTHROPOLOGY OF CHINESE TURKESTAN AND THE PAMIRS.** By T. A. Joyce. pp. 34. 5 Plates. (Royal Anthropological Institute.)
- LES DOCUMENTS CHINOIS.** Découverts par Aurel Stein dans les sables du Turkestan Oriental. Publiés et traduits par Edouard Chavannes. Royal 4to., with 37 Collotype Plates. £3 3s. net. (Oxford University Press.)

Indian Frontier.

- PENNELL OF THE AFGHAN FRONTIER.** By A. M. Pennell. 10s. 6d. net. (Seeley, Service and Co.)

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- THE CRADLE OF MANKIND: LIFE IN EASTERN KURDISTAN.** By W. A. Wigram and E. T. A. Wigram. (Black and Co.)

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 LIST OF PUBLICATIONS OF THE SOCIETY.
 RULES AND LIST OF MEMBERS.

R U L E S

OF

THE CENTRAL ASIAN SOCIETY

1. THE CENTRAL ASIAN SOCIETY was founded for the encouragement of interest in Central Asia by means of lectures, the reading of papers, and discussions.

2. Persons who desire to join the Society shall be proposed by one Member and seconded by another, and shall then be balloted for by the Council. Ladies are admissible.

3. The Secretary shall in all cases inform Members of their election.

4. The Annual Subscription of Members shall be £1.

5. The Council shall have power to remit subscriptions in special cases in which such remission shall appear expedient.

6. All subscriptions are due on election, and thereafter annually, but if the election takes place in November or December, the second annual payment will not become due till the expiration of the succeeding year; thus if a person be elected in November, his second subscription will not be due till the second January following.

7. Every person elected a Member of the Society shall make the payment due thereon within two calendar months after the date of election, or if abroad within six months after election; otherwise the election shall be void unless the Council in any particular case shall extend the period within which such payments are to be made.

8. Annual subscriptions shall be due on the tenth day of January in each year; and in case the same shall not be paid by the end of the month, the Treasurer or Secretary shall be authorized to demand the same. If any subscriptions remain unpaid at the Anniversary Meeting of the Society, the Treasurer shall apply by letter to those Members who are in arrear. If the arrears be not discharged by the 1st of January following such application, the Member's name as a defaulter shall be suspended in the meeting room, and due notice be given to the Member in question of the same. The name shall remain suspended, unless in the interval the arrears be discharged, until the Anniversary Meeting next ensuing, when, if the subscription be not paid, the defaulter will cease to be a Member of the Society.

9. A Member, who is not in arrears, may at any time resign his membership by notice in writing, but such notice of resignation must reach the Secretary before the 1st of January, otherwise the subscription for the current year will be payable.

10. A Member's resignation shall not be valid, save by a resolution of the Council, until he has paid up all his arrears of subscription; failing this he will be considered as a defaulter, and dealt with in accordance with Rule 8.

11. The Officers of the Society shall be: (1) The Chairman, (2) the Honorary Treasurer, and (3) the Honorary Secretary, all of whom must be Members of the Society. In addition to these there shall be a Secretary.

12. The Chairman shall be elected by the Council, and shall hold office for one year from the date of his election. He shall be eligible for re-election on the expiration of his tenure of office.

13. The Honorary Treasurer and the Honorary Secretary shall be elected at the Anniversary Meeting, on the nomination of the Council, for two years, and are eligible for re-election.

14. The Secretary shall hold office during the pleasure of the Council.

15. The Chairman, as head of the Society, shall have the general supervision of its affairs. He will preside at Meetings of the Council, conduct the proceedings, give effect to resolutions passed, and cause the Rules of the Society to be put in force. He shall, ex officio, be a Member of the Council and of all Committees, and may at any time summon a Meeting of the Council.

16. The Honorary Treasurer shall receive all moneys, and shall account for them. He shall not make any payments (other than current and petty cash expenses) without the previous order of the Council. He shall, ex officio, be a Member of the Council and of all Committees. He shall exercise a general supervision over the expenditure of the Society, and shall prepare and submit to the Auditors at the expiration of each year a statement showing the receipts and expenditure of the Society for the period in question. All cheques must be signed by him, or in his absence any Member of the Council acting for him.

17. The Honorary Secretary shall, in the absence of the Chairman, exercise a general control over the affairs of the Society, and shall, ex officio, be a Member of Council and of all Committees.

18. The Honorary Secretary shall attend the Meetings of the Society and of the Council and record their proceedings. He shall conduct the correspondence and attend to the general business of the

Society, and shall attend at the Rooms of the Society at such times as the Council may direct. He shall superintend the persons employed by the Society, subject to the general control of the Council. He shall be competent on his own responsibility to discharge small bills, but any account exceeding the amount of Five Pounds shall, except in cases of great urgency, be submitted for approval to the Council before payment. He shall have the charge, under the general direction of the Council, of printing and publishing the Transactions of the Society.

19. The Secretary shall act generally under the orders of the Hon. Secretary, and if at any time the former is prevented by illness or any other cause from attending to the duties of his office, the Hon. Secretary shall act in his absence; but in the case of prolonged absence the Council shall have power to make such special arrangements as may at the time be considered expedient.

20. There shall be a Council consisting of twelve Members of the Society, exclusive of the Chairman but inclusive of the Honorary Officers of the Society.

21. The Members of Council as aforesaid shall be elected at the Anniversary Meeting on the nomination of the Chairman in Council, subject to any amendment of which due notice has been given, as provided in Rule 23.

22. There shall be prepared and forwarded to every Member in Great Britain, together with the notice as to the Anniversary Meeting, a list containing the names of persons so nominated to serve on the Council for the ensuing year, together with any other names, should they be proposed and seconded by other Members, a week's notice being given to the Secretary. The List of Members nominated as aforesaid shall be first put to the Meeting, and, if carried, the amendments (if any) shall not be put.

23. Of the Members of Council other than those referred to in Rules 12 and 13—*i.e.*, the Officers—three shall retire annually by seniority. They shall be eligible for re-election.

24. Should any vacancy occur among the Honorary Officers or other Members of Council during the interval between two Anniversary Meetings, such vacancy may be filled up by the Council.

25. The Ordinary Meetings of Council shall be held not less than once a month from November to June inclusive.

26. Special Meetings of Council may be summoned under the sanction of the Chairman, or in his absence by a circular letter from the Secretary.

27. Three Members of the Council shall constitute a quorum.

28. At Meetings of Council the Chair shall be taken by the Chairman, and in his absence the Senior Member present shall take the Chair. The decision of any matter shall rest with the majority, and in case of an equality of votes the Chairman shall have the casting vote in addition to his ordinary vote.

29. Committees may be appointed by the Council to report on specific questions, and unless otherwise stated three shall form a quorum. Such Committees shall be authorized to consult persons not members of the Society.

30. Ordinary General Meetings are for hearing and discussing papers and for addresses, but no resolutions other than votes of thanks for papers read shall be passed at such meetings except by permission of the Chairman.

31. Special General Meetings are for considering and dealing with matters of importance, such as the making or amendment of its Rules, or questions seriously affecting its management and constitution. No business shall be transacted at such meetings except that for which they are summoned, and of which notice has been given.

32. The Anniversary Meeting for receiving and considering the Annual Report of the Council and Auditors, and dealing with the recommendations contained therein for the appointment of Members of the Council and Officers for the ensuing year, and for hearing the President's Address (if any), and deliberating generally on the affairs of the Society, shall be held in June of each year. But no resolution seriously affecting the management or position of the Society, or altering its Rules, shall be passed unless due notice shall have been given in the manner prescribed for Special General Meetings.

33. Ordinary Meetings shall be convened by notice issued to accessible Members, and as a general rule they shall be held on the first Wednesday in each month from November to May, both inclusive, the Wednesday of Easter, Whitsuntide, and Christmas weeks being excepted. At such meetings, and also at the Anniversary Meeting, but not at special General Meetings, each Member of the Society shall have the privilege of introducing, either personally or by card, two visitors.

34. Ten Members shall form a quorum.

The Accounts shall be audited annually by an Auditor nominated by the Council. The employment of a professional Auditor shall be permissible. The Report presented by the Auditor shall be read at the next ensuing Anniversary Meeting.

LIST OF MEMBERS
OF
THE CENTRAL ASIAN SOCIETY

CORRECTED TO APRIL 1, 1914

OFFICERS AND COUNCIL

Chairman :

1913. THE RT. HON. SIR H. MORTIMER DURAND, P.C., G.C.M.G., K.C.S.I.,
K.C.I.E.

Vice-Presidents :

1904. LORD LAMINGTON, G.C.M.G., G.C.I.E.
1905. LIEUT.-COLONEL SIR FRANCIS YOUNGHUSBAND, K.C.I.E.
1906. COLONEL SIR THOMAS H. HOLDICH, K.C.M.G., K.C.I.E., C.B.
1908. SIR VALENTINE CHIROL.
1908. RT. HON. LORD CURZON OF KEDLESTON, G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E.
1913. THE EARL OF RONALDSHAY, M.P.

Hon. Treasurer :

1912. A. COTTERELL TUPP, I.C.S., LL.D.

Hon. Secretary :

1912. E. PENTON, JUNR.

Members of the Council :

1911. SIR FREDERIC FRYER, K.C.S.I.
1911. LIEUT.-COLONEL A. C. YATE.
1912. COLONEL PEMBERTON, R.E.
1912. COLONEL SIR HENRY TROTTER, K.C.M.G., C.B.
1912. SIR WALTER LAWRENCE, G.C.I.E.
1912. THE RT. HON. SIR WEST RIDGEWAY, G.C.B., G.C.M.G., K.C.S.I.
1913. E. R. P. MOON, ESQ.
1913. SIR EVAN JAMES, K.C.I.E., C.S.I.
1913. COLONEL J. G. KELLY, C.B.

Secretary

1905. MISS HUGHES.

LIST OF MEMBERS



The names marked with an asterisk are of those who have served on the Council. The names in capitals are those of present Members of Council. Names in italics are those of Councillors resident in India. The names marked with a dagger are those of original Members.

A

1910. Abdul Qaiyum, Khan Bahadur Sahibzada, C.I.E., Assistant Political Officer, Khaiber, Peshawar, N.W.F. Province.
†Aglionby, Captain A., Junior Naval and Military Club, 96, Piccadilly, W.
1912. Allen, G. B., Free Chase, Warninglid, Sussex.
1912. Amedroz, H. F., 48, York Terrace, Regent's Park, N.W.

B

1908. Baddeley, F. J., 34, Bruton Street, W.
1910. Bailey, Captain F. M., 7, Drummond Place, Edinburgh, N.B.
1906. Bailward, Colonel A. C., R.A. (ret.), 1, Prince's Mansions, Victoria Street, S.W.
1905. Barnes, Sir Hugh Shakespear, K.C.S.I., K.C.V.O., 7, Cheyne Place, Chelsea.
1913. Barrow, Major-General Sir Edmund, G.C.B., Artillery Mansions Hotel, S.W.
10 1910. Beauclerk, Lord Osborne de Vere, Brooks' Club, 4, St. James's Street, S.W.
1907. Benn, Major R. A., C.I.E., Political Agent, Kalat, Baluchistan.
†Bennett, T. J., Harwarton House, Speldhurst, Kent.
1910. Bigg-Wither, Captain F., I.A., Deputy Commr., c/o Messrs. A. Scott and Co., Rangoon, Burma.
1909. Blandy, J. E., Madeira.
1903. Bottomley, Frank, 157, Sheen Road, Richmond, Surrey.
†Bruce, Lieut.-Col. C. D., Wynters Grange, Harlow, Essex
†Buchanan, W. A., 23, Great Winchester Street, E.C.
1912. Bury, The Viscount, Guards' Club, 70 Pall Mall, S.W.
1914. Bury, C. Howard, Bath Club, Dover Street, W.

C

- 20** 1907. Cadell, P., c/o Messrs. H. S. King and Co., 9, Pall Mall, S.W.
†Carey, A. D., I.C.S., East India United Service Club, 16, St. James's Square, S.W.
1903. CHIROL, Sir Valentine, 34, Carlyle Square, Chelsea, S.W. Vice-President.
1908. Cox, Lieut.-Col. Sir Percy Z., K.C.I.E., C.S.I., Knockdrin, Simla.
†Crow, Mrs. F. A., 17, Westgate Terrace, Redcliffe Gardens, S.W.

1907. Cunningham, Sir William, K.C.S.I., I.C.S. (ret.), Queen Anne's Mansions, S.W.
 1907. CURZON OF KEDLESTON, The Rt. Hon. Earl, G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E., Hackwood, near Basingstoke, Hants, Vice-President.

D

1908. Dane, Hon. Sir Louis, G.C.I.E., C.S.I., Barnes Court, Simla, India.
 1908. Daukes, Captain C. T., c/o Thos. Cook and Son, Bombay, India.
 †Dartrey, The Earl of, 10, Upper Belgrave Street, S.W.
30 1906. Davis, W. S., Bhopal Agency, Sehore, Central India.
 1903. *Donoughmore, The Earl of, 5, Chesterfield Gardens, W.
 1906. Dobbs, H. R. C., I.C.S., Sibi, Baluchistan, India.
 1910. Douglas, Captain H. A., Derwent Lodge, Lansdowne Road, Tunbridge Wells.
 1913. Douglas-Pennant, Captain Hon. G. H., Guards' Club, Pall Mall, S.W.
 1910. Drummond, Miss, Kensington Palace Mansions, W.
 1903. *†Durand, Colonel A. G. A., C.B., C.I.E., 31, Park Lane.
 1907. *DURAND, The Right Hon. Sir H. Mortimer, P.C., G.C.M.G., K.C.S.I., K.C.I.E., 42, Montagu Square, W. Chairman.

E

- †Elphinstone, Lord, Carlton Club, 94, Pall Mall, S.W.
 1911. Etherton, Captain P., Lansdowne, Garhwal, U.P., India.

F

- 40** 1907. Fancourt, Col. St. J. F. M., C.B., Deancroft, near Stowmarket, Suffolk.
 1907. *FRASER, Lovat, The White House, Slough.
 1906. FRYER, Sir Frederic, K.C.S.I., 23, Elvaston Place, Queen's Gate, S.W.

G

1908. Gabriel, Vivian, C.S.I., C.V.O., I.C.S., c/o The Foreign Department, Government of India, Simla, India.
 1913. Garrard, S. H., Cavalry Club, and Welton Place, Daventry, Northants.
 1909. Gearon, Miss S., Ladies' Empire Club, 69, Grosvenor Street, W.
 1908. Gibson, Miss, 101, Philbeach Gardens, S.W.
 1908. Godfrey, Lieut.-Col. Stuart H., Indian Army. Political Agent, Dir, Swat and Chitral, Malakand, N.W.F. Province, India.

H

1904. *Hart-Davies, T., I.C.S. (ret.), East India United Service Club, 16, St. James's Square, S.W.
 †Hills-Johnes, General Sir James, V.C., G.C.B., Dolaucothy, Llanwrda, R.S.O., South Wales.
- 50** *†HOLDICH, Colonel Sir Thomas H., K.C.M.G., K.C.I.E., C.B., 41, Courtfield Road, S.W. Vice-President.
1908. Howell, E. B., I.C.S., Assistant Secretary to the Government of India, 23, Chesterton Road, Cambridge.
1906. Hughes, T. O., Political Agent, Panjgur via Karachi, India.

I

1906. India, Secretary of State for, India Office, Whitehall, S.W.
 †Inglis, Major J. D., St. Mary's, Colchester, Essex.

J

- *†JAMES, Sir Evan, K.C.I.E., C.S.I., Glenshee, Cambridge Park, Twickenham. M. of C.
 †Jardine, Mrs., 21, Pembridge Crescent, Bayswater, W.
 *†Jardine, W. E., I.C.S., C.I.E., The Residency, Gwalior, Central India.
1908. Jennings, Col. R. H., R.E. (ret.), C.S.I., 20, Roland Gardens, S.W.

K

1907. *KELLY, Col. J. G., C.B., 30, West Cromwell Road, Kensington, W. M. of C.
- 60** 1913. Kemp, Miss, 26, Harley House, Regent's Park, N.W.
 1912. Kennedy, G. R., 24, Gloucester Terrace, Hyde Park, W.
 †King, Sir H. Seymour, K.C.I.E., 25, Cornwall Gardens, S.W.

L

1904. *LAMINGTON, The Rt. Hon. Lord, G.C.M.G., G.C.I.E., 26, Wilton Crescent, S.W., Vice-President.
1907. *LAWRENCE, Sir Walter, Bart., G.C.I.E., 22, Sloane Gardens, S.W., M. of C.
1908. *Lloyd, George, M.P., 99, Eaton Place, S.W.
1912. Loch, Lieutenant P. G., 97th Infantry, c/o Messrs. Cox & Co., Bombay, India,
1908. Lockhart, Lady, C.I., 187, Queen's Gate, S.W.
1909. Lyall, Captain, R.A., I.A., Parachinar, Kurrum Valley, N.W.F. Province, India.

M

1909. Macartney, Sir George, K.C.I.E., H.B.M. Consul, Kashgar, Chinese Turkestan.
- 70** 1903. Malcolm, Lieut.-Colonel Neill, D.S.O., Staff College, Sandhurst.
1906. McMahan, Lieut.-Colonel Sir H., G.C.V.O., K.C.I.E., Sec. to Government of India, Foreign Dept., Calcutta, India.

1912. Medlicott, Captain H., Cavalry Club, Pall Mall, S.W.
 1911. Merk, W. H., C.S.I., Starling Leeze House, Coggeshall, Essex.
 1910. Miles, Lieut.-Colonel P. J., 51st Sikhs, Peshawar, India.
 1903. Moon, E. R. P., 6, Onslow Gardens, S.W. M. of C.
 †Murray, John, M.A., D.L., J.P., F.S.A., 50A, Albemarle Street, Piccadilly, W.

N

1905. Neill, Professor J. W., I.C.S. (ret.), 4, Campden House Chambers, Kensington, W.

O

1906. O'Connor, Major W. F. T., R.A., C.I.E., Foreign Office, Calcutta, India.
 1905. Oliver, D. G., 67th Punjabis, Junior United Service Club, Charles Street, S.W.

P

- 80** †Peel, The Viscount, 52, Grosvenor Street, W.
 1907. PEMBERTON, Col., R.E. (ret.), B6, The Albany, Piccadilly, W., and Pyrland Hall, Taunton. M. of C.
 *†PENTON, E., 2, Cambridge Terrace, Regent's Park, N.W.
Hon. Sec. M. of C.
 †Perowne, J. T. Woolrych, Posbury House, Crediton, Devon.
 1914. Perry-Ayscough, H. G. C., c/o The Chinese Post Office, Shanghai, China (via Siberia).
 1908. Phipson, H., 10, Hyde Park Mansions, W.
 †Picot, Colonel, Indian Army (ret.), 43, Onslow Gardens, S.W.
 1905. Preece, J. R., 1, St. James's Place, S.W.

R

1910. Raines, Lady, 46, Sussex Gardens, Hyde Park, W.
 1912. Richmond, Mrs. Bruce, 3, Sumner Place, S.W.
90 1904. *RIDGEWAY, The Rt. Hon. Sir West, G.C.B., G.C.M.G., K.C.S.I., LL.D., 10, Ormonde Gate, S.W. M. of C.
 †RONALDSHAY, THE EARL OF, M.P., 38, Grosvenor Street, W. Vice-President.

S

1907. Salano, E. J., 4, Park Lane, W.
 †Sandbach, General A. E., D.S.O., R.E., Naval and Military Club, 94, Piccadilly, W.
 1908. Sandbach, H., 129, Mount Street, W.
 1908. Scovell, Captain A. M., Seaforth Highlanders, Caledonian Club, St. James's Square, S.W.
 1907. Scovell, Lieut. G. J., c/o Messrs. Holt & Co., Whitehall Place, S.W.

1903. Showers, Major H. L., C.S.I., C.I.E., Resident at Jaipur, Rajputana, c/o Messrs. Grindlay & Co., 54, Parliament Street, Westminster, S.W.
1912. Stainton, B. W., c/o Messrs. Hickie, Borman, Grant & Co., 14, Waterloo Place, Pall Mall, S.W.
1903. Stein, J. J., 19, Kensington Court, W.
- 100** 1909. Stein, Sir Aurel, K.C.I.E., Ph.D., D.Litt., D.Sc. Superintendent Arch. Survey, Frontier Circle, Peshawar, N.W.F.P., India.
1910. Stirling, Capt. H. F. D., 59th Sind Rifles, Frontier Force, Chitral, N.W.F. Province, India.
1907. Stokes, Major C. B., 3rd Skinner's Horse, Military Attaché at Teheran, 50, Marlborough Hill, N.W.
1903. Swayne, Major H. G. C., R.E., Headquarters of the Army in India, Simla.
- †Sykes, Miss Ella E., Elcombs, Lyndhurst, Hants.
1905. Sykes, Miss Ethel R., Elcombs, Lyndhurst, Hants.
1904. Sykes, H. R., Longnor Hall, Leebotwood, Shrewsbury.
1907. Sykes, Colonel P. Molesworth, C.I.E., C.M.G., 4, Lyall Street, Belgrave Square, S.W.

T

1903. Tanner, Miss, Parkside, Corsham, Wilts.
1903. Tayler, Miss H., 34, Kensington Court Mansions, W.
- 110** 1908. Taylor, Arthur Boddam, 123, Sinclair Road, W. Kensington, W.
1905. Thomas, F. W., Ph.D., India Office, Whitehall, S.W.
1908. Tod, Lieut.-Col. J. K., Indian Army, 7th Hariana Lancers, Jacobabad, Sind, India.
1907. Trevor, Sir Arthur, K.C.S.I., 16, Harcourt Terrace, Redcliffe Square, S.W.
1907. TROTTER, Col. Sir H., K.C.M.G., C.B., 18, Eaton Place S.W. M. of C.
1908. Tucker, A. L. P., St. James's Club, Piccadilly, W.
- *†TUPP, A. Cotterell, I.C.S., LL.D., 17, Devonshire Terrace, Lancaster Gate, W. (*Hon. Treasurer*). M. of C.
1903. Tupp, Mrs. Cotterell, 17, Devonshire Terrace, Lancaster Gate, W.

V

1905. Vanderbyl, P. B., B4, The Albany, Piccadilly, W.

W

1911. Waller, Miss D., 32, Knightsbridge, S.W.
- 120** 1911. Waller-Sawyer, Mrs., 32, Knightsbridge, S.W., and Moystown House, Belmont, King's Co., Dublin.
- †Walton, Sir Joseph, M.P., Reform Club, 104, Pall Mall, S.W.
1905. Watson, Major John William, I.M.S., c/o Messrs. Grindlay, Groome and Co., Bombay.
- †Whitbred, S. H., 5, Half Moon Street, W.

1912. Woods, H. C., 171, Victoria Street, S.W.

Y

†YATE, Lieut.-Colonel Arthur C., Beckbury Hall, Shifnal, Shropshire.

1905. Yate, Colonel C. E., C.S.I., C.M.G., M.P., 17, Prince of Wales Terrace, W. M. of C.

127

†YOUNGHUSBAND, Lieut. - Col. Sir Francis E., K.C.I.E., 3, Buckingham Gate, S.W., Vice-President.

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NOTE

THE Council of the Central Asian Society have had under consideration the project of enlarging their publications by the addition of short articles and notes on current events in the East. It is hoped to present four parts in each year. The present issue forms the third number.

MONGOLIA : ITS ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL ASPECT*

BY CAPTAIN R. B. OTTER-BARRY

I FEEL it a great honour to be asked to lecture to so learned a society as yourselves to-day, but I much regret that my friend and collaborator in our book, Mr. Perry-Ayscough, is not present on the platform to describe his interesting journey through those little known parts of Mongolia by Uliassutai and Kobdo, to Kosh-a-Gatch and Biisk.

Unfortunately he has been obliged to return to China, and he left England for America on March 18.

