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VOLUME IV., PART I.

ALBANIA PAST AND PRESENT

By Miss M. EDITH DURHAM

Colonel Sir Francis Younghusband presided at a meeting of the Society on December 13, 1916, when Miss M. Edith Durham read a paper on "Albania Past and Present," illustrated by lantern views. He said that Miss Durham was well known to them by name, and they were certain to learn a great deal pertinent to the position in the Balkans from her paper. Albania might be described as the bedrock of the Balkans.

Miss Durham said: Albania has a very long past, and a present that is heavy with pain and anxiety.

Of her present, the latest reports are that it is worse even than that of Belgium, that her men are being forced into the Austrian Army, and that the civil population is dying of starvation in many districts. Mr. Howard, an American missionary, whose report is the latest that I have, states that at least 150,000, largely women and children, have died of hunger and misery since this war began.

Other nations in Europe have now suffered for over two years. But it was in the summer of 1910 that the Albanians first made their bold rising and tried to win freedom from Young Turkish rule, and ever since then Albania has been almost incessantly plundered, harried, and devastated by foreign troops.

She has been the victim of the greed of many Powers. Turkish, Montenegrin, Serb, Greek, Bulgar, and Austrian armies have successively swept and plundered and slaughtered in Albania during the past five years. Of all war's victims, not even Poland is more to be pitied or is in greater need of help.

So much for the present. We will now turn to Albania's past. It is a very long past; Albania is, in fact, the bedrock of the Balkans. We can only here touch very briefly on the main points of her history.

In prehistoric times the Balkans were inhabited by a number of tribes, which appear to have been closely related as to blood. We first hear of them as Illyrians, Macedonians, Molossi, and so forth.

Illyria, whence sprang the modern Albania, was a large territory,

comprising all that is now known as Bosnia and the Herzegovina, Dalmatia (as far even as Trieste), Montenegro, a large part of modern Serbia, and the larger part of modern Albania. Farther south a closely related group of similar tribes formed a separate kingdom of Epirus. The ancient Illyrians had evidently a fairly high civilization. Masses of implements and ornaments have been found in the extensive cemeteries of Bosnia and Serbia, in graves that lie beneath those of the Romans, who afterwards invaded the country. And these implements show that the Illyrians were among the first to manufacture and use iron. It was probably carried thence to other places.

When we first hear of Illyria in history, it was strong enough to insult the Romans. The seafaring population of the coast harried and plundered Roman shipping, and Illyria's proud Queen, Teuta, returned a rude answer to Roman remonstrances. Possibly the fine seafaring qualities of the modern Dalmatian are in part due to his Illyrian pirate ancestry.

A Roman punitive expedition resulted in 230 B.C. At this time, as now, Scodra, which you probably know better as Scutari, was the capital. It, indeed, is one of the oldest capitals of Europe. And the people still call it by its old name, very slightly modified, Shkodra.

Of the difficulties the Romans had with the kingdom of Epirus, and of the exploits of King Pyrrhus, we have all heard at school. The Albanians still cherish his memory, and say that his name was Burrus, which means the warrior, or brave man. "*A je burre?*" ("How art thou, my brave?") is to-day the common greeting when one mountain-man meets another. I well remember the pride with which a Moslem Albanian gendarme, who was guiding me from Permeti to Tepelen, pointed up to the clouded mountain-top, and said that "Up there were the ruins of the castle of our great King Burrus, who beat the Romans and everyone else." And at the carnival masquerade at Scutari I saw Pyrrhuses in marvellous tin helmets fashioned by the local smith—the most admired of any of the masquers.

Plutarch tells us that the soldiers of Pyrrhus hailed him as the "eagle." Which is of great interest, for the Albanian does not call himself an Albanian, but Shkipetar (from *shkip*, an eagle), the people of the eagle. And his land is Shkiperia. The term "Albania" has been given by foreigners, and its origin is somewhat disputed. It probably derives from the name of a tribe in Central Albania—Arberia or Arbonia.

The word *liria* in modern Albanian means "free," and the Albanian of to-day translates Illyria to mean "the land of the free." Certainly no race has made a more continuous struggle for freedom throughout the ages than has the Albanian. Albanian history is one long tale of epic struggles against one invader after the other.

We have no time to detail the various invasions. But let us note

that, though each invader in turn has striven to crush the Albanian's individuality, none has as yet succeeded. He has clung with such tenacity to his national customs, his idea of race, and his language, that no Power has as yet assimilated him. All efforts to Slavize, Grecicize, or Ottomanize him have failed. The Romans did not succeed in subduing Illyria till A.D. 169, when they took Scodra, and forced the Illyrian King, Gentius, to march as prisoner in a Roman triumph.

Judging by the length of time which the Romans took to conquer Illyria, and also by the great amount of pre-Roman graves, the country must have been pretty thickly populated. And this aboriginal population has left its mark, for the ornaments found in quantities in these graves are in many cases almost precisely like those which are still worn by Balkan peasants. And in most parts the silversmith turns out usually to be either an Albanian or a Vlah, which points to a long and unbroken tradition.

Under the Romans, Illyria seems to have prospered. Rome found some of her best soldiers among the tribesmen, and more than one Emperor—Diocletian, Constantine the Great, and others of lesser note—were of native blood.

Christianity reached the Dalmatian coast as early as the first century, and had penetrated far inland by the fourth. The Albanians, in fact, claim to have been converted by St. Paul himself, who says: "Round about Illyria I have fully preached the Gospel of Christ." Be this as it may, Illyria early formed, and still forms, part of the patriarchate of Rome. And the Christians of the north, which includes almost the whole of the mountain tribes, have remained faithful to Rome ever since.

Scutari became an archbishopric as early as A.D. 307. The archbishopric was, however, transferred later to Antivari. But Scutari was continuously the seat of a Bishop till the nineteenth century, when it again became an archbishopric.

Under Rome, Illyria was dotted with Roman colonies, joined by roads, which were probably better than any that have since existed. Roman coins are still found in plenty in many places. Apollonia, on the coast rather to the north of Avlona, was a celebrated university, and was joined to Salonika by the Via Egnatia. The name Avlona, or Valona, is, in fact, merely a corruption of Apollonia.

We now come to the second period of Albanian history, the Slav period.

The Roman Illyrian civilization was rudely broken into and largely destroyed by the irruption into the peninsula, in the seventh century, of huge savage hordes, the ancestors of the modern Serbians. They were a tribal people, and were pagans. Coming in overpowering numbers, they drove the Roman civilization to the coasts, where

Roman influence is not yet dead, and possessed themselves of the fertile plains inland; for they were a nation of herdsmen.

The Albanians, as we may as well now call them, maintained their freedom and language in the mountains of the Albania of to-day. In the north—modern Bosnia, that is—the language died out; but it is very possible that we may still find traces of the old Illyrian population. In certain districts of Bosnia all the Roman Catholics are tattooed with strange devices. Now, tattooing has never been recorded as a Slavonic custom, whereas we are told by classical authors that tattooing was one of the peculiarities of the ancient Balkan tribes. The fact, therefore, that these people are tattooed, and are also members of the Church of Rome, looks like a direct tradition from very ancient times. It is strengthened by the fact that tattooing in similar designs is found also in many parts of Albania. Some of the tattoo patterns, moreover, resemble some of the ornaments found in the ancient graves.

Nor, indeed, is all trace of the Roman colonists gone. We find groups of what are known as Kutzo-Vlahs dotted about all through these lands. They speak a Latin dialect which resembles, but is not the same as, the Roumanian language. And in physical type they bear a strong resemblance to the darker type of Albanians. There is a particularly large group of them at Elbasan and at Ochrida, both of which were important points on the Roman Via Egnatia. They, in all probability, derive from the intermarriage of Romans with the native population. The Albanians seem to me to have an instinctive feeling of relationship with them. For I have been repeatedly told that "Vlahs have sweet blood," and that a "man need not mind giving a daughter in marriage to a Vlah," and also that "Vlah" is Albanian for "a brother."

The invading Slavs were pagan, and were not converted to Christianity till the ninth century—that is, some five hundred years after the Illyrians—and then by missionaries from Salonika. The differences which were later to make the two Christian Churches hate one another more than they did the Turk were already beginning to make themselves felt, and when the final split came the Serbs threw in their lot with Byzantium. Thus, as Serb power grew and spread over Illyria, or Albania, as we may as well call it now, the Roman Catholic Albanians suffered not only the woe of being invaded, but were also subjected to religious persecution. To race hatred was added religious hatred.

The Christians of the south, we may here mention, later, under the influence of Byzantium, went over to the Orthodox faith. But they have not forgotten the ties of blood, and remain in racial sympathy with their Catholic brethren. The north never wavered in its allegiance to Rome. Not one Orthodox is to be found among the Christian tribes of the north.

The Serbians formed their stronghold and centre on the fertile plains of Kosovo and the Metoya, for they were a nation of herdsmen. And they called this kingdom, not Serbia, but Rashia. This is a fact of great interest, for Rashia is an Albanian word meaning "a plain"—the kingdom, therefore, of the plain, possibly the name by which the original inhabitants called it.

The Nemanya Kings, who made Serbia, ruled from 1180 to 1356, and pushed farther and farther into Albania. They took and fortified Scutari, and strove, it would appear, to Slavize the people, but unsuccessfully.

In 1321 we find the Catholic Albanians appealing to Charles of Anjou and to Prince Filippo of Taranto to force King Milutin to recognize and respect their religious rights. And in 1332 a certain French friar, Frère Brocardus or Brochart, gives us an interesting contemporary account of the state of the country. He says: "There is, among other things, one which would make it easier to take this kingdom of Rashia. . . . There are two peoples, the Abbanois and the Latins, who both belong to the Church of Rome. The Latins have six cities, and as many Bishops—Anthibaire (Antivari), Cathare (Cattaro), Dulcedine (Dulcigno), Suacinense (?), Scutari, and Drivaste (now ruined completely). In these the Latins live. Outside the walls the Abbanois have four cities—Polat Major, Polat Minor (these are the modern tribal districts of Upper and Lower Pulati), Sabbate (Sappa), and Albanie (Elbassan and Durazzo district). They are all under the Archbishop of Anthibaire. These Abbanois have a language which is quite other than Latin, but use in their books the Latin letters. (What would we not give now for a book of that date!) Both of these people are oppressed under the very hard servitude of the most hateful and abominable lordship of the Slavs. If they saw a Prince of France coming towards them, they would make him their leader against the accursed Slavs, the enemies of the truth and our faith." That the worthy Frère did not exaggerate is proved by the severity of the celebrated Canon of Laws enacted by the Serb Tsar, Stefan Dushan, in 1349.

During the twenty years of Dushan's reign—that is, from 1336 to 1356—all Albania formed part of the Serbian Empire. Dushan made special laws against the Catholics. For example, Law 6: As to the Latin heresy and those that draw Orthodox believers to its faith, the Ecclesiastical Authorities must strive to convert all such to the true faith. If such a one will not be converted, he shall be punished with death. The Orthodox Tsar must eradicate all heresy from his State. The property of all such as refuse conversion shall be confiscated. Heretical churches will be consecrated and opened for priests of the Orthodox faith. Law 8: If a Latin priest be found trying to convert a Christian to the Latin faith, he shall be punished with

death. And so forth. In truth, the Turk, with all his faults, has not treated the Christians so badly as one Christian sect has treated another.

I have dwelt at some length on this period because it has so much bearing on recent events. The Albanian since that time has never ceased to regard the Slav as his bitterest and cruellest foe, and the Slav, in turn, has preserved his mediæval way of dealing with the Albanian. During and after the first Balkan War the old laws of Stefan Dushan were pitilessly enforced. Hundreds of persons who refused to join the Orthodox Church were martyred, hundreds more were expelled and deprived of all they possessed.

Modern Balkan troubles are all built on early mediæval and pre-Turkish hatreds. And it is failure to recognize this important fact that has led us into some of the painful positions in which we now find ourselves.

We now come to the third period, the Turkish. Great Serbia was torn to pieces very shortly after Tsar Dushan's death by his nobles, who struggled for supremacy. It had lasted, indeed, barely two hundred years. Albania broke loose at once, and the names of many local chieftains have come down to us; but we have no time now to dwell on details, for we must pass on to the next great Balkan catastrophe—the coming of the Turks. Till this time the Balkan peoples had been wholly occupied fighting each other. The Greeks, in fact, invited the Turks to help them against the Slavs. In view of present-day events, it is of interest to note that ever since the Turk was first established in Europe the Balkan peoples have taken turns in aiding him against each other, instead of uniting to expel him. Not till the Turks were settled in the eastern part of the Balkan Peninsula and were marching westward in force did the Balkan peoples realize their danger. Then Lazar, who was Tsar of a very much reduced Serbia, collected together Bosniaks, Serbs, and Albanians, and led them against Sultan Murad's army on the plains of Kosovo. A long and fierce fight ensued, and the issue was doubtful till a Serb noble—the son-in-law, in fact, of Tsar Lazar himself—deserted to the enemy with his twelve thousand men—bribed, it is said, by offers of power. This act of Serb treachery established the Turk in Europe.

The Serbs accepted the son of the traitor as King under Turkish suzerainty. The Albanians, however, were far from submitting. They joined with the Venetians, who had been for some time past settling on the Adriatic coast and trading with the interior. Albano-Venetian relations seem to have been good. The names of many powerful Albanian chiefs are found in Venetian records. Scutari and all the north was free from the Turks, but they penetrated South and Central Albania.

Then there arose an Albanian chieftain who has gained world-wide fame, George Castrioti, known as Skenderbeg, called in his day the "champion of Christendom." This remarkable man is one of the great warriors of history. Taken as a child from his father by the Turks as a hostage, he was brought up a soldier and a Moslem. He, however, threw over the Turks and their religion, and returned to his fatherland to Kroya, and was hailed by the Albanians as their leader. For twenty-four years he was continuously victorious. Two Sultans successively hurled larger and larger troops against him in vain. Murad II. came himself at the head of 40,000 men, and attempted to storm Kroya, but was repulsed, and had to retire discomfited.

Skenderbeg not only freed the land, but kept it free. His realm extended as far as Ochrida, and Dibra was one of his towns. I shall not forget the grief of the Albanians when they heard that Dibra, one of Skenderbeg's towns, had been given by the Powers of Europe to their secular enemy the Serbs. So long as Skenderbeg lived Albania was free. He died of fever in 1476, aged sixty-four, leaving no one who was great enough to take his place.

Skenderbeg dead, Venice could not hold out much longer. The Turks violently attacked Scutari, which was defended by combined Venetian and Albanian forces. Scutari fell in 1479, after a most bloody struggle.

When the new road was being built along the foot of the old citadel in 1911-12, I saw hundreds of old stone shot and cannon-balls dug out of the ground, the relics doubtless of that last great fight. And old Venetian bronze cannons stood in the citadel till 1913, when unfortunately they were looted by the Montenegrins.

Previous to the fall of Scutari, it is said that angels came and carried away the picture of the Madonna from the Church of Our Lady at the foot of the hill, and deposited it safely at Genzano, in Italy. Many a time have I assisted at the celebration of this festival, the greatest feast-day of Scutari, when the poor people—who are now starving—came joyfully from every mountain and village, glad and good-natured, in their best attire—a happy crowd, so orderly and so friendly. I think now sadly of the huge admiration they had for the Great Powers of Europe, their infinite faith in the goodwill of those Powers. And now they have been dragged into the hell created by those same Powers, and are dying as innocent victims.

When the Turks overpowered Albania, many Albanians fled into Italy, where some eighty Albanian villages are still in existence, and the Albanian language, customs, and costume are to a large extent preserved. For many years the Albanians hoped and hoped in vain for the help of their former friends and allies, the Venetians, against the Turks. But Venetian power, too, was on the wane. Venice lost

successively Durazzo, Dulcigno, and Antivari. The Albanians of the Mirdite and Dukagin mountains sent appeals for help in 1570, 1571, 1580, 1596, 1601, and 1616. Then they gave up hope.

From the beginning of the Turkish invasion they had succeeded in obtaining recognition of their tribal autonomy from the Turks. They now began in the seventeenth century to adopt Islam. Many Greeks and a very large number of Slavs had become Mahommedan as early as the fifteenth century. In the case of Albania one reason seems to have been the fact that the Christian Bishops of Albania were foreigners, and were mainly occupied in quarrelling with one another about the frontiers of their dioceses instead of looking after their flocks. "The hungry sheep looked up and were not fed." And a Moslem manger was no doubt ready for them. Thus in 1638 we find a violent dissension between the Bishop of Alessio and the Archbishop of Durazzo. And again, in 1703, no less than three Bishops were contending for the district of Postripa, and allowing no priest to officiate in it, till the quarrel was settled by Pope Clement XI., who sent a special legate for the purpose. Clement XI. was Albanian on his mother's side, and made a strong effort to aid the Catholic Albanians; but on his death Rome seems to have lost interest. Albania was largely served by foreign priests who had no understanding of the people.

The conversion to Islam of a large portion of the Albanians has had a disastrous effect on Albania. Though the Moslem Albanian is as tenaciously Albanian as ever, the fact that he is Moslem has caused ignorant outsiders to consider him a Turk. Islam has also had a retarding influence on education. But far from Islamism making the Albanian into a Turk, no sooner did the Moslem Albanian chiefs begin to gain power than they again began to assert themselves and make efforts for freedom. The Albanians had, indeed, been increasing in strength and flowing back on to the plains from which the Serbs had expelled or held in subjugation their ancestors.

The town of Djakova (of St. Giacomo, that is) was founded by an offshoot of the Christian tribe of Merturi. And when in 1690 the Serb population elected to emigrate to Austria, where they were given assistance and wide lands in the Banat, the mountain Albanian tribes resettled almost the whole of the district as far north as Mitrovitza and north-east to Nish and Uskub, and made scattered Albanian villages as far even as Monastir. They regained, in truth, a large part of their ancient Illyria. Nor did they submit to Turkish interference. Christian and Moslem alike united to preserve their ancient laws and customs. Much liberty was allowed them, and they gave, in return, military service.

So powerful, then, did the Albanian chiefs become that they struck out for complete independence. Ali Pasha, the ruler of the

south, whose capital was Janina, was, in fact, for years quite independent, and tried, and almost succeeded, in persuading England to support him. The Pasha of Scutari was almost as powerful. It was then that the Turks made a determined effort to subdue Albania once more. After stern fighting, they conquered Ali Pasha, now an old man, and slaughtered him and his family. South Albania then fell entirely under the Turk, and entered on a difficult period.

In order to kill national sentiment, the Turks then permitted the Greeks to open schools and work a propaganda. The Greeks in those days always worked with the Turks to destroy the racial and national spirit of the other subject races. The Pasha of Scutari was also badly beaten, though not wholly subdued. But the nation as a whole never forgot its traditions.

At the time of the Congress of Berlin—that fatal Congress at which the seeds of so many troubles were sown—the Albanians saw the other Balkan races obtaining European support and recognition, and formed the well-known Albanian League to protect their land and their rights and to beg also for recognition. Great Britain, it is interesting to find, was strongly in favour of forming a large Albanian province, to include the whole of the vilayets of Scutari and Janina and the larger part of Kosovo vilayet, with a portion of Monastir vilayet, too, and to grant it considerable autonomy with a view to future independence. Both Lord Goschen, then our Ambassador at Constantinople, and Sir Edmund Fitzmaurice worked hard for this end. Its formation would have obviated very many recent misfortunes. But the Powers were not unanimous on the subject, and all that was done was to recommend some such reforms to the Turks.

The Turks responded by arresting most of the heads of the League and executing or exiling them into Asia. Albania was in worse plight than ever. Turkish governors, and sometimes garrisons too, were put in the Albanian towns. But the Sultan did not wish for another national rising, and to propitiate the Albanians gave permission for Albanian schools, and consented to allow the language to be printed. A huge impetus was at once given to the national spirit. Especially in Koritza, in South Albania, was an active centre formed, to the anger of the Greek priests and propagandists. The Sultan then, seeing that national education would soon produce an Albania stronger than ever, and influenced, no doubt, too, by the Greeks, suddenly withdrew his consent, prohibited the printing of the language, and threw the unfortunate schoolmasters into prison.

When I first visited Koritza in 1904, its schoolmaster was still serving out his term of fifteen years' imprisonment. A similar term was the penalty for being found in possession of newspapers printed in Albanian. Newspapers were nevertheless printed abroad and secretly circulated, and the Koritza patriots, at great risk to themselves, continued working.

The Turkish Government had already given permission to the British and Foreign Bible Society to sell its publications in the Turkish Empire. The Albanians, therefore, made a translation of the Gospels and some of the books of the Old Testament. Albanian colporteurs carried stocks of these around along with other publications. And the demand for twopenny copies of the Book of Genesis was amazing. I once assisted at the selling of seventy-four such books in one day. Almost all were bought by Mahommedans, some even by Albanian officers in the Turkish Army.

Thus, under shelter of Great Britain, Albania struggled towards national development, greatly hampered by the Greeks, who lost no opportunity of denouncing the secret readers and teachers of Albanian to the Turkish authorities. A Greek Bishop even went so far as excommunicating the language, and Greek priests told the people that it was useless to pray in Albanian, as Christ did not understand it.