My idea to-day is first to try to show the political importance of Mongolia in the Far East; and then to give you some faint idea of the people and resources of this vast country.

I am indebted to Mrs. Bulstrode for some six of the slides shown this afternoon.

Mongolia is to Russia what Tibet is to our Indian Empire. Though one of them is a plateau, and the other a mountainous and difficult country, they both succeed in dividing Russia and India respectively from China. Both these countries are under more or less of the suzerainty of the Flowery Land, and the inhabitants of both resemble each other in many ways. It has been said, and to some purpose, that Europe owes a debt of gratitude to Russia for stemming the onrush of those Mongol hordes some 600 years ago, and preventing them from overrunning Europe, when Europe was in a general state of unrest. There are some, too, who assert that it was a great pity that Russia was ever defeated in their war with Japan in 1904-1905; they assure us that this defeat encouraged the advance of the East to the West, and lessened that prestige in force of arms of European nations in the eyes of all Asiatics. Be all this as it may, it is quite apparent that Russia forms a buffer to the advance of the East in Europe—a wall against the Yellow Peril, a serious consideration when we realize the rising expense of labour in the West. Certainly imported Eastern commercial enterprise and cheap Eastern labour is the last thing we want in Europe.

* Read April 1, 1914.

4 MONGOLIA : ITS ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL ASPECT

Between Russia and Great Britain there are several points of similarity, but perhaps the chief ones are their genius for pioneer work and colonization, and the great stakes that both countries hold in the East. But there is a similarity with a great difference. Russia has the advantage of combining both her colonization and Eastern advance on the same mainland. Where her colonization in her "Canada"—namely Siberia—ends, her Eastern advance commences. Railways join her to her most distant dominions, and her system of general protection is much facilitated. On the other hand, Great Britain's spheres of influence are widely scattered all over the world. There is but little consolidation, and very great expense has to be incurred to keep up even an inadequate protective scheme.

In the East Great Britain, starting from the south in India, *has* moved onwards northward. I bring emphasis to bear on the "has," for it seems as if at present her policy in the East is to mark time—a dangerous policy for any country, for too often it means "go back," and far more dangerous when a country such as Russia, starting from the north, *is* moving down towards the south and Great Britain's sphere of influence. Here I bring emphasis to bear on the "is," because Russia's policy is a continuous policy of advance—the policy of Peter the Great, continued ceaselessly despite set-backs such as the Japanese War. Sooner or later Russia's advance must clash with the boundaries of Great Britain's sphere of influence, and the question that remains to be answered is when? and how?

The general distribution in Asia of territory at the present day differs much from what it did some eighty years ago. It shows quite clearly Russia's advance both on the east and west of Mongolia. Though Mongolia's boundary itself remains much the same, actual Russian influence in Mongolia itself is very much greater to-day, and has been increasing yearly. Still, this has not been done without considerable expense to Russia, when one realizes that since 1899 she has been obliged to almost double the war strength of her army.

Let us just take a cursory glance at Persia. Here, by the 1907 Convention, three spheres of influence were arranged. It is impossible now to go into detail, but generally speaking Great Britain took the Southern, the central sphere remained neutral, and Russia took the Northern and largest sphere, including Tehran, Persia's capital.

Russia chooses her ministers well, and it is quite significant that lately H. E. Monsieur Korostovetz, one of Russia's strongest and most able Eastern diplomats, has been sent as minister to Tehran. Monsieur Korostovetz was the plenipotentiary who carried out the late Mongolian question; and as I personally know him, I can quite realize why Russia has seen fit to send so able and strong a man to keep up Russia's interests in Persia at a critical period.

Let us turn to Russia's present position on the Northern Frontier

of Afghanistan. The Oxus forms her boundary there. In 1866 Bokhara ceded the province of Syr-Daria to Russia, and in 1873 a treaty with Bokhara practically made Bokhara a Russian dependency.

A railway running parallel to the Oxus, and averaging some 250 miles from it, threads its way from Merv through Bokhara, Samarkand, Kokand, to Andijan. A branch has been built from Merv to Afghanistan's frontier at Kushk Post, 80 miles from Herat, and another, with construction trains said to be now running, from Samarkand to Termez, some 230 miles. This middle East Railway system is joined to the Trans-Siberian by a line from near Samarkand, and another line leaves Merv for the Caspian Sea.

By the 1907 Convention, Russia is prevented from entering Afghanistan. But conventions can be broken, and it is interesting to know that Russia has a proposed plan for an invasion of Afghanistan towards Kabul and Kandahar via Kushk Post and Termez, drawn up by that Russian General Kuropatkin, who figured so largely in the Russo-Jap War.

True, the country of Afghanistan is tremendously difficult, but more than one invasion of India has been made by this northern way in olden days. We have most of us heard of Colonel Burnaby's ride to Khiva. It was only in 1872 that, on a pretext that the Khivans had aided the rebellious Kirghiz, Russia advanced on the capital of this Khanate, and forced the Khivans to sign a treaty putting this State under Russian control; since this time Russian influence in both Khiva and Bokhara has advanced much quicker than the prophets of those days imagined could ever be the case; and both these States, like Mongolia, at one time formed part of the great empire of Jenghis Khan. I must not dally here, but before coming to Mongolia proper, let us fly across Chinese Turkestan and Mongolia to Manchuria, and just trace Russia's advance in this country—the eastern boundary of Mongolia.

It is quite impossible to give even a sketchy outline of all the little bickerings and arrangements that Russia and China have carried out during very many years on this boundary. It is just sufficient for our purpose to state that Russia's energies for many years were concentrated on her attempt to obtain an ice-free port. Vladivostock was found of little use, a half-frozen port almost under the surveillance of Japan; Port Arthur was obtained on lease from China at a time of general unrest in the Eastern Sphere, and Russia was freely overflowing into Manchuria. Then the disastrous war with Japan came as a tremendous blow to Russia. She had underestimated the strength of her Eastern adversary, and miscalculated her railway facilities compared with the sea transport of Japan. She had to relinquish her ice-free Port Arthur, but her treaty, on conclusion of the war with Japan, still gave her control of the railway to the junction Kwang Cheng-tzu, and she still

retained and has increased her influence in North Manchuria. At last we have come to Mongolia, the subject of this paper. I have been endeavouring to show the importance of Mongolia's position in the East politically, and the reasons that perhaps have induced Russia to take her opportunity for consolidating her influence in Mongolia. On the west Russia has reached that point where further advance on her part must clash with British interests. On the east, Japan has dealt her a distinct rebuff—temporarily only, perhaps, but a stinging blow for all that. Has Russia learned her lesson that Asiatic races with modern military training are not to be despised? Did she think it necessary on the first opportunity to make sure of her influence in Mongolia (1) before such a time as China might in the far future become too strong for her to tamper with, or (2) before Japan, well occupied now in South Manchuria with financial difficulties and political disturbances at home, had recovered sufficient strength to put in any serious objection to her advance? Whatever her reason, her action was well timed with the Balkan War in the Near East and the Chinese Revolution in the Far East.

The spiritual and temporal ruler of Mongolia is the Hu-Tuk-Tu, whose palace is under the sacred Mount Bogdo, the home of wild animals who become quite tame and docile. The Hu-Tuk-Tu is the ruler of the remnant of those Mongols who, in the thirteenth century, became, under Jenghis Khan, a formidable nation.

Jenghis Khan died in 1227, whilst conducting a campaign in Central Asia, and the conquest of North China was completed half a century later by his grandson Kublai Khan, who established the Yuan Dynasty with his Capital at Peking.

The splendour of Kublai's Court has been described by Marco Polo, who says that, "If you were to put together all the Christians in the world, with their Emperors and Kings, the whole of these Christians—aye, and throw in the Saracens to boot—would not have such power, or be able to do as much as this Kublai, who is the Lord of all the Tartars in the world."

Meanwhile, the conquests begun by Jenghis Khan in the West were continued by his successors.

The Mongol hordes not only swept over China, but subjugated Persia, Hindustan, Russia, Poland, Hungary, and turned back only at the gates of Vienna. The Mongol yoke over Russia was thrown off by Grand Duke Dimitri, who defeated the Mongols at the Battle of Kalka. At the end of the fourteenth century the Mongols were expelled by the Ming Dynasty from the throne of China. They had become too unwieldy, their power without co-operation amongst themselves gradually dwindled and dwindled until on the establishment of the Manchu Dynasty in China, which had ousted the Ming Dynasty, Inner or Southern Mongolia acknowledged the suzerainty of the Manchus.

Then, towards the end of the seventeenth century, Northern Mongolia sought the protection of the Manchus, and in 1691 acknowledged the suzerainty of the Son of Heaven. So had this remnant of the great Mongol Empire become vassals of China—the Chinese were clever in their methods of enthralment. They encouraged that effete form of Buddhism, Lamaism, amongst the Mongols, for their own ends. They turned the former Chieftains of the Mongol tribes into paid officials, and threw them a sop of the title of Prince. They transformed a formerly warlike people into a nation of peaceful nomads. They gave them a certain amount of home rule, whilst retaining the supreme power. They had, in fact, employed their usual methods of peaceful subjugation, and were gradually absorbing the country and its people. They encroached into Mongolia with their Colonists many miles north of the Great Wall; they sent Colonists to the fertile valleys of North Mongolia to till the ground. The Mongols, adepts as horsemasters and herdsmen, and absolutely unadapted for tilling the ground or for commerce, found themselves entirely dependent on the Chinese merchant for most of their few necessaries, and fewer luxuries; and so we find this remnant of a race descended from warriors—a nation who by the sword had held and ruled great empires—like some poor old soldier, his art of fighting gone, with no taste or experience of commerce or agriculture to take its place, compelled to accept the rule of its former vassal.

As one travels through their country one's thoughts fling back to modern civilization, to telephones, motor-cars, tube railways, the hurry and stress of modern life, and one cannot help thinking that perhaps after all the Mongols have the better part. But modern civilization, that great "Juggernaut," grinds on relentlessly; and nations that will not, or cannot, join the procession must be ground beneath the feet of those that will.

Japan has learnt that lesson, China is awakening, but the fate of Mongolia is hanging in the balance.

Mongolia is divided geographically and politically into two great sections—Inner and Outer Mongolia. The former skirts the northern boundary of China, and for the most part its Princes own allegiance to the Chinese Republic. Outer Mongolia, or Halhar, on the other hand, is the centre of the Hu-Tuk-Tu's sphere of influence. It consists of four big principalities: (1) Tse-tsen Khan; (2) To-She-tu Khan; (3) Jassask-tu Khan; (4) Sain-noin Khan, which are again divided into eighty-nine petty principalities.

In the north-west extremity of Mongolia is the disputed district of Uriankhai, which the Mongols wish the Russians to recognize as part of Mongolia. On the north-east of Mongolia is another district, that of Hulumbuiya, or Barga, which forms part of the Chinese province of Heilung-Kiang (north-west of Manchuria). This district is claimed by

8 MONGOLIA: ITS ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL ASPECT

the Mongols to belong to Outer Mongolia, as they allege that the population inhabiting that area has always been Mongolian. Otherwise Mongolia's boundary to the north reaches as far as Siberia; in the west it is hedged in by Russian Turkestan, Dzungaria, that home of Chinese exiles, and Sinkiang, or Chinese Turkestan. To the east the great Khingan Mountains, gradually sloping towards the sea, divides Mongolia from Manchuria, and the north of China fills up the gap on her southern boundary. This great upland of Mongolia, averaging 3,000 feet above the sea-level, is girdled by snow-capped mountains; within are fertile valleys, large rivers, rich mineral-bearing tracts, grassy steppes and sandy wastes.

In the seventeenth century Mongolia, or rather Urga, was already known to the Russians commercially.

The commercial missions took the opportunity of pushing trade during their stay in North Mongolia, and in 1727 a definite decision of frontiers at Kiachta was arrived at.

Russia's inroad into Mongolia had begun, and in 1858, by the Treaty of Aigun, a Russian Consulate was established at Urga, and Russia had obtained her definite stand in Mongolian territory.

In 1881 the St. Petersburg Treaty was signed by Russia and China. This treaty, as well as dealing with the re-establishment of Chinese authority in Ili, dealt with certain trade and frontier conditions in Mongolia.

The increase of the Chinese army trained on modern lines was sufficient to make her think of Japan's rapid military development. It was essential for her to obtain a buffer State between herself and China. By 1909-10 these sentiments were almost openly expressed. Certainly they were on the lips of more than one of her greatest Eastern diplomats.

In 1910-11 Russia commenced to press China to a consent of renewal in modified terms of this treaty of 1881. But the Chinese Government would not acquiesce, and negotiations continued to be spun out indefinitely. Russia backed up her request by dispatching a division of troops from Transbaikalia down the Trans-Siberian Railway. The Chinese gave in and little was heard of the episode, but Russia's action here showed her hand. She intended to brook no interference from China. Profiting by her experience at the hands of Japan, she did not mean to wait until China was strong enough to back her word by force. Japan barred her way temporarily in Manchuria. China was not to be allowed to prevent her wishes in Mongolia from being materialized. Then came Russia's stroke of luck, the outbreak in October, 1911, of the Chinese Revolution—a revolution that perhaps was half expected by those who knew of the strength of the Kuo-Ming-tang society. China was harassed by her internal troubles; her

troops, even if they had been ready for use, were fully occupied here, there, and everywhere in China itself.

In August, 1912, the Russian Government informed China that, as China refused to negotiate the revision of the treaty, she, Russia, had no other course but to consider the agreement of 1881 as remaining in force for another ten years. Russia, however, was ready to abolish the duty-free zone of fifty versts on the Russian side of the frontier as from January 14, 1913, and would have no objection to a simultaneous abolition of the privileges in vogue on the Chinese side. Prior to this, dissatisfaction in Urga had arisen amongst the Mongols against the Chinese Government, and especially against the Chinese officials in North Mongolia. Previous appeals to the Peking Government had met with no redress and but little response. In July, 1911, the Hu-Tuk-Tu took matters into his own hands. He presided over a meeting of certain influential Mongol Princes, and at this meeting it was resolved to seek the Tsar's protection. A deputation of Mongol Princes was dispatched to St. Petersburg, and arrived there in August, 1911. The deputation was officially received, and returned to Urga with the assurance that Russia would make representations to Peking.

The position was, however, a difficult one. Here was the nominal vassal of a neighbouring Power applying to Russia for protection. Russia's sympathy was with the Mongols. It was her policy to take this opportunity of consolidating her influence in Mongolia, and at the same time appearing as the protector of the Mongols. Accordingly, she informed the Chinese Government that she would not allow harsh measures to be taken against Mongolia, and proposed a *modus vivendi* based on the following conditions :

1. Conservation of inner *status quo* in Mongolia.
2. No admission of Chinese Colonists.
3. No Chinese garrison to be stationed in Halhar (Outer Mongolia).

The Chinese declined to accept these conditions, and in November the Mongols declared their independence and abolished the Chinese Government in Urga; the Amban San To (the Chinese Administrator) and the Chinese officers fled for protection to the Russian Consulate. At the same time the Mongols applied again to the Russians for money, arms, and diplomatic intervention.

Russia deemed it expedient to presume once more to establish an arrangement between Mongolia and China. In this attempt she repeated her previous demands, and the Republican Government of China, which by now had established itself at Peking, rejected them. Russia thenceforth advised China that she would negotiate direct with the newly-established Mongol Government. In September, 1912, she sent a special plenipotentiary, Monsieur Korostovetz, to negotiate with the Mongols direct at Urga. The pourparlers with the Hu-Tuk-Tu and his

Ministers resulted in the signing of a political convention and commercial treaty called the "Protocol."

The gist of this treaty gave to Mongolia the Russian aid in order that Mongolia might retain her newly-created autonomous Constitution, also the right of having her own national troops and of refusing to allow Chinese troops or Chinese colonization in her territory. On the other hand, Mongolia threw open her country to Russian trade, and guaranteed not to allow other nations any more trading rights than Russia held. The Mongol Government also guaranteed that in case they entered into any other agreement with China or any other State, such new agreement was not to infringe any claims of the present agreement with Russia without her consent. In a word, Russia gave Mongolia her protection for rights of trade; but the Chinese, being informed of this agreement, declined to recognize its value, insisting on their sovereign rights over Mongolia, and the impossibility of Mongolia entering into any sort of agreement without her sanction. At the same time, China began to assemble troops on the border of Inner Mongolia at Kalgan, Moukden, Kwang-cheng-tzu, Hailar, and Tsi-tsi-har, advancing also from Urumtsi in the province of Sin-Kiang towards Uliasutai and Kobdo. The Mongols, on their side, made warlike preparations, sending troops to the borders of Outer Mongolia.

In December, 1912, the Mongols sent a mission to St. Petersburg to express their gratitude for the conclusion of the agreement, and for the support afforded by Russia.

The leader of this mission was Prince Han Daradji, Minister of Foreign Affairs, assisted by Prince Shemine Damdim. They were well received in Russia, who promised Mongolia her aid. However, in April, 1913, China and Russia, having renewed negotiations, succeeded in elaborating an understanding, the conditions of which seemed sufficiently satisfactory to both sides.

The understanding recognized China's sovereignty over Outer Mongolia, and at the same time preserved some sort of inner self-government. The Mongol Ministers, who were watching these negotiations with great suspicion and distrust, lodged a petition simultaneously in Peking and St. Petersburg, and asked to be represented as being the party vitally concerned in the question. Meantime, the six conditions were submitted to the House of Representatives at Peking in May, but after protracted discussion, and after a vote by a majority in favour of ratification, the Senate, owing to the prepondering influence of the Kuo-Ming-tang party, refused to endorse the Russian proposals. Seeing that there was no possibility of reaching an understanding, Russia declared to China that she could not continue negotiations in the same strain. Accordingly, in July, 1913, she submitted a new basis of negotiation, embodying much harsher terms.

However, on November 5, 1913, a treaty was signed by Russia and China, which practically made Mongolia an autonomous buffer State, with the very nominal suzerainty of China. Neither Russia nor China were to colonize in or maintain troops in Mongolia, and Outer Mongolia was given complete autonomy, and the conditions as regards rights of trade of the Russians as before agreed in the Mongol-Russian Treaty still held good.

It should be added that several times during these negotiations of 1912-13 the Chinese attempted to negotiate with the Mongols. Their wish was that Mongolia should join the Republic, and letters and telegrams were constantly being exchanged on this subject. In every case the Mongols refused, alleging that they had nothing to do with the Chinese Republic. Their personal relations and allegiance had been rendered to the Manchu Dynasty, and with the overthrow of that dynasty all bonds were severed. The Chinese replied that they were of opinion that the Mongols owed allegiance to the Government of China, and not to the Manchu Dynasty. China pointed out the danger of Mongolia accepting Russian protection, and instanced the fate that had overtaken Korea and Bokhara.

The Mongols are not by any means unanimous in their pleasure at the conclusion of the treaty. The Princes are some of them hard hit by the withdrawal of the subsidies which they used to receive from the Peking Government. Now they have to obey the Central Mongol Government at Urga, which is nearer at hand than Peking, and is more exacting in its requirements.

More revenue is required to meet the expenses involved by the upkeep of an army in the field, consequently extra taxation has to be enforced. Needless to say, this taxation is unpopular amongst all classes of society.

The Mongols are beginning to find out, too, that government by their own countrymen is more severe and harsh than it was under the old régime.

The withdrawal of Chinese merchants is another blow, as the Russians are unable to replace them adequately.

The Mongols hoped to receive full independence, and are not satisfied merely with internal autonomy. They expected the whole of Mongolia to come under the Hu-Tuk-Tu's sway, and are dissatisfied and disgusted at the attitude assumed by the Inner Mongolians, who for the most part remained loyal to the Chinese Republic.

They also would like to have an accredited representative at St. Petersburg, and to have the Russian representative at Urga called a Minister, and not Consul-General. According to the latest information, they are very irate at Russia's action in cementing an agreement with China acknowledging even China's nominal suzerainty over Mongolia.

Still in January, 1914, Russia had promised the Mongolians further monetary aid and aid in a military sense, provided the latter did not tend towards straining the Russo-Chinese relations. But fighting up to quite recently continued on the Mongol-Chinese borders. That Russia has the dominating influence there seems no doubt—that Mongolia is in a bad plight seems equally true, so thus we find the country of Mongolia desired by two great Empires—one European, the other Asiatic. A race now dwindled to some 2,000,000 souls, the remnant of a vast Empire, a cat's-paw for nations whom she herself had once conquered—encroached upon, despised, almost effete, entirely priest-ridden. In this last word lies the cause of her decline—an ignominious state for a nation with such a history.

Mr. Perry-Ayscough entered Mongolia by the Northern Gate of Kiachta, and travelled by tarantass to Urga. Here he stayed with the Plenipotentiary Monsieur Korostovetz for some little time, and decided to make his way to Europe via Uliassutai, Kobdo, Kosh-a-Gatch, through the lovely scenery of the Chuyan Alps, and then via Biisk to Novo Nikolaievsk on the Trans-Siberian Railway. At Kobdo, which he found almost deserted, he saw the traces of the resistance the handful of Chinese had made against the Mongols.

The scenery he passed through, especially that in the Chuyan Alps, and the curious people he met must have rewarded him for the discomfort of his journey by tarantass in weather very often severe.

He says he never left the beaten track, if such tracks can be called beaten.

I entered Mongolia by the Southern Gate of Kalgan, and once having ascended to Han-no-pa found myself on that undulating Mongolian plateau called the Gobi. Han-no-pa is the starting-place for caravans travelling by various roads across Mongolia. My caravan consisted of a Peking cart and four ponies. I slept in the cart at night. Occasionally I met other travellers on the line that I took—some of them with camel caravans, some of them with bullock-carts, and some of them only on foot, wheeling all their possessions some 650 miles, from Urga to China, and using a sail to help them on their way. The only buildings met with in the desert are the very occasional temples, as the wandering Mongol tribes live in felt tents. At Tuerin there is a lamasery nestling in a small oasis between low rocky hills. This lamasery was filled with Lamas ranging in size from small boys to old men, and here one saw examples of what Carlyle called the rotary calabash system of prayer. As one neared Urga one came across more prosperous-looking Mongols in their various encampments; among them was a Mongol lady with her nurse and two children. The nurse was droning a Mongol nursery rhyme to the youngest child :

When you grow up you'll ride a big horse,

Yai—Yai—Yai—Yai-Ya.

Then you will marry as a matter of course,

Yai—Yai—Yai—Yai-Ya.

What will you do when your children cry?

Yai—Yai—Yai—Yai-Ya.

Surely you'll do the same as I,

Yai—Yai—Yai—Yai-Ya.

In Urga itself you see smarter ladies than these country ones, just as you see smarter women in London than in the country. At Urga, where I stayed a short time, I was given by the Chinese Amban a pass entitling me to the use of horses from any Mongol troop of horses as I went along, so I travelled across country off the main track to the Yero gold-mining district. Threading my way through valley after valley of lovely country, alternately riding over grass such as we find in England, only more luxuriant, and through dense forests of firs, oak, and silver birch. The ground was carpeted with wild flowers, such as Turk's-cap lilies, larkspurs, pinks, poppies, and peonies. Eventually I made my way to Kiachta, the northern gate of Mongolia. The rivers were swollen and crossing was often difficult. The horses we had to drive into the water to swim across as best they could, while we with the cart drifted over on a primitive Mongolian ferry. While still some three or four miles from Kiachta the town could be clearly seen perched on the side of a hill. Examining it through field-glasses one could see even more clearly than in the case of Urga the divisions of the town. The Russian quarter, with church domes and large houses above, then the Chinese walled city, and below, at the bottom of the slope, a collection of humble Mongol dwellings, consisting of felt tents or "yurts." Thus Russia and China hover over Mongolia like two great birds of prey, waiting to drop on their victim. Ostensibly they are there to supply the commercial deficiencies of the Mongols. The capital of Urga is more to the Mongols as a great monastery than a capital in our sense of the word.