At Koritza, however, under protection of America, the American Mission opened a girls' school. Its Albanian headmistress, one of the bravest women I know, ran the school successfully. The Turkish authorities searched vainly for Albanian books. She used English ones, and translated her lessons orally. Writing was destroyed as soon as finished when danger was suspected. The girls taught their brothers, and the school was a centre of culture and national feeling. I am very sorry to tell you that in the summer of 1914, just before the outbreak of the present war, this school, which had done splendid work for fifteen years, was pillaged and burnt by Greek invaders, who devastated and pillaged all the surrounding country. The schoolmistress, after many adventures, is now safe in America, together with some sixty thousand Albanian refugees, whose centre is in Boston, and who are working earnestly with a view to reorganizing their country when peace is once more proclaimed. They publish a paper called *Illyria*, and are all engaged in various trades and manufactures. I hear that they are reckoned in America as very good and industrious citizens.

Nor was national education confined to the south. In Scrutari also schools were opened both by the Austrians and the Italians and protected by them, and Scutari thus became the educational centre of the north.

To return to Albania's story. The Albanians, like many other people, hoped great things from the Young Turk revolution, and especially grasped at the promise of national equality and the freedom of the press. I was in Albania when that revolution took place. Never, perhaps, in the world's history has there been a greater outburst of national feeling than when freedom of the press was announced in Albania. Almost in a night crops of little newspapers

sprouted up. Albanian clubs were opened, Albanian schools formed. The nation at once collected money and opened the Normal school at Elbassan, which was to train teachers for all, and books were written and translated. The restrictions on the use of the Latin alphabet were cast aside. A national conference was held. The rush of children to the schools was such that there was not room for them. The Koritza schoolmistress wrote to me that Mahommedan girls were being sent to her from distant parts as boarders, and that she did not know where to stow them all.

It was a bright dream while it lasted, but all too soon shattered. The Turkish Government again intervened and forbade the use of the Latin alphabet, and began at once arresting and imprisoning editors and schoolmasters and closing the printing-presses, and ordered that Albanian, if printed, should be printed in Arabic characters—characters totally unsuited to a European language. Thousands of Arabic alphabets were printed and sent into Albania by the Turkish Government. The people collected them and burnt them in public at Berat.

The results of these and other oppressions were the Albanian revolutions of 1910-11-12—revolutions which the Young Turks put down with great severity, but which finally shook Young Turk rule to its foundations. And they paved the way for the Balkan wars of 1912-13.

Into quite recent politics it is, perhaps, better not to enter. We are too near the events for criticisms of our Allies or our foes to be desirable here. I will therefore only say that Albania as a whole remained neutral during those wars, and fought only in self-defence when attacked; that she was invaded and spoiled by three armies; that terrible atrocities were committed on Albanians; and that in the end her hopes were cruelly disappointed when, in response to her appeal for recognition, the Powers sent her a wholly incapable and incompetent German Prince, the Prince of Wied, who did not deign even to visit his land and subjects, but preferred to sit in his comfortable palace at Durazzo and tried to form a little imitation of a German Court. It is a disgrace to all who were concerned in the choice that such a man should have been appointed. And the unfortunate Albanians were at once made the prey of numerous and unscrupulous European intriguers.

We may be, however, allowed to hope, with the Albanians, that as the present war is being waged for the rights of small nationalities, Albania's day, too, will dawn, and that once again this oldest of European peoples will have her place in the sun. And all of us who know the Albanians' great possibilities, their intelligence, industry, and vigour, have no doubt that, if given a chance, they will ultimately succeed.

We will now look at a few views of the people and country.

The CHAIRMAN: Miss Durham has given us an exceedingly interesting and very instructive paper; but it contained one statement with which, I am sure, not one single person here will agree. She said that the very curious man-lady or lady-man she showed us on the screen "treated her with the contempt she deserved." You will all say, I know, that it is not contempt Miss Durham deserves, but very different feelings. She has nobly set herself to see and understand something of the trials this little state has had to go through in the past and what it is suffering at the present time. She finished her lecture by saying that she hoped a better day was dawning for Albania, and in this hope we earnestly join. In this war we are fighting for the freedom of smaller nationalities, and we certainly shall not fail in interest in and sympathy for Albania, after what Miss Durham has told us. We must admire from the bottom of our hearts the sturdiness with which the Albanians through all these centuries of oppression have stuck to their own individuality; and we may hope that in the years to come they may have that opportunity for which they are evidently panting to express that individuality to the full. There is one Albanian gentleman here this afternoon. He is rather modest in regard to his knowledge of English; but I am sure we would be only too lenient with him if he would very kindly speak to us.

The Albanian gentleman referred to said that Miss Durham had done more for his country than anyone he could think of. Her work had earned for her among the people the title of the "Queen of Albania." He trusted she would be able to continue to help them, and, as in the past, do everything she could for Albanian nationality.

Mr. H. W. NEVINSON said that, intensely interesting as the address had been to everyone there, it was, he thought, of most interest to himself, because he had had the privilege and honour of going through Albania with Miss Durham and under her auspices. Whenever her name was mentioned she was respectfully termed their Queen. He was interested in the slides of the most beautiful country he had ever seen, especially Northern Albania; and he was interested to see in one picture so fine a photograph of his own back, this being the first time he had seen it. He could not describe with what respect and honour Miss Durham had for many years now been regarded in Albania. He was charmed and overwhelmed by the welcome he always received when he mentioned her name. From her reflected glory he was sometimes called the King of Albania, because they all believed that Miss Durham and he had been sent out by King George to take over the government of the country. He would like to mention another thing which even Miss Durham did not know. When he was in Salonika last winter a large party of English nurses arrived, having fought their way with great difficulty through the Albanian

frontiers from the north of Serbia, accompanied by a small body of guides. They told him that as they journeyed they were received by the people (though they were in a state of semi-starvation) with the greatest enthusiasm and hospitality, simply because they belonged to the same nation as Miss Durham. That seemed to him a very fine tribute for any Englishwoman to receive, showing as it did how great her influence had been over a nation of tribes which were supposed to be so savage in the past.

We were engaged in this war for the protection and freedom of small nationalities. Our late Prime Minister announced at the very beginning of the war that that was one of our objects. What a disaster, what a crime it would be to Europe, if we allowed a small nationality like Albania, which had held together since the time of the Roman Empire, to be divided, as had been proposed, between its most intense enemies, the Serbians and the Greeks! Let us at all events resolve that whatever might be the protection or management Albania might require, it should be protected mainly as an independent State.

Dr. GASTER said that he had an Albanian nurse in his infancy at Bucharest, and ever since he had retained a love and admiration for the Albanians—the Scots of the Balkan Peninsula. He wished Miss Durham had told them a little more of her own achievements, not only to tell what she had done, but to bring out more clearly the character of these Albanians. The story would show their gratitude, simplicity, chivalry, and undaunted courage. It was his privilege to be a member of the Albanian Committee after the Balkan War, and he joined in trying to urge their claims upon the diplomatists of the British Government. They did not succeed to the extent they desired. He did not wish to enter upon politics; but he would say that if the concessions to the Albanians pressed at the time by people who knew the country had been made, they were convinced that a much better outlook would have been opened up for the Albanians. Perhaps even the situation in the Balkans would have been somewhat different to what it was now. The Albanians had suffered both in the north and the south by the oppressions of two implacable foes, the Serbians and the Greeks. It was the first necessity for them to have an independent status when the war was over. Most of the sailors of the Greek fleet were Albanians and most of the traders were Albanians, and the Greeks had a great dread and dislike of them. In the past they used the Turkish Power to destroy the Albanians, and now they were using other Powers for a similar purpose, and we had to see to it that they were not successful.

It was most interesting to watch the resource and determination of the Albanians in trying to develop a literature of their own. He was the possessor of some very good specimens of their efforts in this

direction during the last century. One of the oldest was a translation of the Gospels in parallel columns, one in Greek and the other in the Albanian language, but Greek characters. There were also translations in which the Latin alphabet was used, and there was a society in Bucharest which had invented another alphabet for use in Albania. Both Turkish and Italian were used in their books; so that altogether the Albanians had to relearn their written speech five times over. Yet in a marvellous way they persevered in trying to develop their literature and their language. It was to be hoped that in the future the impediments arbitrarily imposed on their aspirations would never be renewed, and they would have free scope to develop their literature and their country as they wished. Alexander the Great was reputed to have been an Albanian. They hoped that another Alexander might soon arise to be the instrument of giving these people the freedom they had so amply earned by their fidelity and their sufferings.

The meeting closed with a vote of thanks to Miss Durham.

JAPAN'S PART IN THE WAR

By Mr. N. KATO

At a meeting of the Society on January 17, 1917, Mr. N. Kato, the London editor of the *Mainichi*, read a paper on "Japan's Part in the War."

Colonel Sir Francis Younghusband, who was in the chair, said the lecturer was in England as London editor of one of the chief papers in Japan. He was not only distinguished in his own country for his journalistic abilities, he was still better known as a philosopher. He was a man of very great distinction and learning and had made a special study of English life. Japan was far away from Central Asia, but he believed Mr. Kato would have to take them still further afield in explaining to them the very great and distinguished part Japan had taken in the war. It was a part which they in England had not understood and appreciated as fully as they should. But that evening they would be able to hear at first hand, from the Japanese point of view, the part that country had taken in the struggle.

Mr. Kato said: Very little is yet known to the British public of the part played by Japan in this war. This is, I believe, due not so much to a lack of appreciation as to the fact that Japan is so far from the main theatre of war. Before laying a few outstanding facts before your readers, I may perhaps be allowed to say a few words on the general attitude of Japan towards the great war.

In the September number of *The Nineteenth Century*, Mr. Robert Machray points out that there were three possible alternative steps for Japan to take at the outbreak of the war, other than that which she did pursue. He says, in the first place, that Japan might have proclaimed her neutrality and stood aside from the present war entirely; and in the second place, that she might have sat upon the fence, so to speak, and then gone over to what she thought the winning side; and thirdly (this is the most serious possibility, the writer says), that she might have from the beginning thrown in her lot with the Central Powers!

Now, such a speculation can be tolerated when it is indulged by anyone who is not a Japanese, but from the Japanese standpoint it is simply inconceivable. To proclaim her neutrality was, in my opinion, an impossibility for Japan, inasmuch as Great Britain did not proclaim her neutrality. For was not Japan the ally of Great Britain since 1902? And what is the use of an alliance if it could be cancelled in the very hour of need! Or, again, could Japan condescend to the mean practice of selling her honour to the highest bidder? Such a practice is incompatible with the spirit of *Bushido*, the moral code of the Japanese people. And lastly, the supposition that Japan might have thrown in her lot with the Central Powers is the most absurd of all; for even if there had been no Anglo-Japanese Alliance, Japan, by ranging herself by the side of Germany, would have run absolutely counter to her national policy of preserving peace in the Far East as well as the whole world. Could Japan have been blind to the obvious fact that this war was forced upon the Entente Powers by Germany's desire for world domination? Could she range herself with the Powers whose cause she knew was wrong and whose victory meant the menace to the future of civilization and humanity? In short, it was impossible for Japan to have taken any other course than that which she actually took, without forfeiting her national honour and prestige. She chose the only course left for her, and she did it in a way worthy of her position, dignity, and self-respect.

Early in August, 1914, the British Government had asked Japan for assistance under the terms of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance, and on the 15th Japan sent an ultimatum to Germany demanding from her the withdrawal of all her warships from Chinese and Japanese waters, and the delivery to her in a month's time of the leased territory of Kiaochou, with a view to its ultimate restoration to China. A reply was requested within a week, and as it was not received, Japan declared war on August 23, 1914, only three weeks after the British declaration of war.

Tsingtao, the capital of Kiaochou, is a strongly fortified military and naval base of Germany in China. It was the nucleus of German expansion in the Far East. I should say it was the outpost of the grand German scheme of "Berlin-Bagdad Policy." I am told that the German Emperor had cherished the hope of making Tsingtao into an Eastern Kiel one day, and his chagrin was great when he heard of its fall.

It is well to remember how Tsingtao was acquired. By the Shimonoseki treaty, which was concluded at the end of the war of 1894, China had agreed to concede Port Arthur to Japan as a part of the indemnity. But Germany, having persuaded two other European Powers

to co-operate, demanded Japan to give up her claim to the Chinese port. England declined to be a party to this intervention, an action which gained the gratitude of Japan and laid a foundation of the conclusion of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance several years later. Japan, of course, had to give up her legitimate claim to the spoil which was bought with costly price of blood and money. Soon after, Germany, taking advantage of the unfortunate accident of the killing of two missionaries, and as a reward for her intervention, got Tsingtao from China; Russia got Port Arthur; and France got some valuable concession in Southern China; and afterwards even Great Britain leased Wei Hai Wei—this, perhaps, from the need of maintaining the balance of power in the Far East. At any rate, the German occupation of Kiaochou started the scramble for territorial concessions from China, and although Port Arthur was returned to Japan after the war with Russia (with whom, mind you, we are great friends now), Tsingtao remained in German hands, and during those twenty years Germany has converted it into a strong military fort and a naval base as well as a prosperous colony.

Japan, in her turn, advised Germany to give it up, but as she did not listen to our advice, war was declared and a besieging army of about 1½ divisions was sent out. After a long and thorough preparation, and with a short and gallant attack, both from land and sea, the fort of Tsingtao was occupied by our army, with the help of two battalions of British troops under the command of Major-General Barnardiston. Over 4,600 German soldiers were taken prisoners.

Thus, the only German military fortress and the most formidable naval base of German Far Eastern fleet was stripped of our enemy's hand, and the constant menace to the peace in the Eastern Asia was thus got rid of. The fall of Tsingtao took place on November 7, 1914, and with it the Japanese Army's part in this war came to a successful end. The total casualties of the Japanese Army in this campaign were nearly 2,000.

To *The Times* Japanese section, issued last September, the Japanese Admiralty has contributed an excellent account of the naval achievement during the war, with an accompanying chart showing the routes covered by the fleet. This falls under five heads.

(1) *Naval Action at Kiaochou or Tsingtao.*—This may be summarized as the transporting of the besieging army and its safe landing, which went on without a hitch; and the blockading of the harbour and the cannonading of the fortress from the sea in conjunction with the land forces.

(2) *Activity in the Eastern and China Seas.*—This consisted of patrolling constantly in those wide areas of sea, protecting the Allied com-

merce and transports from the attacks of the enemy warships which had escaped from Tsingtao before it was blockaded. Under this head comes the landing of Japanese marines to help in suppressing the serious mutiny among Indian troops in Singapore.

(3) *Activity in the Indian Ocean.*—This consisted in chasing the raider *Emden*, which did much havoc to the world's commerce and the Allied transports; and in escorting the transport of Australian and New Zealand contingents up to the Red Sea. In this connection, I may say that three batches of the Russian troops from Eastern Siberia were convoyed by the Japanese Navy to Toulon.

(4) *Activity in the Pacific Ocean.*—This was the most arduous task undertaken by the Japanese Navy. Chasing down German and Austrian warships and taking possession of their naval bases among various German islands in the Pacific was not an easy task. The Japanese fleet cruised all over the ocean from Hawaii on the north to Fiji Islands on the south, and to New Guinea on the west, covering all areas scattered over with those islands like Marshall, Caroline, New Caledonia, Samoa, and Bismarck Archipelago. We are at present administering the Caroline and Marshall Islands.

(5) *Activity on the West Coast of America.*—After being deprived of naval bases in Tsingtao and various islands in the Pacific, the German warships, which were once dispersed, finally succeeded in reuniting themselves off the western coast of South America, and the Japanese Navy's part in these regions was to let them feel the pressure from all sides and chase them down to a convenient corner, thus finally succeeding in rounding them up for the great naval victory at Falkland Islands, where the British fleet under Admiral Sturdee practically annihilated the German Pacific Navy.

In short, we can summarize the whole naval activity of Japan as having helped the Allied navies by relieving them from their tasks in the Eastern seas and the Pacific Ocean, besides escorting transports of Anzacs and Russians safe to their destinations. The extent of this relief can be judged from the fact that the Japanese fleet engaged in these activities was no less than 225,000 in tonnage—say 30 to 40 vessels—besides a great number of merchantmen, such as transports and mine-sweepers. It may be noted that this naval force is almost equal to the whole fleet of Japan at the time of the Russo-Japanese war, although little more than one-third of its present force. At the same time, it must be remembered that, although the warships actually engaged in these activities were only about one-third, the whole Japanese fleet, in fact, has been mobilized during the period from the declaration of war up to the British victory at Falkland. Japan lost one third-class cruiser, one destroyer, one torpedo-boat, and three

mine-sweepers. All the German warships in Tsingtao were sunk or destroyed, and the *Emden* was run to earth by the Australian cruiser *Sydney*.

Lastly, I come to the munition work of Japan for the help of the Allies. Unlike the other two—*i.e.*, the help by army and navy—this part of the Japanese contribution towards the victory is still in progress, and I must not give any exact figures. I can only say that Japan has mobilized the whole of her industrial resources for the war. Not only the two great arsenals of the Japanese Government, but thousands of private works and factories are busy, day and night, in manufacturing all kinds of munitions to supply the Russian armies in the field. About a year ago the Japanese Foreign Minister intimated that two-thirds of the Russian Army was at that time being armed by Japanese munitions. This was surely no small effort on the part of Japan.

Nor was it only Russia that Japan has helped with munitions. England also obtained large quantities of rifles and other things from Japan at the early period of the war for Kitchener's Army. She has furnished rifles to all the other Allies, except Italy. But the chief country to which Japan is supplying munitions at present is Russia.

Prior to the fall of Warsaw in August, 1915, Japan had sent to Russia enough rifles to arm no fewer than 52 divisions, or something like 750,000 rifles, to say nothing of field artillery and heavy guns. It is a well-known fact that Japan had sent some officers to train Russian gunners in the handling of Japanese guns.

Again, it is not only weapons of all kinds that Japan is sending to Russia, but practically everything in the way of equipment needed by Russian soldiers, including clothing, boots, and provisions. Some idea of the extent of this side of assistance may be gained from the fact that in 1915 no less than ten million yards of khaki cloth were sent to Russia. Needless to say, these munitions and equipments were sold to Russia for value received, but it is noteworthy that the price received for them is, I understand, about half compared with that of the American supplies. Japan could not afford to suffer loss on these sales, but she seems not to be anxious to get "excess war profits."

At the same time, it is quite true that Japan is making money. During the last two years Japan sold munitions and equipments to Russia alone to the value of £30,000,000, but it is interesting to note that she by no means received the value in cash. On the contrary, in order to help Russian finance, she has bought already £12,000,000 worth of Russian Bonds. The Japanese Mint has been also busy in making Russian coins.

With regard to France, Japan bought back her Railway Bonds,

amounting to £6,000,000, which had been placed in Paris before the war. She also bought some long-dated French Bonds.

Lastly, with regard to England, Japan has already bought back her own bonds in the London market to the amount of £14,000,000 during the war period, besides paying to England the interest upon her bonds to the amount of over six million pounds. Again, Japan has bought ten million sterling's worth of the British Treasury Bonds, and our memory is still fresh concerning the success of the British war loan of £10,000,000 issued at Tokyo, which was interpreted by British papers as expressive of Japan's financial improvement, her confidence in English finance, and her faith in the final victory of the Allies. Moreover, the greater part of the gold reserve abroad, which is growing fast, is deposited in the Bank of England, and is, I believe, of some assistance to your finance, and is also the best proof of Japan's confidence in British financial power.

Japan is no rich country. She has been a borrowing country, and of late years the balance of commerce has been always against her. But, owing to the change of circumstances during the war, she has become, or at least is becoming, a lending country. With the money which she has made during the war she is trying, in her modest way, to do what she can to help the finance of the Allies. It is far from my intention to boast of the part played by my country in this colossal struggle of the whole world. Japan has only done, and is still doing, her bit. Indeed, I wish that she could have done more than this, but in one sense it is a rather satisfactory sign that the Allies in Europe did not find it necessary to ask Japan for more assistance than what she has actually given. But whenever the occasion comes in which her further assistance and co-operation is required, I believe that my country will never shirk the responsibility imposed upon her, for she is as firmly determined as any of the Allied nations to fight the war to the finish, and to win a complete victory such as will secure the permanent peace of the world.

The CHAIRMAN: You will all agree that we have listened to an exceedingly instructive account of the part which Japan has taken in the war—in the military, the naval, the munitions, and the financial spheres. We shall have gathered from the tone of the lecture the spirit with which Japan has gone with us into this tremendous struggle. I have not myself visited Japan, but thirty years ago I travelled all round Manchuria and heard much about Japan. What is so exceedingly striking is that in this short lapse of time of only thirty years Japan should have risen to such a height of greatness as that she occupies to-day. There are many here besides myself who spent the greater

part of their lives in Asia, and I am sure they must be as impressed as I am with this phenomenon in Asiatic politics. There was one striking feature in the lecture which brings this home to us specially, and that was the single fact that the Japanese transported Russian troops from Vladivostok right away round to France. If any of us had been told thirty years ago that such a thing as that would happen, he would have been extremely astonished. It is not only Russian troops that they have taken across the seas, but also troops from Australia. There is no doubt that Japan has in this war made contributions of the very greatest help to us.

Colonel SIR T. HOLDICH said he regretted exceedingly that he had no personal knowledge of Japan. It was one of the marvels of history, and would always remain so, that in the short space of forty years Japan should have risen from what we knew her to be then to what she was now. It was difficult to conceive the power which Japan had been able to throw into the present struggle and the great assistance she had been able to give us, when we remembered that half a century ago Japanese policy was one of isolation from and opposition to all other nations. He was quite unprepared to hear that the Japanese Navy had taken such a signal part in the struggle, particularly in patrolling the Pacific Ocean during the war. They could all recall the brilliant work of the Navy of Japan in her war with Russia; but since then those of them who had not been able to follow Japanese affairs closely had not realized that her fleet had been so largely increased that it had become much stronger than it was then. It was an enormous undertaking, and one which had been very much overlooked since the beginning of the war, to patrol the Pacific while the German cruisers still held a hand there. We could not be too thankful for the endeavours which Japan had put forth in the naval sense, and we owed very much indeed to her assistance since the war began.

He was not surprised to hear the reply the lecturer gave to the question asked him in France why Japan was not sending troops to Europe, why she was not sending soldiers as well as rifles. He conceived that there might be grave political reasons for that into which the lecturer did not care to enter. But they would all be quite satisfied with his reply, and with the confidence he expressed on behalf of his country in the ultimate success of the Allies. One could only hope that in the long future as in the present Japan would still remain as good and firm an ally as she had proved to be in the last few years.

Mr. E. R. P. MOON wished to say a few words, as one who had made two short visits to Japan. All present entertained a sense of enormous appreciation and gratitude for what the lecturer had told them.

Many of the facts he had given they had heard for the first time; indeed, the greater part of what he had said was new to him, though he always endeavoured to keep in touch with Japanese affairs. His first visit to Japan was in 1895, at the time to which he referred, just when the peace with China had been concluded, and it was intensely interesting to hear how what was done then had worked out in the intervening twenty-one years.

Colonel A. C. YATE said he visited Japan in 1898 and 1905. On the former occasion, when he got to Nagasaki, he called on the Lieutenant-General commanding the garrison and asked permission to see the troops there. The General very kindly consented, and sent a staff officer round with him, and also an interpreter, to see every branch of the service. Perhaps the thing he most thoroughly appreciated was to see a regiment of infantry that was being inspected by its Colonel. He was thus able to observe how thoroughly it was prepared for mobilization. Naturally he was interested in his own branch of the service, that of the cavalry. In 1906 or 1907 he received an invitation from Sir Alexander Bannerman, who was present at the siege of Port Arthur as British representative, to meet a Japanese officer. To his great pleasure and surprise he turned out to be the officer who had taken him round the garrison at Nagasaki some years before. He invited this officer to his county dinner, and to the surprise of both of them the officer's name was coupled with the toast of the guest. But he rose to the occasion; he (Colonel Yate) had never heard a better speech made by a man unfamiliar with our institutions, and not speaking through the medium of his mother tongue.

He remembered standing on the veranda of the Singapore Club in 1905, to watch a great fleet pass through the Straits. He and those about him were surprised at the progress Japan had then made in sea power. They were now gratified to think that this fleet had been employed in the last two and a half years with such good effect for the support of the Allied cause. The Japanese fleet had been a factor in resisting German aggression, and enabling them all to look forward to ultimate success in this war.

An AMERICAN LADY said they ought not to separate without contrasting the brutalizing effect of German *kultur* in the last forty years with the progress of Japan from her archaic polity to a place of honour among the Great Powers.

The CHAIRMAN expressed his thanks to the lecturer on behalf of the audience. They had all learned a very great deal from the lecture, and were not now in any uncertainty as to the importance of the Japanese contribution to the war. They hoped that this would not be the last occasion of his visiting the Society.

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THE BOUNDARY PROVINCES OF WESTERN CHINA

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ERRATA.

Vol. IV., Part I., page 24, lines 9 and 21, *for* "Nagasaki" *read* "Nagoya"; line 17, *for* "that of the cavalry" *read* "the infantry."

Kansu, Szechuan, and [illegible].

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Kansu is the northern of the three boundary provinces, and corresponds geographically to the ancient Tangut Kingdom, which so long successfully defied the Chinese and was finally subjugated by the Mongols in the thirteenth century. It covers an area of 125,000 square miles, with a population of about 6,000,000, of whom perhaps one-quarter are Mohammedans, to be found chiefly in the central portions, while within and along the western frontiers are tribes of

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Colonel Sir Francis Younghusband presided, and said they were fortunate in having with them Mr. Wilton, who was H.M.'s Consul in Nanking, and had spent the greater part of his life in China. He was with him in the Tibet Mission in 1904, and afterwards made an interesting and valuable journey in South-West China. He studied the conditions mainly from the point of view of railway communication with Burma, but at the same time he paid attention to topographical details, and also to the condition of the people in the various provinces he visited.

The title of my paper this evening is "The Boundary Provinces of Western China," and I will commence by placing on the screen before you a map of Western China, showing the three provinces of Kansu, Ssuchuan, and Yunnan.

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Tibetan stock. The Yellow River, the second largest in the Chinese Empire, takes its rise across the border in Tibet, and although there are numerous ferries, there was but one bridge spanning it (at Lanchowfu, the provincial capital) in its course of 4,000 miles until the construction in 1911 of the railway bridge in the eastern maritime province of Shantung.

The province has been subject to civil war and the devastation of two Mohammedan rebellions; and the general unrest has effectively arrested any development of its natural resources during the last century, although portions of the north-west and north-east are now exhibiting some signs of agricultural revival.

The first of these rebellions was in 1855, lasting for eighteen years, and owed its origin to mutual distrust and suspicion and a fear on the part of the provincial officials of the growing strength of the Mohammedans. The second broke out in 1895, and was finally put down four years afterwards.

A Belgian syndicate was granted a railway concession five years ago for a line from Lanchou eastwards right across China to the sea coast, but no portion of this line has as yet been constructed in Kansu; and the province can boast of no railway communications, the usual means of transport being by carts and pack animals. Since its inauguration as a province in 1750, Kansu, in spite of civil dissensions, has ceased to be a battlefield for China and her enemies, and served as an advanced base and lines of communication for Chinese armies in Tibet and Chinese Turkestan during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

To the south of Kansu lies Ssuchuan, the land of the Four Rivers. It is the largest of all the Chinese provinces, with an area of 220,000 square miles and a population of 50,000,000. Thanks to its temperate climate, fertile soil, and the industry of its inhabitants, it produces everything, except cotton, necessary for its dense population, together with a large surplus available for export. The most intensely cultivated and densely populated part is that known as the Red Basin, which occupies approximately the centre, and is surrounded by mountainous and sparsely inhabited country to the east, north, and west, and is bounded by the Yangtse on the south.

A marked feature of the agricultural as distinguished from the industrial districts is the absence of villages. The farmer and the farm labourers live in farmhouses on the land, and the tendency is to the separation rather than to the congregation of dwellings; as a result, the whole countryside is dotted over with cottages at a short distance from one another. Another characteristic of the purely farm life as distinguished from village life of the agricultural population is the street market (Ch'ang). These are generally long streets lining the main roads, consisting of shops owned by the farmers, and

let to traders on the market days, which fall on every third, fourth, or fifth day, as the case may be. These gatherings are the centres of news, gossip, official announcements, festivals, theatricals, and public and even family meetings, and are very lively scenes on the days of meeting.

In addition to its other natural resources, Ssuchuan possesses abundant salt wells scattered widespread throughout the province. These wells have all been laboriously bored by hand, some reaching to a depth of over 3,000 feet. The brine is brought to the surface in bamboo buckets attached to bamboo ropes wound round a drum by harnessed buffaloes. The natural gas, of which there is a large supply in the principal salt centre, is conducted in bamboo pipes and utilized for the evaporation of the brine.

From the political and ethnographical points of view the country to the west of the Red Basin is by far the most interesting, as it stretches towards and beyond the wild regions generally known as the Tibetan Marches, inhabited by Tibetans and people of Tibetan stock. As regards the inhabitants of the Red Basin, these are all Chinese, and the province may be said to have been but recently colonized. In the seventeenth century it was practically depopulated by the notorious Changhsien-Chung, a blood-thirsty madman who waded to power through streams of blood, and removed every obstacle by the simple expedient of wholesale massacre—men, women, and children, he spared none. He was finally killed by the Manchus, who invaded and conquered the province towards the latter end of the seventeenth century. There appears no reason to question the popular belief that he recorded his murders on a stone tablet, known as the tablet of the "seven shas," each "sha" (kill) representing a million.

I was unsuccessful in my attempt to get a peep at the tablet itself, for it is deeply buried beneath the stone floor of the prefect's yamen at Chentu (provincial capital), and its exhumation would have been followed by a terrible earthquake. I was able, however, to inspect a painting of what was undoubtedly a genuine portrait of Chang taken from life. It left a very unpleasant impression, and the stark staring eyes, with their look of ferocious madness, haunted me for quite a little time.

After the Manchu conquest the province was colonized by Chinese from other provinces, and so unpopular were these remote regions that, according to tradition, men had to be transported thither in chains—a Chinese euphemism for saying that it was used as a penal settlement in those days. It may be said, therefore, that the settlement and revival of this prosperous and wealthy province has been accomplished within the space of the last century and a half. Not only has it contributed largely in the past to the revenues of the

central Government, but it has also given considerable financial assistance to the exchequers of its poorer neighbours, such as Kueichow and Yunnan, and has also provided the funds required for the former upkeep of the expensive establishments maintained in Tibet for the Chinese Amban and the so-called Chinese garrisons in that country. Its wealth and strategical importance explain in a great measure the uneasiness and suspicion which China has manifested towards India, and the policy of the former in maintaining Tibet as a buffer zone against an advance from India in this direction —an advance, it need hardly be said, which was wholly imaginary, but, nevertheless, a bogie consistently held up before the eyes of the Court at Peking by the provincial Government of Ssuchuan.

The extraordinary prosperity of Ssuchuan is due not only to the fertility of its soil and the industry of its inhabitants, but also very largely to its excellent water communications; and the bold and hardy type of boatman is never deterred by meagre pay, dangers of wreck, and exposure to the elements from braving the many dangers of the numerous rapids in the higher reaches of its rivers. The main artery is unquestionably the Yangtse, and the city of Chungking, with a population of 300,000, built on nine hills, stands on the north bank of this great river, 1,400 miles from the sea, as the commercial gateway for the entire province. In spite of its picturesque situation and the extraordinary life and bustle of its commercial existence, it is a cheerless city to live in, for the average sunshine is but one day in seven, and it is a Ssuchuan proverb that when the sun appears at Chungking the dogs bark, so great a stranger is he. Below Chungking for a distance of 400 miles the river is broken by deep gorges and dangerous rapids, and all passengers and merchandise were hauled up in native junks at infinite toil and considerable risk before the advent of steamers within the last few years. The pioneer of steamer enterprise on these upper waters of the Yangtse was the late Archibald Little, and many a time I have sat with him on the veranda of his house overlooking the river at Chungking and discussed the pros and cons of this scheme so close to his heart, and yet so full of many disappointments to him. He did not live to see his dreams fully realized, but it may fairly be claimed that it was British enterprise and British determination which showed the way for steam navigation on the upper Yangtse; where it has led others have followed, and to-day a regular service of specially built steamers is plying between Ichang at the foot of the rapids and Chungking.

Beyond Chungking, too, it was British enterprise which led the way and solved the problem of steam navigation as far even as the confines of the Tibetan Marches, and almost to the city gates of the provincial capital itself.

With your kind permission I will tell you something of a cruise

I made one summer on these upper reaches of the Yangtse and the Min River, when I accompanied Lieutenant Watson, now in command of H.M.S. *Bellerophon*, on his little gunboat the *Woodcock*. The *Woodcock* was a twin-screw, shallow-draft gunboat of about 12 knots, and we started from Chungking full of hope and confidence to explore these unknown waters. The Chinese officials, with whom we were on excellent terms, entreated us not to go, as we would all be drowned, nor could they conceal their nervousness as to the effect our sudden appearance would have upon the minds of the natives, who had never seen nor even had the slightest conception of a "fire-wheel ship" (steamer), and they sent runners from town to town along the river banks warning the people to fear nothing and to behave themselves. The news of our approach spread like wildfire, and everywhere there were thousands and thousands of spectators lining the banks, and even standing knee-deep in the shallows, intently watching the progress of a boat propelled neither by oars nor hauled by trackers. Throughout the length of our journey the vast crowds were perfectly quiet and orderly, although on one occasion, when the siren was blown somewhat unexpectedly, they bolted in hundreds from the bank and made for the nearest cover in apprehension of a bombardment. The funnel was popularly supposed to be the muzzle of a huge gun, and the general belief was that we were propelled by men hidden in the bottom of the boat. After reaching the limit of junk navigation on the Yangtse, 240 miles above Chungking, we turned northwards into the Min River, which is regarded by the Chinese as the main branch of the Yangtse, and proceeded as far up as Kiating, the most important town in those parts. Just below Kiating the T'ung River joins the Min at right angles, and was running in a freshet at about 14 knots. Both rivers were impassable for native craft, and not a boat was visible on the stream anywhere. The approach is difficult at all times, and at this moment not one of the thousands of spectators believed that we could steam up to the town. On the one side was the T'ung racing into the Min River over a submerged shingle bank, and on the other side of the narrow winding channel, studded with rocks, were the red sandstone cliffs rising sheer from the water's edge and sculptured into a colossal image of the Maitreya Buddha 300 feet high. We ascended successfully, except that the edge of the shingle bank bit a piece out of one propeller, and we sheered over at an alarming angle from the shock. It was a tight corner—perhaps the tightest on the river—and when it was passed, Watson turned to me on the bridge and laughed a little laugh of relief. The fame of the dramatic arrival travelled far and wide, and as an advertisement for the British flag it could not have been surpassed.

I hope I have not tried your patience too long over this little

cruise, but, quite apart from the valuable knowledge of the river and commercial prospects in those regions, I venture to believe that advertisement of this kind is worth more than the publication of scores of reports written at desks and compiled from books of reference. British prestige in Western China was at a low ebb twenty years ago, but it is high to-day, and this is due in no small measure to British naval officers and bluejackets, who seem to have the happy knack of hitting it off admirably with all classes of the Chinese. As an instance of this I may mention that, when the *Woodcock* left Ssuchuan, the Chinese authorities expressed their warm thanks for the excellence of the men's behaviour and their good feeling towards the people, and begged permission to distribute little presents among them.

"Prestige" is anathema to some people, who would like to eliminate it from the dictionary, but "prestige" is a very real thing; and when gained, as ours has been, by firmness combined with tact, patience, and fair dealing, it is, I venture to believe, an asset of incalculable value.

The Min River is not a geographical boundary of the province, but it is an ethnographical one, for it divides the Chinese on the east from the Tibetan on the west, and the Miniak country to the north-west of Tachienlu, the most important town in the Tibetan Marches, has been regarded by many Tibetans as the cradle of their family. These regions to the west are noted for big game and gold. One of the little independent States there, to which Chinese are admitted on sufferance and as itinerant pedlars only, is so rich in alluvial gold that the saying is that your straw sandals, costing rather less than half a farthing a pair, will sell for a dollar after a day's walk. Not without reason, too, are the highest reaches of the Yangtse known as the River of Golden Sands, and its gold is washed out of the river flats for many hundreds of miles along its course.

In the south-west of the province and in the great bend of the Yangtse lies the area known as Liangshan, inhabited by the independent Lolos, noted for their physical courage and manly appearance. I should like to tell you something of these interesting folk, but time presses, and we must cross the Yangtse into Yunnan. Before doing so, however, I will throw on the screen a few types of the independent Lolo.

The province of Yunnan is the south-western corner of China, and has an area of 150,000 square miles, and with the exception of numerous lake basins, the aggregate extent of which does not exceed 10,000 square miles, may be described as mountainous. It is a broken plateau, with an average elevation of 6,000 feet, traversed by mountain ranges whose general trend is from north to south. The plateau falls abruptly to the deep valleys of the Yangtse on the

north; to those of the Irrawaddy, Mekong, and Red Rivers on the west and south; and with an easier gradient to that of the West River on the east. In the west, the courses of the great rivers—Shewli, Salween, Mekong—are marked by deep troughs cut through the wild and precipitous country. In the east the plateau is scored only by one large river, the Ta Chiang. The population is about 10,000,000, and 40 per cent. of these dwell in the lake basins, and the remainder are to be found in the hilly areas; the Chinese element is in the majority in the level lands, while the various members of the tribes predominate in the highlands. These tribes, including the Shan, Lolo, and Miao families, constitute a very interesting ethnographical study, and, although earlier arrivals in the province than the Chinese, they do not appear to be the aboriginal inhabitants. The Shans have migrated into Yunnan along two lines from the east and from the north; the Lolos from the east; and the Miaos from the east likewise, although at a later date. In addition to these three principal tribal families, tribes of Tibetan stock are scattered along the western and north-western frontiers. Those on the western border are comparatively late arrivals, and these mountaineers find themselves in the unpleasant position of being wedged in by China on one side and Burma on the other.

The capital of the province is Yunnanfu, at an elevation of 6,300 feet, and described by Marco Polo as a very great and noble city. Most picturesquely situated on the shores of the K'un Yang Lake, surrounded by mountains and wooded hills, it is the terminus of the French railway from Tongking. This line, about 300 miles long, is the only railway within the whole area of the boundary provinces of Western China, and it has long been the dream of many practical men to link up Burma and Yunnan with the vast markets of Ssuchuan and the Yangtse Valley by a railway. Fascinating as this problem is, however, its solution still lies in the future.

The rivers of Yunnan are, practically speaking, unnavigable, and overland communications very difficult and costly, so that, away from the single line of railway, merchandise is carried slowly and painfully on the backs of pack animals. Nor has the province yet recovered from the eighteen years' struggle between the Mohammedans and Chinese from 1855 to 1873, when it was computed that 10,000,000 of the inhabitants lost their lives. During this period the Mohammedans established a capital at Talifu for some years, but the town was surrendered, and thousands of the defenders driven into the lake and drowned.

Inasmuch as its frontiers lie on Tibet, Burma, and Indo-China, Yunnan is bound to continue to have a deep political interest outside China. It cannot be denied, however, that the economic outlook of the province is somewhat gloomy, and it would appear that its

future progress and material prosperity depend absolutely upon the satisfactory development of its enormous mineral resources, hitherto practically unexploited.

We have now glanced at these three boundary provinces, isolated from the neighbours of China on the north and on the west for nearly 200 years by the buffer zones of Tibet and Mongolia, and we have seen that both from the strategic and economic points of view the centre —*i.e.*, Ssuchuan—is the strongest part of China's boundary line in the west, and its weakest points are on either flank, represented by Kansu and Yunnan respectively.

The creation of these buffer zones has been no accident, but the deliberate policy of the Manchu Emperor Kienlung (in the middle of the eighteenth century), probably the most powerful and sagacious statesman that ever ruled the destinies of the Chinese Empire. He defined the present province in Kansu in 1750, and some years later laid down the limits beyond which Chinese sovereignty should not penetrate into the vast regions of Tibet; in 1769 he closed a series of wars with Burma by a treaty under which the latter paid tribute to China. He was far-seeing enough to perceive that the wastes of Mongolia and Tibet could never be colonized by Chinese, but were formidable buffers against any hostile approach from Central Asia. Tibet has never in any sense been a Chinese province, and to Tibet, even more than to Mongolia, he granted autonomy, for he foresaw that the spiritual influence of the Dalai Lama at Lhasa and the Tashi Lama at Shigatse would keep in check their co-religionists, the Mongol tribes, and that a suzerainty, even as shadowy as Turkey once held over Egypt, would be a far more valuable asset than a precarious attempt to establish Chinese sovereignty in wild, desolate lands, with difficult communications, scanty supplies, and where Chinese settlers could not maintain themselves.

Ever since the close of Kienlung's reign in 1796 there has been a constant struggle between the provincial authorities of Ssuchuan and the central Government at Peking as to the policy to be adopted towards Tibet. The former have ever adopted an aggressive attitude towards that country, and the latter have been desirous of maintaining the *status quo*. In the days of the monarchy it was the rule for a strong Viceroy to endeavour to snatch and administer whatever portions of Tibet came convenient to his hand, but he was invariably overruled on the appeal of the Tibetans to the central Government.

The Mission which Sir Francis Younghusband took to Lhasa met at first, as you all know, with a great deal of hostility on the side of the Tibetans. The tact and patience of Sir Francis, however, aided by his extraordinary knowledge of the peoples of Central and Eastern Asia, converted this hostility into good feeling, and the Mission

departed from Lhasa, leaving behind a most favourable impression not only in the minds of the people generally, but also of the Tibetan hierarchy. The progress of the Mission was viewed with suspicion and alarm, and in a weak moment the Court at Peking gave way to evil advice. Chinese troops not only overran Eastern Tibet and occupied Lhasa, but the conversion of Tibet into a Chinese province was even attempted. The whole campaign has proved disastrous for China, and no dispassionate observer would venture to deny that this fatal departure from her traditional policy has resulted in a very heavy blow to her prestige throughout the whole extent of the buffer zone covering her three western boundary provinces.

The CHAIRMAN: We have listened to a very interesting lecture, but I think the most interesting part was left out. Mr. Wilton described how he was on a steamer which went down in the Yangtse in 120 feet of water, when the captain of the boat and twenty of the passengers and the crew were drowned. But he did not relate how he escaped to be present with us this evening. We hope he may tell us of his adventures on that occasion.

The slide we saw of the Great Wall of China showed it to be a very solid masonry structure, looking as though it would last for ever. He described how it was 2,000 miles long from the sea-coast to its limit in northern deserts. I know the Wall from its departure from the sea to Peking and some 200 or 300 miles beyond, and all that part is of the same solid type. But I have also seen it along the borderland of Mongolia and the Gobi desert, and there it is nothing but a flimsy structure of mud and sticks.