Religion is everything to the Mongols, and it is in Urga where thousands of Lama priests gather, fattening on the superstition of the lay community. The Mongols have no shops.

From an economic point of view, Mongolia can be divided into two parts by a line running from Hailar, along the Kerulun River through Urga, Uliassutai to Kosh-a-Gatch. Roughly speaking, south of this line, with the exception of the Chinese colonization of the Chinese border, is unproductive. This land is called "gobi" or desert. In the west I understand it is a sandy waste, but the eastern portion is more of a steppe country. Grazing there is, at certain times of the year, sufficient to keep troops of horses, etc. Water is scarce and brackish, and in some places there are salt lakes. To the north of this line, how-

ever, there is a very different state of affairs. Here is a fine country said to be full of mineral wealth—gold, coal, and silver. So far there is only one gold-mining concern: that of the Mongolore Society who have scratched the gold in the Yero district, using Chinese labour and antiquated methods. In the province of Barga, which is really Manchuria, coal is being successfully mined. One of the few industries of the Mongols, if one can dignify it by so important a name, is the making of felt; this felt is made from wool and horse hair, and when made serves the Mongols for tents, portions of clothing, and for covering their carts. Some of this felt is exported to Russia and China. Cattle and sheep and hides are also exported, but perhaps Mongolia is noted more, in the east, for her Mongolian ponies. China buys nearly all her horse-flesh from Mongolia, and fine little beggars these ponies are, too, not only for rough hard riding, but for racing, polo, and driving.

The Russians contemplate building a railway from their Trans-Siberian line to Kiachta. Two routes have been suggested and surveyed—one from Masovaia on Lake Baikal, the other from Verhne-Udinsk down the Selenga Valley. Once this railway is completed, it cannot be many years before an extension is made to Urga. Then, probably, a line will be constructed across the Gobi Desert to Kwei-hua-chêng, from which place a line is now being completed to Kalgan to join the Peking-Kalgan Railway. Here a branch line may perhaps be thrown out west from Urga to Uliassutai, Kobdo, and Semipalatinsk, which would connect up again eventually, no doubt, with the Samarkand-Bokhara district railway system. Let us look forward in imagination to the time of the completion of this railway system. Cook will be issuing tourist tickets to the East via Urga, and we shall find that a break, perhaps, is allowed at Urga of a few days to enable tourists to see this ancient Mongol capital. Guides will show the tourists the great monasteries, the resting-place of that gigantic bronze Buddha. They will point out the ancient site of that iniquitous prison, and perhaps retail with relish some of the atrocities that used to be committed there. Peking will be brought four days nearer to London. Mongolia would then be well under Russian influence. The wealth of that rich northern portion would be developed, and those fertile valleys put under the plough, forming another granary for the world. Sporting men will be making trips to Mongolia, and the Mongols themselves will have become an almost negligible quantity: such is the picture that comes up in one's mind. The onrush of civilization! But how useless it is ever to attempt prophecy in the Far East. The Eastern mind is not to be comprehended by the Western. The East arrange matters so differently from what we expect. Even now the Russians, who formerly had bullied China, are beginning to fondle the Chinese Republic, or rather, their President, Yuan-Shih-Kai, and have ordered

the return of their Russian troops from Tientsin. A reaction, too, has set in in Mongolia against the Russians, the Mongols' former protectors.

One cannot help admiring that virile Russian race—no one who has watched the continuity of her policy of advance could help doing so—certainly Mongolia, unable to govern herself, under Russian protection has a chance of carrying out reforms that have been neglected by China. That iniquitous prison system, familiar to us all from Mrs. Bulstrode's picture in the *Illustrated London News*, for example, might then have a chance of abolition. The degenerating effects of Lamaism might then, too, in time be lessened, and education might gradually be inculcated. Russia thinks in centuries, not in years, and we can realize only too well the danger of any great Russian influence in Mongolia permeating into Tibet. There is but a strip of China between Mongolia and Tibet. The Lamas of one country are constantly moving into the other. The Mongol Lama is often educated at Lhasa. The very Hu-Tuk-Tu himself, the present ruler of Mongolia, is a Tibetan, the son of a former steward of the Dalai-Lama of Tibet. The Dalai-Lama of Tibet is the Spiritual Ruler of both countries, with thousands of fanatical followers. Should Russia be suspected of obtaining a dominating influence in Mongolia, it behoves Great Britain simultaneously to obtain a dominating influence in Tibet. We can only hope that Great Britain does not intend to imitate the merchant who spent so much care and time over his household affairs, that his business abroad failed to pay sufficient funds to meet the household bills.

Lord LAMINGTON: I have no personal acquaintance with Mongolia, but I followed with deep interest the vivid descriptions given by the lecturer of the Russian advance which goes on in such undeviating fashion in all those parts of Central Asia. I was unaware of the recent railway extensions toward Afghanistan of which mention has been made in the paper. The line from Samarkand to Termez is a very formidable factor as regards the position of Afghanistan between ourselves and Russia. We all know the powerful and indeed omnipotent position of Russia in Northern Persia, and it would seem that Russia will soon acquire definite ascendancy in Mongolia. I was unaware that the Mongolian and Tibetan frontiers are, with the exception of a narrow strip of Chinese territory, practically coterminous.

I feel very much the force of the concluding words of the lecture. There is a danger of our so intently gazing on home affairs, at a time when we are considering questions of the future political basis of the United Kingdom, as to neglect the problems of our Imperial position, especially in the Middle and Far East. The lecture, apart from its

political interest, was also extremely vivid in its descriptions of Mongolian life, and a most striking contrast was drawn between the great Mongolian race of former times and their descendants of to-day. If they only number two millions, that must be a very large decrease from their numbers in the Middle Ages, when they gained the sovereignty of a great deal of Asia and some parts of Europe.

A lady said that in reference to the railways toward the northern frontiers of Afghanistan, she visited those territories of Russia twice recently with an interval of eighteen months between, and was much impressed with the work done in strengthening the railway system in that time. It was not only that an extra line had been laid down toward the frontier, but the whole system had been very much strengthened constructionally. It was very interesting and noticeable to see how rapidly the Russians could develop their railway systems.

Mr. C. HOWARD BURY said that when he recently travelled by the Trans-Caspian Railway he was told that a new line had been surveyed which was to start from Saratov and to run through Khiva, Bokhara, and Karshi to Kilif on the Afghan frontier; also that a new railway had been surveyed and earthworks had been started north of Tashkent at Aris and to go to Pispek. This part was expected to be completed in five years time. This line was then to be prolonged to Verny and on through Kapal to Semipalatinsk, thus linking up the whole of the frontier of Southern Turkestan by railway and in direct communication with European Russia.

Colonel PEMBERTON said he had visited the borders of Mongolia in 1891 on the north, and in 1898 on the south, and even then the Russian intention to establish her influence in that country could be foreseen.

Many Russian maps had been prepared and shown at meetings of societies in St. Petersburg, which assumed Russian ascendancy in Mongolia. He had no doubt that within the next few years the lecturer's prediction of a railway line running from Urga to Kalgan and connecting with the Peking railway, would materialize.

Captain OTTER-BARRY had mentioned a railway from the Trans-Siberian line to Kiachta, which would open up a very fertile country in Northern Mongolia.

Siberia was a wonderfully well-watered country with many great navigable rivers, and the same could be said of the northern portion of Mongolia, so that in many places there was an opening for wheat growing and other cultivation and, therefore, for the settlement of a large population. What were the two million Mongolians as between the vast Chinese and Russian populations? For them independence or a separate political existence was impossible—by the nature of things they could not avoid absorption sooner or later in the Russian Empire—and

it was to be anticipated that the Mongolians themselves would come to appreciate the benefit of passing from the control of China to that of Russia.

And after all, it must be remembered in this connection, that China had a great task of her own before her—one which would assuredly absorb the energies of her people and Government for many years to come, so that it would be long indeed before she would be in a position to spare time, money, or attention necessary for the development of the resources or a closer study of the welfare of the peoples in the outlying portions of her great empire. Under Russia the Mongolians would develop a European type of civilization. The Russians had done good work in Turkestan—advancing education there more, perhaps, than among their own peasantry at home. Their administration, though bureaucratic, was in the main sound and good, and their administrators showed considerable powers of adaptation, which made him think that Mongolia had much to gain from the transfer to Russia. In respect to Tibet, there were undoubtedly affinities of religion and outlook between the Tibetans and the Mongolians which must effect the question so far as concerned our attitude towards that country.

Should Russian political influence predominate at Lhasa, which might well be the result of coterminous frontiers in that part of Asia, our prestige would suffer and the security of the Tibetan frontier of our Indian Empire be imperilled. Should political parties at home continue to waste time in party warfare to the detriment of the larger affairs of the Empire, we should assuredly, sooner or later, reap the consequences of our neglect. In regard to the proximity of Mongolia to Tibet, he was not sure that the strip of Chinese territory proper lying between those countries on the Koko Nor side, was so narrow as had been suggested, or whether a Russian advance southwards in this direction was a feasible military operation; but in any event China would certainly be alive to any danger in this quarter, and could be relied upon to do her best to maintain her hold on the intervening territory—her sole means of communication with Chinese Turkestan. Rest assured that whatever the Republic's domestic preoccupations it would in the future be the policy of Chinese statesmen to increase their hold on Chinese Turkestan, among other means by the construction of railways and the improvement of communications generally. He doubted whether the day would ever come when Russia would have it in her power to cut off Chinese Turkestan by an advance southwards into Tibet. The conquest could, he thought, be more easily effected by an advance from the west from Russian Turkestan to Kuldja and Kashgar.

The Chairman (Sir THOMAS HOLDICH) : We have all listened with very great interest to the lecture. We heard one not long ago from Mr. Gull which dwelt on the descriptive and social side of Mongolian

life, while to-day Captain Otter-Barry has surveyed the political situation in Mongolia. The one thing which struck me most, perhaps, was the indication he gave of the great decadence of Mongolia in the comity of nations from the time when she ruled Asia and a part of Europe. We must remember that she played a very large part in history from times earlier than we can trace. Those valleys which we now know to be so fertile were the nursery of the human race; later it was from them that those terrible hordes of savages spread over Asia and part of Europe, which so seriously affected the destinies of nations. But now there is nothing left but some two million Mongols living in a poor country. We have been told this afternoon that at least one-half of Mongolia is fertile, and capable of profitable cultivation. This fact answers a question which has always puzzled geographers. How was it possible for such multitudes of people to be bred in an inhospitable country such as we thought Mongolia to be? The investigations of recent travellers like Captain Otter-Barry have shown that there is no great matter for astonishment, since so large a part of the country at least is capable of supporting a large population.

The point of the whole story presented to us to-day is the degree to which we are affected by Russia's relations with Mongolia. I confess, for my part, that I do not think it matters to us in the least whether Russia makes herself effective in Mongolia or not. If it matters at all it is in this negative way—namely, that if Russia is occupied thus in the Far East, she will have her attention turned from other parts of the Nearer East, where she might be much more troublesome. I am not acquainted with the Mongolian frontier, but I am well acquainted with the Afghan frontier. Although we know now what we did not know twenty or thirty years ago—*i.e.*, that there will be enormous difficulties in the way of any military advance toward India from the north—we have to recognize that there is still what may be described as an open door on the Persian frontier of Afghanistan. So long as Russian attention is turned away from that door, I think we have reason to congratulate ourselves. I was never myself an adherent of the creed of pessimists who thought there was great danger of Russia attempting to violate the Indian frontier. Her position may have been strengthened by the railways of which we have heard; but we have all known for a long time that no matter what preparation Russia may make, or however much she may improve her military position on the Afghan border, she is no longer able to walk into Afghanistan irrespective of our interference. Since the time she could have done so without much difficulty there has grown up a very fairly efficient Afghan army, and there is no doubt whatsoever that under any circumstances any violation of the northern frontier would be met by the Afghan army, supported by us. We must also consider the enormous development in the Far East in military matters.

We know what has happened in Japan, but we do not know what is happening elsewhere to occupy the attention of Russia. I think that Captain Otter-Barry has given us a great deal to think about and much to thank him for. You will join me, I am sure, in a hearty vote of thanks to him for his interesting lecture and excellent illustrations.

Lord LAMINGTON: I should like to be permitted to say that Sir Thomas is such an authority on the Indian border and Afghanistan that what he says thereon merits the utmost respect, and I would not challenge his remarks as regards Russia's advance towards the Afghan border. But when he suggests that it is satisfactory that Russia's attention should be engaged elsewhere, thus diverting her from Afghanistan, you must remember that there is another portion of the East, the Nearest East, where Russian ambitions have been blocked by reason of the Balkan War and its consequences. The Balkan States have now acquired a much stronger position than was previously expected. If Russia has thus been thwarted, at all events for the present, respecting her hopes of getting to the Bosphorus, is it not more than likely that she will endeavour to make up for this by finding access to the open sea through the Persian Gulf, where our interests as to the safety of the Indian Empire are vitally concerned? That is one point at least that does require watching, and I feel strongly that this country should adhere to the axiom laid down on the subject by Lord Lansdowne some ten or eleven years ago that we could not regard with indifference any other European Power coming down to the Persian Gulf. It is most essential that we should safeguard our position there. As regards what Sir Thomas said about the Afghan army, I read only the other day—I think it was in the *Times*—that it was in a rather parlous state, that there is much discontent and disorder going on, and that the Ameer is in a rather critical position.

The CHAIRMAN said he was interested to hear what Lord Lamington had said. He did not think that so long as we held our own on the sea we need trouble ourselves about the Persian Gulf.

SIR ALFRED LYALL AND THE UNDERSTANDING WITH RUSSIA*

By SIR H. MORTIMER DURAND

THE CHAIRMAN said that, as they all knew, Sir Mortimer Durand had written an exceedingly interesting book on the life of Sir Alfred Lyall, his former chief and predecessor in the high post of Foreign Secretary to the Government of India. Sir Alfred's views on the Anglo-Russian Agreement were of special interest, because he was one of the first, if not indeed the first, to propose an agreement with the Russians in regard to Central Asia. It was, therefore, with very great pleasure that he asked Sir Mortimer to read his paper on the subject.

Some months ago, after the publication of my Memoir of Sir Alfred Lyall, I was asked by the Council of the Central Asian Society to read before the Society a paper upon Lyall and the Anglo-Russian Convention of 1907.

I was rather doubtful about doing so, for, in the first place, the Memoir treats with considerable fulness Lyall's views on the subject, and, further, any attempt to discuss our present relations with our old rival in Asia is apt to lead one out upon rather dangerous ground. But Lyall was a very distinguished member of this Society, and a man for whom we all had a deep regard. As his former colleagues and friends wished me to revert to the subject, and as the special object of this Society is to study all that concerns the affairs of Central Asia, I did not feel that I could properly decline to meet their wishes.

Before I begin I would ask you to remember that the primary object of this paper is to show Lyall's views; and with this object I shall have to make a large part of the paper consist of extracts from his writings, and to read instead of talking, as I should prefer to do.

It is unnecessary for me to dilate upon the notorious fact that for something like a century—ever since the fall of Napoleon—England and Russia have faced one another in Asia with, to say the least of it, considerable jealousy. There was, indeed, considerable jealousy before that time—before the middle of the eighteenth century—when an English company tried to open up a trade with the northern provinces

* Read May 26, 1914.

of Persia through Russian territory. The Russians eventually put an end to this project, and one can hardly be surprised at their doing so considering that the company launched armed vessels on the Caspian, and that some of its people entered the service of the dreaded Persian conqueror, Nadir Shah. The Russians, who were then very weak in that part of the world, could not afford to see the Caspian turned into a Persian lake and the Caucasus taken in rear by Nadir's armies. In Europe Russia and England were on good terms, and had a tradition of common interests. This tradition was strengthened by the wars against Napoleon, but later it was strained by the divergence of their views about Turkey, and it never extended to Asia. Everyone in this room knows what the position has been there, and how as the two Powers advanced towards one another from East and West the friction between them became more and more acute. When, in 1854, the Turkish troubles resulted in the Crimean War, Russia was much weakened in Europe; but as regards Asia, the consequence was that she was set free to complete the subjugation of the Caucasus, and, that done, to set out upon her natural "slope" from the Caucasus eastward. Since then war between England and Russia has been avoided, but we have more than once been very near it, and until the Convention of 1907 was signed Russia and England were regarded by every Asiatic Power—perhaps by the world—as natural rivals in Asia, if not as natural enemies. The belief that sooner or later they must meet in a desperate struggle for the supremacy of the East was practically universal. That belief had a great influence upon the attitude of all the Asiatic Powers, and reacted strongly upon Europe. It is useless to inquire which of the two countries was mainly responsible for this state of affairs, but it existed, and was a perpetual danger to the peace, not only of Asia, but of the world.

Of course, the English in India were specially interested in the possibilities of a conflict with Russia. Few in number, among a vast population of Asiatics, with an army very small indeed for the tasks it had to perform, they naturally regarded with concern the steady approach towards the Indian frontiers of a great European military Power. So long as they had none but Asiatic States to deal with, they felt sure of their ability to hold their own; but they knew that the close proximity of such a State as Russia must add greatly to the difficulties of their position. Some of them, it is true, had no fears as to the ultimate issue. Relying upon the loyalty and fighting power of our Indian troops, and the fierce independence of the Afghans and mountain tribes, they faced without alarm the prospect of a Russian attack. This was my own view. In an *Edinburgh Review* article of 1897 I urged that Russia was not strong enough to attack us, and that we should do well to show more confidence in our own strength, which, so long as the people of India trusted us, was immense. Others were

less confident, and regarded the approach of Russia as a great danger to our Empire. But whatever might be the difference of opinion in this respect, almost all alike looked upon the Russians as likely to prove troublesome neighbours. The accepted view in India was that the farther we could keep them away from our frontiers the better for us. And this view was just as strongly held by English statesmen.

In 1877, when the war between Russia and Turkey broke out, Alfred Lyall was the Governor-General's Agent in Rajputana, and I was serving under him. To my surprise I found that his views on the subject differed widely from those generally held. The following is an extract from my Memoir :

“Almost everyone in India was strongly on the side of the Turks. Englishmen and Indians alike seemed practically unanimous on that point. I can well remember the interest with which the war telegrams used to be received. We had at Mount Abu ‘vakils,’ or representatives of the Native States, under Lyall’s charge. These people used to come to me constantly to study a map on which I marked the progress of the opposing forces; and though they were almost all Hindus, their sympathy with the Turks was unmistakable. Lyall, with his experiences of the Mutiny and his wide range of thought, was decidedly for the Russians; and it was then that he first began to expound to me the doctrine that our proper policy in Asia was to come to an understanding with them. He fully recognized the fact that a sweeping Russian success in Asia Minor might ‘overset the balance of all Asia, and may threaten our communications with India in more ways than one;’ but he wished them such success as would break down the power of Turkey in Europe.” The fact is that Lyall was not inclined to regard the Mussulman Powers with much sympathy. The occurrences of the Mutiny had convinced him that the Mussulmans had been at that time our bitterest enemies, and he never got over the feeling that, as a whole, Islam must be against us. No one could accuse him of religious bigotry, and his verses show that he did sympathize with the fighting spirit of the Moslem. Take, for example, the old “Pindari,” the first poem which made him known :

“My father was an Afghan, and came from Kandahar ;
 He rode with Nawab Amir Khan in the old Maratha war :
 From the Dekhan to the Himalay, five hundred of one clan,
 They asked no leave of prince or chief as they swept thro’ Hindustan.”

The whole poem breathes the same spirit, and many similar passages could be quoted from other pieces of his. Also, as time went on, he made many Mussulman friends. But as between the two great Indian faiths, the Mussulman and Hindu, his personal sympathy was with the second, which appealed to his meditative and subtle mind. Anyone who compares his two studies at Delhi, the “Hindu Ascetic” and “Badminton,” cannot fail to see how he regarded the tendencies

of the two faiths. Moreover, setting aside any question of this kind, he regarded the Mussulman States in general as obstacles to civilization; and with all his keen soldierly feeling he hated the slaughter and cruelty which obtained among them. In an *Edinburgh Review* article of 1902, "England and Russia during the Nineteenth Century," he wrote: "No greater misfortune has ever befallen the European Continent than the occupation by Mohammedans of Constantinople, one of the finest positions in the world, commanding the best lines of communication between Europe and Asia—a position admirably adapted to be the centre, as it was for nearly a thousand years, of civilization and commerce, and which has, instead, become a fortress of barbarism, an extinguisher of light and natural life, the focus of unending discord, persecutions, and ferocious internal struggles of a kind that has long since disappeared elsewhere in the West."

In any conflict between the Turk and the Russian, therefore, Lyall inclined to the side of the Russian, and his sympathies had the same bent with regard to Russian conquests among the Khanates of Central Asia. It was a curious irony of fate which made him Foreign Secretary in India immediately after the Russo-Turkish War, and identified him with the steps taken by Beaconsfield's Turkophile Government. We had checked Russia at Constantinople; she struck back at us in Kabul; and from 1878 to 1880 Lyall was the chief adviser of Beaconsfield's Viceroy, Lord Lytton, in his efforts to repel Russian influence from Afghanistan.

Nevertheless, though Lyall did his best for British interests when Russia and England were committed to antagonistic action, his views and sympathies had not changed; and in 1881 he officially proposed that we should throw over the policy which we had followed for so many years—that of trying to keep Russia at a distance. As stated in my Memoir of Lyall I found the proposal among his papers. It was in an envelope which bore the following docket in his handwriting:

"Note of 1881 in regard to a treaty with Russia on the subject of the Afghan north-west boundary. This contains the original suggestion upon which the boundary was afterwards formally demarcated, and it also foreshadowed the policy of an agreement with Russia in Asiatic affairs. Lord Morley reprinted in (it?) in 1906 for the negotiations with Russia."

Now that matters have gone so much farther, it would serve no purpose to quote from this paper; but I may remark that Lord Morley expressly authorized me to refer to it as I did in the Memoir. He read Lyall's docket, and said I was quite free to publish it. You will see that Lyall claimed to have sowed the seed from which the new policy has sprung.

Now, I have no wish to claim for him anything more than he deserves. It may be said at once that there had been arrangements

with Russia before 1881, and that the question of an understanding with her as to the position of the two Powers in Central Asia had been more than once discussed. Even Lord Palmerston had observed that "when Russia and England come to an understanding the peace of Asia is assured." But the real point is this, that until 1881 the object on our part of any understanding had always been to prevent the contact of British and Russian possessions and protectorates in Central Asia. What Lyall advocated was, that instead of trying to get from Russia a formal agreement limiting her advance—which she would never give while faced by fluid uncivilized States or tribes—we should agree to her advance right up to the limit of the protectorate for which we were responsible, if on her side she agreed to a formal treaty binding her to abstain from all interference beyond that limit. He thought Russia might be inclined to agree to such a treaty, not so much because of any specific advantages she might hope to secure from it as because the treaty would strengthen her position in Central Asia by exhibiting our influence and power on her side instead of against her. It is to be remarked that although Russia had then made vast strides forward over the sparsely inhabited countries of Central Asia, she was still very weak there. Her military forces east of the Caspian were insignificant, and she had much difficulty in providing for them. We rightly believed that, if left to herself in Central Asia, she would one day become strong, but she was not strong then. She had met with little serious opposition except from climatic and geographical difficulties, and had not been forced to develop her military strength in that quarter of the world.

Lyall's proposal was not immediately followed up, and Russia soon made another move forward, as he had foreseen :

"From Merv, last home of the freelance, the clansmen were scattering far,
And the Turkoman horses were harnessed to the guns of the Russian Tsar."

She was still very weak in Central Asia, unable from all her scattered garrisons to put 50,000 men into the field, and she must remain so until her railways were pushed forward from north and west to join the two widely separated wings of her advance ; but her outposts were now not far from Afghanistan.

Then, in the winter of 1883-84, came the first step on our part towards a formal understanding with Russia. I have written about this in my Memoir of Lyall :

"He was deeply interested at this time in learning that his views regarding an understanding with Russia were bearing fruit.