We have all been interested in what Mr. Wilton has had to tell us of the remote province of Ssuchuan. From what I have heard of it from Mr. Wilton on many other occasions besides this evening, it must be one of the richest parts of the world. Its lands are exceedingly fertile, and it contains highly valuable mineral deposits. Its population of about 50,000,000 (which is rather more than the population of these islands) is very industrious and intelligent. With all these advantages of climate, fertility of soil, and mineral wealth, one cannot help realizing how much scope there is there for development in the future, provided proper means of communication with the outside world can be found. Mr. Wilton said that the Chinese provincial governors were nervous and jealous as to our advance from India in that direction. Well, it may be natural that they should be so when there is that fertile province to attract us. But, as Mr. Wilton has said, there is not the slightest cause for apprehension. We have the tremendous natural obstacle of the Himalayas between us and Ssuchuan, and I am sure it is no part of the policy of the Government of India to move further in that direction. We did

move in the case of the Mission to Tibet; but there was not the slightest intention or desire for annexation, and as soon as we had achieved our objects of putting our relationship with the Tibetans on a satisfactory footing, we withdrew from the country. It was gratifying to hear from Mr. Wilton that as a result of the Mission there was good feeling there toward us, because that was always part of our intention when we went there. We desired to establish good feeling amongst the people of Tibet and those of the western frontiers of China. In the work of bringing this about Mr. Wilton himself played a part.

The lecturer is perfectly right in what he said about the value of British prestige. It is hard perhaps for people here in England thoroughly to understand this. But those who have travelled in the East, and especially those who have travelled alone in out-of-the-way parts, know how extremely important it is that our prestige should stand high and should be firm and constant. It is because of that prestige that Englishmen are able to travel in safety in every part of Asia. It is by means of that prestige that officials like Mr. Wilton are able to carry on their work in far-away corners of the Chinese Empire.

Sir FREDERIC FRYER said that though he was a good many years in Burma, he never had any opportunity to visit the western provinces of China of which Mr. Wilton had given them such a good description. When he was Lieutenant-Governor of Burma there was considerable hostility between the Chinese and the people of the Burma frontier. The Chinese central Government always expressed the most excellent intentions toward us, and always promised that everything should be done to preserve peace upon the frontier. But the local governors were always making advances within what we considered to be our territory. On several occasions after the demarcation of the boundary, the Chinese crossed it, and sometimes our forces came into collision with Chinese troops. The central Chinese authorities always alleged that the aggressors were not troops, but simply marauders, although it was well established that the parties crossing the agreed border actually did consist of regular Chinese soldiers. He believed that now our relations with China in those regions were on a much more friendly footing, because every year a party of Chinese officials met a party of our officials to settle any dispute that might have arisen since the previous conference. In consequence mutual knowledge had very much improved, and he thought now it could be said that our border relations were generally excellent.

There had always been a great desire to carry a railway from the British border into Yunnan, and when he was in Burma the Government made a road from Bhamo to Tengyueh. It was practicable, or intended to be practicable, for wheeled carriage. We made our part

of the road, which was seventy miles long, and then it was for the Chinese to continue the road right into Tengyueh. But when he left they had not done so, although we had offered, in case they found it difficult to provide engineers, to align the road. He believed it would be quite practicable to make a railway as far as Tengyueh. Beyond that place, he was informed, there would be considerable difficulties in laying out a railway, because of some very high ranges that would have to be passed. But he felt confident that in process of time we should have railway communication between Bhamo and Yunnanfu.

Mr. GEORGE JAMIESON, C.M.G., said he shared Sir Frederic Fryer's hope that a railway would be built from Bhamo to Yunnanfu. But as regard the province of Ssuchuan it was a very different proposition. The whole tendency of trade therefrom was down the Yangtse River to Shanghai, and there were very great difficulties of natural features in the way of a railway from Burma to Ssuchuan. The misfortune of that province was that it was so isolated from the eastern part of China. Formerly the only way of access was by native boat up the Yangtse, with its frightful and dangerous rapids. Steamers had now been constructed which were able to navigate these rapids; but it was expensive work even now. He believed that freight charges, say from Ichang to Chungking, were two or three times more than those from Shanghai to London in normal times. Until a railway was built to the coast Ssuchuan would never be reasonably in touch with the rest of China. He believed that the next trunk line in China would be from Ssuchuan to Hankow, to connect with Shanghai. Preliminary surveys had been made, and if it were not for this shocking war and its effect in limiting financial and industrial enterprise, by this time something would have been done to provide this very necessary means of communication. It would not be an easy railway to make, because through a great part of the way it was intended that the route should follow those enormous gorges which they had seen on the screen. But provided the capital was forthcoming the task would not be beyond the skill of modern engineering. The Chinese need not be alarmed as to any supposed desire of the British to take Ssuchuan from the Indian side. All we wished was to have access to it as a market for our goods, and it was one almost untapped. A good deal of Manchester and other goods even now went up the Yangtse, but nothing in comparison with the needs of 50,000,000 or 60,000,000 of population. The wealth of the people would be greatly increased by facilities for exchanging their produce for manufactured goods. In natural resources Ssuchuan was one of the richest provinces in China. Besides supplying salt for about one-third of the Empire, it produced in abundance many things for which there was unusual demand, such as silk, wool, white wax,

musk, etc., and it would become, once a railway was built, the greatest market in China for foreign manufactures.

Mr. N. KATO said he would like to state the feeling of the Japanese in regard to the prestige of the British people in Western China, to which Mr. Wilton had referred. There were some few people in Japan who looked with misgiving upon British competition in business in Ssuchuan and other provinces of the Yangtse Valley. But the more liberal party of enlightened Japanese welcomed the work of British merchants and traders in developing the resources of the interior of China with sincere hope of their success. Among his Japanese friends in London he found when they talked of Chinese affairs between themselves they always came to one conclusion. They said to each other: "Our own country was opened up by foreigners of the West, who taught us the necessity of commerce and trade. We are thankful for the opening up of Japan, and all that it has meant for us. China cannot be opened up of itself. That development can best be achieved by free competition among the nations trading with China. So long as the penetration is commercial and industrial, and is not political, it will be for the good of China and of the world at large." From this point of view he was very pleased to have listened to praise of the British trader, and also to hear the results of the expedition to Lhasa, which was led by their Chairman. China had suffered severely from the war, because for the time being foreign capital was not available for the development of her resources. When the great struggle was over, the nations of the West might be assured that the Japanese would welcome their endeavours to further commercial enterprise in the vast republic of China.

Mr. WILTON, replying to the discussion, said he would first respond to the Chairman's request for information on his adventure in being wrecked on the Yangtse. He managed to get ashore, and spent the night in an empty native boat, eating a somewhat frugal dinner of dry rice and salt. He travelled to Shanghai with the least possible delay, and bought some more clothes, and this was the end of the adventure.

In reference to the road from Bhamo, to which Sir Frederic Fryer had alluded, he would be interested to know that the Chinese portion had been completed at Chinese expense by engineers lent by the Government of Burma. At any rate, if it was not quite finished, it was very near completion, so that it might be said there was good road communication from Bhamo to Tengyueh. With regard to railway enterprise in the same region, no doubt a railway was possible to Tengyueh. But when it reached that point, where could it go to further? If they sought to reach the important marts of Western Yunnan, they would have to traverse great watersheds, crossing passes of about 8,000 feet, and dropping down to four or five valleys

as low as that of the Salween (about 2,400 feet). He very much doubted whether this great feat was likely to be attempted for many years to come.

Mr. Jamieson mentioned the heavy cost of haulage from Ssuchuan along the Yangtse. Whether a through railway would pay when there was the alternative of the river route and given a good and regular steamer service thereon might be regarded as doubtful. The Maritime Customs hoped to improve the water route, and were regulating the traffic. They had employed as expert adviser an Englishman, Captain Plant, whose knowledge of the upper river could not be surpassed. Whether the money would be forthcoming for enterprise on an adequate scale remained to be seen, but at least something could be done at moderate cost to remove a great many of the dangers to which traffic was now exposed on the river.

The meeting closed with a vote of thanks to the lecturer.

BAGDAD

COLONEL SIR FRANCIS YOUNGHUSBAND presided at a meeting of the Society on April 25, 1917, when Colonel Sir Thomas Holdich read the following paper on Bagdad:

So much has already been written and said about Bagdad that it is difficult to add anything really useful to the mass of information which has been made public, and which has been thoroughly well illustrated by the maps in our daily papers, which now must be familiar to most of the members of our Society. It will perhaps be well to commence with a few personal notes which, without appealing to the fascinating history of that marvellous country which centres in Bagdad, may lead to a realization of the modern atmosphere which surrounds it and foreshadow certain possibilities in the future.

I was led to Bagdad by the exigencies of geographical inquiry. We wished to know more of the regions which lie westward of India in extension to that which we already knew of the more immediate hinterland. It was necessary to learn something of the topography of the southern highlands of Persia through which overland communication might eventually be established with the Persian Gulf. Our surveys accordingly reached outward through the rugged borderland of the Makran coast, where for the first time something like accurate scientific light was thrown on a region of classical history and Arabic romance, which illuminated the stories of Alexander's extraordinary retirement from India, and, many centuries afterwards, the Arab invasion of India under a youth named Mahomed Kassim who occupied the whole of the Indus valley and carried his triumphal campaign as far as Kashmir. It was a marvellous discovery to find for how many centuries this once well-known and well-trodden avenue of approach from Bagdad to the Indus and India had lapsed into utter oblivion. Makran had long been regarded as an unwholesome, dried-up, and impossible region of sand and sun-scorched rock, where no self-respecting traveller would venture with the hope of acquiring fresh laurels. Ancient ports were identified on the coast where the ships of Nearkhos, Alexander's admiral of the fleet, had touched; ancient cities were unearthed where the mediæval Arab geographer had halted on his way to India, or, perchance, had stayed

to rise to eminence as a merchant; old dams for retaining an always scanty water-supply were to be recognized as the work of the greatest builders of the mediæval world, the Arabs; together with an assemblage of tribal communities of mixed origin and uncertain record such as may be discovered hereafter in remote corners of the Nearer East —the "flotsam and jetsam" of former nationalities. Makran led direct from India to the western borderland of Persia overlooking the Persian Gulf, where the highlands are occupied by mixed races of Persian and Arabic origin who will doubtless become important in the political economy of the future. The Bakhtiaris, for instance, are the immediate neighbours of our settlements in the oil-fields, and much depends on their good-will both now and hereafter if we assume any responsibility for the peace and security of Southern Mesopotamia after the war. A reconnaissance of their country extended into Kurdistan proved them to be on the whole favourable to us and to our English representatives. Mr. G. B. Scott, who has worked amongst them as Surveyor for some years in connection with the Anglo-Persian Oil Company, has nothing but pleasant recollections of their hospitality and good-will. Arrangements for exploratory surveys implied the consent and assistance of our political authorities both in Persia and Mesopotamia. Amongst other things, I was most anxious to secure a safeguard for a native explorer to travel from Bagdad to Mecca as a pilgrim with a taste for inquiry. In this I did not succeed, but it was this that led me to Bagdad. At first sight the promise of a successful desert excursion across Arabia did not seem to be remote. The first stage on the journey is the caravan highway between Bagdad and Nejef, passing through Kerbela, or more directly through Hilla on the Euphrates. Kerbela is about sixty miles south of Bagdad, and about twenty-five to thirty miles north-west of Hilla, Hilla being the modern representative of Babylon, built chiefly with bricks from Babylon's ancient walls on the banks of the Euphrates. From Nejef southwards across the central Arabian desert to Shammar and Mecca would have been a most delightful journey for a keen native explorer—a Muhammadan, of course, and a careful observer—and it would have been productive of much valuable geography touching the little known regions of the central deserts. But it was not to be. The risk was too great unless a guarantee of safe-conduct could be procured at a reasonable cost from some well-known and influential pilgrim. I have never started my too-willing and venturesome native surveyors into trans-border countries to make maps and collect information without some such security for their safe return; and I am glad to say that I never lost one of them. In this case no guarantor could be induced to accept the risk, so I contented myself with a ride to Kerbela, and thence to Babylon, with such examination of existing mapping as could be com-

passed within a strenuous week. That trip to Kerbela was but the last stage of a strange journey from Basra, at the head of the Persian Gulf, which was taken in the company of dead men. The flat-bottomed Turkish steamer on which I embarked for the weary journey up the twisting Tigris was just full of them. They were neatly stacked on deck in even rows, each in his own winding-sheet, and they lay piled there like well-packed merchandise awaiting the final grace of a peaceful interment at the sacred shrine of Kerbela. I need hardly remind you that there are two great Muhammadan sects—the orthodox Sunnis, and the Shiah, followers of Ali the son-in-law of the Prophet, who acknowledge no Kalifate outside the family of Mahomet, and who have from the very earliest days of Islam been in opposition. In A.D. 680 Hosein, the grandson of Mahomet and son of Ali, was slain at Kerbela by the orders of the Kalif Yazid the First. From that day to this has the tenth day of Moharam been observed as a day of mourning and woe by the Shiahs. It is then that those remarkable processions take place in which the Shiah followers of the Prophet indulge in a wild orgy of woeful processions, lamenting and weeping, shouting out the name of Hosein, cutting themselves (and sometimes their neighbours) with knives, and exhibiting a fine frenzy of despair for a political crime which took place nearly twelve centuries and a half ago. It is a curious observance, but there is in these degenerate days an atmosphere of fraud overshadowing even this pious display of ecstatic devotion to the cause of a martyr. I am informed on excellent authority that it is not altogether unusual to find small bladders filled with blood concealed beneath the clothes of the devotee, and the frightful effects of perpetual knife-slashing are more apparent than real. Hosein was buried (part of him, that is, for his head was sent to Medina) at Kerbela, where a magnificent mosque has been raised over his tomb (which I was privileged to see); and round about it, outside the city, as far as the eye can reach, the plain is one vast graveyard—a very forest of graves in which the faithful followers of Ali lie buried in profound peace. They come from afar, from India and beyond India, but mostly from the remoter regions of Persia. All Persians are Shiahs. And thus it is that the traffic of the Tigris, now devoted to the needs of an army, was once great in Shiah corpses, and that Bagdad has become a sort of trade centre for their distribution towards Kerbela. Again I quote an unimpeachable source of information when I tell you that the trade in dead Shiahs is a living business for smugglers. The subject is a gruesome one, but it is not without interest and importance. It enormously affects the status of Bagdad as a Muhammadan centre for *all* Islam, Sunnis and Shiahs alike. Half the city is even now occupied by Shiahs, that half which lies on the right or western bank.

Bagdad was not merely an academic centre of learning and art for the mediæval Arab. As the forces of Islam grew, the political capital of Arabia was moved first from Medina to Damascus, and then from Damascus to Bagdad. It was here that the great Kalifs of romance and history established their seat of government for all Arabia. Arabs had swarmed into the Euphrates and Tigris valleys, and through all vicissitudes of history (for Bagdad has been in Persian hands more than once) it has remained essentially an Arab city. It is well to remember that Mesopotamia was a political part of Arabia, as was also Syria. In my opinion they are so still geographically. What in future concerns Bagdad will find its echo in Damascus, in Nejd (Central Arabia), in Mecca and Medina. The result of our first and inconclusive fight for Bagdad affected even far-off Abyssinia. In short, the importance of our occupation of Bagdad, strategically and politically, becomes more obvious from day to day as the war drags its weary length along. If our campaign in Mesopotamia has not made an unqualified progress, it has nevertheless been a splendid success, and a lasting testimony to the length and strength of England's arm.

Bagdad itself is an Oriental city which has not yet become Europeanized. Turks, Arabs, Jews, and Persians are there in the undiluted atmosphere of the East. Its social atmosphere is almost as far removed from that of Constantinople as Bombay is from London. Here the Arab swaggers about in the dress of the patriarchs, and in the bazaars and streets of the ancient town there is hardly a discordant note in the Oriental appearance of men and their surroundings. The top-hat and the "bowler" are not, beyond the neighbourhood of the European quarter, and even there European women must conform to Eastern custom in dress, and wear the veil when out of doors. It is perhaps a unique experience (one which will soon belong to past history) that an English gentleman should meet an English lady of his acquaintance in the streets and be unable to salute her, although he may readily enough recognize her as a friend. Beneath a flimsy pretence of a veil he can see quite well enough the symptoms of a welcoming smile, but he must not respond or take off his hat or otherwise reveal to the casual passer-by that he knows anything whatever about the lady in question. Under such conditions European ladies (there are not many of them) can walk about in safety near their own residences, but no lady would dream of entering the streets of the bazaars or native quarters even to the very limited extent that is sometimes permissible in India. There is not much attraction in the part of the town on the left or eastern bank of the Tigris, so far as the town itself is concerned. Here are the best residences of both European and native inhabitants, but the streets are narrow and inconceivably dusty, and the high walls on

the right hand and the left carefully conceal the gardens within them, nothing but the feathery tops of the palms appearing above them. There are many gardens, so much so that the Persianized form of the city's name, Bághdád, is quite appropriate and duly significant, "Bagh" being Persian for a "garden." But private Oriental gardens are not the joy to the casual visitor that they are in England, or as they were in India in the garden-cultivating days of the so-called Moguls. The founder of the dynasty, the Turkish prince and warrior Baber, found nothing in India to satisfy his craving for a beautiful garden. He loathed Delhi when he had conquered it, and the burden of his lament is ever the same: "Oh for the gardens of Kabul!" There followed the garden-making era which has left India such monuments of combined architectural and cultivated beauty as are not to be found elsewhere. Certainly not in Bagdad, for of architecture there is little or nothing to admire if we except the tomb of the deeply lamented Zobeid (and that is on the wrong side of the river), whilst the only beauty of garden cultivation within reach of the visitor is just that which European Residencies may have to show. The European residents may be few in number, but they have not (in the late past) been undistinguished in the field of Oriental culture. Some of them built homes for themselves modelled more or less on Oriental lines, and here in this ancient city of Arabic literature and art have they spent years of their lives in study and retirement from the "madding crowd" of Europe. To the recluse and the student I can imagine nothing more delightful than a residence at Bagdad. And let me add that amongst the most cultivated Oriental students were to be found Turks of the Turkish administration.

For the rest, the vista of Bagdad stretching in irregular lines of shimmering white buildings on either side of the red, rolling Tigris, as it may be seen from the Residency gardens, is by no means devoid of picturesque beauty. Palm-trees spread their fans here and there above the houses, or gather in groups on the river-banks. Quaint craft of Arab building cast coloured reflections on the brick-red flood, and the round, black, saucer-shaped coracle made of shisham wood, and "pitched within and without," hurries about like a huge water-beetle—a testimony to the toughness of naval conventions in preserving the most inadequate form of river craft that the genius of the patriarchs who built the ark ever evolved. The boat bridge shuts off the blue of the far distance and acts as a fine impediment to navigation. Surrounding Bagdad are the open flats of Mesopotamia with their alternations of swamp and desert stretching beyond the fringe of vivid cultivation. To the south, from whence the infidel has arrived to flood the city with his strange military language, are shreds of suburban ruins reaching towards Ctesiphon beyond the Diala River. And here may I say that, knowing that river to be an excep-

tion to the shallow flood-streams of Mesopotamia, and to flow between steep banks as an unfordable stream, and knowing the strength of Turkish defences with such a splendid natural ditch before them, I never anticipated that the Diala position could possibly be carried so soon by direct attack in face of determined opposition. I regard the story of the passage of that river as quite one of the most splendid episodes of the war, which has been full of such. Long may the brave Lancashire boys who achieved it wear that brilliant record on their colours! To the north and north-east along the road which leads to Khanikin, on the Persian border hills, and beyond it to Kermanshah, the road by which our troops have gone to join hands with the Russians, the country is not quite so desolate. There are patches of cultivation, and these patches will be of inestimable value to our divisions. As for the climate, one can only think of it with envy whilst enjoying the amenities of April in England. It must be getting a little too warm, perhaps, but generally it must be delightful at this time of the year, the time when every little valley on the Persian border bursts into a galaxy of flowers. Turning once more to the south, the road to Kerbela starts from the city on the right bank of the river, emerging from the maze of bazaar streets almost directly into the open plain. Once again after riding ten miles or so does the abomination of desolation prevail. And yet it is grand country to ride over. Following the caravan route in the trail of long lines of corpse-laden camels and ponies, there need be no restriction in pace beyond that which your horse requires. In the bright clear desert air of winter it was a charming experience, only clouded somewhat by the primitive form of caravanserai at which one had to put up for the night. A big square wall-enclosed structure offered room enough for animals, but not the vestige of private accommodation for their masters. One slept literally in a manger with one's horse for a presiding angel, and nothing sweet remains in the memory of that beastly halting-place except the coffee. That was unique—but there was not enough of it. At Kerbela we were hospitably entertained by the presiding Mullah—a man of great dignity combined with much affability and information. Thanks to our introduction by the Resident at Bagdad, the short stay at Kerbela was one of unmitigated interest and pleasure. From Kerbela to Hilla and Babylon was a nightmare of difficult and intricate wandering through a maze of water-ways; the perpetual crossing of the Euphrates' network of channels in crazy coracles; and general congratulation when, on sound and open ground, we approached the long lines of dilapidated Babylonian canal banks and could see therefrom the rugged and scarred features of those historic mounds which cover the remains of that ancient city. Leaving Babylon and the picturesque town of Hilla, with its wealth of ancient relics and its industry in creating

new ones, the ride home to Bagdad was but a repetition of the ride out. There were three of us in the party—two sailors from the Royal Naval Contingent in the Persian Gulf and myself. We were met in Bagdad by our charming hostess (the wife of the Resident) with a suggestive hint in the shape of towels and soap that perhaps we would like to experience the pleasures of a Turkish bath before returning to the Residency. It was very thoughtful of her.

Due west from Bagdad our troops have occupied Feluja, on the Euphrates, about forty miles from the city, following the line of telegraph which passes just south of Lake Akkar Kuf. Here we are introduced at once to the great scheme for the regeneration of Mesopotamia by irrigation which was initiated by Sir W. Willcocks. Here is the Feluja barrage, which, together with the upper Hindie barrage near Kerbela, is to regulate the water-supply of the Euphrates throughout the desolate regions between Bagdad and Kerbela and to the far plains of Babylon. Another barrage, or dam, is projected (but not, I think, yet under construction) on the Tigris below Samarra (where the Bagdad railway northward at present ends)—a restoration, in fact, of the ancient Nimrod's dam. These dams, with such ancient reservoirs for overflow as are represented by the Akkar Kuf depression and a vast basin west of Babylon, are the northern features of a magnificent scheme which is to bring life and agricultural wealth to all lower Mesopotamia. Projected by Willcocks, financed (partially, at least) by Germany, and carried out by Turkish engineers, a very fine beginning had already been made towards the realization of a project which might ultimately rival that of the Nile, but which is, after all, only the revival of an ancient system. We have laid our hands on them now. They are inseparable from the responsibilities incurred by the occupation of Bagdad, nor can I see why English direction and Turkish engineering should not finish what has been so well begun. I will not weary you with any repetition of the potential sources of wealth which lie in Mesopotamia. They have been summed up and tabulated so often, and on such excellent authority, that I feel that the last word has been said about them. It is, however, not so often noted that the trade beyond Bagdad into Persia by the great trade centre of Kermanshah (now in Russian hands) was almost exclusively British before the war. We were going to give all this away to Germany. But for the war we should certainly have done so. But the war has opened our eyes and put new values on many things about which we were apathetic and neglectful. We have been awakened to the far-reaching responsibilities of Empire. We must either keep awake to them or have no Empire. We can no longer walk along an uncertain path hoping for the best to eventuate from a perpetual policy of unreadiness. This leads us to ask, "What are we going to do with Bagdad?

We have heard much of the potential wealth of Mesopotamia. What about its people?" Here I think that our own little Society should make itself useful. We should collect information from every available source; we should get expert opinions for our discussions; we should advocate a policy, and it may well happen that the policy advocated here may be considered elsewhere as worth consideration. That is as much, perhaps, as we dare hope for. To take the broad geographical view, Mesopotamia is a part of Arabia. Ethnographically as well as geographically, and above all historically, we cannot consider Mesopotamia apart from Arabia. Bagdad is associated with the most glorious records of Arabian ascendency. It has been from its foundation on the site of an earlier Assyrian town a Moslem city, and its geographical position has rendered it a centre from which Moslem aims and institutions have been carried through all the world of Asia. All the great empires of Western Asia in proud historical procession—Elam and Babylon, Assyria, Medea, and Persia—have held their courts and swung their sceptres over the Mesopotamian plains, but it was not till the second of the Abbasid Kalifs selected the site of Bagdad as the capital of Islam that the glory of Damascus, the older capital of the Ommiad Kalifs, paled before the rising significance of the Bagdad of Haroun al-Raschid and the "Arabian Nights." Doubtless it was the wealth of the Mesopotamian plains which led in the first instance to this choice of a capital for Arabia, but, like modern Berlin, it also possessed great advantages as a strategic centre from which to strike outwards at the best, the most civilized, and the wealthiest of Asiatic dominions. It was from Bagdad that the invasion of India was planned and carried out with such astonishing success after Makran had been reduced to a well-ordered province and the roads through it held by Arab legions. Whilst it is impossible to draw any sharp line of distinction geographically between Arabia and Mesopotamia, or, indeed, between Arabia and Syria, that line is sharp enough between Mesopotamia and Persia. Between the Aryan Persian and the Semitic Arab, there is no affinity of race or tongue, and though both Arabs and Persians are Muhammadans the division of sect between Shiah and Sunni is one which has lasted since the beginning of Islam, and is as irreconcilable now as it ever was, so that there is no difficulty in pointing out where Arabia ends and Persia begins. The difficulty lies in the north, where hereafter it may well happen that the line has to be drawn between Mesopotamia and Anatolia, and between Syria and that same country —*i.e.*, where the new Turkey ends and the old Arabia begins. It will be for England to fulfil the proud destiny of restoring Arabia to her geographical place, and with it perchance to revive something of that Semitic energy and the great intellectual ability which once made her foremost amongst the nations of the world. This is fore-

shadowed in the proclamation of Sir S. Maude issued recently at Bagdad: "I am commanded to invite you," he says, "through your nobles and elders and representatives, to participate in the management of your civil affairs in collaboration with the political representatives of Great Britain who accompany the British Army, so that you may be united with your kinsmen in the north, east, south and west in realizing the aspirations of your race." These words can only have one meaning, and that is that the Arab is invited to come into his own again. How far that may be under British protection and with British political assistance, or whether England is destined to carry out the splendid scheme of agricultural regeneration so well begun, and to make the desert blossom as the rose, as in Egypt, is carefully and discreetly left to the imagination. Perhaps this is well, for I remember a similar proclamation made by a distinguished General in an Afghan city, in which a distinct promise was included that we would stay and see the reforms through. Alas! a new Government with different party principles decreed that we should leave that town for good, and thus our good friends who had trusted to our word had reason bitterly to lament their faith in us. Sir S. Maude's proclamation is addressed to the "nobles, elders, and representatives" of Arab society in Mesopotamia, and here we are face to face with a practical difficulty. Where are they? The Arab of Mesopotamia is for the most part but a degenerate specimen of his race. There are, indeed, certain Arabs of the towns, merchants and cultivators, who are gentlemen in demeanour and appearance, and it may be that amongst them there may be found exceptional men of administrative ability. It seems hopeless to expect that there will arise any claimant for the honour of governing Bagdad equal in political and military strength to the Sharif of Mecca, the man who has already seized the most ancient capital of all the Arabian capitals, and thrust the Turk out into the wilderness.

It is, of course, as impossible to generalize on such a subject as the idiosyncrasies, the ideals, and the characteristics of the Arab as it would be to class the European of the continent of Europe in one category. Arabia is immense, has always been immense, but the Arab, no matter where he may be within the limits of his vast Asiatic habitat, has been true to his Semitic instincts throughout, and has exhibited a form of homogeneous ethnographical combination which is not to be found in any Aryan or Caucasian admixture of nationalities. Nevertheless, it would be as foolish to summarize the social status of the Arab of the Hedjaz or of the great central plains of Arabia from a study of that of the Arab of Syria, or Mesopotamia, as to accept a Sussex clodhopper or a Yorkshire dalesman as a typical inhabitant of Europe. Even in Mesopotamia the judgment of many writers clearly shows that one can no better estimate the intellectual,

moral, or physical character of the Arab townsman from a casual acquaintance with the wild, disorderly, and disintegrated class of scallywag tribesmen who scour the Mesopotamian deserts, than one can understand the social habits and customs of Mayfair from a study of Whitechapel. Such considerations seem to me to point to one conclusion. Arabia as a mighty whole will never be united into one consolidated nationality governed from one supreme centre, and acknowledging but one overlord. Arabia will never even be a federation of provinces owning allegiance in political and military matters to a central federal administration. Hedjaz, Syria, and Mesopotamia will emerge from Turkish misgovernment as separate and distinct Arab political entities, self-governed and self-protected. The distances between them are too great and communications too difficult. Medina, Damascus, and Bagdad will all be revived as centres of administration, apart from that of Central Arabia. Bagdad, indeed, may well become once again a home of Oriental literature and art. But it will be long ere we can leave Bagdad and Mesopotamia to work out their own salvation. We shall inevitably have to see to it that the Mesopotamian provinces are well guarded and well administered, that the remarkable opportunity for agricultural renovation is brought to a successful issue, and that well-defined and scientific boundaries draw a line between Mesopotamia and the administrative territories of Turkey or of Russia (as the case may be) to the north and north-east, ere we can afford to leave the Bagdad railway and Mesopotamian culture (both human and agrarian) to take care of themselves.

The CHAIRMAN: Sir Thomas Holdich has referred to the brilliant success of our arms in and around Bagdad in recent weeks, and to the length of the British arm in reaching to so distant a region. Even if we were not in the midst of this great European War, it would be a striking feat for us to undertake a campaign at such a distance from our shores, seeing that the supplies of all kinds for our troops have to reach them through thousands of miles of submarine-infested seas to the Suez Canal, and then through the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf, and up some 300 miles of river. We must all agree that this is one of the most striking events of the war. We had all hoped that by this spring we should at least regain Kut-el-Amara, but I must say it came to me as a surprise that we were able to go on at once and to reach Bagdad; and not only so, but to go further still, and to reach the end of the railway beyond Bagdad, a distance of about eighty miles. I am sure the meeting wishes to express the deepest sympathy with, and admiration for, the troops who have been able to achieve so wonderful a result, and to convey to them the assurance that even in the midst of this great war their fine exploits were not overlooked or forgotten.

I think the principal point that we shall gather from Sir Thomas's interesting address is this: that Bagdad and the surrounding country is not so much Turkish and not so much connected with the Turks and Constantinople as it is Arab and connected with Mecca, Medina, Nejd, and Damascus. That is an extremely important point for us to bear in mind at this time, because the Turks are not, as many are inclined to think, the real indigenous inhabitants of the country. They are merely there as conquerors, and I do not think they have done very much to improve the condition of the people or of the country, but rather the reverse. Therefore, as Sir Thomas has said, we should keep clearly in our minds that this is an Arab city, connected with Arab centres of civilization. He put forward what I think a very valuable suggestion, that this Society should concern itself with the history of Bagdad and that region in connection with the Arabs, and should endeavour to formulate a definite policy. That will be a matter for the Council to consider, and I am sure the Society would gladly welcome any other lecturers who can give us fuller information and considered opinions upon the subject—one of the most important that will have to be dealt with after peace is secured. The great irrigation schemes to which Sir Thomas referred are particularly interesting to us as Britons, for in India and in Egypt we have constructed the greatest irrigation works the world has ever seen. I am sure we shall be proud to do the same for Mesopotamia.

Sir Edwin Pears said he had greatly enjoyed the paper, and the part which most interested him was the latter portion, drawing attention to ethnographic and historic facts which supported a policy of the separation of the Arabs from the Turks. The idea seemed to be the establishment of a great Arab State which should include Mesopotamia, Bagdad, and the regions round the Tigris and Euphrates, and the great mass of Arabia proper. Sir Thomas suggested that the nobles and men of eminence in the Arab State should consider what should be their form of government. They had already done something of that kind. It did not go very far, but so far as it went it appeared to him to be on the right lines. Some eight or nine years ago some leading sheiks in the east of Arabia met and decided that the Kalif of the region should be Mahmud Yahia, who had large possessions in Mesopotamia, and who was of the house of Koreish. After accepting the office he went to Mecca and Medina, and now, according to the most recent reports, he had entirely thrown in his lot with the Sharif of Mecca, who had proclaimed himself King of the Hedjaz. There they were in the presence of a movement which might have great results, and was likely to be on the lines suggested in the paper. What there was in it was not for him or anybody in that room to say. But it showed that remarkable dissensions had arisen, not merely on political, but on religious matters, between the Turks and the Arabs,

and that there was a large amount of unrest. If the Arabs could maintain unity instead of quarrelling among themselves, it was possible that they would ask England, with united voice, to be their protector. As to that he had no doubt that England would be prepared to assume this responsibility. But the English people must remember one thing—that they had nothing to do with the question of the Kalifate. That was a question on which it would be as impertinent for Christians to enforce their opinion as it would be for the Vatican to issue any declaration as to who or who ought not to be Archbishop of Canterbury, or for the Protestants of this country to claim a voice in the election of the Pope. Different views were held, not merely in Turkey and Arabia, but also in India, as to whether the Sultan was Kalif or not. But this was not our business, or only so as it related to the good government of India. He trusted that we might ultimately see a great Arab State, as pictured by Sir Thomas Holdich, occupying Mesopotamia and keeping the peace in Arabia. As to the coming of that day he could only say, "Insh' Allah!"

Colonel JENNINGS mentioned that he had ridden from Bagdad to Kerbala in a day. He wished to express his agreement with the remarks of the lecturer.

Mr. S. CHARLES HILL said that they had heard a great deal in the last few years of the route to India via Bagdad in connection with the building of the Bagdad Railway. Of course, from Western Europe to India there had always been three possible routes—the overland route by Bagdad and the Persian Gulf, that by Egypt and the Red Sea, and the long voyage by the Cape. The last, however, had only been opened from the time when the contest of European Powers for control in India began. Amongst the India Office records he had come across an interesting piece of evidence that the possibilities of political power being gained by way of Bagdad were recognized before the close of the eighteenth century. This was contained in a letter written in 1782 by the British Ambassador of Constantinople, which at the request of Sir Thomas Holdich he read to show that the German (or Austrian) idea of reaching India by way of Bagdad was a very old idea. Mr. Hill pointed out that Britain had won control of the Cape route to India by hard fighting with the Portuguese, Dutch and French, and that only a few years later Napoleon tried to open a way to India by Egypt, but failed. In reply to the Ambassador's letter, the representatives of the East India Company at Basra laughed at the German attempt to reach India via Bagdad, knowing the costliness of that route; but the attempt was only postponed, and not abandoned, and the invention of railways, by diminishing the expense, has now brought it within the bounds of practicability. There still remains, however, the same obstacle which baffled Napoleon, for as the only route from Egypt to India is by sea, so the only route to India from

the Persian Gulf (to which the Bagdad Railway must run) is also by sea, and England's sea-power has again come into play.

Mr. H. CHARLES WOODS: Sir Thomas Holdich's paper is so full of interest and charm from beginning to end that, were it not for the late hour, there are many of its aspects upon which I should like to comment. I will, however, confine myself to making references to two points which seem to me to be of considerable importance. The lecturer has spoken of the meaning of our Mesopotamian campaign. We all know that many criticisms were made upon the conduct of that campaign last year, and that at first it was far from successful. But true as this is, I consider that we must always remember the very considerable benefits which resulted from the immediate inauguration of that campaign—benefits bound up with the prevention of the prolongation of the Bagdad Railway from the Bagdad end. The line was opened as far as Samarra in October, 1914—that is, just before the entry of Turkey into the war at the very end of that month. We arrived at Basra on November 21, and, according to reports published at the time, seized material there which was intended for the railway. This means that our rapid occupation of the port of Mesopotamia actually prevented the extension of the railway, for, by the original concession, it was foreseen that material for this part of the line would be imported by way of Basra and conveyed to Bagdad by means of river transport. Had the material actually at Basra remained available, or had the port continued open, there is no doubt that the line could have been prolonged at least as far as Tekrit, up to which point it was incorrectly reported open about eighteen months ago.

If I correctly interpret what Sir Thomas Holdich has said, it is his opinion that in the future Bagdad, Damascus, and Mecca will increase in importance—importance accruing to those places owing to their at least semi-independence of any form of centralized government. With this opinion I am in entire accord, for I feel that in countries such as the present Turkish Empire a completely centralized form of government is a danger to all connected with it. In this connection it has always to be remembered that the complete failure of the Young Turks was due in part to their determination to centralize the strings of government at Constantinople, and to give even less power to local officials than had been the case in the time of Abdul Hamid.

The lecturer has rightly referred to the friendly relations which have existed between the Baktiaris and ourselves in the neighbourhood of the oil-fields. This raises a most important question in that it rightly suggests that, to insure the success of any régime in the East, the susceptibilities and views of the inhabitants must be treated with consideration. We do not yet know, and it is still too early to discuss, what may be the future distribution of, or the forms of government to be established in, what is now Turkey in Asia. But

as parts of it must be repartitioned or divided into spheres of influence, it is well to say now that the Governments responsible for these various parts or spheres will do well to endeavour at all costs to secure the goodwill of the people, and to remember that prosperity and tranquillity largely depend upon enabling the inhabitants to feel that the country is being administered for them, rather than exploited in the interests of foreigners with whom they have no concern.

In concluding these few remarks I would like to say that I am fully in accord with the proposal that this Society should devote its attention to the collection of information concerning the many districts the future of which will be effected by the war. We now know the results of our lack of information at the time of, and after, the outbreak of hostilities, and I am convinced that now, as in the past, we require to have all the historical and other facts at our fingers' ends.

Mr. E. R. P. Moon said that a few days ago he received a letter from a young nephew of his in Basra, which gave an interesting account of a lecture to which he had listened by Lieutenant Anderson, of the Army Service Corps, on Mesopotamia. The point he wished to refer to now was the tribute of Mr. Anderson to the wonderful skill of the ancient engineers which had been exhibited in the old system of canalization. He attributed it to Khammurabi, with whom most of them were more familiar as the Sovereign whose legislation was thought by some to have provided the basis of the Mosaic law. He would like to know from Sir Thomas whether he had heard that the irrigation designed by Sir William Willcocks contemplated the utilization of the ancient anicuts and other works which had been so neglected and injured by the Arabs of Mesopotamia.

Sir Thomas Holdich said that of course he had heard a great deal of the irrigation projects of Sir William Willcocks, and he believed they were based on the very ancient system which locally was attributed to Nimrod. Indeed, everything in that country was attributed to Nimrod. We might be quite sure that that region retained the traditional views current in the days of the Arab Kalifs. In reference to the remarks of Sir Edwin Pears, he feared he did not make himself sufficiently understood on the subject of the Arab States. Mr. Woods had more correctly interpreted his meaning. He did not think Arabia could ever be united again as one great political whole. He thought that decentralization was the only way of dealing with Arabia in these days, when there was no one particular chief of such importance or such power as would enable him to hold together so vast a territory as Arabia. If there was anyone who could achieve this, he would probably be found in one of the central capitals. He believed that the chief Ibn Rashid had more administrative power than had hitherto belonged to any other chief, except perhaps the power which had recently been assumed by the Sharif of Mecca. He

thought it extremely important that after these years of Turkish misgovernment some Arab chiefs should be able to prove themselves strong enough to take a share in the work of administering the country. He looked upon administrative decentralization between Medina, Damascus, and Mesopotamia as positively certain in the readjustments that would follow the war.

Note by Lieut.-Colonel A. C. Yate.

I refrained on April 25 from prolonging the discussion on Sir Thomas Holdich's paper on "Bagdad." I now offer some remarks as an appendix to the discussion. The future that lay before Mesopotamia was very clearly indicated by the late Viceroy of India, Lord Hardinge of Penshurst, when he visited Basra shortly before he vacated the Vicroyalty, and not long after Lieut.-General Sir A. A. Barrett, in command of the Expeditionary Force sent from India, had occupied it. What Lord Hardinge said at Basra was read by the hundreds of millions who peruse the daily Press, and left little doubt in the public mind that His British Majesty's Government was convinced that Mesopotamia under British administration would be a much greater boon to the world than it had been since the Turks came there. Lord Hardinge spoke as one who, having been Ambassador at St. Petersburg and Permanent Under-Secretary at the Foreign Office (as he is once more now), and also Viceroy of India, could speak with knowledge and authority. Intelligence has more recently reached us that the Chief Political Officer attached to the Expeditionary Force in Mesopotamia has been in touch with several of the Arab potentates of the interior of Arabia. The explorations carried out within the last few years by such men as Captain Leachman, of the Sussex Regiment, and the late Captain Shakespear have no doubt paved the way for such communication; while to the names of Burton, Blunt, and Palgrave we may now add as travellers in Arabia or visitors to Mecca a number of others, including that of Captain Wavell, who fell some eighteen months ago in East Africa.

The name of "Bagdad" is now inseparably associated with the great railway concession through the medium of which Berlin aimed at Asiatic dominion. That aim is now doomed to be shattered, and, despite the professions of the Russian Republican party that they desire no annexations of freshly acquired territory, it is practically certain that Russia cannot dissociate herself from the policy of her Allies, Britain, France, and Italy, and that she must accept her share of the responsibility which the partial dissolution of the Turkish Empire will throw upon Europe and, indeed, the civilized world. Some years have elapsed since the *Bourse Gazette* of St. Petersburg growled out: "If we wait much longer about taking Constantinople, Japan and the United States of America will have a finger in the pie." St. Petersburg *has* waited, and Japan and the United States *will* have a finger in that pie, as the coming International Peace Congress will show. We need hardly concern ourselves now to anticipate that what Russia has coveted for a century or two, and Messrs. Sazonoff and Trepoff have recently signalized as Russia's reward for this war, can have any other destiny. Nor is it necessary to discuss at present the ambitions of France and Italy. It suffices to indicate that the British

Empire, in addition to Mesopotamia, requires control of the railway from Alexandretta to the Persian Gulf, and of the port of Alexandretta, and also is very strongly interested in the international railway which will sooner or later link Ultima Thule with the Cape of Good Hope, passing by the Bosphorus, the Cilician Gates, and Cairo. The decentralization of the Turkish Empire was the theme of both the lecturer and one or two of the subsequent speakers. What was not demonstrated was the part that the Christian Powers would play in that decentralization. Not a word was said about the susceptibilities of the 300 to 350 millions of Mohammedans in the world, of whom 100 millions and more are His Britannic Majesty's subjects. I know that there are very enlightened thinkers, Mussulman as well as Christian, who have conceived a Pan-Islamic confederacy under the hegemony of the British Empire. The idea is not one to be scouted. At any rate, at this moment Islam is watching with the keenest attention the fate of the Caliphate. It is more than doubtful if the Turk would have opened her arms to Germany, had she seen any other channel of escape from the Damoclean sword that hung over her. Some years ago the project of administering the provinces of Asia Minor by Christian officials nominated by the Great Powers of Europe was tentatively put forward. I have heard, and that on authority which admits of no doubt, that the Porte went so far as to offer the administration of Anatolia to a distinguished subject of His Majesty King George V.; but the flattering invitation was declined. One thing is now certain: the issue of this war will in some measure comfort the souls of Crusaders, and undenominationalism will establish itself in due course in the territories which for centuries have been the battlefield of the Cross and the Crescent. For my own part I have no wish to see Jerusalem become the pocket-borough of either a Christian, Mussulman, or Jewish community. I would internationalize it and restore it to the Knights of St. John of Jerusalem, the only living representatives of the erst Latin kingdom of Jerusalem, and well known for their broad-minded and cosmopolitan views. Every nation in Europe has a hand in the Hospitallers, and Jerusalem and Rhodes would be as well administered in their hands, and better, too, perhaps, than in those of any individual Power.