"I see signs (he wrote) that the Foreign Offices of India and England have come round to the view which originated with me in 1881, when I strenuously recommended that instead of working against Russia in Central Asia, we should propose to demarcate by formal treaty the boundaries of Afghanistan, the treaty to be not with the

Afghans, but with the Russians. This view is put in my *Edinburgh* article.'

"As a matter of fact, the policy was on the point of being accepted and put into practice, for Colonel Ridgeway* and I were then in the Indian Foreign Office, and during the winter we had both arrived at the conclusion that an arrangement with Russia offered the best prospect of coming to a satisfactory settlement of the Afghan question. My own opinion was largely coloured by Lyall's systematic advocacy of this course of action; and so, perhaps, was the opinion of Lord Ripon, who accepted generally the views put forward by Colonel Ridgeway and supported by me. The result was the Afghan Boundary Commission of 1884-86, which, though it passed through some troublous times, and very nearly ended in war with Russia, eventually led to an agreement, and paved the way for a general understanding. The real difficulty at this time, and later—indeed, until the Japanese War—was not that the Government of India was averse from an understanding with Russia, but that the Russians, firmly believing 'the twentieth century was theirs,' were reluctant to tie their hands by any comprehensive engagements with us. And this was natural enough."

The following are quotations from the *Edinburgh Review* article of January, 1884, to which Lyall referred. After describing the position of Afghanistan between the two great Powers, he writes:

"Since every diplomatic arrangement with Afghan Princes has been made with very slight reliance on its intrinsic value or durability, but entirely in order that England might check Russia, or Russia annoy England, the result is a series of rather ludicrous attempts to treat the Amir as a civilized ruler of a modern Government. For over forty years we have been contracting treaties, engagements, and formal understandings with the ruling Amir, or with Persia or Russia over his head, we have guaranteed the Amir's frontiers, we have subsidized him, armed him, and twice we have fought him. . . . But not all the fighting, nor all the negotiations of the last forty-five years, has brought us one inch nearer to the solution of the problem of finding a *modus vivendi* for Afghanistan between Russia and England. Hitherto each move on either side has been wrong; the pieces have been simply replaced, and the two players are still sitting opposite to each other with Afghanistan as the chess-board between them.

"The end is not yet visible, though some potent conclusion cannot be far distant. . . . We may venture to predict that the only durable basis on which the peace and development of Central Asia, and the protection of our own north-west frontier, can be established, will be found in some formal and public convention with Russia in regard to the affairs of Afghanistan. A treaty with the Amir of Kabul is a delusion and a snare. . . . But a compact with Russia would bring

* Afterwards the Right Hon. Sir West Ridgeway, G.C.B., G.C.M.G., K.C.S.I.

the whole settlement within the province of international law, and would render us independent of the fortunes or caprices of uncivilized governments. Meanwhile, it is no paradox to maintain that our position in India is not, after all, affected disadvantageously by the ambiguous manœuvres of the Russians in the Turcoman country and along the Oxus, or by the clouds that sometimes gather with obscure menace beyond the horizon of our north-west frontier. All Upper India still looks, instinctively and traditionally, to the Afghan passes as the roads which bring fresh armies into India, to upset dynasties, and to throw the whole country into confusion. Whether the leader be Mongol or Russian is of small concern; the rumours of foreign invasion from Central Asia perplex with chronic fear of change the people who inhabit the great northern plains; and, therefore, the reputation of being able and ready to hold the gates of India against all comers furnishes an argument in favour of the English Government that far outweighs a multitude of minor shortcomings. Nor, indeed, is there anything new in the fact that apprehensions of external danger may rather strengthen than shake the position of a skilful and resolute administration."

These last words afford a good example of Lyall's confidence and knowledge of India. They were published in January, 1884. The following year saw the Amir Abdurrahman at Rawal Pindi conferring with Lord Dufferin, while the Anglo-Russian Commission was at work on the northern frontier of his kingdom. During his visit occurred the Penjdeh incident, when a Russian force attacked and dispersed a body of Afghan troops which was said to be outside Afghan limits. It was rather rough diplomacy, and very nearly led to war between Russia and England, but the immediate result was to evoke a remarkable outburst of loyalty in India. The Indian Chiefs offered contingents to serve against Russia; the Indian Press, which had of late been showing a captious spirit, suddenly changed its tone, and the position of the Indian Government was shown to be very strong. It was an excellent lesson for all concerned.

The whole story will be found by anyone who cares to read it in my Memoir of Lyall. It ended, thanks to the able negotiations of Sir West Ridgeway, in the formal agreement between Russia and England to which I have referred above. A portion of the Afghan frontier, from the Hari Rud to the Oxus, was then laid down. It has since been respected by Russia, and I believe no trouble has ever arisen about it.

I will not attempt to quote all the passages in Lyall's numerous review articles, subsequent to this agreement, which deal with the relations between Russia and England; but it may be stated that for the next twenty years, and more, his efforts were directed towards deprecating suspicion and unfair judgments on the part of Englishmen,

and in advising a more confident reliance on our own strength. "English rule," he wrote, "has made India the most powerful State in Asia," and he would never admit that if we continued to rule with justice and resolution we had anything to fear either from internal agitation or from external attack.

As to Russia, an *Edinburgh Review* article of January 7, 1890, upon Curzon's "Russia in Central Asia" is a good example of Lyall's line of thought. Curzon had written strongly about the danger to us involved in the Russian railway extensions, and had contrasted in pointed terms our inaction with the Russian achievements generally. "I am showing that while English statesmen have chattered in Parliament, or poured gallons of ink over reams of paper in diplomatic futilities at the Foreign Office, Russia, our only admitted rival in the East, has gone continuously and surely to work, proceeding by the three successive stages of conquest, assimilation, and consolidation, and that at this moment, whether her strength be estimated by topographical or by numerical considerations, she occupies, for offensive purposes, in Central Asia a position immeasurably superior to that of England, and for defensive purposes one practically impregnable."

Lyall demurred, pointing out how much we had done ourselves of late, not only in railway construction, but also in annexing and consolidating great territories. He fully admitted that the Russian approach towards India was a serious matter for us, but he would not admit that it was a matter to cause us alarm, or that we had any great cause of complaint at her proceedings. "England," he wrote, "has been so long accustomed, in Europe and in Asia, to isolation and immunity from invasion, that the sight of a neighbour laying out military railways towards her land frontier, taking up points of vantage, sketching plans of campaign, and generally preparing to support a political prospectus by military demonstrations, rouses her to wrath and alarm. And yet, as Mr. Curzon points out, the progress of Russian annexation eastward was not only natural but unavoidable; she was carried onward by her own momentum, until she brought up against the breakwaters presented by China and Afghanistan; nor can she be blamed for utilizing her new position in Asia to support her machinations in South-Eastern Europe. . . . When, therefore, the English treat Russia's movements and military dispositions as a direct menace, when they impugn her diplomatic proceedings as tainted with intrigue and bad faith, they are apt to forget that she is at most doing no more than every great European Government has done, and is indeed doing, in like circumstances, and that it is the novelty of the system in its application to England that makes it so exceedingly distasteful to ourselves."

Curzon had described and condemned the behaviour of Russia in 1878, when she marched troops towards the Afghan border, and

sent a mission to Kabul. Lyall again demurred. "This view of the case is, however, too exclusively English. The Russians would answer that England has twice in a generation stepped in to thwart, by war or armed intervention, their vital interests, and was in 1878 throwing her weight in the scale against Russia at the Berlin Congress. A nation that plays at bowls in this fashion must expect rubbers; nor would the highest Continental authorities upon the game admit, we fancy, that Russia's feint upon Afghanistan (which entirely failed) was in any respect unwarranted by the rules of high political duello."

For the rest Lyall had no illusions as to the necessity of being thoroughly strong from a military point of view. "England in Asia, like her neighbours in Europe, is now lying side by side with a powerful state of equal magnitude, which may be friendly or hostile according as a collision of interests can or cannot be avoided by dexterous steering. We are fairly forewarned of the course upon which collision is most probable, and upon those very plain indications we have to calculate in handling our ship. The English nation must understand that in this situation there is nothing abnormal or astonishing, that it demands not panic but precaution, and that to show indignation at veiled threats, or to stand aghast at duplicity, is to betray an inexcusable unfamiliarity with the manners and methods of Cabinets in dealing with the vast issues of modern politics. But we must also remember that to adopt beforehand every possible safeguard, and to be always ready for war, is by no means the same thing as assuming war to be inevitable."

Lyall, indeed, went so far as to doubt whether we could indefinitely keep the two railway systems apart.

"The overland route between Europe and India is manifestly destined to be some day one of the chief highways of the world. . . . And although we quite admit that, in the singular position of our Anglo-Indian Empire, the proximity of a powerful and heavily armed neighbour involves military and political considerations of peculiar gravity, yet we must nevertheless observe that nowhere in the civilized world—even among jealous and almost hostile States, have strategical reasons been held to be so imperative as to prevent the junction of the main railway lines between two Continental countries."

Again, in 1895, when writing about the war between China and Japan, and the proposals for a joint mediation of the European Powers, which were declined by Russia and France, Lyall returned to his old argument:

"It is due to the memory of the late Tsar, Alexander III., to record the fact that his attitude and policy towards this country were not only not adverse, but friendly, pacific, and straightforward in the course of these transactions. The result has happily been a material

improvement in our relations with Russia. . . . Nothing can tend more to the maintenance of peace, both in Asia and in Europe, than a good understanding between the two great European Powers that rule the north and south of Asia. They have many interests in common—interests far more important than the questions that divide them.”

In 1902 appeared a very valuable article from Lyall's pen on “England and Russia during the Nineteenth Century.” It is a thoughtful piece of historical writing which well repays study. He might have gone farther back with advantage to his argument, but perhaps he goes far enough. After tracing the reciprocal history of the two Powers from the beginning of the century until the Crimean War, in 1854, he observes that the war effectually crippled for twenty years the resources of Russia for vigorous aggression in Europe and Asia. “But,” he says, “against this must be set the disadvantage that the alliance between England and Russia, or at least the tradition of common interests, which began with the coalitions against the first French Empire, and was mutually recognized as a policy for fifty years, was broken down in 1854, and has never since been cordially revived. From this war may be dated, we believe, the feeling of distrust, the propensity to condemn off-hand and indiscriminately the motives and movements of Russia, that have more than once disturbed the calm judgment of the English nation at times when the fair and dispassionate consideration of a dispute on both sides of it might have adjusted some acrimonious controversy.”

Lyall agreed that even as long ago as 1815 the policy of Russia had been “a determination to make the threat, if not the accomplishment, of an invasion of India a part of every future quarrel with Great Britain.” He said the policy had since been once or twice distinctly affirmed. But, as before shown, he declined to see that it was in any way illegitimate. Speaking of Persia and our interests there, he says :

“Russia might use a paramount influence at Tehran to assume exclusive charge of the future railway-lines across Persia to the sea ; she might acquire control of the State's Customs, and might establish a naval station on the Persian Gulf that would interfere with our interests in those waters, and might even flank inconveniently our maritime communications with India. She might insist on territorial cessions or privileges in Eastern Persia that would bring her down on the western frontier of Afghanistan, and place her where she might some day turn the great quadrilateral of mountains in the Afghan midlands by a march across the open country lying between Seistan and Kandahar. We do not believe that such a distinctly hostile demonstration would ever be made by Russia wantonly, or except under what she might hold to be adequate provocation on our part ; yet we have already shown that the idea of so disposing her forces in Asia that she might be ready to alarm and preoccupy England at

some critical conjuncture, in Europe or elsewhere, has long been conceived by Russian statesmen and soldiers. Nor, indeed, could a rival, whose path towards Constantinople we have crossed twice in the last fifty years, be expected to overlook such an obvious manœuvre on the field of political strategy."

Then he goes on to speak of Afghanistan, to draw a parallel between it and Turkey, and to refer to possible difficulties being raised by Russia. His article closes with a passage on the old lines:

"In political settlements everywhere there is no finality, and in the climate of Asia they are apt to be particularly short-lived; nor is it a matter of surprise that awkward points have a tendency to reappear. Yet it is greatly to the interests of both European Governments that a friendly attitude should be preserved in regard to the Afghan frontier, for the tranquillity of all Asia depends upon a good understanding between England and Russia at its centre."

But the opportunity for a general understanding had not come. Russia was not ready for it. When I went to Persia as British Minister some years before, I hoped that there might be a possibility of coming to some agreement, but I soon saw that the hope was vain. Even before my arrival in Tehran I had a rather significant warning on the subject. The Russian Minister and I had some friends in common, and, unknown to me, one of them wrote to him about me. I was shown his answer, which was not only civil but cordial. Yet it contained the words: "I am very glad to think that the antagonism of the policies of which we are the representatives will not transport itself upon the personal terrain." That the policies could be other than antagonistic had never apparently occurred to him, or he wished to give me an intimation beforehand that any attempt at a rapprochement would be useless. In 1907, when the Convention had been signed, we had the authority of two men who had special opportunities of knowing the truth for believing that the delay in coming to an understanding was not the fault of England. Lord Sanderson, who had spent his life in the Foreign Office, said in the House of Lords "I do not think that at any time the fault has been with the Government here. The difficulty has been at St. Petersburg, where the dominant political party has been unwilling to fetter itself by positive engagements except on terms that would have been unacceptable to us." They thought, Lord Sanderson said, that "they had something to gain, and at all events nothing to lose, by delay." "It is only recently that there has been a change in this respect." And Lord Lansdowne said: "Although we were willing, the Government of Russia apparently were by no means prepared to come to terms with us" . . . "until lately we know that she kept us at arm's length."

The real difficulty, as I have pointed out elsewhere—in my Memoir of Lyall—was that up to 1904 the Russians believed "the twentieth

century was theirs," and the statesmen who wished for a settlement were overborne by the military party.

Then came the war between Russia and Japan, and the startling succession of Japanese victories by land and sea. To most Englishmen these were a relief. It was felt that the Russians would for some time to come be powerless to threaten India. Lyall stuck to his old views. I have referred to the matter in the Memoir. He delivered an address in this room, leaning to the side of Russia rather than Japan, and urging that the triumph of the Japanese boded ill in the long run to European dominion in Asia. When a few months later the Russians fired upon our fishing fleet in the North Sea, Lyall commented upon "the incredible rashness" of the Russian Admiral, and said it was "quite impossible to admit the pretensions of the Russian naval commanders"; but he earnestly hoped for a pacific solution, and was greatly relieved when it came about. "The English did well to be angry," he wrote, "yet our Ministers did better to avoid war." Nor did he ever change his views about the Russo-Japanese conflict. He wrote to a French friend in the following year: "In England I am in a small minority of those who believe that unqualified rejoicing over Japanese victories is a proof of little wisdom or foresight. . . . But I should not expect the yellow races to break out westward unless the European Governments in Asia go on weakening themselves on that continent by internal quarrels. A really good understanding between England and Russia on Asiatic affairs ought to raise a powerful barrier against any such encroachments, but such a league is just now far distant."

In the year 1906 Lyall contributed to the *Edinburgh Review* an article examining the political situation in Asia by the light of recent developments. This is a paper full of knowledge and thought. It should even now, eight years after its appearance, be read by everyone who takes an interest in Central Asian affairs. Lyall showed how wide and rapid had been the extension of European dominion outside Europe, and how for the last twenty years the arena of combat, the focus of burning questions which kindle war, had been transferred to Asia and Africa. He also pointed out that of late the Asiatic peoples had been waking up and increasing their military strength, with grave consequences affecting all foreign dominion over countries lying outside the pale of Western civilization.

"While the European Governments have been quarrelling among themselves over partitions of territory, spheres of influence, and trade facilities in Asia and Africa, some of the stronger native States have been taking lessons from them in the art of war, and even the independent tribes are everywhere exchanging their matchlocks for rifles. In fighting qualities the men of the best Asiatic and African races are very little inferior to the European soldiers; in numbers they have

always been superior in the field; so that, with equal arms, they are becoming formidable enemies."

For a notable example of the changed conditions he compared the English Expedition to Magdala in 1868 with the Italian campaign against Menelek in 1896.

"And the culmination of this change in the relative military strength of Eastern and Western nations is illustrated by the recent reverses of Russia in Manchuria. In the art and practice of modern warfare the two combatants, Asiatic and European, were here at last found to be equal. The experiences of that war mark an epoch in history, portending unforeseen, momentous, and far-reaching consequences. In the first year of the present century a competent observer of the tendency of affairs in Asia might have been justified in believing that Russia and England held the future destinies of the Continent almost entirely in their own hands. He might have predicted that these two mighty nations would sooner or later come into violent conflict, which would determine the destiny of surrounding kingdoms, and that from West to the Far East the spread of European dominion would be thenceforward irresistible. No one can now venture on any such presumptuous forecast, since one of the strongest military Powers in the West has met its match in the farthest East, not only on land, but on the sea. The naval victories of Japan are unprecedented in the long annals of the interminable warfare between East and West. Land battles have been won and lost on either side, but from the days of Salamis to the days of Lepanto and Navarino, the Asiatic has invariably gone down before the European in a great sea-fight. The sudden appearance of Japan as a formidable wielder of sea-power is, therefore, a strange and portentous phenomenon, and the watcher of the political horizon may well feel, to quote the metaphor of a famous poet, like an astronomer 'when some new planet swims into his ken,' and may stare at the Pacific like Cortez, 'silent upon a peak in Darien.'"

Lyall speaks of the awakening of China, and its possible consequences to European nations, and he goes on as follows:

"There can be little doubt, at any rate, that the superiority in the art and appliances of war, by which Europeans have won their dominion in Asia, is on the wane; the armies of Eastern and Western States will henceforth meet on even terms in this respect; the era of facile victories is closing."

Turning to the Anglo-Japanese alliance and its effect upon the position of England and Russia, he says it is "undoubtedly a brilliant stroke of high diplomacy, which has turned the balance of military power very much in our favour. Above all, the alliance makes for peace in Asia; it has greatly reduced the possibilities of war, and peace is what England has always desired, while at this moment it is hard to believe that any other policy can possibly be contemplated by Russia."

This brings him back to his old point: "The question arises . . . whether the opportunity cannot be used for endeavouring to find some practical solution of a problem which in one way or another affects the interests of every Asiatic kingdom, from Constantinople to Peking, and has an indirect bearing upon international relations in Europe. For no one can have failed to perceive that the recent depression of Russia has disturbed the equipoise of the great European Powers."

He shows the great importance to France and to England of the controlling power exercised by Russia in Europe over the spirit of restless militarism, and points out that "Russia and England cannot be perpetually manœuvring against each other in Asia if they desire to act together in Europe."

"And," he proceeds, "it is time to make a stand against the fixed idea, which has been too prevalent in the minds of those who speculate upon the outcome of the existing situation in the East, that the inevitable issue must be some decisive trial of strength between these two great empires in the region which lies between their Asiatic frontiers. Those who contemplate such an eventuality, and who authoritatively insist that we must deliberately prepare for it, have not taken into account the dislocation of all relations and interests in Europe which must surely be the result of such a collision, the perils which are inseparable from the chances of war, and the very doubtful gain that could accrue to the winner. They do not reflect that the reverberation of such a conflict would shake the whole Mohammedan world, would stir up subject races on both sides, and that the spectacle of fierce Mohammedan soldiery set against each other by Christian commanders could be neither edifying nor particularly salutary."

Lyall then describes the effect produced by the present relations between Russia and England upon the Asiatic countries which intervene between the two Empires—"the chess-board upon which the game for ascendancy is being played"—upon Tibet and Persia and Afghanistan. The description is too long to quote now, but it is instructive, and it leads him to his invariable argument, that for all sakes England and Russia should come to a settlement of their differences. He closes it by pointing to the good already effected by the partial settlement of 1886. Afghanistan, he says, has been comparatively quiet and prosperous for twenty-five years.

"This period, unprecedented in the annals of Afghan tumult and bloodshed, of internal order and external security, is due, first, to the protection and aid rendered to two successive Amirs by the British Government. But it may be ascribed, in a scarcely less degree, to the delimitation of their frontiers, with the consent and co-operation of Russia, ratified by a public convention which the Russians have since observed in good faith, although the wild ways of Afghans on a rough borderland have occasionally tired their patience.

“This convention, in fact, initiated a change in the character of the relations between Russia and England in Central Asia; they had hitherto been contentious, they now became for the first time conciliatory. Our earlier practice had been to object and remonstrate against each successive stride, which brought the Russian conquests across the desert lands from the Caspian to the Oxus, to accept with incredulity reassuring explanations, and to protest when they were falsified by events. . . . At last the British Government resolved to try a change of method in their policy. The Russians had persistently evaded any engagement that would have bound them to stop short in their advance, leaving a vacant interspace between their own annexations and the Afghan border; a kind of no-man’s-land, where no one could be responsible for disorders. So we offered to acquiesce in and recognize what we had previously been attempting to hinder, to agree that Russia’s occupation might extend up to the Afghan line, on the condition that this line should be demarcated by a joint commission, and that Russia should sign a written convention to abide by it. The arrangement was made with the Amir’s consent, though he was not one of the signatories. The parties to the contract were two civilized Governments, answerable for any breach of it before the public opinion of Europe.

“We have laid some stress upon this transaction, because we suggest that it may be taken as an example and indication of the only policy which, if it can be pursued, may relieve the strain and friction which have so long embarrassed our relations with Russia in Central Asia. We are by no means concerned to rely upon verbal asseverations or to defend the diplomatic expedient to which Prince Gortschakoff and Prince Bismarck have occasionally resorted. When the stakes are high, such players will not show their hands at a critical moment; the rules of their game permit them to mislead an adversary. But international engagements belong to another category, nor can it be alleged that Russia has not usually observed them, or that her behaviour towards England has been invariably unfriendly, or that she has habitually availed herself of opportunities for embarrassing us in Asia.” . . .

Lyall then quotes a speech by Sir Robert Peel about the strict good faith and friendly feeling shown by Russia during the first Afghan War, and goes on :

“It may be admitted that since 1842 much has happened, and that the approximation of the two Empires in Asia has operated to increase the tension of our reciprocal relations. Russia has made no secret of her intention to use the position which she holds on the Afghan frontier as a means of counteracting any adverse pressure we might bring to bear upon her policy in other directions, and we are forewarned against a manœuvre that would in certain contingencies not be altogether illegitimate. This is one symptom, perhaps the most acute, of the

present anomalous complexion of affairs, which fosters a veiled hostility in Asia between two Governments, whose interests undoubtedly point toward amity and concordant views in Europe."

Lyall supports his conclusions by a reference to the views of some recent Continental writers, citing the well-known Vambéry, as also a Russian and a Frenchman, who all agree that Russia and England have before them an opportunity which may be used to their mutual advantage, and for the benefit of the Asiatic countries under their influence. Vambéry, whose political prepossessions were always anti-pathetic to Russia, says that the two Empires have undertaken quite as much as they can manage in Asia, and that their dominions require relief from the heavy burden imposed by alarms and rumours of impending war. The present state of things, he says, can only be changed if the two Powers work together in peace and unity. The French writer, M. Ronire, points to the possibility of an entente between Russia and England, and the Russian even advocates an alliance. Lyall closes his article as follows :

"For ourselves, we are disposed to welcome a discussion which will bring into prominence the striking consequences that have ensued from the rapid expansion of European dominion into Asia and Africa, because we doubt whether they have yet been generally realized. The result has been to complicate and entangle the politics of both Continents, so that the Western Powers are closely concerned with the fortunes of the Far East; and in Central Asia Kabul has to be protected from London. The European nations who have acquired great possessions in distant lands are under the necessity of maintaining great armies to guard their frontiers against each other, as well as to uphold their Empires among alien races by an exhibition of superior strength. . . . All these interests and responsibilities engender irritation and disputes, which react upon international relations at home. On the other hand, the prediction . . . that the populous kingdoms of the Far East would take their military lessons from Europe, and would mobilize their multitudes for self-defence, if not for aggression, appears likely to be fulfilled. . . . We are quite aware that no immediate solution of these far-reaching problems is to be expected; that sanguine anticipations may defeat their objects, and that the views and suggestions we have ventured to indicate must not be pressed prematurely. Nevertheless . . . we have endeavoured to lay before our readers, however inadequately, the outlines and salient points of a situation which is affecting the peace and prosperity of at least half the world."