Letters from Mesopotamia just now are not allowed to say much. The censorship is jealous. I have, however, just received one from an officer who prides himself on having commanded a regiment of the "first division that entered Bagdad," and awards the credit to the "three M's" thus:

"I think General Maude has run the show most awfully well, and, further, I expect much is due to General Money, the Chief of his Staff, not to mention McMunn, who has just got his K.C.B." Such is the concise and undoctored despatch which, as far as I am aware, is the first in the field.

LIST OF MEMBERS

OF

THE CENTRAL ASIAN SOCIETY

CORRECTED TO MAY 17, 1917

OFFICERS AND COUNCIL

Chairman:

1916. 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.S.I., 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:

1915. SIR EVAN JAMES, K.C.I.E.

Hon. Secretary:

1916. E. PENTON, ESQ.

Members of the Council:

1915. SIR HUGH BARNES, K.C.S.I.
1915. T. J. BENNETT, ESQ., C.I.E.
1916. SIR FREDERIC FRYER, K.C.S.I.
1916. COLONEL J. G. KELLY, C.B.
1916. E. R. P. MOON, ESQ.
1916. COLONEL E. ST. CLAIR PEMBERTON, R.E.
1916. MISS ELLA SYKES.
1915. COLONEL SIR HENRY TROTTER, K.C.M.G., C.B.
1914. A. L. P. TUCKER, ESQ., C.I.E.
1914. LIEUT.-COLONEL A. C. YATE.

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.
1916. Ainscough, T. M., Artillery Mansions, Victoria Street, S.W.
1912. Allen, G. B., Free Chase, Warninglid, Sussex.

B

1908. Baddeley, F. J., 34, Bruton Street, W.
1910. Bailey, Captain F. M., 7, Drummond Place, Edinburgh, N.B.
1914. Baillie, J. R., 1, Akenside Road, Hampstead, N.W.
1906. Bailward, Colonel A. C., R.A. (ret.), 1, Prince's Mansions, Victoria Street, S.W.
1916. Baluchistan, The Hon. the Agent to the Governor-General and Chief Commissioner, Quetta.
1905. *Barnes, Sir Hugh Shakespear, K.C.S.I., K.C.V.O., Woodlands Corner, West Byfleet, Surrey. M. of C.
1913. Barrow, Major-General Sir Edmund, G.C.B., G.C.S.I., India Office, S.W.
1910. Beauclerk, Lord Osborne de Vere, A.D.C. to C.-in-C. Advance G.H.Q., and Brooks's Club, 4, St. James's Street, S.W.
1907. Benn, Colonel R. A. E., C.I.E., Resident, Jeypore, Rajputana, India.
*†Bennett, T. J., C.I.E., Harwarton House, Speldhurst, Kent. M. of C.
1916. Bernière, Col. H. J. de, 115, Jermyn Street, S.W.
1910. Bigg-Wither, Captain F., I.A., Deputy Commr., c/o Messrs. A. Scott and Co., Rangoon, Burma.
1916. Bombay, Sec. to Govt. Political Dept., Bombay, India.
Bosanquet, O. V., C.I.E., Agent to the Governor-General in Central India, Indore, C.I.
1916. †Bruce, General 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

1907. †Carey, A. D., I.C.S., East India United Service Club, 16, St. James's Square, S.W.
1903. *Chirol, Sir Valentine, Kt., 34, Carlyle Square, Chelsea, S.W., Vice-President.

1908. Cox, Lieut.-Col. Sir Percy Z., K.C.I.E., C.S.I., Knockrind, Simla.
1914. Crewdson, Wilson, J.P., F.S.A., Southside, St. Leonards-on-Sea.
1914. Crewdson, Captain W. T. O., R.F.A., Nowshera, India.
†Crow, Mrs. F. A., 17, Westgate Terrace, Redcliffe Gardens, S.W.
1907. Cuningham, Sir William J., K.C.S.I., I.C.S. (ret.), Queen Anne's Mansions, S.W.
3 1907. *Curzon of Kedleston, The Rt. Hon. Earl, P.C., G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E., Hackwood, near Basingstoke, Hants, 1, Carlton House Terrace, S.W. Vice-President.

D

1908. Dane, Hon. Sir Louis, G.C.I.E., C.S.I., Clarendon Lodge, Millbrook, Hants.
1908. Daukes, Captain C. T., c/o Thos. Cook and Son, Bombay, India.
†Dartrey, The Earl of, 10, Upper Belgrave Street, S.W.
1906. Davis, W. S., Bhopal Agency, Sehore, Central India.
1903. *Donoughmore, The Earl of, 5, Chesterfield Gardens, W.
1906. Dobbs, H. R. C., C.I.E., I.C.S., Off. Commissioner N.W. Frontier Province, India.
1910. Douglas, Captain H. A., Derwent Lodge, Lansdowne Road, Tunbridge Wells.
1910. Drummond, Miss, Kensington Palace Mansions, W.
1903. *†Durand, Colonel A. G. A., C.B., C.I.E., 31, Park Lane, W.
40 1907. *Durand, The Right Hon. Sir H. Mortimer, P.C., G.C.M.G., K.C.S.I., K.C.I.E., Penmain House, Rock, Wadebridge, Cornwall. Chairman.

E

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

F

1907. Fancourt, Col. St. J. F. M., C.B., Deancroft, near Stowmarket, Suffolk.
1915. Flower, Hon. E., Durrow Castle, Durrow, Queen's County, Ireland.
1916. Forbes, Sir George Stuart, K.C.S.I., The Athenæum Club, Pall Mall, S.W.
1915. Fraser, George, Imperial Institute, S. Kensington, S.W.
1916. Fraser, The Hon. Mr. S. M., C.S.I., C.I.E., the Resident, Hyderabad, India.
1906. Fryer, Sir Frederic, K.C.S.I., 23, Elvaston Place, Queen's Gate, S.W.

G

1908. Gabriel, Vivian, C.V.O., C.S.I., c/o The War Office, Whitehall.
50 1913. Garrard, S. H., Cavalry Club, and Welton Place, Daventry, Northants.

1909. Gearon, Miss S., Ladies' Empire Club, 69, Grosvenor Street, W.
1908. Godfrey, Lieut.-Col. Stuart H., C.I.E., 7, Lansdowne Road, Holland Park, W.

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.
*†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.

I

1916. India, Foreign and Political Department of Government, Delhi.
1906. India, Secretary of State for, India Office, Whitehall, S.W.
1915. Ingram, M. B., Cavendish Club, Piccadilly, W.

J

60 *†James, Sir Evan, K.C.I.E., C.S.I., Glenshee, Cambridge Park, Twickenham.
†Jardine, Mrs., Monmouth House, Stanley Avenue, Wembley, Middlesex.
1916. Jardine, Sir John, Bart., K.C.I.E., M.P., Applegarth, Godalming, Surrey.
*†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., 1, West Cromwell Road, Kensington, W. M. of C.
1913. Kemp, Miss, 26, Harley House, Regent's Park, N.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.
1914. Laurie, W. J. C., I.C.S., c/o The Secretariat, Behar and Orissa, Bhagalpur, India.
70 1907. *Lawrence, Sir Walter, Bart., G.C.I.E., 22, Sloane Gardens, S.W.
1908. *Lloyd, Capt. George A., M.P., D.S.O., 48, Wilton Crescent, 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.
1915. McCoy, Mrs., c/o Messrs. Glyn, Mills, and Co., 67, Lombard Street, E.C.
1903. Malcolm, Brigadier-General Neill, D.S.O.
1906. McMahon, Lieut.-Colonel Sir H., G.C.V.O., K.C.I.E., 59, Pont Street, S.W.
1915. Maunsell, Colonel, Constitutional Club, Northumberland Avenue.
80 1912. Medlicott, Captain H., Cavalry Club, Pall Mall, S.W.
1910. Miles, Major-Gen. P. J., c/o Lloyds' Bank, Bath.
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.
1915. Mylne, Miss Nina, Commonwealth Bank, New Broad Street, E.C.
1916. Mysore, The Hon. the Resident, Bangalore, S. India.

N

1905. Neill, Professor J. W., I.C.S. (ret.), 10, Holland Park Court, Holland Park Gardens, W.
1916. North-West Frontier Province. The Hon. the Chief Commissioner, Peshawar, India.

O

1906. O'Connor, Major W. F. T., R.A., C.I.E., H.B.M. Consul, Shiraz, Persia.
1905. Oliver, Captain D. G., 67th Punjabis, Junior United Service Club, Charles Street, S.W.

P

90 1908. Payne, Mrs. Wood, 101, Philbeach Gardens, S.W.
†Peel, The Viscount, 52, Grosvenor Street, W.
1907. Pemberton, Col., R.E. (ret.), B6, The Albany, Piccadilly, W., and Pyrland Hall, Taunton.
*†Penton, E., 2, Cambridge Terrace, Regent's Park, N.W. *Hon. Sec.*
†Perowne, J. T. Woolrych.
1908. Phipson, H., 10, Hyde Park Mansions, W.
*†Picot, Colonel, Indian Army (ret.), Hotel Beau Séjour, Lausanne.

R

1910. Raines, Lady, 46, Sussex Gardens, Hyde Park, W.
1916. Rajputana, The Hon. the Agent to the Governor-General, The Residency, Mount Abu, Rajputana, India.
1912. Richmond, Mrs. Bruce, 3, Sumner Place, S.W.
100 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.
*†Ronaldshay, H.E. The Earl of, Governor of Bengal, Government House, Calcutta, India. Vice-President.
1914. Rose, Archibald, C.I.E., 46, Abingdon Villas, Kensington, W.

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.
1916. Spranger, John Alfred, 2nd. Lieut. R.E., 4, Via Michele, Florence, Italy.
1912. Stainton, B. W., c/o Messrs. Hickie, Borman, Grant & Co., 14, Waterloo Place, Pall Mall, S.W.
1909. Stein, Sir Aurel, K.C.I.E., Ph.D., D.Litt., D.Sc. Superintendent Arch. Survey, Frontier Circle, N.W.F. Province, India, 23, Merton Street, Oxford.
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.
110 1903. Stoner, J. J., 19, Kensington Court, W.
†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, Brigadier-General Sir Percy, K.C.I.E., C.M.G., Shiraz, via Petrograd and Teheran.

T

1903. Tanner, Miss, 8, Cavendish Place, Bath.
1908. Taylor, Arthur Boddam, 96, Brook Green, W.
1905. Thomas, F. W., Ph.D., India Office, Whitehall, S.W.
1908. Tod, Colonel 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.
120 1907. *Trotter, Col. Sir H., K.C.M.G., C.B., 18, Eaton Place, S.W. M. of C.
1915. Tryon, Capt. H. W., J.P. (late Gordon Highlanders), 32, Hans Mansions, S.W.
1908. *Tucker, A. L. P., C.I.E., Hayes, Northiam, Sussex. M. of C.

V

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

W

1911. Waller, Miss D., 32, Knightsbridge, S.W.
1911. Waller-Sawyer, Mrs., 32, Knightsbridge, S.W., and Moystown House, Belmont, King's Co., Ireland.
†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., 11, Mansfield Street, W.
1916. Wilson, Lieut.-Colonel James Allan, D.S.O., 8th Gurkhas, Ambala, Punjab, India.
130 1912. Woods, H. C., 171, Victoria Street, S.W.

Y

*†YATE, Lieut.-Colonel Arthur C., Beckbury Hall, Shifnal, Shropshire. M. of C.
1905. *Yate, Colonel C. E., C.S.I., C.M.G., M.P., 17, Prince of Wales Terrace, W.
1916. Yorke, Mrs. F., Ladies' Imperial Club, 17, Dover Street, W., and Oakholme Cottage, Staplers, near Newport, Isle of Wight.
*†YOUNGHUSBAND, Lieut.-Col. Sir Francis E., K.C.S.I K.C.I.E., 3, Buckingham Gate, S.W., Vice-President.

RULES

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.

CENTRAL ASIAN SOCIETY.

CERTIFICATE OF RECOMMENDATION.

_____

_____

being desirous of becoming a Member of the CENTRAL ASIAN SOCIETY, *we whose names are hereunto subscribed do hereby recommend to the Society as a Candidate.*

Proposer _____

Seconder _____

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VOLUME IV., PART III.

MESOPOTAMIA AND SYRIA AFTER THE WAR.

At a meeting of the Society on May 30, 1917, Mr. Demetrius Boulger read a paper on this subject. At the commencement of the proceedings,

Sir Frederic Fryer announced that the Council had that afternoon elected Sir Henry Trotter to be their chairman for the ensuing year, and that he had kindly consented to serve.

Colonel Sir Henry Trotter then took the chair, and said that during the year he would do everything in his power to further the interests of the Society. It was quite an unexpected honour, and very gratifying to him, to be thought worthy of the position. He hoped the Society would continue its good work and prosper as it had done in the past year, during which they had had larger attendances at their meetings than any he could recollect. Mr. Boulger was known to most of them as an author. One of the first works he ever wrote was a life of Yakoob Beg of Kashgar, which appeared in 1878. It was a curious coincidence that he (the speaker) was their chairman for the first time at this lecture, and that his own first connection with Central Asia was as a member of the mission to Yakoob Beg in 1873-74. One of Mr. Boulger's last works was a history of the Battle of the Boyne; but in the interval there had come from his pen a vast amount of work both in books, in leading reviews and magazines, and in journals.

Mr. Boulger said: Among the great surprises of the War, when we have the leisure to examine our feelings, will be reckoned the speeding up of those old questions which we had been studying for the better part of a century, only to conclude that they appeared unsolvable, and that they would have to be handed on as a legacy to men wiser than ourselves. Think for a few brief minutes of General Chesney and his Euphrates Valley railway scheme; of William Andrew, who carried on his efforts and was ever ready to procure the millions necessary to give them practical form; of Reignier Conder, who toiled persistently in Heth and Moab with his face set towards the same goal. All their energy, all their enthusiasm, was of no avail; their counsels

fell on ears that would not listen, and the field that was within our grasp was weakly abandoned and resigned to a rival. Our recent heavy sacrifices in Mesopotamia and Syria will not have been in vain if the old apathy has been uprooted, and if we see with clearer vision than before where our true interests are involved. Thus human progress, instead of concentrating its efforts in new countries where tradition exists not, may once more attain its full vigour and its highest development in the heart of the Old World amid the scenes made famous and familiar to us by Xenophon and Herodotus, the Bible and the Crusades.

Eighty years ago General Chesney returned from his first expedition to Mesopotamia, and his main conclusions are just as sound to-day as when they were uttered. He reported in favour of the Valley of the Euphrates as against that of the Tigris; he selected Alexandretta Iskanderun, Alexander's commercial city, as the port for the Levant, and Koweit as the port for the Persian Gulf, and no later explorer has shaken the wisdom of his choice, although some have played with the idea of reviving Seleucia Pieria at the mouth of the Orontes. But Chesney's first scheme was based on a bilateral project of a railway from Alexandretta to the Euphrates at or near Birijek, and of water transport by river steamers from that place, the highest navigable point of the Euphrates, to the Persian Gulf, a distance of 1,100 miles by the river. He even founded on the Euphrates, near the town named, as a starting-point for river steamers, Port William. I do not find that German map-makers have perpetuated the name, but the fact stands on record. Chesney's main argument in support of this alternative route to India was his conviction that the Suez Canal was quite practical and, speaking thirty years before its accomplishment, inevitable. But although his expedition was officially supported and subsidized, nothing came of his scheme or the proposals by which it was to be brought to success. Political considerations barred the way. The Syrian question was then in an acute stage, and when William IV., on receiving General Chesney, asked the question, "What do my Ministers say to your proposals?" he could only reply that he met with little encouragement from any of them. The King's comment is well worth remembering: "People sometimes hesitate till the opportunity is lost."

Twenty years, or nearly so, passed. The Syrian question had been put to sleep. England and France were allies, Turkey was their friend, and in a sense their ward. The Euphrates Valley scheme was revived, not as a mixed undertaking, but boldly, openly, as an unbroken railway line of 920 miles in length across Syria down the river to the Gulf. Mr. William Andrew, the chairman of an Indian railway, threw himself into the project, formed the company on his own initia-

tive, raised a million pounds in one day, the capital he required, and rejected the offers of four times that sum made in the next few days, of which there was no need for the moment. Chesney hastened to the scene of his former labours, and this time it did not look as if his confidence would be disappointed. The survey of the line was carried very far, if not completed; all difficulties on the spot and at Constantinople were removed; and the cost of construction was fixed at the moderate total of five millions, how moderate you can infer from the fact that the Germans had already expended three times the sum on the Asia Minor railway when the War began. At the very moment that success seemed to be assured fresh difficulties arose, not with the Turks or the Arabs, who greeted Chesney as their father, but with our own authorities. "There is a black mark at the Foreign Office against the Euphrates Valley railway," someone wrote to Chesney—one of those black marks of which the cause and origin can never be traced.

Another twenty years, or nearly so, passed. The Suez Canal had come into existence; the Euphrates Valley railway had become, apparently, no more than the dream of a few enthusiasts. It seemed like knocking one's head against a brick wall to talk of reviving it, and then suddenly in 1872, by the efforts of Mr. William Andrew, a Parliamentary Committee was appointed to consider the whole question. It took evidence and it summoned witnesses in the usual way. General Chesney was sent for and examined during several days. He told a friend that he feared he was hardly at his best—he was then over eighty—but his statements were lucid and the old enthusiasm was not entirely gone, if tempered by the disappointment of a lifetime. His pleading was not wholly in vain. The Committee drew up a report which in general terms endorsed his views. It was "in favour of a line from the Mediterranean to the Persian Gulf via the Valley of the Euphrates, in preference to that of the Tigris," and its grand conclusion was to the effect that the need of an alternative route between the Mediterranean and India had been established.

Once again success seemed imminent. Even the troubles in the Balkans which followed were regarded as only imposing a temporary check on the realization of the project, and when the Anglo-Turkish Convention was signed in 1878 the last barrier to a complete accord between Turkey and this country was pronounced removed, and of course we all concluded, the old veterans of the cause and the new recruits then coming in, that the first-fruit of the agreement would be the commencement of the Euphrates Valley railway.

Any attempt to explain why these hopes, reasonable in themselves and based on the best available knowledge, were falsified, why nothing was done, would be not only perilous and indiscreet at this time, but

it would entail immense and probably inconclusive research and labour. It is safer to resume the chronicle. The last effort to obtain official support was made by Sir William Andrew, who had received the honour of knighthood for his railway work in Scinde and the Indus Valley in 1880, when he headed a deputation to Lord Cranbrook, then Secretary of State for India. The main request was to obtain from the Government of India a modest subsidy in return for the carriage of mails. Something was promised, something even might have been done, but a change of Government ensued. Mr. Gladstone came into office, and he had never been in favour of the Euphrates Valley scheme. Sir William Andrew was in his turn discouraged, and relaxed what seemed an unavailing activity, and the question, which had up to that point been argued on public and patriotic grounds as relating to an indispensable link in the chain of our communications with India, passed out of the political arena, and seemed till the other day to have been relegated to oblivion, or at least to an obscure page in the large volume that might be entitled " the lost opportunities of England."

It may be said, then, that in the year 1880 the Euphrates Valley scheme as a political railway, after many vicissitudes, died a natural death, but there remained a possibility of carrying it out partially, or, as a whole, on the basis of a purely commercial venture. New figures appeared on the scene, and a great meeting was held at Stafford House under the Duke of Sutherland's auspices. It was necessary in the first place to obtain the Sultan's firman and a fresh concession to make a new start. One man among us alone possessed, not merely the energy, but the means to second his energy and enterprise. Mr. Edward Cazalet proceeded to Constantinople, and as secrecy was an element of success, he went there on his own steam yacht. He went, arrived, and conquered. The prearranged telegram reached London informing us, who were anxiously awaiting the result, that the mission was successful, that the firman had been given, that the concession had been drawn up and signed. Mr. Cazalet sailed away from the scene of his triumph, and we waited, hopefully this time, to receive further news from him at Malta. It is thirty-four years ago, but my impression is that the next message came from the Piræus—at all events, Mr. Cazalet had died suddenly on board his yacht, two days, if I remember aright, after leaving Constantinople. With that tragic incident the story of the Euphrates Valley railway scheme reached its end.

The year 1883, which saw the extinction of these hopes, was also the turning-point in Anglo-Turkish relations. The concession was rendered more or less of a dead-letter by the death of its acceptor; Abdul Hamid began to listen to German counsellors and to take German officers into his service. Externally there was not much to be seen,

but everyone who knew Constantinople agreed in reporting that the Porte was obstructive, and that English advice fell on deaf ears. In the end English influence sank to zero, the Germans became predominant, and their Bagdad railway superseded that advocated by Chesney and his successors down the Valley of the Euphrates. So greedy were the German cormorants that they even gobbled up the little local line built by British engineers and capital from Mersina to Adana, and thus in 1906, for that epoch at least, we were expelled from the slight foothold we had established on the shore of the Levant.

It is necessary to remember these things of the past when the time comes for us to make new arrangements in providing for the future. The critics of the old project, or at least some of them, used to declare that we proposed to build a railway through a desert for the benefit of some nomad tribes who dealt in dates. General Chesney had in 1833 described Mesopotamia as "a country the natural wealth of which far exceeds that of Egypt." I have recently had occasion to read the correspondence of an officer serving on the Tigris. It contains no military references whatever, but it is full of interesting details of the country, dilates on the manifest signs of extraordinary capacity for development, and dwells on the fact that the desert sand has only to be kicked up to reveal some relic of the past which establishes the existence of ancient civilizations differing in kind, but equal to our own. In proof of this he has sent home fragments of coloured glass that preceded that of Venice by thousands of years, chips of pottery and ware such as modern Europe first imported from China less than two centuries ago. I will not say more lest the Censor, in his zeal to establish the necessity of his own existence, should place an embargo on what promises to prove an interesting and growing collection.

This in its way corroborates the general statement to which General Chesney committed himself eighty years ago.

It may be said again, as it was said in the past, what have we to do in the lands of Syria and Mesopotamia, what call have we to venture forth to the banks of the Euphrates and the Tigris? I well remember a very great English statesman saying in my presence that he deprecated all enterprises away from the sea, and on that principle he could not favour the Euphrates Valley project. But those were the days of absolute implicit belief in the phrase, "the command of the seas." No one can talk in that sense any longer. Naval power has its limitations. Our calculations must include problems of the air, and of the vast hidden realms of power below the surface of the oceans. The importance of land communication is enhanced, not diminished, by recent events. The necessity of alternative routes supplementing each other, keeping some lines of traffic and transport open when others are closed, is one that may be called self-evident. It will not do for any

critic to attempt to snuff out the Euphrates railway and the development of Mesopotamia with an assertion that it is all visionary. The ground has been taken from under his feet by the action of the Germans. Have they constructed their line across Asia Minor, have they pierced the Taurus, for Quixotic reasons ? Have they not kept before themselves from the beginning as an incentive the vision of restoring Syria, Mesopotamia, and Persia to their ancient splendour when they were the seats and centres of the five great monarchies ? Backwards and forwards swayed the balance of power. Syria lorded it at one time over Mesopotamia and Persia; Mesopotamia or Babylonia in its turn subjected all the lands to the Mediterranean; Persia at another moment seemed in a fair way to establish her hegemony in Western Asia on Hohenzollern principles. But under them all the central capital, whether it was Nineveh or Persepolis, Babylon or Palmyra, ranked among the marvels of the world, the centres of wealth and luxury not to be found elsewhere.

The Germans knew all these things. They took up the standpoint that what had been may be revived. They relied on engineering science. The Bagdad railway was to be their lever. They even invoked and obtained for a time the services of that great English hydraulic engineer, Sir William Willcocks, to husband and harness the waters of the Euphrates as he had done those of the Nile. In face of these facts it would be impossible for anyone to say to-day that the Euphrates Valley railway is the dream of visionaries, and that Mesopotamia is a hopeless desert, fit only for roaming tribes, and that it must remain so. We must again adopt the point of view of the Parliamentary Committee of 1872, when it reported in favour of the provision of an alternative route between the Mediterranean, the Persian Gulf, and India.

It should be some encouragement to us in doing this to remember that both Syria and Mesopotamia have in certain parts enjoyed for at least one period of history the benefits of Christian administration set up and sustained amid incalculable difficulties and perils by a mere handful of the races of Western Europe—French and Flemings, Lorrainers and Italians, some Normans and some English, the German element alone being conspicuously absent. I refer to the Frank kingdoms of Jerusalem and Edessa. Captain Conder held that they only perished because recruiting declined at the European bases, but their existence, which was certainly curtailed by the Mongol invasions, shows conclusively that Western authority and principles of life and governance could be upheld under difficulties that no longer exist in detached sections of the vast region that we cannot ignore without leaving our formidable rival master of the ground. You will not forget that the assizes of Jerusalem introduced by Godfrey of Bouillon

constituted a measure of jurisprudence in the territory of the Muslim which may well have been in the mind of Francis I., King of France, when he secured the famous Capitulations. Those reserved rights of French tradition, we must not allow ourselves to forget through haste or preoccupation, are entitled to respect, and furnish a basis of hearty and sincere co-operation.

In conclusion, I will submit to you that the question of Syria and Mesopotamia is no longer a matter of the Euphrates railway alone. The railway from the Levant, not from the Bosphorus, is to be our lever, the master-key to the position in the Near and Middle East. But the task to be accomplished is to restore their lost prosperity to these famous lands which have been allowed so long to remain derelict. Not only our own interests, but the needs of the world demand it. The region watered by the Euphrates and the Tigris was once the greatest granary of the world known to the ancients. There is no reason why, with the aid of the engineer and the chemist, it should not become so again. An authority on the subject estimated that with good government the province of Karamania, which lies to the north-west of Syria and is less favourably situated than Mesopotamia, could produce a surplus stock of five million quarters of corn every year. That is but an example. Good government provides the real cure of the evils which Western Asia has so long suffered, a government that is founded on peace and order such as we have taught India and Egypt to value. But the first step towards its attainment is the introduction of a new railway system in Syria and the Valley of the Euphrates, based on the needs of commerce and traffic and not on those of strategy and ambition; and some prominent and influential Englishman or group of Englishmen would do well to throw themselves now, without waiting till the end of the War, into the task of reviving the project of General Chesney and Sir William Andrew—a project that may at last be deemed secure from petty criticism, and against which the black mark referred to in older times must have been long ago removed.

Finally, we cannot eliminate the Turk, our late friend and temporary enemy. He must be brought round to see that his true interests point to his rallying to the support of measures that will benefit himself and his country, and then it will be possible to say once more, as was said by one of our old travellers, that "the name of Englishman served as a talisman with high and low throughout the lands of the Ottoman."

The CHAIRMAN said that Mr. Boulger had dealt very much with the past and very little with the future, and his suggestion towards the end of the lecture that Mesopotamia was likely to remain in the hands

of the Turks was one which he hoped would not turn out to be correct (Mr. BOULGER: Not the Turkish Government, but the Turks.) One of their vice-presidents, Sir Thomas Holdich, wrote a most interesting article in the *Fortnightly Review* for May, in which he discussed the future boundaries of Turkey. He pointed out the likelihood that what remained of European Turkey and Constantinople would fall into the hands of Russia, and that Syria and Palestine would fall into the hands of some Christian Power; but he very wisely refrained from saying what Christian Power it was to be—whether Russia, France, or England. He abstained from prophesying as to the further question of the possible setting up of a Jewish Empire. So far as Arabia was concerned, he urged that it should be in Arab hands under the protection of Great Britain. He also considered that Mesopotamia should be an independent Arab State, but with the strategic points and the railways under the control of Great Britain. The whole country from Trebizond and eastward of that line would fall to Russia, it being very desirable that what remained of the Armenian population and the Nestorian Christians should fall into the hands of a civilized Power. The Turks would be confined to Asia Minor. They were fairly homogeneous, and this would probably be the best thing that could happen to them. They would probably make their capital either at Broussa or at Smyrna. However, that was all in the distant future, and it was very difficult for anyone to prophesy what was going to happen. He himself had made a good many prophecies about the War, and many of them had turned out correctly. But on one occasion in this room he said he was certain that the Russians would not be able to take Erzeroum in the winter-time; yet three days later he learned that they had done so. Since then he had been very chary about prophesying.

He was in Constantinople when the first German military mission arrived there, and also when the German Emperor paid his first visit to the late Sultan. At that time German influence was small; to-day history testifies to its power. The lecturer had rather inferred that the German work on the Bagdad railway was mainly based on philanthropic views, with the idea of benefiting the country and the people; but perhaps he had misunderstood him on that point. (Mr. BOULGER: No; I did not say so. I don't believe in German philanthropy.) It seemed to him that the countries of which they had been speaking would continue to be a source of controversy and difficulty in the future, as Macedonia had been in the days of Turkish rule. Macedonia comprised a great agglomeration of different races, and the same remark applied to Mesopotamia and also to Syria. How the various races of Mesopotamia were to be governed and who was to govern them would be a burning question in the future.

Sir EDWIN PEARS, after congratulating the Society on the election of Sir Henry Trotter as chairman, said that the paper was very interesting in refreshing their memory as to the events of the past. It had been his lot to watch at close quarters the unfolding of those events from a focus differing from that of Mr. Boulger. He was in Constantinople when the successive efforts to obtain railway concessions detailed in the paper were made. He had the pleasure of acquaintance with that perfectly charming man, Mr. Edward Cazalet, who went to the Porte for the purpose, and who was in a dying state when taken on to his yacht for the return journey. He followed what was done on that occasion, and his memory did not confirm the view of the lecturer as to the obstinacy with which the Euphrates Valley scheme was blocked. The Sultan, Abdul Hamid, could be as obstinate as anyone when it suited him and his purpose; but it was not on this rock that the scheme foundered. He gathered that Mr. Boulger was well acquainted with the group in England seeking the concession, and therefore he presumably knew that there were in the case intermediaries who demanded backsheesh of a tremendous character, with the result that the Duke of Sutherland and those connected with him decided to drop the whole thing rather than give money in that reckless fashion, and as to which no account could be given. That disposed of the Cazalet business.

With reference to the local line built by British engineers and capital from Mersina to Adana, he was chairman of the line for a number of years, and after retiring from that position he continued to be a member of the council when the Germans took it over. It was no use abusing the Germans for things they had not done or which they had done properly. What happened was this: The railway was held by British shareholders to the extent of 55 per cent., and French shareholders held the remaining 45 per cent. This was so for a long time, until the Germans contrived to buy the whole of the French shares in block, and meantime, whenever any shares came on the market in London, they were bought up by the Germans. So one fine morning our board found that 60 per cent. of the shares of the line had passed into German hands. Thereupon he (Sir Edwin) resigned, as did every English and French member of the board. Subsequently Mr. Gwinner went to him with another member of the German board and requested him to stay on it as an ordinary member. Mr. Gwinner had been elected chairman, but they had determined to ask him and Sir William Whitall to remain on the board. He declined to answer until he had consulted Sir William. What had happened was that debentures had been issued in London, drawn up in an English technical form no German could understand. In these circumstances Sir William and he concluded that it was their duty to remain on the board in the interests of the English share and bond holders, in order to see

that the debentures were fairly dealt with. Sir William remained on the board till his death, and he (Sir Edwin) remained on it until the outbreak of the war with Turkey. There was no fault to be found with the Germans in buying up the line, for it was an ordinary business operation.

He would now pass to another question, and a more important one—namely, that of the desirability of the Euphrates line of which the lecturer had spoken, and of the attitude of the British Government toward it in later years. Now, it was not to be assumed that our Foreign Office was ill-informed on matters of that kind, or would fail to encourage such a project without having good reasons for it. Let him remind those who did not know the country that the whole district lying between Asia Minor and the Persian Gulf consisted of desert, except where the line would cross between the two rivers, the Tigris and Euphrates. During the larger portion of the year it was incapable of producing anything. He had the fullest sympathy with the projects of Sir William Willcocks for providing irrigation works to make Mesopotamia as productive as the Valley of the Nile. But the desert would not blossom as the rose unless the supply of water was adequate, and this was more than doubtful. In that room he pointed out a year ago what great climatic changes had gone on in that portion of the world, and that centuries ago they had already gone far to block up the three overland trade-routes from the Levant. They must not delude themselves into thinking that the desert could be made fruitful again after such changes in natural conditions. A friend of his who motored the whole way from Alexandretta to Bagdad said that with the expenditure of less than £1,000 the road could be put right, enabling a service of motor-cars to run the whole distance from Alexandretta to Bagdad in four days. But while a desert road was good for motoring, the country was too sparsely populated for the development of a considerable rail-borne traffic. Why did our Government decline responsibility for the undertaking first postponed by Chesney? Because they found, as every investigator who had examined the question had found, that whatever justification there might be for construction of the line as a military operation, like the road from Constantinople to Salonika, it could never possibly pay as a commercial undertaking. Russia had made many such roads, Germany had also made many such roads; but they were military not commercial undertakings. Our Government was not thinking of a military road when it decided not to support the Euphrates project. It had no intention of invading India, and it did not contemplate that anybody else was going to entertain such a project. But it worked out the question, and worked it out satisfactorily, that in the circumstances of the case land transport could never pay against water transport. Eastern

produce for the English market, under such a scheme, would be shipped from Colombo or from Bombay, would be taken up the Persian Gulf to port, and then be railed some 1,800 miles to the Bosphorus. That would be a very costly business, and would not be very much quicker, to say the least, in normal times than the through mail steamers by the Suez Canal. As to passengers, very few would prefer this alternative form of journey to and from the East. The fact was that it was the economic risk that caused our Government to look askance at the proposals for the Euphrates Valley railway. If anyone thought that the time had come for the revival of such a project, he would ask them to look carefully into the question, and not be in a hurry to conclude that the scheme was practicable and desirable. Like the chairman, he did not care to indulge in prophecies; but he thought it would probably be found at the end of the War that the conclusion reached by the British Government years ago should be reaffirmed. There were many circumstances which urged them to favour the Euphrates Valley railway; but looking all round, they concluded that the best thing was to let it alone, and leave it to be dealt with by men simply looking at the economical aspect. If there were military reasons for the line in the altered circumstances, that was another question altogether.

He was glad to have heard what Mr. Boulger had said. It was always well to be reminded of the curious story of the past, and without making prophecies they might derive a certain amount of encouragement in looking at the schemes which had been rejected, and of hope that which might prove accepted and acceptable to our Government would not be matters of hasty consideration.

Mr. H. CHARLES WOODS said that as the lecturer had referred to the question of the cost of railways in Asia Minor, he would have wished that he had given them more figures. He thought he was correct in saying that as far as Konia, the Anatolian Railway Company's kilometric guarantees were more or less covered by the increase in the value of the local taxation. (Sir EDWIN PEARS: Very nearly so.) He was not in any way anxious to praise the system of guarantees, but the effect of the line to which he had referred in developing the country must be considered in this connection. With reference to the introduction of German influence in Asia Minor, Mr. Boulger talked of its beginning in 1883. He (the speaker) did not know the exact date of arrival of the first German officers as instructors for the Ottoman army, but he thought they would be more correct if they said that the real German penetration of Turkey began from the accession of the present Kaiser, and that it was greatly furthered by the visits of that Monarch to Turkey in 1889 and 1898. The lecturer rather gave them to understand that from about 1883 the English

ceased to have any interest at all in Asia Minor. As a matter of fact, it was about 1888 that the Haidar Pasha-Ismia line was taken over by the Germans. But for years after that, and even up to the time of the outbreak of war, this country still held a controlling interest in the Smyrna-Aidin line, with which Sir Edwin Pears or members of his distinguished family were associated.

With reference to the question whether Turkey or the Turks were to remain in Mesopotamia, he thought he might be considered to have been friendly to the Turks in the days of peace. But so far as Mesopotamia was concerned, it was not a question of Turkey or even of the Turks. Mesopotamia belonged to the Arabs. Whatever the future arrangements might be, and whoever was the Protecting Power, it was a matter of vital importance that she should consider, study, and respect Arab interests. Whatever autonomy might be given, and whatever local government might be set up, it was the interests of the local inhabitants that we had to study. He felt that the lecture had served a purpose in reminding them of so many facts and details extending over a great number of years.

Mr. E. R. P. Moon said that having travelled by the Mersina-Tarsus and Adana railway some thirty years ago, he would like to say that he was struck by the contrast suggested by Mr. Boulger between the idea of a railway across Asia Minor through Mesopotamia to the head of the Persian Gulf, starting from the Bosphorus, and one starting from Alexandretta. It would have been very interesting if Mr. Boulger had discussed the comparative recommendations of these alternative routes. So far as he could conjecture, the Germans took the Asia Minor route at a time when facilities in railway construction had greatly developed, as one which was more handy for the " Central Empires' " traffic, while we naturally favoured the Alexandretta route, since we had easy access to it by sea. Another question he wished to raise was how far the Turks would be really capable of governing the populations of Asia Minor and act as a cement of them if that country alone was left to them. Not very long ago he heard a very interesting paper by Sir William Ramsay in which he described the exceedingly heterogeneous character of the populations of different valleys in Asia Minor, where there were isolated groups of people who did not marry outside their own villages, who spoke different languages, and who had customs differing very widely from one another.

Mr. Taylor said that, having lived thirty years in the country they had been discussing, he wished to refer to the point raised by Sir Edwin Pears as to water carriage being so much cheaper than rail. This was no doubt the case, especially when carriage by rail involved unloading and reshipment. He could not agree with what Sir Edwin said as to the unfruitfulness of Mesopotamian lands. His experience

was that the whole of the country between the two great rivers was naturally as fertile a district as could be found anywhere (Sir EDWIN PEARS: I agree absolutely.) Fertility was reached within a comparatively short distance of Alexandretta, and therefore it was unnecessary to cross the real desert with the railway. The line would pass through the most fertile country that could be imagined. One difficulty of cultivating the land was caused by periodical flooding. The country did not suffer from want of water, as Sir Edwin Pears had suggested, but from want of control of the water. He had seen the far-reaching plains when there was not one dry yard of land to be detected across the whole horizon. If the water could be controlled in any way (and Sir William Willcocks had worked out scientific schemes for the purpose), Mesopotamia would produce sufficient corn to feed the whole world. Manure would not be required, owing to the natural fertility. But the methods of cultivation adopted by the Arabs were very primitive. Their ploughs were instruments that did no more than scratch the surface, and they did not even harrow the ground. They sowed the ground first and then they ploughed. Yet he knew of a place which took its name from the fact that seed sown produced a hundredfold. This was an exaggeration, but there were many places where, with these primitive methods, the produce was thirty or forty fold There were many parts which could not be reached by water carriage, and would be developed greatly by railway communication. He thanked the lecturer for an interesting paper, and said that certain parts of his historical outline were new to him, although he had heard a great deal of the Chesney expedition.

Mr. BOULGER said that the last speaker had said practically everything he would have said in reply to Sir Edwin Pears, and therefore it was not necessary for him to detain them.

The meeting closed with a vote of thanks to the lecturer, proposed from the Chair.

THE RIVER TIGRIS FROM THE SEA TO BAGHDAD.

THE CHAIRMAN said they were all expectantly waiting to hear the lecture by Mr. A. Boddam Taylor on the Tigris. He had resided for thirty years in Baghdad, and must be regarded as an authority upon local conditions. His lecture should therefore be a valuable pendant to those previously given during the session on Mesopotamia.

Mr. A. BODDAM TAYLOR then read his lecture as follows:

About 20 miles outside the entrance to the Shat-el-Arab there is a bar which must be crossed by steamers bound to that port. In the old days the only indication of the entrance to the channel was a buoy with a pole bearing a cage. A steamer leaving Bushire in the afternoon could easily make the buoy next morning by daybreak. The channel, a narrow, winding one, was marked by other smaller buoys.

All this is now changed. There is, I understand, a lightship at the outer buoy, and a better channel has been marked out.

The bar is about 4 miles across, and there is deeper water on the other side. Low flats soon become visible on both sides, and these gradually give place to more defined banks and cultivation. Low embankments keep out the tide, which otherwise would swamp the land.

Some few miles up the river are the Fao telegraph stations, where the Indo-European cable joins up with the Turkish telegraph line. Here the date-groves commence which line the river right up to Kurnah.

Some few miles below Mahomerah we pass Abadan, where the Anglo-Persian Oil Company have erected their refineries.

Mahomerah itself is situated on the River Karun about a mile above its junction with the Shat-el-Arab, and is only just visible in the distance.

The banks of the river become more defined as we proceed, but innumerable creeks run inland on both sides; some of these extend for miles, others are short. From these main creeks others branch off,

and smaller ones from these again, so that the whole ground is a network of ditches. The Arabs say that the date-palm can only exist with its roots in the water and its head in the fire—the sun-heat—but in reality these ditches serve as much as drains as they do for irrigation. The water in them is under complete control; it can be kept in or shut out as necessary, and if the ditches are neglected and get choked up, the palms soon feel the effect.

While on this subject of the date-palm it may interest you to hear a few details in respect of it. Most fruit trees produce flowers bearing stamen and pistil, and the fertilization is carried out by bees, flies, or insects; the date-palm is either a male tree or a female tree, and Nature has made no provision for the transference of the pollen, which process must be carried out by man. When the flower bursts the spathe in which it grows it is covered with pollen; the whole bunch is cut off the male tree and divided into a number of small sprigs, one of which is inserted into each bunch of flowers on the female tree, and the wind shakes the pollen over the whole bunch.

This is the most important process in the cultivation of dates, and failure to carry it out properly results in what the Arabs term " sheesh " —that is, the dates grow two and three together, they have no stone, and never come to maturity. The date-palm may be said to be polygamous, for one male tree will serve some two hundred female trees—at least, that is the proportion of male trees which the Arabs preserve.

There are over one hundred distinct kinds of date-palms, the fruit of which varies considerably in appearance; indeed, the female trees themselves vary, particularly in the fronds, and although to the casual observer there is no noticeable difference, a fellah could tell by merely looking at it what variety of tree it is; but there is only one kind of male tree, and its pollen fertilizes all the different female varieties.

A stone of any date when planted will produce a tree, but the chances are it will be a male tree; if a female tree, it will be a throw-back to the original wild date, whose fruit is not worth eating. The female trees throw off a number of suckers, which are cut away and planted, and this is the only means of propagation.