But an attempt at a solution on the lines he had indicated was nearer than he supposed, for little more than a year later was signed the Anglo-Russian Convention, of which so much has been heard ever since. As the principle of the Convention, a friendly understanding

with Russia, was one which he had so long advocated, Lyall received the news with great satisfaction, and he was not disposed to attach much importance to the objections which were brought against some of the terms of settlement—notably the partition of Persia into spheres, and very unequal spheres, of Russian and English influence. He thoroughly recognized the fact that no such Convention would make it safe for us to relax our attitude of vigilance and military readiness in India; but taking it as an honest attempt on both sides to make an end of the old antagonism in Asia, and to maintain the balance of power in Europe, he cordially approved of it.

You will have seen that so far I have not attempted to discuss the merits of the question. What I have tried to make clear to you is that for something like thirty years Lyall had worked, both officially and in a large number of published review articles, for the principle of an understanding with Russia. What share his arguments had in bringing about the understanding no one can say, except that they certainly had a material share in bringing about the Afghan Boundary Commission of 1884-86, and the frontier agreement, which in his own words “initiated a change in the character of the relations between England and Russia in Central Asia.” It may be said also, without fear of serious contradiction, that Lyall was throughout the most consistent advocate of an understanding, and that his writings give the best exposition that has ever been given of the political situation in Asia from the point of view of the school, if indeed there was a school, which aimed at a friendly settlement of the differences between England and Russia. Whether the Convention is a sound attempt to solve the difficulties of the position, whether it is succeeding, and will succeed, in effecting its object, are separate questions upon which there are great divergences of opinion. But it can do nothing but good to study the views on the whole subject of a man who brought to bear upon it such exceptional experience of the East, and a mind of such exceptional calibre. That was, I understand, the main object of the Council in asking me to read this paper. Lyall himself, to quote the last *Edinburgh Review* article he ever wrote, just before his death, regarded the Convention as “a significant intimation that, after long diplomatic fencing and military manœuvring on either side,” Russia and England had “at last made the discovery that their true interests lie in a mutual understanding.” And in that fact he rejoiced.

I might, perhaps, stop here, and not trouble you with any remarks of my own upon the subject; but there are one or two things I should like to say. I shall not trouble you long.

I wrote in my Memoir of Lyall, about his views on the Convention: “In principle he was doubtless right. An understanding with Russia, on equal terms, carried out with good faith and self-respect on both sides, cannot fail to be of great advantage.” And in an *Edinburgh*

Review article written ten years earlier I said: "We should do well also to show less distrust of the intentions of the Russians. It is seventy years now since Russia has made any serious encroachment on the frontiers of Persia, and this is a fact worth remembering when we are considering the probability of her violating the frontiers of Afghanistan." It seems to me that to show distrust is to invite and almost to justify disloyalty. I do not know why, but we English are much too prone to impute bad faith. If anyone here doubts this, I would ask him to turn to our party politics. Is it not the case that we are divided into two sections, and that each section habitually accuses the other of bad faith? Are not the words "lie," "liar," in habitual use in the mouths of Englishmen speaking of other Englishmen? To anyone who has spent his life in countries where an Englishman's word is a power, this habit is one of the most striking and unpleasant things in our national life. And what we do to each other we do to foreign nations—often with little more reason. And they do not like it.

Having said this, I hope it will be understood that in the remarks I am about to make nothing is farther from my desire than to impugn Russian good faith. An understanding between England and Russia is a logical carrying out of Lord Lansdowne's wise policy in abandoning the attitude of "splendid isolation" and drawing nearer to France. I earnestly hope that it will long continue, and that time will prove the Convention to have been an entire success. To make it a success we must accept it in the spirit in which he accepted it. "I am ready," he said in the House of Lords, "to trust Russia to observe this agreement in a spirit of absolute loyalty." We do not set to work to ruin our understanding with France by throwing doubts on her willingness to abide by her agreements. We must not do it to Russia.

But it seems to me, nevertheless, that there are two points which should be steadily borne in mind. These are, first, that in all good faith each party to an agreement may be inclined at times to interpret his own rights under it more liberally than is altogether in accordance with the interests of the other; and, secondly, that the Convention does not materially alter the necessities of our military position in India.

As to the first point, if our Government when making the agreement showed insufficient firmness in "holding up our end," they are likely to show the same tendency in carrying it out, and their action in the matter may be worth considering—even now.

In the debate on the Convention, Lord Curzon pointed out that their action involved a considerable draft on our confidence—"a claim that we who know nothing of the negotiations, or the degree of valour with which the Government backed up British interests, are bound to accept whatever terms they submit to this country, on the simple assurance that the result will be more harmonious relations between

some other great Power and ourselves." Lord Curzon had, perhaps, some ground for his implied doubt. Most of us who have represented our country abroad have been tempted at times to think that our Governments, in some of their dealings with Russia and other countries—America, for example—had, to use Falstaff's immortal simile, shown no more valour than a wild duck. In any case, Lord Curzon and other critics had little difficulty in showing that, so far as the specific terms of the agreement were concerned, we seemed to have made a very bad bargain. Now, Russia was, of course, perfectly justified in securing for herself the best bargain possible. It was the right and duty of her Government to get for her all they could. But it was the right and duty of our Government to get for us all they could, and it seems difficult to feel confident that they did so. To take two points out of many. The Russians were to have in Afghanistan any trade facilities the Amir might give us, but there was no clause securing to us any facilities he might give the Russians. Also, we promised Russia equal commercial opportunities in that country where our influence predominated, but she did not promise us equal opportunities in regions where she was predominant. As Lord Lansdowne observed: "A more one-sided application of a sound principle I never came across." Much more might be said about Afghanistan and Tibet.

Now look at Persia. This is a point upon which, at the time, I felt strongly, in part because Lord Crewe, as the spokesman for the Government in the House of Lords, made me responsible for having recommended the arrangement to which the Government had arrived. I feel sure this was a wholly unintentional misrepresentation, and in any case the matter was of no importance to anyone but myself. But let us consider the arrangement. I have marked on the map three lines which show the position clearly. Take first the red line drawn right across Persia from the Turkish Frontier to Afghanistan. Seven or eight years before the Convention was signed our trade and our influence were paramount and almost exclusive up to that line, and we had considerable influence and trade to the north of it. I had then been five years in Persia studying the question, and I drew that line as showing the facts existing in 1899. I also made proposals for safeguarding and, if possible, improving our position all over Persia. You will observe that the line included the important centres of Kerman-shah, Hamadan, Ispahan, and Yezd. I did not propose the division of Persia into spheres of influence bounded by that line or by any other. The line showed the limit up to which our influence and trade were paramount and almost exclusive. Beyond it to the north Russian influence was strong, and in parts Russian trade was gaining ground; but our influence was still great, and our trade by no means excluded. We had Consulates right up to the Russian border—at Tabriz and Resht and Meshed. Russia had only just begun to touch the fringe

of the southern zone at Ispahan and about Seistan. The southern zone was, in fact, very much more in our hands, politically and commercially, than the northern zone was in Russian hands. Now it is, I believe, the case that in the period between 1900 and 1907—though this was the period during which occurred the Russo-Japanese War—Russia improved to some extent her position in Persia. But I find it difficult to believe that she improved it to such a degree as to justify the bargain then struck with her. What was that bargain? Our Government took what Lord Crewe called the Durand line—which, I repeat, was not proposed by me as a proper line of division between British and Russian spheres of influence—and they made it the southern limit of their Russian sphere. Not only this, but they drew it to the south instead of the north of the important centres which I had indicated as lying within our paramount and almost exclusive influence, thus surrendering, so to speak, the bastions which made the strength of the line. Not content with that, they made neutral territory of the bulk of the country to the south of the line, where British influence had for generations been paramount and almost exclusive, and they restricted our sphere to the south-east corner of Persia. It is true that they did not bring the Russian sphere down to Seistan (nor had I), but deflected the line upwards in North-Western Persia, so as to exclude from the Russian sphere a considerable piece of country, mostly desert. This, however, as you will see, was small compensation for the sacrifices made elsewhere.

The arrangement was defended on strategical grounds, and it is believed that the Government acted on the advice of Lord Kitchener. If so, there was no doubt much to be said for the arrangement from the strategical point of view. But the sacrifice in other respects was great.

As some of you may remember, I disclaimed at the time the responsibility for recommendations which I had not made, saying that my object was not to criticize the Convention as a whole, but that as regards Persia I had advocated no such arrangement, and that as an isolated proposal it would have been indefensible.

I mention the incident again now mainly to emphasize the fact that the country would do well to watch the arrangements made on her behalf, and to take care that with reference to railway-lines and other matters of importance, British interests are not sacrificed to the laudable desire of being conciliatory and generous in the interpretation of the Convention. It looks as if in negotiating the Convention our Government had been so anxious to get an agreement that they were ready to accept almost any terms—and that is rather a dangerous way of looking at the question. Besides our material interests we have to think of our reputation in Asia, especially in India and among the Mussulman Powers which stretch from the Punjab to the Bosphorus. It is, possibly, going too far to say, as Lord Ronaldshay said in the

debate on the Convention, that we "govern India almost exclusively by prestige." Still, prestige is of great value in the East, and indeed anywhere. It is easy to scoff at the word, but to do so shows a want of acquaintance with practical affairs. Prestige is to international politics what credit is to business. Again, we have to remember our obligations to the Mohammedan Powers and our interest in their goodwill. We should be very careful to do nothing which seems to them unjust or unfriendly if we can possibly avoid it, even when they may seem to us unreasonable. It has always seemed to me that Lyall's prepossessions made him inclined to attach less importance to that consideration than it deserved.

The situation in Southern Persia, and in Persia generally, is disquieting, and deserves special attention. The position is a difficult one, for, even assuming that we have the right to protect British interests in that country by sending a British force sufficient to restore and maintain order, it is not easy to see where the force is to be found without inconvenience. I notice in the *Central Asian Society's JOURNAL* a letter by Colonel A. C. Yate on this subject, in which he takes exception to a statement on the part of Lord Hardinge that the Government of India would always be firmly opposed to the despatch of a British expedition. Lord Hardinge may be too confident as to the future views of the Indian Government, but it must be remembered that, though we have obligations towards Persia and many ties with her—ties which, if reports now current are true, may be of vast importance to us in the near future—yet our first Asiatic interest is our Indian Empire, and to that everything else must be subordinate. The occupation of Southern Persia by British troops might involve a very serious development of military strength, and put a considerable strain on our Indian army. Nothing could be worse than sending an insufficient force, as we did before, and a sufficient force will be a large force. Nor can we assume that the occupation would be temporary. All experience points the other way. Considering all the possible eventualities involved, I feel that our Government will do well to be very cautious in committing the country to such a move. The supply of British bayonets is limited.

This brings me to the second of the points which I mentioned above—that the Convention does not materially alter the necessity of our military position in India. No convention with Russia or any other Power can do so. If conventions come to be regarded as a substitute for armed strength, then they are worse than useless. This is no fanciful apprehension. When the alliance with Japan was concluded, there was some unwise and undignified talk about the defence of our north-west frontier by the aid of Japanese troops. And in the debates on the Convention of 1907, while Lord Curzon protested against any reduction of our Indian military expenditure, more than

one Member of Parliament rose to advocate it on the express ground that the Convention had now averted the danger of a Russian invasion. Holding the gates of India is our business. The idea of calling in our allies to do it for us is dishonouring to ourselves and to the loyalty and courage of our Indian soldiery. Nor is it any mark of distrust in the good faith or goodwill of Russia to say that any reduction of our Indian army because of our Convention with her would be wholly indefensible. The gods have a way of shaking at intervals the political kaleidoscope in Europe and bringing out novel combinations. It is conceivable that, without any fault on the part of Russia, our interests and hers may some day again come into conflict. In that case we must expect trouble in India. Surely we should never rely for the safety of our own shores upon anything but our naval strength. No conventions with the naval Powers of Europe would make us do that. A sufficient army is as necessary to India as a sufficient fleet is to England. Russia is not weaker in Asia now than she was before the beginning of the century. She is far stronger. Although she failed in the colossal task of subduing on the far side of Asia a nation of more than forty millions of men fighting for its existence at its own doors, the campaigns in Manchuria were an extraordinary revelation of her resources and fighting power. And excluding altogether from consideration the possibility of hostilities with Russia, there are many other contingencies to be faced. It is not inconceivable that Russian and British troops may be found some day standing together against a common enemy in Asia. In any case, such contingencies as that to which I have referred—the troubles in Persia—show how necessary it is that India should be strong. On all accounts, conventions or no conventions, the maintenance of our military strength in India is just as clear a necessity as the maintenance of our naval strength in Europe.

For the rest, it is perhaps too early yet to say that the Anglo-Russian Convention has proved a success. It is certainly too early to say that it has proved a failure. Our duty, I submit, is to hope that it will be completely successful, and to do everything in our power to make it so.

The CHAIRMAN: I think we must all thank Sir Mortimer for having given us such a clear and impressive exposition of the views of that very talented Indian administrator, Sir Alfred Lyall. It is not often we have the chance of knowing what is in the minds of great Anglo-Indian officials. Indeed, it is usually the case that the views of those who know India best are least known in England. But we have had to-day a complete account of the views of Sir Alfred Lyall on the important subject which he had so much at heart—that of an agreement with Russia. It is particularly interesting to find that so far back as 1881 he had formed the intention of pressing with all his great

ability this idea of an understanding with Russia. With what has been said as to the reasons for Russia's advance in Central Asia, as set forth by Sir Alfred Lyall, I am myself in very cordial agreement. I have met many Russian officers in Central Asia who spoke quite plainly of invading us in India ; but I doubt very much whether this was ever the deliberate intention of the Russian Government. It has always seemed to me that the Russians were forced southwards very much as we were forced northwards through India to the Himalayas. When a great civilized Power finds on its borders disorderly tribes and uncivilized States, it is an exceedingly difficult thing for that Power to keep still, and it is more particularly difficult to do so when on the other side there is a strong rival Power which may advance and will probably take some action in regard to those States and tribes if it does not take action itself. For that reason I think it was a perfectly natural operation on the part of the Russians that they should year by year be impelled farther and farther southward toward India, just as much as we were impelled toward the Afghan frontier and the Pamirs in Central Asia. I think, therefore, that, as Sir Mortimer Durand has pointed out, it was unwise of us to impute any bad faith to the Russians when they did advance. We had to move forward ourselves, and those who have been connected with frontier affairs must realize how difficult it is, in the face of another rival Power, to keep still when alongside those disorderly and uncivilized peoples. Sir Alfred Lyall evidently grasped that fact years ago, and he therefore came to the conclusion that the best way to meet the situation was by mutual agreement with the Russians. The first step was the demarcation of the north-west Afghan frontier. I can remember when that was being done how we thought that it must be only a very temporary measure, and that sooner or later the Russians would overstep the boundary. But, as a matter of fact, it has been kept intact to this day ; the boundary fixed in 1886 has not been transgressed, and Sir Alfred Lyall is proved to have been in the right. This was the foundation of the later agreement with Russia, and we can only hope that this may prove equally successful.

Lord LAMINGTON : We are all very grateful to Sir Mortimer Durand for the very wonderful address he has given us, which was full of historical research and elucidates many points. When Sir Mortimer referred to the Convention, and to the necessity of upholding it and not imputing bad faith to Russia, I could not help thinking of some considerations he did not mention. The Convention was concluded just after Russia had suffered the severe reverses of her war with Japan. I understand that we then decided to promote the policy Sir Alfred Lyall had so steadfastly advocated, and that the basis of our proposed agreement was so extraordinarily magnanimous and unduly generous that Russia repudiated it and did not believe we could be

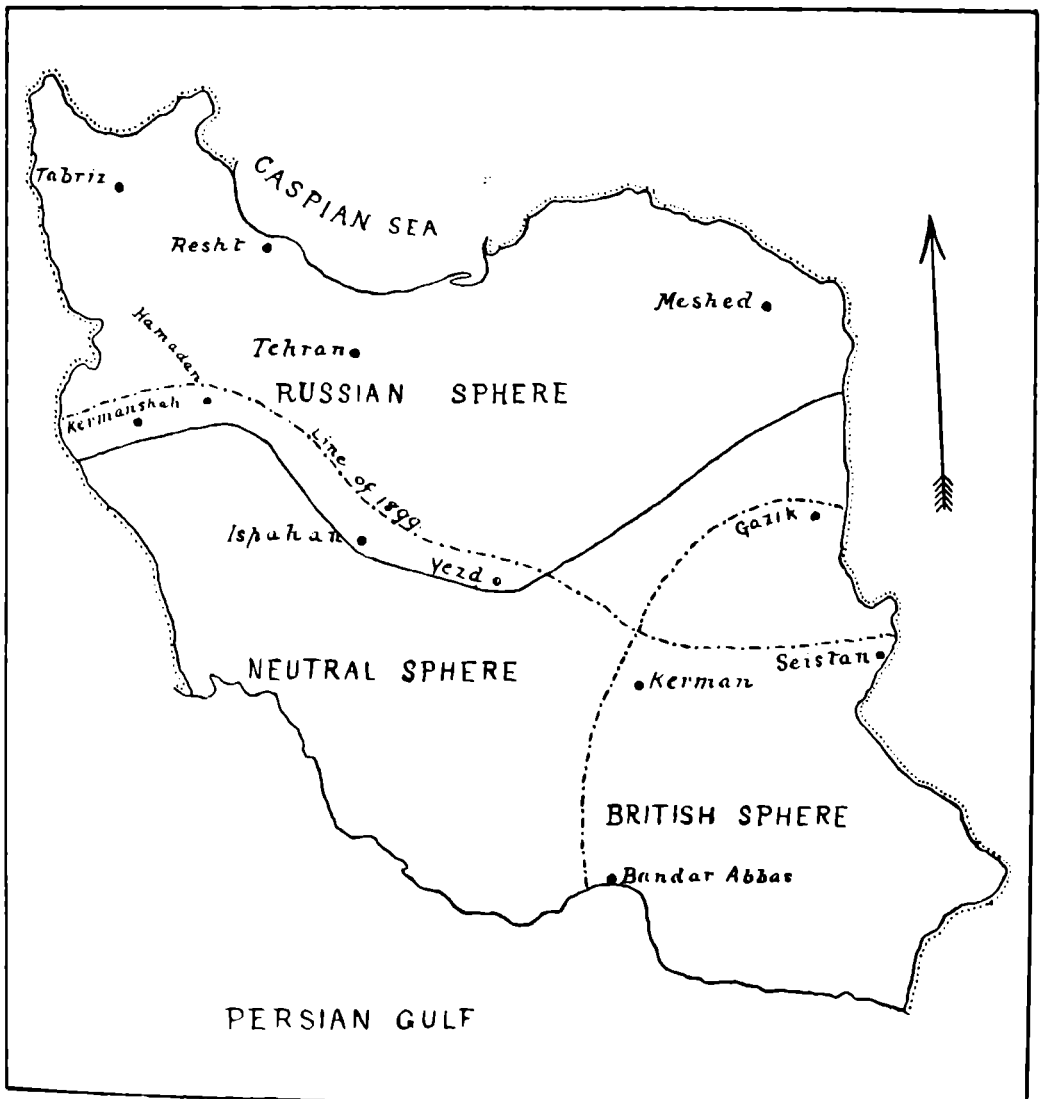
sincere in making such terms. The 1907 Convention is, I understand, practically the second edition of our offer. As regards Persia, it sets forth that the object and intention is to preserve the independence and integrity of the country; whereas from that day to this there have been in Persia thousands of Russian troops. Is that carrying out the object of the Convention? It is ridiculous to say for a moment that the Convention has upheld its proper purpose. I consider it has absolutely failed therein, and that this is proved by the mere fact of the continued presence of these troops in Persia. I do not believe there is any person who thinks for one moment that these foreign troops are ever going to be withdrawn. The Russians, we know, are trying to get to an open water port. I note that recently a memorandum has been presented to the Czar by Baron Rozen, in which he indicates that Russia, having suffered a check in the direction of getting to the Mediterranean by way of Constantinople, her whole energy and the object of her policy should be directed to Central Asia and toward the provision of a port in Persia. That is laid down distinctly as a policy. We cannot, in face of such suggestions, sit on one side and say we have the Convention, and that that duly safeguards us. Sir Mortimer very truly said that no Convention can absolve us from the necessity and duty of looking after our own defences in India. My complaint against the Convention is that it has failed to carry out its objects, and is not removing the causes for controversy and friction between Russia and ourselves. I do not myself believe that had there been no Convention, Russia would have been a whit stronger in Persia to-day than she is with the Convention. As to the alleged strategical advantages of the spheres of influence it laid down in Persia, I believe that Lord Kitchener never agreed to those spheres. I cannot speak with absolute authority, but I believe Lord Kitchener was asked what he was prepared to defend with the existing army in India, and he answered that he was prepared to defend the area which was afterwards agreed to as within the British sphere. But that was not the same thing as his approving of the demarcation of spheres as laid down. Sir Francis Younghusband told us quite frankly that Russian officers declared to him that there was a desire and intention to get to India, and I have seen in a Russian paper the remark that there can be no real friendship between ourselves and Russia so long as we retain India. Now, I do not wish to impute bad faith to Russia, but it must be remembered that there are always two parties in Russia, one of them in favour of carrying out agreements with perfect honesty and fidelity; and the other, a strong party, always anxious to seize every opportunity and to press forward an aggressive policy. It is no uncommon thing for two Russian representatives at one city to press forward strongly opposite policies. Anyone here who knows Persia will admit that that is an absolutely true statement.

Colonel C. E. YATE, M.P.: There was a sentence in the lecture relating to the Penjdeh incident which seemed to imply that the Afghans were supposed to have occupied a point in Russian territory. It never occurred to me before that that could be so. The Russians at that time had only just occupied Merv, and had not penetrated beyond that, and the Afghans, as far as we understood at the time, were within their rights in garrisoning their frontier at Penjdeh. The place was afterwards given up to the Russians, and this was one of the terms upon which a peaceful settlement was reached. But I do not think we can say that the Afghans were occupying any Russian territory in those days.

In respect to Persia, one point that emerges from the discussion is the necessity for us at the present time to be watchful of our interests in the Gulf and in the south. We ought to remember that attached to the Anglo-Russian Convention of 1907 there was a letter from Sir Edward Grey in which he laid down in most definite terms our special interests in the Persian Gulf, and placed on record the fact that Russia did not deny those interests. I think the expression used was that the British Government had taken formal note of the statement to that effect made by the Russian Government. When we come to think of it, the essence of British interests in the Persian Gulf consists of the maintenance and safety of the roads leading up from the Gulf toward the interior of Persia. Those interests are secured to us by the acknowledgment of the Russian Government, and it behoves us to maintain in every possible way access from the Gulf to the interior. This is a most important matter to us at the present moment when the Trans-Persian Railway scheme is under consideration. It is understood that a proposal is on foot to construct an international line from Baku in the north, through Tehran and down to Bunder Abbas or Charbar in the south. What we have to secure is that all British goods coming from India or the Gulf should have just as clear a run into Persia as the Russian goods coming from the north. If British and Indian goods are to have this free run, it follows that the break of gauge on the railway should take place at Ispahan or Yezd, and the Russian gauge should not come south of that. The remaining part of the line should be on the Indian gauge. We must adhere to Lord Lansdowne's declaration of the need for using every means in our power to prevent any foreign Power acquiring a port in the Persian Gulf. We have, therefore, to see that the Russian line is not brought to the Gulf, and that the railways in the south are on the Indian gauge and in British hands. I will only add that, as an old assistant of Sir Alfred Lyall's, I have listened with great delight to the paper. All will agree that Sir Mortimer has given us a wonderful treat.

Colonel A. C. YATE: I agree with Lord Lamington that the independence of Persia has not been secured by the Convention. A great

authority on Persia, with whom I was recently in conversation, expressed to me the opinion that Russia would never evacuate Azerbaijan, and he went farther and said that Russia welcomed any British act savouring of intervention in Southern Persia as affording a pretext and parallel for her own more aggressive attitude in the Northern. We all know that our Government has just invested £2,200,000 of public money in the Anglo-Persian Company's oil-fields, which are mainly situated in the neutral zone. When the First Lord of the Admiralty announced some time ago that oil was largely to replace coal as fuel in our Navy, his Government then had decided to invest this money in Persian territory, and that the neutral zone. Is England likely to abandon a country in which she has sunk two millions and more?



PERSIA : BETWEEN THE UPPER AND NETHER MILLSTONE

THE recent speech of the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs will cause serious alarm to the Viceroy of India, who, a few months ago, assured his Government that armed interference in Persia was the last thing of which he thought. What its effect may be upon Earl Kitchener, who, having as Commander-in-Chief in India curtailed the British sphere to its present ludicrously modest limits, may, as representative of Great Britain in Egypt, be not impossibly regretting that he was so ultracautious, is an open question. The recent journey of Captain Shakespear from Koweit to Suez, following upon the journeys and explorations of earlier travellers, and viewed in connection with the importance of Arabia to the British Empire and the steady spread of railway communications in Asia Minor, Syria, Arabia, and Egypt, suggests that where the foot of the explorer treads, the railway follows. Joseph's brethren went down into Egypt to get corn; but in the near future, with the assistance of the Anglo-Persian Oil Company, the improved irrigation of Mesopotamia, and the development of the Persian wine industry, Egypt may well turn to Mesopotamia and Persia for corn, wine, and oil, and see them conveyed to her by a Trans-Arabian railway.

Mr. Dillon, in the House of Commons on June 18, bluntly accuses the *Times* of being the mouthpiece of the Foreign Office, the favoured recipient of Sir Edward Grey's *ballons d'essai*. On the 24th, Sir Edward took his full revenge before a sympathetic House. The first leader in the *Times* on the Persian crisis, certainly, taken in conjunction with the general tone of that journal in regard to the Anglo-Russian convention, the Morgan-Shuster sacrifice, and Persian anarchy since 1907, seems to afford some colour for this imputation. The two subsequent leaders in the *Times*—subsequent, moreover, to Mr. Dillon's accusation—vigorously assailing the Anglo-Persian Oil speculation, calculated, as the Foreign Secretary had to admit, to call for the intervention of two brigades, turn the tables on Mr. Dillon, unless, indeed, our leading journal thought it wise for the moment to dissemble. But let the *Times* dissemble as it may, nothing now can conceal the fact that the Viceroy of India, in protesting his innocence in regard to any idea of a military occupation of South-Eastern Persia, should not be taken too seriously. What may be taken seriously are the telegrams of the Teheran correspondent of the *Times*, and the reports of the most recent travellers in Kurdistan, Armenia, and Azerbaijan, all of whom agree that the Russian in Azerbaijan has come to stay. Russian influence in that province has thwarted the elections for the Majlis, defeated M. Mornard's best efforts in the interests of Russian finance, thwarted the introduction of the Swedish gendarmerie which, admittedly, has done well in the South, maintained at Tabriz as governor a renegade Persian who finds the rising constellation of

the Bear more attractive than the setting symbol of the Lion and the Sun, and even now is taking the postal service between Erivan and Teheran out of Persian hands. There is not the smallest indication that the Czar's Government, from the moment that the Convention of 1907 was signed, ever had any other design than that of absorbing Azerbaijan. Policy made this move obligatory. Germany was pushing its great railway with its numerous branches to the Shat-el-Arab; France was obtaining concessions for a number of lines in Asia Minor and Syria; and even Italy had its ambitions. The Batoum monopoly is dear to Russia. That Samsun or Trebizond should infringe it was not to be thought of. Therefore Kurdistan, Armenia, and Azerbaijan must be kept in hand. Furthermore, free access to the Baghdad Railway, and through it to the Persian Gulf and to the Eastern Mediterranean, would justify Sir Edward Grey in insisting that the Russian cry, once so loudly voiced, of "a port on the Persian Gulf" is not to be realized, despite the sympathy extended to it at first in certain highly responsible quarters, and that, too, in India.

The neutral sphere has become a farce. It has long been so. When we sent troops to Shiraz and Ispahan, and projected railways from Khormusa to Khoramabad and Bandar Abbās to Shiraz; when we called to mind our long-standing interest in the Karun Valley route; when our Foreign Office put its foot down and told Turkey and Germany that the Baghdad Railway east of Basra was a matter that must be left to Great Britain; and, in short, when our responsible statesmen took steps to retain the Persian Gulf under British control, and felt so secure of their position there that they decided to invest over two millions in the Anglo-Persian oil-wells, the farce became self-evident.

What is it possible to do for a country that cannot govern itself, that is the prey of factions, and which by years of misrule and corruption seems to have lost the power to produce a ruler or a government? The days of a Nadir Shah, a Karim Khan Zend, or an Aga Muhammad Khan, are past. It seems almost inevitable that the task of administering the country must fall to Great Britain and Russia, with the concurrence, we would hope, of those who lead and control public opinion and action in Persia. The Russians already have their troops in the Northern sphere; in the Southern we have the Swedes. Some of the ablest authorities on Persia have advocated an Indian gendarmerie under British officers. For my part, I have long urged that some use should be made for military and defensive purposes of the inhabitants of Western Baluchistan; and I see no reason why an irregular Baluch force, foot and mounted, under British officers, should not be used to maintain, or help to maintain, in Southern Persia, that order which alone can enable that ancient monarchy to re-establish itself. It is true that the Baluch freebooter, who for generations has harried the provinces of Fars and Kirman, will hardly know himself as a "peacemaker" in Persia, but I have great faith in the British officer's discipline. The sequel of the re-establishment of peace and prosperity need not now be considered, but I am afraid Persia may find its benefactors reluctant to quit. Still Professor E. G. Browne's last letter in the *Times* suggests thoughts. Dr. Morrison and Sir Richard Dane are doing well in China. H.H. the Agha Khan, in whose veins runs the blood of Fath Ali Shah, and Professor Browne are British subjects who may yet work out the salvation of Persia. When the Bakhtiaris, as the Persian Minister tells us, educate their sons in Europe, and a "well-disciplined and efficient Persian gendarmerie about six thousand strong" maintains order, the helping hand of England may yet maintain an independent Persia and

stultify the cynical Russian suggestion that oil is to England in the South an agent as effective for penetration as the mailed fist of Russia in the North.

After all that was said in the House of Commons on June 17, and after all that has been written about the Anglo-Persian oil contract, before and after that date, one solid fact which cannot be ignored remains—viz., that when the division was taken on the debate at 10 p.m. on the 17th, only 18 members in a house of 272 voted against Mr. Churchill's motion, inviting the House to authorize the issue out of the Consolidated Fund of £2,200,000, to be invested in the Anglo-Persian Oil Company. As I understand the matter, it is to the speech of Mr. Pretymann that we must ascribe the decision of all or most Unionist members present to support the motion. It is most interesting to find that, just as the Anglo-Russian Convention concluded by Sir E. Grey in 1907 originated with Lord Lansdowne, so it was under the ægis of a Unionist Government that Mr. D'Arcy obtained and kept his oil concession in Persia. Similarly, just as Lord Beaconsfield, with the financial support of the Rothschilds, purchased Ismail Pasha's Suez Canal shares, so it was with the financial backing of Lord Strathcona that a Unionist Government in 1903 saved the concession and paved the way for the establishment of the Anglo-Persian Oil Company in 1909. The fact is that, whatever betide, the British Government must keep under its own control the Shat-el-Arab, the Karun Valley, and the Persian Gulf; and, if that must be done, and is done, then the investment of State capital in the Anglo-Persian oil-wells involves no extra risk or responsibility.

The entire policy is one, and must stand and fall together. If it falls, we lose alike the oil and the political control of the Persian Gulf, so essential for India. If it stands, we secure India and a magnificent supply of oil for the Empire. It is perfectly clear from what Sir Edward Grey said that, if British interests in Southern Persia require military protection, India, whatever may be or may have been the views of Lord Hardinge of Penshurst and Earl Kitchener, will have to provide it. The evidences of a permanent Russian occupation of Azerbaijan, coming as they do from journalists and travellers and from Mr. Noel Buxton, M.P., a supporter of the Government which ratified the Convention—that of 1907—which promised *independence* to Persia, is so overwhelming that the time has indeed come when we must picture to ourselves an *independent* Persia shorn of the provinces of Azerbaijan, Gilan, Mazandaran, and Northern Khorasan. The *raison d'être* of Teheran as a capital has gone. Aga Muhammad Shah, the first Shah of the Kājār dynasty, made Teheran his capital, because his own Kājār tribe dominated it, and possibly also because he considered that from there, better than from Ispahan, he could oppose Russian encroachment on the Caspian and the Caucasus. That era is past. The Caspian is a Russian sea, and the entire Caucasus a Russian province. Merged in mystery as early Persian history is, I am justified, I think, in saying the Kings of the Pishadian and Kaianian dynasties knew nothing of the Caucasus and the Caspian. It is not, then, the old order yielding place to new, but reversion to the old order. Mr. Noel Buxton suggests Shiraz as a possible new capital. When one knows the conditions and limits of an independent Persia of the future, the site of the capital will suggest and decide itself. Thought for the present merely wanders through a labyrinth of possible sites.

It is satisfactory to know that the Turco-Persian Delimitation Commission

has completed its demarcation to the important point of Kasr-i-Shirin on the principal route from Baghdad into Persia on the one side, and Kurdistan on the other. Seeing that this point was settled by the Delimitation Commission last November, it is curious that neither His Majesty's Ministers in Parliament, nor the Chairman of the Anglo-Persian Oil Company at the annual meeting of that Company's shareholders, made any reference to the fact that the principal oil-wells near Kasr-i-Shirin had been adjudicated to Turkey, and that consequently the Anglo-Persian Oil Company would hold them from Turkey and not from Persia. The pipe-line for the Kasr-i-Shirin wells will be made to Baghdad, that from the wells near Shustar being, as is well known, laid to Muhamra. Thus to the old-standing trade of Baghdad, the Karun River, and the Persian Gulf is now to be added a large oil export, and, in the near future, grain both from Southern Persia and from the newly irrigated plains of Mesopotamia. We hear rumours of a shipping combine—there is English, French, and German capital in it, if reports be true—for coping with the rapidly growing trade of the Shat-el-Arab and the Gulf. What we do not hear about is Russian enterprise and the Trans-Persian Railway. Sir Edward Grey's replies to Colonel C. E. Yate's question on this subject in the Commons on June 23 and July 7 are enigmatic. Still, I venture to hope that the confidence with which Russian promoters of the Trans-Persian Railway used, two or three years ago, to claim a "Russian port at Chahbar" has ere this received its quietus. They indulged then in dreams of many thousands of tons of Indian tea imported straight from Chahbar across Persia into Russia. All being well, these thousands of tons shall pay import duty to the new independent Persia. Let it be some comfort for the Persian to look forward to that. It would be well, however, if we were sure of this. There is only too much ground to fear that the present Government may renounce the decision so clearly enunciated by Lord Lansdowne and other Unionist statesmen, that Great Britain should concede a port on the Persian Gulf to no foreign power. Our commercial and strategical interests alike demand that no railway on a Russian gauge should either reach the Persian Gulf or approach the eastern frontiers of Afghanistan within the British sphere. Yet a strong suspicion is once again afloat that a railway on the Russian gauge may yet be constructed from Astara across Persia to Bandar Abbās. If that be done, we may well feel, with Lord Curzon, that the minister who agreed to it should be impeached.—A. C. Y.

THE OPENING OF THE PANAMA CANAL.

The Relation of India and the Crown Colonies to the Empire.

THE need for the consideration of this subject at the present time is urgent, in order that some arrangement may be made by which these possessions of the Crown may share, in an Imperial scheme of defence for the safeguarding of the Indian Ocean and the Pacific and be *acknowledged* as a "unit of Empire."

Whatever causes may have led in the past to the present position of India and the Crown Colonies, the adoption of Empire by Great Britain and the world-wide responsibilities it implies, might have earlier brought about some change in our system which actually excludes these dependencies from any share in the advantages and in the responsibilities of Empire. Looking back, it is easy to understand that India was always occupied with the controlling of a land frontier, ever advancing, and was quite content to enjoy the Pax Britannica without being called upon to pay for naval defence. I go no further back than November 1, 1858, when by proclamation the intention of Her Majesty to assume the government of India was announced.

But since the war between Russia and Japan, the condition of our Eastern Empire has undergone a great change. The military policy of the Government of India is no longer arranged to repel the possible attack of a European army across her north-west frontier, her eyes and her thoughts travel seaward, and the main objective for her army becomes—

1. The support of naval policy in Eastern seas.
2. Co-operation with our Overseas Dominions.

Her expansion is no longer limited by the land on which she has found a scientific frontier, but if she is given the chance, there need be no position amongst the nations of the world to which she may not attain; her commerce will expand, and she will discover new markets in the ports of the Dominions; her resources as a manufacturing base will be developed by British capital; her revenue will be enormously increased, until full recognition throughout the Empire is made of her great wealth and importance.

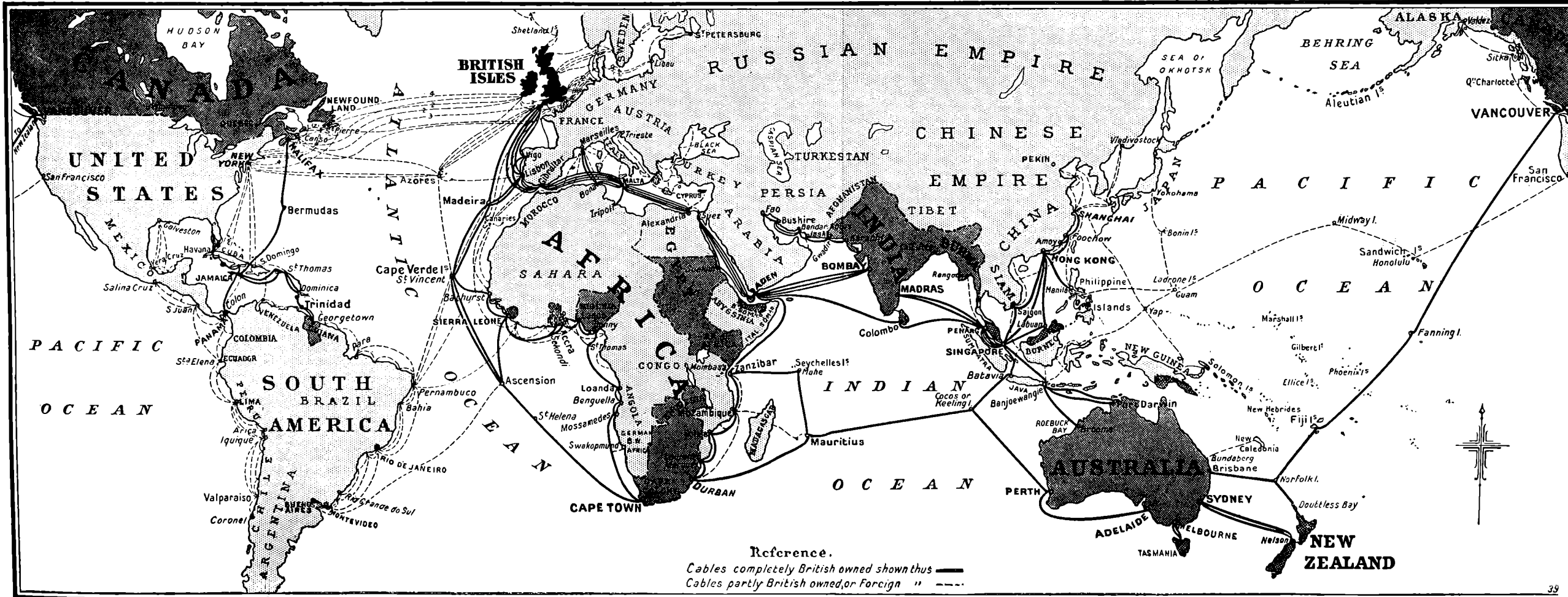
There are, however, two fallacies which seem to be ingrained in the system of administration in India which need to be overcome. That it is unfair to the peoples of India to pay from Indian revenue towards a naval defence, and that British capital ought not to be employed in the country, the development of which should be left to the people of India themselves, such ideas scarcely call for refutation, they simply retard the progress of our Eastern Empire, and if they are allowed to influence the future of India, they must inevitably leave her behind in the history of the world's progress.

But, unless co-operation between India and the Overseas Dominions is initiated and encouraged and a free exchange of advantages can be arranged, we shall fail in developing our military system on Imperial lines, and shall not obtain from the Commonwealth, the Dominion, and the Union, the reinforcements for India, Ceylon, the Straits Settlements, and Hong-Kong, that are

MAP ILLUSTRATING THE GEOGRAPHICAL POSITION OF COUNTRIES BELONGING TO THE BRITISH EMPIRE IN CONSIDERING THE PROPOSAL FOR THE CO-OPERATION OF ALL THE UNITS OF EMPIRE IN PROVIDING FOR THE DEFENCE OF THE INDIAN OCEAN AND THE PACIFIC.

(Reproduced, by kind permission, from the Empire Day Edition of "The Times," Monday, May 25, 1914.)

MAP OF THE WORLD SHOWING CABLE ROUTES.



Reference.
 Cables completely British owned shown thus —
 Cables partly British owned, or Foreign " - - -

necessary to the security of them all, for we can no longer make use of the Suez Canal for the passage of reinforcements from home in time of war. Such are absolutely necessary for India's safety, and can only be obtained through the generous consideration of the various questions that will be deliberated upon at the Imperial Conference that must take place in the early months of next year.

Can anyone doubt the advisability of acknowledging "Sea Power" to be the basis of all our Imperial policy, equally applicable in all territories that claim to have a share in the Empire? Without its combination and co-operation, unity and joint action, cannot be attained.

But we can only state the case plainly and trust to the wisdom of our rulers; they have to deal with the problem in regard to India and the Crown Colonies, in no hesitating way, for if these are not admitted to the Imperial Conference of 1915, and if they are not permitted to share on an equality with the other portions of the Empire that will seek to find a solution of the problem that faces the British Empire, their opportunity will go by and they will never be able to claim the position that is essential for them.

For to-day we are face to face with facts and require to meet them:

1. The opening of the Panama Canal will involve great changes in our relations with the Overseas Dominions.
2. The early assembly next year of an Imperial Conference on defence, and the desire expressed by Australia and New Zealand to secure full consideration for a policy of co-operation in the defence of the Pacific, indicate the character of the deliberations that will take place when that Conference assembles.

We must recognize that our "Alliance with Japan" is unpopular in the Dominions, and that in so far as it is held to be a reason for reducing the standard of naval strength in Eastern waters, there is justification for such unpopularity; the Conference of 1909 came to an agreement which held out the hope of co-operation, but that agreement has since disappeared.

The Conference in 1915 will really have to begin its work *de novo*, and the partners in the Empire will discuss an entirely new situation; the geographical position of units remains unaltered, but the basis for co-operation has materially changed. The delegates from Great Britain will find that the defence of the Pacific is held by the delegates from the Dominions, as a problem entirely independent of the Imperial Naval strength in European waters, or of diplomatic arrangements that more or less control the distribution of our fleets; they will be prepared for arrangements that will maintain at all hazards the requisite number of ships for the defence of the Indian Ocean and the Pacific; they will ungrudgingly and generously co-operate, but the defence in Eastern waters must be a complete defence. The points they will discuss will probably include:

1. The military defence against invasion of all Imperial territories, and the most convenient and effective way of securing that defence. This involves the possibility of arranging in advance for the transfer of troops, in certain strength, from one part of the Empire to another threatened part.
2. The victualling of Imperial territories in time of war. There are no grounds for speculation as to the deliberations which will take place at the Imperial Conference, but the entirely new departure which will follow the opening of the Panama Canal is certain, and the delegates will assemble with their minds fixed on the question of the defence of the Pacific.

Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa are each of them directly interested. May this single purpose lead to the closer federation of the Empire

It needs no apology for laying stress on the high importance of this question being studied carefully by every man and woman in the British Empire, for this Conference will either make or mar our prospect of true federation.

If the delegates from the Mother Country deliberately face the great problem of the defence of the Pacific and enter ungrudgingly into the discussions with regard to its solution, their generosity in meeting them may meet with the most willing and generous support, and will recover for them the lead in naval questions throughout the Empire; they may be able to formulate and gain approval of a permanent arrangement by which the influence of the British Empire may be maintained in distant seas.

It is our duty to support the action of the Government by stimulating an enlightened public opinion that will justify generous action and will enable them to prepare for any additional expenditure that may be necessary, but more than all, to feel and to show a spirit of real trust in the good intentions of all who are concerned, in bringing about a true federation of the Empire in all its parts, and in effecting a real co-operation that will lead to great advantage.

E. F. CHAPMAN.

BEECH HURST, LINGFIELD.

A TYPICAL DAY'S MARCH IN EASTERN BOKHARA.

OF all the countries in which the religion and culture of Islam once reigned supreme, Bokhara and Afghanistan have perhaps succumbed the least to outside influences. Until quite recently these last outposts of Mohammedan civilization have obstinately resisted the intrusion of the stranger. Thanks to its position as buffer state between India and Russia, Afghanistan has maintained its independence; but Bokhara, less fortunately placed, is already in Russia's grasp, though nominally independent. To those who knew the country some fifteen or twenty years ago, the steady advance of Russian influence is very apparent. Native art and industry are withering under it. Russia floods the country with her cheap cotton goods, coloured with inferior aniline dyes, and the Bokhariot dons these in place of the home-woven fabrics of his own country, with their soft yet brilliant hues won by primitive means from the vegetable world.

In the bazaars of the larger towns, Bokhara, Karshi, Sharshauz, the Jew and the Armenian drive a thriving trade in all kinds of Russian wares. These are, generally speaking, "cheap and nasty," for picturesque as his own *milieu*, the Bokhariot is indiscriminating in his choice of European goods. Gaudy lamps, poor tin-ware, crockery with appalling patterns, distorting mirrors, plush sofas, and various bric-à-brac, are among the objects which find their way into the Bokhariot's establishment. Their number would be greater, but for the fact that the native is a man of few wants. Living in conditions, and holding traditions which differ little from those of a thousand years ago, his rule of life is, that what was good enough for his fathers is good enough for him; and while the paraphernalia of a European household excites his wonder, he continues to run his own establishment in the old way. How far Russian influence will prove a solvent of this indifference to what is new is difficult to say. Mohammedan culture and civilization are so deeply rooted in the Koran, so bound up

with the exclusion of women from all part in the public life of the community, that so long as these conditions obtain, any far-reaching change is hardly to be looked for.

Meanwhile the lover of what is old-world and picturesque must be thankful that the process of disintegration at least works slowly. In the north-eastern corner of the Khanate, in the valleys of the Surkhob, the Muksu and the Khingob, the mountain-folk live in their primitive tree-embosomed hamlets, or tend their flocks in the treeless heights of the great Tupchek plateau in a simplicity unspoiled as yet by outside influence. Travel in those regions is a delightful pastime rather than a serious undertaking.

On the big caravan tracks of the plain vehicles are possible. One may jolt along in the arba—a springless cart with enormous wheels, warranted to surmount every obstacle—or one may trust one's bones to the enterprising Jehu of a Russian phaeton; but the narrow mountain-paths of Darwaz and Karategin can only be scaled on foot or on horseback. Travel in these regions transports us back to the Middle Ages, before the era of roads, when our forefathers journeyed thus, and took weeks to traverse country which the railway covers in a few hours.

The day's march begins early, for the Bokhariot, being a good Mohammedan, is up before sunrise, which in summer means about four o'clock, to perform his devotions, and once he and his fellows are clattering about the courtyard, calling to each other in high-pitched tones, further sleep is impossible. In lower latitudes the house-fly is another hindrance to the prolonging of one's slumbers after dawn. Flies are the great pest of Bokhara, and swarm in myriads on the walls, on the floors, and on the food. The native, however, does nothing to destroy them, and seems, in fact, to be little disturbed by them. It is possible that if he knew of their danger to the community, he would regard them as the old peasant regarded the locusts who were destroying his fields. Being asked why he did nothing against them, he replied that he felt sure they were sent as a punishment by Allah, and that therefore he must endure them.

Before we start, our host, the Amlakdar, or chief official of the district, provides us with breakfast—tea, eggs, new bread, fruit, and a dish of rice and milk. We enjoy the meal leisurely, and leisurely prepare for the journey; there is no train to catch, and we have the whole day before us. The Mirza Bashi, the Government official who accompanies us everywhere at the command of the Amir, comes in to wish us "Good-morning," and to inform us that the horses are ready. The courtyard of the Maimankhanah (house for strangers) is filled with a motley crowd of shouting and gesticulating humanity. Horses of all sorts and conditions are being loaded up with baggage, the more respectable specimens being reserved for the riders. Saddles and bridles leave much to be desired, but we comfort ourselves with the thought that they will be changed at the next station. A final adjustment of saddle-bags and stirrups, and the Mirza Bashi, in rainbow-hued garments and white turban, mounts his fine black charger, heads the procession, and we are off. The Amlakdar and his gaily-clad suite accompany us for about half a mile, then, dismounting, they bow gravely, stroke their beautifully trimmed beards, and bid us farewell.

The horses are quiet, well-behaved animals, and soon settle down into the regular journey jog-trot. Here and there is one more restive than his fellows, but his ardour is tamed by a gallop up-hill, after which he is as easy to handle as the others.

This mode of travel is conducive to thought, but curiously enough it is not the problems which interest us so much in Europe that now occupy the mind. At present these seem very far away. We are living in another world; the clock of time has been put back a few centuries. Our mighty cavalcade winding along the road might be Timur and his nobles marching through his dominions, or the fugitive Babur, whose ill luck in his own country led him to found a far mightier kingdom in India. Nay, we are carried back still farther, to a different land, but one with similar conditions and modes of life—to Palestine, and amongst the people of Bokhara we see a living picture of the types among which Jesus lived and worked. Do not the sick, the maimed, the halt, and the blind swarm round us as they did round Him, confident that we must have something that will cure them? In the haughty Bokhariot official, with his big paunch, gaudy clothing, and his sublime contempt for the poor, out of whom he extorts everything, to the last farthing, we have the counterpart of the Pharisee or of the rich man Dives, and we understand more clearly than before how the down-trodden of those days must have worshipped the man who dared to take their part against their oppressors.

To those familiar with the Bible its analogies and parables gain a clearer meaning in the light of a journey through this country. It is as if the Bible lay illustrated before us, not as we were accustomed to it in our childhood, when Elijah appeared in robes of the seventeenth century driving a Roman chariot, but with a truth and vividness drawn from Nature itself. This land, so fruitful where water reaches it, so parched and desolate where the life-bringing stream is wanting, makes us understand why the Bible dwells so insistently on the blessings of water, and why throughout its pages water is the great symbol of the spiritual life.

Only those who have ridden for hours over desolate stretches of steppe under the pitiless glare of the Turkestan sun can imagine what "the shadow of a great rock in a weary land" means to the traveller, or with what feelings he welcomes a shady sycamore or walnut-tree, standing as a solitary sentinel in the unspeakable loneliness of the arid steppe. The Bokhariot, like the Israelite of old, girds up his loins when he has a journey to make; not, indeed, the proud official who will not be seen on foot, but the man in the street. I venture to say the Last Supper was served on the floor, and that Jesus and the twelve sat round the great dish in a circle, just as the Bokhariots do at the present time. To this day the Bokhariot pays attention to the washing of his feet, though he may be less particular about other parts of his body. The changes of raiment, customary as gifts in Bible lands, have their counterpart in the rich silk khalat, or outer garment, which the official has presented to him when he visits the mighty of the land. These are a few instances out of many which strike us as we wander through the country. And as we ponder over the simplicity of life here, the contrast between it and the life of the West impresses us painfully. The West has lost in simplicity, gained in complexity, but at the cost of peace. True the Bokhariot of the lower classes has not an ideal life. Oppression at the hands of the ruling class is his fate now as it was centuries ago, but what of our lower classes—the victims of the mine and the factory? The poverty-stricken mountaineer chases the ibex over the glaciers and up the rock face, and brings home a meal which will last his family a month. When that is finished, they starve until he finds another. Or he tills his fields to the best of his ability, and wrings a scanty crop from Mother Earth, who is niggard of her treasures in the

high mountains. But he remains in contact with Nature; it is with her he fights for his daily bread, and the fight steels and hardens his muscles and strengthens his senses. Can the same be said of the miner and the factory hand?

These and similar thoughts fill the mind as one rides leisurely along in the pellucid atmosphere of the early morning, when purple shadows still hover over the mountains, and the innumerable eddies and currents of the river flash silver below us.

Our path runs at times on a level with the river, sometimes it is cut out of the cliff face, or runs along this on a frail-looking framework of branches rammed at right angles into the rock and supported on upright boughs from beneath. The interstices are strewn with stones and gravel, so that the holes may not be too apparent; but woe to the rider whose horse stumbles in one of these. The Bokhariot rides over these places with the fatalistic nonchalance of his race; but the European, if he is a wise man, refuses thus to tempt Providence, and, dismounting, leads his horse warily over the perilous spot. Sometimes, leaving the river far below, the path mounts upward, and winds along the top of the bank amid thickets of bloom. Yellow wild roses, giant hemlock, blue geraniums, grow in profusion, while great patches of vetch and wild peony make vivid splashes of purple and crimson on the hillside.

After a ride of about an hour and a half we arrive at the next station. Here we find a willow-fringed enclosure ready for our reception, and fowl, omelette, milk, bread and chicken broth provided for luncheon. We eat with appetite, for somehow that never seems to fail in these regions. Two musicians treat us to the weird, curious music of the country, which to European ears sounds so unmelodious and so monotonous. We doze a little, take photographs of the magnificent snow-clad peaks in the distance, and a couple of hours later continue the journey on a fresh set of horses. We ride on for some three or four hours. The approach of a train of officials in brilliant robes warns us that we are near our destination. They dismount, and after greeting the Mirza Bashi effusively, tender a quieter welcome to the other members of the party, and, remounting, lead the procession to its quarters for the night. Crowds of villagers line the streets, eager to enjoy the "tamasha," as they call everything offering spectacular interest. They throng the courtyard as we dismount, they swarm on the roofs and round the doors of the house, sitting on their haunches and staring fixedly at our every movement. This village is more important than some of its neighbours, so our quarters are more sumptuous. The house is as usual built of mud. Our room is large and lofty, with whitewashed walls. It has three doors on either side, which serve at the same time as windows. Above these the wall is pierced by lattice-work of a fine geometrical pattern, through which a subdued light filters into the room when the doors are shut. Thanks to the extraordinary dryness of the climate, the Bokhariot can afford to live for the greater part of the year in the open air; his house is therefore little more than a rude shelter of a very primitive sort. In more civilized parts of the country Russian example has led him to adopt glass windows and stoves, but up in the mountains these luxuries are unknown.

A series of niches at either end of the room serve as cupboards. The floor is covered with carpets, and a couple of bedsteads are heaped with an array of cushions and coverlets. In the middle of the room is a long table provided with chairs for the party. These articles of furniture, being unknown in a Bokharan

household, and only provided for European use, are fearfully and wonderfully made. Sometimes the table is only removed a few inches from the floor, in which case the chairs invariably tower above it; frequently the conditions are reversed, and one sits with one's chin on a level with the table. The legs of the table are generally perilously unsteady, and a careless push may lead to their collapse, and the landing of the contents of the board on the floor. This is a serious matter, for the table groans as a rule under the dainties supplied by our host. Trays and dishes piled with sweets, grapes, apples, melons, pistachios, apricots, cucumbers, hard boiled eggs, and bread, all form part of the show, according to the district and the season of the year.

Our first cry on arrival on a hot summer's day is for tea, and that is supplied in quantities. Green tea is the national drink of Bokhara, and when none other is forthcoming, the European can drink it and find it refreshing. As a rule, however, he brings Russian tea with him, or the Maiman-khanah supplies him with it.

When our host thinks we have had enough tea, sweets, and fruit, he orders the rest of the meal to be served. This consists almost invariably of chicken broth, for which the most ancient inhabitants of the poultry-yard have been sacrificed. These, boiled to rags, form a separate dish. Then follow kebab, or stewed mutton, and pillau, a most tasty dish of rice and mutton. This is the national dish of the country, but it varies in quality and ingredients with the rank of the house in which it is produced. In the home of the humble Bokhariot it is a very simple dish, but in the establishments of the rich, potatoes, carrots, pomegranates, quince, and raisins, form part of its make-up, and the result is a very toothsome mixture. Whether a Bokharan menu would appeal to one as much in Europe as it does in Central Asia is doubtful. For cooking purposes the Bokhariot uses almost exclusively mutton-fat, butter being practically unknown. The food is consequently very greasy, and, as he prefers to cook an animal immediately after it is slaughtered, the meat is frequently very hard. I am bound to say that, in spite of these drawbacks, the traveller does justice to the fare. What he leaves is eaten by the servants; what they leave, by the menials; what they leave, by the beggars. If these leave anything, it may eventually reach the dogs; but, judging from the appearance of these animals, I should say they have little to hope for in that quarter, and are probably reduced to theft for a living.

The midday meal over, we lounge about a little and inspect our quarters. If a river is near, or a mountain stream, we go and bathe. To do this without attracting a crowd of native spectators is, of course, very difficult, but sometimes in the quiet pools of a mountain stream it is possible to have a delicious dip without anybody knowing it.

Then we saunter among the groups of native officials quartered near us, and admire the simplicity of their establishment, which in its picturesqueness always puts that of the European to shame. They sit cross-legged on the floor, drinking tea or smoking the chilim or water pipe. They are invariably courteous, interested in all we do, though incapable of understanding the motives of our journey. They invite us to join them; so we sit with them on the floor, sip the green tea they offer us, and, calling the interpreter, prepare for a chat. His knowledge of the Russian language is not immaculate, but it serves our purpose. The talk turns on our mountain excursions. These fill them with wonder. They are at a loss to understand how anyone can find pleasure or

profit in climbing in the snow or over the glaciers, and they ask if it is gold we are seeking. Noting our geologist's interest in stones, they send out to collect as many curious specimens of these as they can find, and are grievously disappointed when these turn out to be worthless.

Evening draws on. The setting sun flings a golden glory over the landscape. The twilight is short, and we prepare for rest. Out on the terrace, which drops sheer to the river a few hundreds of feet below us, or under the trees of the garden, we spread our beds, and by the time the stars are out we are sleeping soundly, ready to be up the next day at sunrise. We fall asleep with the pleasurable thought that to-morrow will again bring us new experiences, new scenery, new quarters, new faces, and that to-morrow's march will bring us still nearer our goal—the majestic snow-crowned mountains of which now and again we catch glimpses as the path winds high above the river valley.

C. MABEL RICKMERS.

THE TIBET CONFERENCE.

The Conference on Tibet now being held in India between the representatives of China, Tibet, and India, seems to be still continuing the similar, monotonous, never-ending way of all such conferences on Tibet. Rumours as to the conclusions which have been reached have appeared in the daily press. But one report says one thing, and another report affirms the precisely opposite fact. One says we are, and the other says we are not, to have a representative at Lhasa. All that seems quite certain is that no final settlement has yet been reached, and that the usual references from the delegates to headquarters continue to be made. They may thus continue for any length of time longer. The essential point for us to watch is that the Chinese neither by their ineffectiveness nor by their spasmodic over-effectiveness should be allowed to create that unrest and uncertainty in Tibet which has led to so much trouble in the past.

FRANCIS YOUNGHUSBAND.

NOTES AND NEWS

A New University for China.—It is proposed to found and endow a British University at Hangkow or some other approved location, and the promoters are leading members of the Oxford, Cambridge, and London Universities, and up to the present seventy-seven Members of Parliament of all shades of politics have promised their support. The idea was that the British Government should make a grant of not less than £250,000 out of the Boxer Indemnity. The proposal has already been considered by the Government, and Sir Edward Grey wrote a strong despatch to the Treasury asking for the allocation of the whole sum required. The Treasury replied in effect that they would be willing to arrange a grant of £150,000 if a like sum be raised in the country. It would be difficult to raise such a sum, and it is thought by the promoters that in consideration of the profit that this country is making on the Boxer Indemnity, it would be reasonable to suggest that the Government should make a more liberal grant. Professor Soothill, the acting President of the proposed University, has enlisted the support of about forty of the Chambers of Commerce in this country, including those of London, Manchester, and Glasgow.

Chinese Minister in London.—The newly-appointed Chinese Minister, Sao Kc Alfred Sze, was educated in America, and graduated at Cornell University. He has seen service in the Chinese Legations in Washington and St. Petersburg, and was Secretary to the Chinese Commissioners at the first Peace Conference at the Hague.

Although educated abroad he is strictly Conservative, and has maintained a consistent aloofness from Revolutionists, which was probably the reason why the Young China Party rejected him when he was nominated Minister in Washington. He has held the posts of Minister of Communications and Master of Ceremonies at the Presidential Palace.

The New Constitution in China.—The Cabinet is abolished and Ministers are replaced by Secretaries. There is a Single Chamber Legislature, and the Premier is a Secretary of State. The President is supreme under the new Constitution. As head of the nation and chief of the Administration, he can convoke, open, suspend, close, or dissolve the House of Legislature, can submit Bills and Budgets, refer passed Bills back to Legislature for reconsideration, and, if they are again passed by a three-fourths majority, can withhold their promulgation with the consent of the Administrative Council. When he deems secrecy necessary, he may refuse to answer questions from the Legislature dealing with Administrative matters. The President has sole power to appoint or dismiss civil and military officials, to declare war or conclude peace, to control the army and navy and expenditure upon them. The clause in the previous constitution to the effect that judges are not subject to interference from higher officials does not appear in the new Constitution.

Opening of Chinese Ports.—We learn from the *Manchester Courier* that the Chinese Government has opened to foreign trade seven towns in the north. They are : Kweiwacheng in Shansi ; Chihfeng, Kalgan, and Dolonor in Chihli ; Lungkow in Shantung ; Taonanfu in Western Shengking ; and Kulutao, the new port under construction in South-Western Shenking. The object in view is evidently to preserve China's interests in the region that is threatened with the dominance of Russia and Japan, though it may be unfair not to credit the Chinese Government with the realization that the encouragement of foreign trade is *per se* well worthy of its attention.

There can be little doubt that China's hold upon Inner Mongolia would be much strengthened if any considerable international trade were to be established at the five new open ports outside the Great Wall. Japanese influence will, however, be undoubtedly extended, because she has acquired the right to construct a railway from Taonanfu to Jehol among others. It must generally be conceded that in principle, if perhaps not in fact, the more places in China that are opened for foreign trade the better both for that country and the merchants who participate in it.

China's Coal Supply.—The fields are numerous and widely scattered, and contain, as a rule, coal of a good quality, such as anthracite, semi-anthracite, bituminous, semi-bituminous, and lignite. The principal coalfield in Manchuria is that of Fushun, near Mukden, where it is stated there are 800 million tons of workable coal. In the province of Chihli—which is at present the most important producer—there are also numerous fields. Shantung Province contains anthracite and bituminous coal. The most famous coal areas are, however, in the province of Shansi. There are two regions—the anthracite and the bituminous. The principal seam in the anthracite area is from 12 feet to 30 feet thick, and persists over wide areas, and the bituminous area contains good workable seams. It has been estimated that the anthracite resources of this province amount to 630,000 millions of tons, while the bituminous resources are said to be even greater. The province of Shensi contains both anthracite and bituminous coal, and that of Honan contains an extension of the Shansi anthracite field. The Great Southern coalfield, which possesses good bituminous coking coal and anthracite, is in the province of Hunan and Kiangsi, and there is an immense area in the province of Szechuan, though information regarding it is conflicting.

British Trade in China.—Mr. Thomas M. Ainscough has been appointed Special Commissioner to the Board of Trade to investigate and report on the conditions and prospects of British trade in China. Mr. Ainscough left for the East towards the end of May, and the present mission is expected to last about a year.

Expedition to the Yenisei.—Miss Czaplicka, who is already well known for her anthropological studies of the aborigines of Northern Asia, is undertaking an expedition for the purpose of studying on the spot the native tribes of the Yenisei Valley, anthropologically and linguistically. The expedition will proceed from Moscow by the Trans Siberian Railway to Kvasnoyarsk, on the Yenisei. They will ascend the Yenisei by steamer to Gilchicha. It is Miss Czaplicka's intention to spend a year in the Yenisei region.

Mongolia.—The Mongolian Government has once more reasserted the fact that it is not under the jurisdiction of China, and begs that British, American, French, and German Consuls, or other authorized representatives, may be sent

to Urga to conclude treaties of commerce and friendship similar to that signed with Russia. This request has been made twice previously, and no answer has yet been received.

This reiteration of Mongolian independence is rendered all the more significant by the reluctance of the Mongols to participate in the proposed conference between China and Russia to determine the Mongolian boundaries, and by the presence of 5,000 Hunghuzes camping under orders for Urga in Inner Mongolia.

Education in Japan is compulsory to this extent—all children must be sent to school at the age of six, and they must attend school for six years.

Those who finish the six years of obligatory attendance may enter the high school. Of these latter there are 311 throughout the empire, with 6,000 instructors and 122,245 pupils. The graded schools are supported by local taxation, and the high schools by prefecture, or State taxation.

There are four Imperial Universities under the direct control of the Minister of Education, the oldest being the University of Tokio, and the next the Kioto. The Tohoku University was established about twelve years ago, while the Kiushu University was established about the same time. The principal Agricultural College was incorporated into the Tohoku University. There are about 8,000 students in the four Imperial Universities, of whom about 1,500 are graduated annually.

Besides the Government Universities, there are a number of high technical schools, agricultural, commercial, industrial, and medical, under Government control, together with a number of private institutions of high standing. The most important of these latter is the Waseda University, which is under the presidency of Count Okuma. There they have about 6,000 students in their various schools, and they have lately built colleges of science and of law, and are about to build a medical school in connection therewith.

English is now compulsory for five years in the high schools, though no other language is, and, as a matter of fact, all educated young men in Japan know English; if they cannot speak it fluently, they can at least read it.

Trade of the Persian Gulf.—It is expected that the irrigation schemes in Mesopotamia will bring vast areas of land into cultivation for grain. British shipping companies have at present a large share of the trade, but it is understood that in one of the developments which may be expected shortly, not only English, but also German and French financiers will participate. The interests of the British India Steam Navigation Company are well represented throughout the ports of the Persian Gulf; but it is interesting to note that the Hamburg-Amerika has already a service from Hamburg and Antwerp to the Persian Gulf, and in France the possibility of a subsidized steamship service has long been discussed.

The Russian Government, too, have decided to grant a subsidy not exceeding £12,000 a year to a line of fast steamers which will run between Odessa and Bushire, on the Persian Gulf, touching at the intermediate ports. Russian Consuls have long advocated such an outlet for Russian trade.

Journey across Arabia.—Miss Gertrude Lowthian Bell, in the *Times* of June 12, gives the following account of her recent journey in Arabia:

“Leaving Damascus in the middle of December, I turned south-east for the purpose of examining the ruin of Burqa—never before visited—which proved to be an outlying fortress of the Roman lines, with early Muhammadan additions—

these last attested by a Kufic inscription dated in the year 82 of the Hijrah. My next business was to revisit the Umayyad palaces in the desert east of the Hejâz railway, a task which was fruitful in archæological results. In the southern part of my route I crossed and recrossed the two tracks of Mr. Carruthers, and found his sketch-map, published in the Geographical Society's Journal, of much service. I planned a ruin at Bir Ba'ir, where he had passed a night; and subsequently, in the Jebel Tubaiq, planned and photographed a small post station, of which, I believe, Dr. Musil had information, though he had not been able to visit it. This and Bir Ba'ir indicate, I make no doubt, the existence of an old caravan route to Taimâ, east of the Hajj road.

"I left Taimâ, a day's journey to the west, and turned eastward into the Nefûd, the great sand desert. Skirting its southern edge, I fixed the position of a couple of wells and photographed the singular sand formations. I passed through Jebel Mismâ, into the plains of Northern Nejd, and made my way without any opposition to Hâyil. The Shammar capital had not been visited, so far as my knowledge goes, by any European since 1893. In the interval the political conditions had undergone considerable alteration. The tribal areas which were held together by the strong hand of the Amîr Muhammad ibn Rashîd have shrunk in extent and diminished in security. The domestic tragedies of the Rashîds, which during the past twenty years have swept all the grown men of Muhammad's house from the stage, and the encroaching power of 'Abd al Aziz ibn Sa'ud of al-Riyâd, form a chapter in the history of modern Arabia of which little has been told. My belief is that ibn Sa'ud is now the chief figure in Central Arabia, although the Ottoman Government was still pursuing its traditional policy of subsidizing and supplying arms to the Rashîds. Captain Shakespear will be able to give us more certain information as to the relative position of the protagonists.

"The young Amîr, Sa'ud ibn Rashîd, a boy of sixteen, was engaged in a distant raid when I reached Hâyil, and with him was his chief adviser, Zâmil ibn Subhân. In their absence, though I was well received, I was allowed little liberty. Nominally Ibrahim, Zâmil's brother, was vicegerent. The real authority lay in the hands of the Amîr's grandmother, Fâtima, with whom I carried on negotiations through the head eunuch. After repeated protests I broke down the embargoes, which were, I think, due mainly to her, in so far as to be allowed free access to the palace. I visited the women of the shaikhly family, and photographed the town, but Fâtima herself refused to see me. Since there was no news of the Amîr, and no likelihood of his immediate return, I left Hâyil after a sojourn of eleven days, and returned to Damascus by way of Baghdad. The road to Baghdad was devoid of interest, but I broke new ground in the Syrian Desert, and found there unexpected traces of settled habitation, dating from no very recent period. At Damascus I learnt that Zâmil and Ibrahim had fallen victims to a palace intrigue, and that the Shammar had suffered a serious reverse at the hands of a shaikh of the northern 'Anazeh. I should judge that the position of ibn Sa'ud has been improved by the further weakening, internal and external, of his rivals."

From Koweit to Suez.—Captain Shakespear, British Resident at Koweit, has just returned from a journey across Arabia from Koweit to Suez via Riadh, Boraidah, and Jaufalamir. He was accompanied only by native-bearers, and covered the distance of about 1,800 miles in about three and a half months. He discovered between Boraidah and Jaufalamir a hitherto untravelled route.

Turkish Boy Scouts.—The Boy Scout movement has taken hold in Turkey, and an English instructor has for some time past been training troop leaders. The movement has official support, and aims at the scientific military preparation of Ottoman youths.

THE ANNIVERSARY MEETING.

The anniversary meeting of the Central Asian Society was held at 22, Albermarle Street, on May 26, 1914, with Colonel Sir Francis Younghusband in the chair.

The HON. SECRETARY read the Report of the Council for 1913-14 as follows :

ANNUAL REPORT.

The Session of 1913-14 was opened on December 10, 1913, with a paper entitled "A Visit to Mongolia," by Mr. E. Manico Gull. Other papers were read as follows :

January 14, 1914 : "Persian Family Life," by Miss Ella Sykes.

February 17 : "Reflections on China and Japan," by G. Lowes Dickinson.

March 14 : "Six Months in the Tian Shan Mountains," by C. Howard Bury.

April 1 : "Mongolia : Its Economic and Political Aspect," by Captain Otter Barry.

May 26 : "Sir Alfred Lyall and the Anglo-Russian Entente," by Sir Mortimer Durand.

An important step has been taken during the last Session in increasing the size, and we hope the usefulness, of the Society's publications. Hitherto the Society circulated its Proceedings among its members. The Council have now decided to issue a small journal, which will contain not only the papers read before the Society, but also lists of recent books on the East, notes on recent explorations, etc., as well as short articles by members and others. The Council hope to issue four parts in each year, and two of these are already in the hands of members. It is hoped that the increased publication will be a factor in securing additional members. The editor, Miss Hughes, to whom the Society is greatly indebted for her excellent work, will be glad to receive contributions from any member on subjects of current interest.

During the present year the Society has suffered a great loss by the death of Sir Thomas Gordon. Sir Thomas Gordon was our first President. He took an active part in the foundation of the Society, and was always keenly interested in its welfare. An obituary notice, written by Sir Mortimer Durand, will be found on page 28 of Part II. of the JOURNAL. Another founder, Mr. H. F. B. Lynch, also died during the past Session. He read a paper at the Society's inaugural meeting, and frequently took part in its proceedings.

The Society's members now number 127, as against 129 last year; the number attending General Meetings, however, have much increased. The customary statement of accounts is appended.

The recommendations of the Council for filling vacancies on the Council for the year 1914-15 are as follows : Under Rule 12 the Chairman, the Right Hon. Sir Mortimer Durand, retires. The Council recommend his re-election. Under Rule 23, Sir Frederic Fryer, Colonel A. C. Yate, and Sir West Ridgeway retire from the Council. The Council recommend the election of Sir Frederic Fryer,

Colonel A. C. Yate, and Mr. A. L. P. Tucker. The Council also recommend that Dr. Cotterell Tupp be elected a Vice-President of the Society.

On the motion of Colonel PEMBERTON, seconded by Sir EVAN JAMES, the report was adopted, and the recommendations of the Council in respect to the election of officers were accepted.

The CHAIRMAN said that the Council proposed a slight alteration of Rule 20, in order to regularize the position of Vice-Presidents. The rule stated : There shall be a Council consisting of twelve members of the Society, exclusive of the Chairman, but inclusive of the honorary officers of the Society." It was proposed to insert after the words "inclusive of" the words "any members who have been or may be nominated as Vice-Presidents." With the addition made that day there were now seven Vice-Presidents, and if the proposal was carried they would be available for service on the Council.

Colonel A. C. YATE took exception to the proposed rule, and suggested that in adding the Vice-Presidents to the Council there should be provision for one Vice-President to retire annually by rotation, and not to be eligible for re-election until after the lapse of a year, thus adopting a principle followed by the Royal Geographical and the Royal Asiatic Societies.

After a brief discussion, in which Sir EVAN JAMES and Sir HENRY TROTTER took part, it was decided, on the suggestion of the Chairman, to refer the question back to the Council for further consideration and for subsequent reference to another general meeting.

NEW MEMBERS.

The following have been elected members of the Society : Mr. J. R. Baillie, I.C.S., retired ; Lieut. G. C. Binstead, Essex Regiment ; Mr. Wilson Crewdson, J.P., F.S.A. ; Lieut. W. T. O. Crewdson, Royal Field Artillery ; Mr. Archibald Rose, H.M.S. Consular Service, China.

CENTRAL ASIAN ACCOUNTS, 1913

| RECEIPTS. | | | | EXPENDITURE. | | | | | | | | | |
|---|-----|-------|----|--------------|-------|----|----|-------|----|----|-------|----|----|
| | | | | £ | s. | d. | £ | s. | d. | | | | |
| By subscriptions— | | £ | s. | d. | £ | s. | d. | | | | | | |
| 119 at £1 ... | ... | 119 | 0 | 0 | | | | 22 | 0 | 0 | | | |
| 4 at 16s. ... | ... | 3 | 4 | 0 | | | | 25 | 0 | 0 | | | |
| 1 in advance at £1 | ... | 1 | 0 | 0 | | | | | | | | | |
| 1 „ „ „ 16s. | ... | 0 | 16 | 0 | | | | | | | | | |
| | | ----- | | | 124 | 0 | 0 | | | | | | |
| Miscellaneous receipts— | ... | | | | 0 | 4 | 4 | | | | | | |
| Received in error | ... | | | | 3 | 0 | 0 | | | | | | |
| By sales | ... | | | | 3 | 12 | 6 | | | | | | |
| By dinner | ... | | | | 24 | 15 | 3 | | | | | | |
| | | | | | ----- | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | 155 | 12 | 1 | | | | | | |
| Balance at bank, January , 1913 | ... | 106 | 4 | 3 | | | | | | | | | |
| Balance, petty cash | ... | 2 | 8 | 5 | | | | | | | | | |
| | | ----- | | | 108 | 12 | 8 | | | | | | |
| | | | | | ----- | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | £264 | 4 | 9 | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | £ | s. | d. | £ | s. | d. |
| By rent | ... | | | | | | | 30 | 15 | 10 | | | |
| By salary | ... | | | | | | | 7 | 3 | 9 | | | |
| <i>Proceedings—</i> | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Printing | ... | | | | | | | 3 | 3 | 0 | | | |
| Reporting | ... | | | | | | | ----- | | | 41 | 2 | 7 |
| Press cuttings | ... | | | | | | | | | | 27 | 5 | 0 |
| | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Dinner | ... | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Refund (subscription received in error) | ... | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Miscellaneous printing, stationery, tele- | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| phone, etc. | ... | | | | | | | | | | 5 | 18 | 6 |
| Postage | ... | | | | | | | | | | 6 | 13 | 1 |
| Petty cash, including teas, lantern, etc. | ... | | | | | | | | | | 7 | 2 | 3 |
| Bank charges | ... | | | | | | | | | | 0 | 10 | 9 |
| | | | | | | | | | | | ----- | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | 136 | 12 | 2 |
| Balance at bank, December 31, 1913 | ... | | | | | | | 125 | 2 | 0 | | | |
| Balance, petty cash | ... | | | | | | | 2 | 10 | 7 | | | |
| | | | | | | | | ----- | | | 127 | 12 | 7 |
| | | | | | | | | | | | ----- | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | £264 | 4 | 9 |

We have examined, with the books and vouchers, the accounts of the Central Asian Society for the year ending December 31, 1913, and find them correct,

E. ST. C. PEMBERTON (Colonel).
J. G. KELLY (Colonel).

March 11, 1914.

THE ANNUAL DINNER

THE CHAIRMAN (the Right Hon. Sir MORTIMER DURAND) presided at the annual dinner held at the Savoy Hotel on May 27, with Viscount Bryce, O.M., as the guest of the evening. About sixty-five members and their guests were present.

After the loyal toasts had been honoured,

Colonel Sir THOMAS HOLDICH proposed "The Central Asian Society." He said it was a comparatively small Society and a young Society, not much more than ten years old and without large funds. But although their position financially and numerically might perhaps be comparatively insignificant, their aspirations were large. They numbered amongst their members men having the right to say that they knew at first hand more about Asia than anybody could tell them in any other society. They hoped that the lectures given and the discussions thereon might have some effect on the general world of politics, and although this may not always be the case, the results of their activities might extend a little farther afield than they thought. He had himself freely used the literature of the Society in advising on questions of general and military surveying which might be expected to arise in the future, in connection with the work of other countries who had scientific aspirations similar to our own. His advice had not fallen altogether unheeded, and there was a good deal of what they had learned at the meetings of the Central Asian Society to be found afterwards in the examination records of aspirants to future military fame in England. Taken as a whole, they covered Asia in their discussions almost from one side to the other, and they watched with the keenest interest the developments of our day. China seemed just now to be enduring the throes of revolution in the search of a new dynasty, and in such circumstances they need not be altogether surprised that in the past year or so they had not received at first hand very much information about what went on there. As regarded Persia, the British Government were now committed to a direct financial interest in the oil-fields of Western Persia. This was a new departure, and one that could not fail to have effect on future British policy. The Central Asian Society would no longer have to appeal for British dominance in the Persian Gulf solely for the sake of its

position as a link on the road to India. In future British interests there would be more fully guaranteed, for Government must inevitably be committed to defending its own property. The difficulties attending this obligation had already been evidenced by what had happened in Mexico in direct connection with the production of oil. There was one feature of the contract with the Anglo-Persian Oil Company which struck him as important. Recently in the House of Commons, in answer to a question, it was stated that the military authorities would be opposed to any line of railway crossing Persia towards India unless it followed the coast. But the oil-wells in which Government had now acquired an interest were in the upland zone, at a distance from the coast, and the Navy would be entirely unable to defend them from the sea; no guns that were ever invented could possibly reach them. That fact seemed to point almost inevitably to the position of the railway being modified. Instead of following the coastline, it would have to follow the highland route. He had always considered this by far the best route that could be adopted, not only on account of the better climatic conditions, but also on account of the facility with which certain considerable trade-centres could be tapped.

In the course of his speech, Sir Thomas made passing comment on the various papers read before the Society during the session, and warmly commended the services of the Hon. Secretary, Mr. Penton, of the Treasurer, Dr. Cotterell Tupp, whose absence that evening they regretted, and of the Secretary, Miss Hughes.

The CHAIRMAN proposed the guests coupled with the name of Lord Bryce. He said that the guest of the evening had won distinction in many fields of human endeavour, in fact, in everything that he had touched, and the result was that, not only amongst his own countrymen, but wherever English was spoken or read all over the world, his name was known and honoured. Not the least of his achievements was that of travel; roaming the seven seas he made good use of his opportunities and anyone going to America, or distant British Dominions, would be well advised to take with them one or other of his books. If all Englishmen, and especially all our legislators, would approach the difficulties of Asiatic dominion with the same open mind which Lord Bryce always exhibited, and with the same careful study of facts and the same accuracy of thought, the task of Englishmen in Asia would be an easier one. If Lord Bryce had not penetrated into Central Asia, he had certainly acquired a knowledge of it, and came to them in full sympathy with their object, which was the study of all Central Asian problems, especially in their bearing upon the first interest of Great Britain in Asia—the Indian Empire.

Viscount BRYCE said he felt it a great honour and pleasure to have been invited as their guest that evening, and to find himself placed amongst many whose names as travellers and authors had long been

familiar to him, and who had given us in this country the bulk of what we knew regarding Central Asia and its many problems. In thanking their President for what he had been kind enough to say, he desired to mention that he could not have written what he had written upon India but for the ready help of his Anglo-Indian friends. It was his good fortune twenty-six years ago to go to India, and to receive from many friends in the civil and military services information and suggestions which had been matters of reflection to him ever since, and which helped him to observe world history in a way which would have been impossible if he had not seen India with its wonderful diversities of races and conditions, and with its Western civilization superimposed upon ancient Eastern civilizations. He would like to say what a debt everyone who had studied Indian problems owed to the late Sir Alfred Lyall, who was connected with their Society from its inception. They knew from the admirable biography of their President what Sir Alfred was, and how much he had contributed to elucidate problems of India and the surrounding States. He (Lord Bryce) had the pleasure and honour of Sir Alfred's acquaintance for thirty years, and he never talked with him ten minutes without going away, not only with new facts, but with new ideas. He was one of the brightest ornaments of the British services who had gone to India, and his name would always hold its place in the illustrious roll of the many distinguished members of those services.

In reference to a remark which fell from the Chair, he had to confess that he had not been in Central Asia; but at any rate he had been all round it. He had approached it from the west at Tiflis and Erivan, from the north in Siberia at Lake Baikal and the Altai Mountains, from the east along the great Wall of China, and from the south at Peshawar. He had never got across the intervening spaces, but he still cherished the hope that he might have the chance of seeing the two most interesting cities in Central Asia—Samarkand and Bokhara. No one could go round Central Asia and approach it from so many sides without feeling how full it was of interesting problems. He was not surprised that they had founded what might almost be called a new branch of the Royal Asiatic Society, in the conviction that Central Asia and its problems were quite enough to occupy the labours of one Society. In the first place the physical phenomena were of the highest possible interest. The climatic problems it presented and the other physical conditions which had so affected its life and had turned the well-peopled areas of former times into inhospitable deserts, set before the geographer a great variety of matters for inquiry which deserved far more investigation than they had yet received. And how much more was this the case in regard to its contribution to history. Central Asia was the great dim background which in ancient and medieval times was a source of awe and terror to the peoples to the west and south. One of the first things of which we read in the Greek historians was a great inroad of Scythians

which overwhelmed the Median Empire not long before the times of Cræsus and Cyrus, and by which the civilized peoples of the Eastern Mediterranean were at one moment threatened with ruin. When one passed along the confines of Central Asia, one felt that an interesting continuance of the ancient conditions was to be found in the existence of the nomad tribes such as Kalmuks and Kirghiz, which still roamed over its wastes. But for the most part, the Mongols of to-day were inoffensive shepherds tending their flocks, and it was strange to think of them as the descendants of tribes who affrighted the ancient world and who poured a flood of invasion into Europe as late as the thirteenth century, when in the days of the Emperor Frederick the Second they were repelled from Silesia. There was little now to suggest that these peaceful primitive herdsmen were the sons of the terrible Mongol warriors of old time. The historical problems connected with their former kingdoms had been rendered more interesting by the fuller knowledge we were obtaining, and great light had been lately thrown upon them by the explorations of Aurel Stein. His discoveries had confirmed the view that the influence of Greek art on the East, traces of which could be found not only in Northern India, but as far away as Japan, must be examined in connection with the relations of the Seleucid and Parthian kings with Central Asia. It could not be forgotten that these historical problems gradually passed over into the political problems of to-day. He hoped he might be permitted to study some of the papers bearing on these matters which had been laid before the Society, for no doubt they would throw a good deal of light upon questions which might come up for solution at any time in Parliament.

He might take this opportunity of submitting some few impressions he had recently derived from travelling round the northern and eastern sides of Central Asia. In the north he was much impressed with the rapid growth of Russian wealth and power. The immigrants from European Russia had in South-Western Siberia an enormous stretch of fertile territory. Nearly all of it was still pasture-land, producing great quantities of butter, much of which came to this country as Danish butter, probably because the trade was chiefly in the hands of enterprising Danes. In point of fact, it was Siberian butter, and very good butter too. The country was now being settled, not quickly but steadily; pasture-lands were being brought under the plough, and within thirty or forty years it would probably have a population three or four times what it was now, and would become one of the great grain-producing countries of the world. It was a country upon which the eyes of British traders ought to be fixed, for it would soon be an important market. British mining men also, capitalists and engineers, ought to know more about it, for there were valuable mineral regions west and south-west of Irkutsk, especially on the Upper Yenisei and in the Altai Mountains. Russian ways were no doubt not our ways;

difficulties arising from the systems of Russian administration had to be encountered ; but the Imperial officials would find it worth their while to facilitate the investment of foreign capital there, and he had no doubt that British capital would find a great deal of profitable employment if it were prudently directed to the right spots.

In the course of his travels he had been struck by the steady growth of the Russian influence over Northern Mongolia, all the way from Urga and Kiakhta to Yarkand and the Thian Shan. The complete subjection of the Khanates and the distracted condition of China were making it easy for her to become predominant in those large and thinly peopled regions ; and railways as well as roads were being constructed which had for the present a chiefly strategic importance, though some of them might ultimately have commercial value. A long line was projected, and likely to be undertaken, from Semipalatinsk to Tashkend, and the railroad from Barnaul to Semipalatinsk was already in course of construction. It would be of great military significance.

The fortunes of Central Asia were so interwoven with those of China that they might wish for a few remarks on the present state of things in the Chinese Empire. It was at this moment called a Republic, but in such a country there could, of course, be no Republic in the ordinary sense of the word. There were in a few Chinese cities, and especially in Canton and Peking, a certain number of young men who had been educated in European or American Universities, and a larger number educated in Japan, who had imbibed Republican ideas, and whose agitation had succeeded in overthrowing the Manchu dynasty, not by any force of their own, but because the dynasty had not a friend left and went down without a voice being lifted in its support. He supposed there never was a stranger thing in the history of the world than this downfall of an ancient and majestic line and power without voice or hand being raised on its behalf by any section whatever of the nation. But to put in the vacant place an effective Republic was a very different affair, and certainly there was nothing in existence now that could be truly called a Republic. The present régime was a mere dictatorship resting on the army. One might wish to see the emergence of a new dynasty, winning for itself the respect and reverence which once belonged to the Manchu rulers, and establishing a stronger and juster rule than theirs had latterly been. But of that there did not seem to be any immediate prospect. Yuan-shi-kai might be able to maintain himself in power as long as he found the money to pay the troops, but would probably be obliged to raise fresh loans, and who was to come after him ? It was to be remembered that the provinces of China had very little connection with one another. If the Central Government were to collapse, any provincial Governor of strength and resourcefulness might be able to assert his independence if only he could scrape enough money together. Thus

there would be established a group of practically independent dominions, and we might see China broken up as she was more than 2,000 years ago. This would mean a great deal of dislocation of trade, and a great deal of bloodshed and suffering for the people. How far it could be prevented by the action of foreign Powers he could not now and here attempt to discuss. The best course might probably be for the Powers to endeavour to prevent a scramble for China among themselves, and to support, if they could do so by any proper means, the Central Government, so as to give it every chance to keep the country together.

As he surveyed the large theatre of Central Asia, he felt that this country would owe a debt of gratitude to the Society for the information it could supply upon grave problems which were likely to become not less, but perhaps even more, urgent and important during the next few years. It was not merely now a question of India (although India must continue to be the centre of our Asiatic interests), but it was also a question of our position in the Persian Gulf, and even perhaps in the Mediterranean. Nor could we view with unconcern the course of events in Syria. He had found in that country, from which he had just returned, a great deal of uneasiness, for Turkish power there, as everywhere, was in the most unstable condition. Thus there were a great variety of questions which might have to be solved within the next fifteen or twenty years. The Society would have a field of real usefulness open to it if it would continue to promote the careful study of these questions by papers and discussions. It would thus help in the formation and guidance of public opinion, and the country would be the better prepared to face these problems as they arose.

RECENT BOOKS ON THE EAST

Far East.

- THIRTY YEARS IN MOUKDEN. By Dr. D. Christie and Mrs. Christie. 8s. 6d. net. (Constable.)
- THE CHINA YEAR-BOOK, 1914. Edited by H. T. Montague Bell and H. G. W. Woodhead. 10s. net. (Routledge.)
- THE FAITH OF JAPAN. By Dr. Tasaku Harada. 5s. 6d. (Macmillan.)
- TERRY'S JAPANESE EMPIRE. By T. Philip Terry. 21s. (Constable.)
- THE EDUCATION OF WOMEN IN JAPAN. By Margaret H. Burton. (Revell and Co.)
- THE TRIALS AND PLEASURES OF AN UNCOMPLETED TOUR. By Mrs. C. H. M. Thring. Illustrations. 12s. 6d. net. (Simpkin Marshall.)
- FROM RUSSIA TO SIAM, WITH A VOYAGE DOWN THE DANUBE. By Ernest Young. 10s. 6d. net. (Max Goschen.)
- SIAM AND CHINA. By Salvatore Besso. Translated by C. Mathews. 30s. net. (Simpkin Marshall.)

Indian Frontier.

- A HISTORY OF UPPER ASSAM, UPPER BURMAH, AND THE NORTH-EASTERN FRONTIER. By Colonel L. W. Shakespear. (Macmillan.)

Near East.

- HINTS FOR RESIDENTS AND TRAVELLERS IN PERSIA. By A. R. Neligan. 5s. net. (Bale, Sons, and Danielsson.)
- THE PRESS AND POETRY OF MODERN PERSIA. By E. G. Browne. 12s. net. (Cambridge University Press.)
- THE ORIENT EXPRESS. By Arthur Moore. 7s. 6d. net. (Constable.)
- TURKISH MEMORIES. By Sidney Whitman. 7s. 6d. net. (Heinemann.)
- TO MESOPOTAMIA AND KURDISTAN IN DISGUISE. By E. B. Soane. 12s. net. (Murray.)
- THE STRUGGLE FOR SCUTARI. By M. Edith Durham. 14s. net. (Arnold.)
- NEW MAP OF THE BALKAN PENINSULA, WITH ADJACENT LANDS AND ISLANDS. 5s. (Bacon.)
- THE INNER HISTORY OF THE BALKAN WAR. By Lieut.-Col. R. Rankin. 15s. net. (Constable.)
- ALBANIA. By Wadham Peacock. 7s. 6d. (Chapman and Hall.)
- TRAVELS AND POLITICS IN ARMENIA. By Noel Buxton and the Rev. Harold Buxton. 5s. net. (Smith and Elder.)
- MOROCCO THE PIQUANT. By G. E. Holt. 6s. net. (Heinemann.)
- MARRIAGE CEREMONIES IN MOROCCO. By Professor Westermarck. (Macmillan.)

Biography.

THE LIFE OF SIR FREDERICK WELD, G.C.M.G. By Alice Lady Lovat.
15s. net. (Murray.)

THE LIFE OF ADMIRAL SIR HARRY RAWSON, G.C.B., G.C.M.G. By Geoffrey
Rawson, Lieut., R.I.M. 12s. 6d. (Arnold.)

LIST OF THE PUBLICATIONS OF THE CENTRAL ASIAN SOCIETY

PRICE 2s. 6d. EACH.

- OUR COMMERCIAL POLICY IN THE EAST. By General E. F. Chapman. 1904.
RAILWAYS IN WESTERN ASIA. By Lieut.-Colonel H. Picot. 1904.
A JOURNEY ACROSS ASIA. By the Earl of Ronaldshay. 1904.
CHINESE EXPANSION HISTORICALLY REVIEWED. By Baron Suyematsu. 1905.
OUR RECENT PROGRESS IN SOUTHERN PERSIA. By H. R. Sykes. 1905.
ENGLAND'S STRENGTH IN ASIA. By Colonel Sir Thos. Holdich. 1905.
RUSSIAN RAILWAYS TOWARDS INDIA. By Colonel de la Poer Beresford. 1906.
BALUCHISTAN. By Colonel C. E. Yate. 1906.
PAN-ISLAMISM. By Valentine Chirol. 1906.
FRENCH INDO-CHINA. By A. Cotterell Tupp. 1906.
THE COLONIAL POLICY OF JAPAN IN KOREA. By F. A. McKenzie. 1906.
THE DEFENCE OF INDIA. By Lieut.-General Sir Edwin Collen. 1906.
THE REFORM MOVEMENT IN PERSIA. By General Sir Thos. Gordon. 1907.
IMPRESSIONS OF THE DUAB' RUSSIAN TURKESTAN. By W. R. Rickmers. 1907.
BRITISH INTERESTS IN THE PERSIAN GULF. By A. J. Dunn. 1907.
TRIBES ON THE FRONTIER OF BURMA. By Sir Frederic Fryer. 1907.
CHINESE TURKESTAN. By Major C. D. Bruce. 1907.
THE STRATEGIC POSITION OF RUSSIA IN CENTRAL ASIA. By D. Fraser. 1907.
THE AMIR ABDUR RAHMAN KHAN. By Sir Mortimer Durand. 1907.
SOME PROBLEMS OF THE PERSIAN GULF. By Lovat Fraser. 1907.
PROBLEMS OF WESTERN CHINA. By the Earl of Ronaldshay. 1908.
THE FUTURE OF BRITISH RELATIONS WITH PERSIA. By H. F. B. Lynch. 1908.
THE PERSIAN CONSTITUTIONALISTS. By E. G. Browne. 1908.
ASIATIC TURKEY AND THE NEW RÉGIME. By Mark Sykes. 1908.
A RAILWAY FROM THE MEDITERRANEAN TO INDIA. By C. D. Black. 1909.
EASTERN TURKESTAN. By G. Macartney. 1909.
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