Basrah is the limit of the ocean steamer. Here the cargo must be transhipped into flat-bottomed river steamers and barges.

The river at Basrah is about half a mile wide, but even here, 60 miles inland, the ground-level is only a foot or so above high-water mark, and embankments are maintained to keep out extra high tides.

Basrah itself is situated about 2 miles up the main creek, but there is a considerable population on the river-banks, and the business houses have their offices and wharves there.

The Custom House is at the entrance to the creek, and the Turks would not permit any sea steamer to go above the limits of the port.

The river steamers are side-paddle boats drawing 2 feet empty and about 5 feet loaded. The largest will carry 350 tons on this draft, but in summer it is not possible to load to more than 4 feet. They have cabins fore and aft, and the upper deck extends over the greater portion of the vessel.

On the lower deck aft there is a powerful capstan, which is in addition to the windlass forward. This capstan is very necessary for hauling the steamer off the ground when she touches, and without it she is very helpless. This is one of the points the authorities overlooked when they despatched numerous craft from India, Burmah, and elsewhere, to do transport work on the Tigris, for which they were utterly unsuited.

The river from Basrah to Kurnah differs very little from that below Basrah, except that it is narrower and the banks more pronounced.

Kurnah stands on the point formed by the junction of the Euphrates and the Tigris. It is a poor place, consisting of some eight or ten mud-brick buildings and a few mat houses. The Tigris at this point is about 300 yards wide, and still fairly deep.

After leaving Kurnah the date-groves cease; only a few clumps of old trees are to be seen. We are now approaching the marshes. Ezra's Tomb, with its blue-tiled dome, stands on the verge of the marshes. It is a place of pilgrimage for the Jews, who at certain seasons every year come here in hundreds to worship. The Mahomedans also acknowledge the prophet Ezra, and although they do not go there in pilgrimage, they respect the tomb.

As the steamer enters the marsh region the river narrows considerably—in many places it is not 100 yards wide. On both sides vast marshes extend for many miles inland. They are overgrown with reeds, intersected by creeks and channels, and are the home of water-fowl and wild-pig. These marshes extend from Ezra's Tomb to Kulat-Saleh, a stretch of some thirty miles of river. I have seen wild-pig literally in herds scampering away through the slush and water on the approach of the steamer.

For the first few miles the marshes extend right up to the river, but as we steam farther on they recede farther inland and the river-banks show up again.

The marsh district is inhabited by Maidan Arabs, who live by fishing and keeping buffaloes. They dwell in mat and reed huts, and move about in narrow bitumen-plastered canoes called "mashoofs," which are paddled or poled. They are very clever at spearing and netting fish. In habits and appearance they are different from

the Bedouin Arabs, and are considered somewhat low down in the social scale, but they are a hardworking, industrious people. Their women go long distances in their canoes to sell their fish, milk, butter, curds, and eggs; they do not veil very closely, and frequently exchange jests and saucy remarks with passing boatmen and villagers. They own herds of cows and buffaloes, donkeys and horses, and on dry patches of land grow large crops of Edra, maize, and marrows.

When the steamer is passing through this marsh district the journey is full of interest. The whole population of the different encampments turns out to line the bank, dancing and shouting for bread, fruit, dates, apples and oranges, which the passengers throw over to them. They are not, as a rule, much encumbered with clothing; the children are generally stark naked, and scramble on the banks for the delicacies thrown to them, or plunge into the water to fish them out. The men wear only a cloak, which is usually wrapped round their middle to enable them to run freely, and even the younger women think nothing of throwing off their cloaks, often their only garment, and plunging suddenly into the stream after some tempting morsel. The older women content themselves with boxing the ears of some child and seizing his spoils.

Kulat-Saleh is a small village some 40 miles from Kurnah. It was a place of some importance, being the seat of a Mudir and a certain number of Turkish troops. About 20 miles farther on we come to Amarah. When I first saw Amarah it was a large encampment of mat huts and black tents, with only a few built houses. It is a very important centre, being the outlet of all the produce of the marsh district, with roads leading to the Persian hills in the background. It grew very rapidly, and when I last saw it some five years ago it presented a rather imposing appearance from the river-front. It boasts a fine esplanade, some half a mile long, with well-built brick houses all its length. The Turks built a fine Serai or Government House and Barracks, and altogether it is the most flourishing town on the river. Just above Amarah is a large creek or river (the Chehalla), leading off the left bank of the Tigris eastward. Years ago —perhaps a century back—this was in all probability a small irrigation canal dug to lead the water on to the land, but the site was so chosen that it caught the full force of the current; every flood increased it in size, so that to-day more water passes through it than passes Amarah in the river proper. This water flows into and forms the marsh on the eastern side of the Tigris, and gradually flows back again into the river between Kulat-Saleh and Kurnah. The Turks have often tried to dam this escape and control it, but have never really succeeded. It is in this way that many canals originally dug as small irrigation ditches have taken change and become enormous creeks

leading the river water off to be lost in marshes. There are several such creeks on the right bank, which form the marshes on that side.

This also is sometimes the cause of changes in the bed of the river itself. One such change is within my recollection. Between Kut-el-Amarah and Baghdad there was a bend in the river about 9 miles round, but the neck of land from top to bottom was only about half a mile. Some enterprising Arab years before had dug a ditch from the upper bend in such a position that the current flowed straight into it; every flood increased it in size, until one very heavy flood cut it through to the river below. The steamer *Mejidieh*, in command of the late Captain Cowley (father of Lieutenant Commander C. Cowley, R.N.V.R., who perished in the attempt to relieve Kut-el-Amarah, and who was awarded a posthumous V.C. by His Majesty), had passed up a few days before, and nothing unusual was noticed; but as he was steaming down-stream past the entrance of this canal the next trip the vessel was carried down it stern first by a raging torrent and shot out into the river below, where he managed to drop anchor without much damage beyond broken paddle-wheels. The result was that this cutting became the river, shortening its course about 9 miles, and the old bed of the river dried up.

But to return to the subject of the marshes, I hear that the army of occupation have built a light railway right through them to Amarah; if so, they must have accomplished an enormous amount of work in the way of embankments.

Upon two separate occasions I have seen such extraordinary floods that the whole country between Basrah and Baghdad was under water; in the marsh district there was not a yard of dry land to be seen. The river-channel was only recognizable by its colour, and the water over the land was so deep that one Turkish steamer got stranded 200 yards outside of the river and was with difficulty refloated. The population were all encamped upon the numerous mounds surrounded by a sea of water. Jackals, gazelles, and other animals, occupied every available piece of high land, and the very partridges were perched upon the scrub. How the railway in question would fare should there be another flood of this sort is more than I can say. One of the first works the British should undertake is the control of these creeks, especially that above Amarah, which will drain the marshes and render thousands of acres of land available for cultivation.

Amarah is the headquarters on the Tigris of the Sabeans, or Sabbie. The name denotes their creed. The word (" Sabbaha ") means to bathe or swim, and the Sabbie are followers of St. John the Baptist. All their rites are carried out in water. They are baptized by being dipped, and they are married in the same way. The community is a

very small one; in Amarah there are some 200 to 300 of them, and there is a smaller colony in Mahomerah, but there are a good number spread amongst the Arabs. They devote themselves entirely to gold and silver working, and make a speciality of an inlaid work with antimony on silver which is kept a secret among themselves. They dress exactly like the Arabs and mix very freely among them. Every large Arab encampment or village has its family of Sabeans, who live amongst them and make their ornaments. From their dress they cannot be distinguished from Arabs, but their type of features is most pronounced, and it is easy to pick them out. They never marry outside their own community.

The river above Amarah offers a very different aspect to that below. The banks gradually become steeper. At Amarah the difference between low summer level and high flood level is only 4 or 5 feet; at Baghdad it is 21 feet.

From Amarah to near Kut-el-Amarah the navigation is fairly easy, and steamers can run by night and day.

We now come into the region of the Bedouin Arab. I have already given you some details of the Maidan Arab, but the Bedouin is quite different. In his haunts in the desert he is not a cultivator—he lives by his herds of camels, cattle, and sheep—but on the banks of the rivers he has gone in for cultivation, making the women do most of the work. He owns flocks and herds; he is not above plundering and thieving, but his pride will not let him sell bread or milk. He will give you these, and his pride will not prevent him from taking a present three times their value; but that is a different thing. This distinction refers only to what the Arab terms " eish " food (the staff of life)—that is, bread, which it is a disgrace to sell. Sheep, cattle, fowls, eggs, etc., do not come under this designation, and may be sold. I may remark here that this is one of the ancient Arab traditions which is now somewhat disregarded.

The Bedouin never fishes except for pastime, and seldom eats fish. He lives on the produce of the land and his flocks and herds. He seldom uses a boat, and makes all his journeys on foot or riding. When he has to cross a river he will swim, assisted by an inflated skin, first tying his clothes in a bundle on the top of his head.

The character of the Arab has been greatly overrated. One reads many romantic stories about their generosity, their chivalry, and their bravery; and this may be the case amongst the nobles, but it is certainly not the case with the average Arab. He is proud by reason of ancient traditions, but it is a pride born of ignorance, and unreasoning; he is avaricious, grasping, and exceedingly lazy. They have some good points—extreme fondness of their children and the respect they show to their parents. They are extraordinarily dignified, often

patriarchal in appearance, although not particularly cleanly in their persons.

On nearing Kut-el-Amarah the navigation becomes more intricate. In a full river the only difficulty the steamer has to contend with is the force of the current, which at times is very great; but when the flood has subsided, which it does in a few days, it is impossible to avoid grounding. The river water is thick with silt and of a deep chocolate colour when in flood. This silt deposits in the bed of the stream and forms sand-banks of very soft but very tenacious sandy loam. These banks are constantly altering in shape and position, and the channels are always shifting, necessitating frequent crossing from one side of the river to the other. There is nothing to indicate the channel, and the vessel will sometimes ground so gently that hardly a motion is felt; but for all that, she may be hard and fast for the next three or four hours until heaved off. At other times she may ground with a bump which will nearly knock you off your legs. This is where the windlass and capstan come in. Anchors are run out both fore and aft, and by alternately heaving on one and then on the other the ship is floated again.

The river in its upper reaches is very winding, and it is often possible to walk across the neck of a bend in a much shorter time than it takes the steamer to steam round. The Ctesiphon bend is a very good example of this. On the voyage up European passengers often land at the bottom of the bend, and after a 3-mile walk across the neck of the bight have an hour or so to spare to examine the arch of Ctesiphon, which is situated within a few hundred yards of the river.

This arch, which is called the "Tak" or the "Takhi-Khesra," was built by Chosroes, one of the Sassanian Kings, about the year A.D. 550 on the left bank of the Tigris, opposite the site of the city of Seleucia.

It consists of a large hall 163 feet long and 86 feet wide, with a vaulted roof 95 feet high, open at one end and closed at the other. The crown of the arch is 9 feet thick, and the walls supporting it are 23 feet thick at the base. The open end of the hall was flanked by two wing-walls, rising to the height of the top of the arch, which were some 20 feet thick at the base. When I first went to Baghdad both these wing-walls were standing, but the Arabs, by digging out the bricks from the base of them, caused both these walls to collapse. The whole is built of large flat burnt bricks, many of them bearing a cuneiform stamp. The bricks at the base were laid in bitumen.

The fronts of the wing-walls were highly decorated. There are no signs above ground of any rooms, but the foundations of them probably exist.

When the northern wing collapsed, numerous cedar-wood beams in perfect preservation were found amongst the débris; but the Arabs

soon disposed of them, and also of the bricks, as the Turks took no steps to preserve anything. One or two small pieces of cedar wood were secured by the Englishmen residing in Baghdad at the time.

The Diala River enters the Tigris about 8 miles above Ctesiphon. This was the scene of severe fighting when the British troops took Baghdad. The river is about 100 yards wide and the banks very steep, with a sheer drop of 20 feet to the water in the low season. There used to be a bridge of boats across it near its junction with the Tigris. About 7 miles farther on Gerarah is reached, where the gardens of Baghdad begin. This point is only 4 miles from Baghdad, although the steamer has to traverse several winding reaches before she can reach there three hours later.

A Baghdad garden is not exactly an Englishman's idea of a garden. The word " orchard " would better describe it. There are not many flowers to be seen; a few rose-bushes, a bed of violets, some pinks and carnations, and a few plants of jessamine, may be found, but apricot, peach, plum, apple, orange, and lime trees abound; date-palms are, of course, the most plentiful. They are all watered by irrigation. In the old days this was effected by means of the musical " churd," an erection of poles and pulleys by which animals hoisted huge skins full of water to the ground-level, whence it flowed into the irrigation ditches. The " churd " was a characteristic feature of Baghdad; every pulley had a different creak, and in the still of night it was a most penetrating sound, which could be heard for a long distance. It has been displaced by the advance of civilization; oil engines and pumps have now largely taken its place.

The houses are built right up to the water's edge upon steep " messaneyehs," or brick-built embankments, some 20 feet high. In summer-time the water falls to the very foot of these embankments and frequently leaves a foreshore, while in flood-time it stands right up to the top of them, and not infrequently low mud embankments have to be hastily made to keep out an extra high flood.

The houses are all flat-roofed, and everyone sleeps on the roof in summer. The roofs are made of poplar poles, mats, reeds, and earth, covered with a layer of clay and slightly sloped to throw the rain-water to the edge, where wooden gutters lead it into the street or into the courtyard. When it is raining a person walking in the street must have an umbrella, not so much for protection against the rain as to keep off the cascades from these gutters.

Every house has a courtyard, round which the rooms are built. The ground-floor consists of servants' rooms, storerooms, kitchen, and " serdab." The " serdab " is a room the floor of which is below the level of the ground. There are air-shafts which lead up to the roof, with ventilating-heads to catch the wind and lead it down. In

summer the upstair rooms are unbearable, and the " serdab " is the only cool place in the house. The word is Persian, derived from " serd " (cold) and " ab " (water). In Persia streams of water flow through such rooms, but in Baghdad there is no water, only the name remains. The upper rooms all lead off a veranda which goes right round the courtyard.

Many of the older houses built by Persians contain most beautiful woodwork screens and " shanasheens." The " shanasheen " is another characteristic feature of the Baghdad house. It is a window overhanging the street. The window extends the whole width of the room, and is provided with glass shutters and wooden filigree-work screens, which can be raised or lowered. Inside the room there is a platform some 3 feet wide, raised a few inches off the floor, which is furnished with gaudily covered mattresses and pillows, and here the ladies of the house spend a great portion of their time watching the doings in the street without being seen themselves.

One great drawback to the Baghdad houses is the complete absence of drainage, a want which I trust will now be rectified.

The water-supply is effected by means of the " sukka," or water-carrier, who fills his water-skin at the river, balances it on the back of a donkey through the streets, and delivers its contents into the household " hubs," large earthenware porous water-holders which every house has in the courtyard. The water filters through them into a receptacle below. Baghdad does boast a water-supply, but only certain streets are thus provided, and the water-carrier still holds his own in most parts.

The population is a very mixed one, consisting of Mahomedans, Jews, Christians, Indians, and Europeans. The Mahomedans are divided as follows: Arabs, who are mostly landowners, merchants, shopkeepers, artisans, and labouring classes, with a percentage of desert Arabs from the outlying districts and a large proportion of moolas and sayids; Persians, who are mostly merchants, shopkeepers, artisans, and labourers; and Kurds, who are all working people. It is from this class that the " hamals," or porters, are drawn, who are celebrated for their power of carrying enormous loads upon their backs. I once saw a " hamal " carry a safe weighing 11 cwt. on his back from an upper to a lower room. He bore the whole weight of it on his back down a flight of steps, being merely supported by two others to steady him.

Of Turks proper there are not a very large number in Baghdad or in the districts.

All the important Government posts are filled by Turks appointed from Constantinople—such as the Governor-General, the Kadi, the Military Commander, the heads of the Customs, the Revenue, the

Imperial Estates, the Wakaf, etc.—and the swarms of minor officials and clerks in these departments all come from there. All the army officers and doctors are Turks, and a large number of the troops, but in private life there are very few. The chemists' shops are mostly kept by Turks, and here and there a few shopkeepers and merchants trading with Constantinople, but that is all. There is no resident Turkish community.

The Turk looks upon Mesopotamia much in the same way that the Britisher looks upon the West Coast of Africa. He is appointed and has to go there; he does his best to make money while he is there, but is glad to get away.

Some 50,000 of the population are Jews, who are all engaged in trade as merchants, shopkeepers, and pedlars, or in certain industries, such as metal-working, weaving, embroidery, and tailoring.

The Christian population of Baghdad is composed of Chaldeans, or, as they are more usually called in Baghdad, "Telkafies," and Syrians. The Telkafies come from the Moosul district, and are a very fine, sturdy race of men. They devote themselves very largely to work on the river steamers and barges, which are manned by them. They also do a good deal of low-caste work which the Mahomedan would decline to do, such as scavengering and sweeping. They are physically fine men, but are not generally very intelligent, and to call a person "Telkafie" is equivalent to dubbing him a "thick-head." Where we would say "as stupid as a donkey," the Baghdadie would say "as stupid as a Telkafie."

The Syrians are a mixture of many countries. Many of them are descendants of emigrants from Beyrout, Damascus, Moosul, and Aleppo, who have settled centuries ago in Baghdad. Under the Turkish Government the Christians have always been well treated and allowed a considerable amount of freedom, so that Baghdad has been looked upon by them as a haven of refuge, and their numbers have increased in consequence.

To these must be added Armenians and Grecks, and also the British, French, Germans, and Italians. The Europeans all told did not number more than a hundred or so.

The subject of the different races inhabiting these parts is a very interesting one, but it is a very large subject, and I fear that time will not permit of my entering very fully into it.

Every class has its own distinctive dress, and the costumes to be seen are many and varied. The ladies are all veiled when in the streets, though the peasant women are not so particular about this, but it is easy to tell their denomination and rank in life from their clothing.

The streets are very narrow; even the main streets were only

just wide enough to allow a carriage to pass, and when two carriages met it was often necessary for one to back to some opening where they could pass each other. When the late Nazim Pasha was Governor of Baghdad he began to widen the main street by the simple process of pulling down all the fronts of the houses, leaving the owners to build them up again 2 yards farther back. The side-streets and lanes are particularly narrow, often not more than 6 to 7 feet wide. The Bazaars still retain the Eastern appearance, the best of them being roofed in with domed roofs, the only light and ventilation being through holes in the domes. Each Bazaar is devoted to a separate trade.

The shops consist of small recesses built into the walls on both sides. These recesses are raised about 2 feet above the street-level and are fitted with clumsy hinged wooden shutters, one of which is propped up and the other let down, forming a platform, upon which the owner squats, with his goods within reach upon shelves or hanging on pegs.

When a male customer wishes to make a purchase he sits down on the platform, takes a pull at the proprietor's water-pipe, or proffers a cigarette and proceeds to discuss the weather, the state of affairs generally, any topic excepting his requirements; this last must be introduced with great caution, and perhaps after lengthy bargaining the purchase may be concluded to the satisfaction of both parties.

Ladies particularly enjoy expeditions into the Bazaar just as ladies at home go to look at the shops—discreetly veiled and generally in twos and threes, they spend hours in examining the different wares and discussing the pros and cons.

This is one of the few privileges enjoyed by the fair sex; the other great diversion is the visit to the "haman." A lady of quality will go to the bath attended by two or three female servants, bearing bundles of clothing, toilet necessaries, tea equipage, etc., and spend hours there drinking tea and gossiping with her acquaintance. They make up bath-parties, and frequently engage the whole establishment for the occasion.

It is only when out in the street that the Christian women are veiled; when indoors they discard the cloak, and will receive their friends, both male and female, without any attempt to conceal their features. Many of the better-class Jewish families will also allow their women-folk to receive male visitors without covering their faces.

There has been a good deal of discussion about Mesopotamia and its future, and I have no hesitation in saying that the agricultural possibilities of the country are tremendous. The land is marvellously fertile, needing only water and attention. Between the Euphrates and the Tigris there are traces of the beds of innumerable ancient canals that have long since fallen into disuse and become filled in; to-day the harvest is dependent entirely upon the rainfall. With good

and regular rains it will be abundant, but the system of cultivation leaves much to be desired. The native plough is merely a roughly shaped piece of wood shod at the point with iron and yoked to an ox or a donkey; at best it does not penetrate more than four inches, and often merely scratches the surface. Ploughing cannot be commenced until heavy rains have fallen to soften the soil, for the plough could not penetrate the baked surface.

The ground is sown before ploughing and the seed ploughed in, no harrowing of any sort being done. No attempt is made to clear the ground from thorn and scrub. No weeding or thinning is ever done. The rainfall is so dubious that only low-lying patches which will collect the water are sown, and thus only a small part of the available surface is utilized. Of late years oil engines and pumps have been introduced in considerable numbers, but they are used more for garden produce than for grain production. There is an enormous opening in this direction.

The irrigation work started by Sir William Willcocks and completed by Sir John Jackson at Hindieh has not assisted grain production. It had the effect of closing the Hindieh Canal and turning back once more into the Hillah branch of the Euphrates the water which flowed to waste in the desert, but only the date-groves and gardens of Hillah benefited by this. To grow grain the water must be raised on to the level of the land. If Willcocks's scheme were carried out in its entirety this would be effected. Another serious defect is the liability of the country to inundations. When once the river overflows its banks the water will remain on the land for weeks, even months, until it dries up or percolates back into the river, and all crops are ruined.

The Turkish Government's policy has always been to prevent progress; they were like parasites, absorbing everything, giving nothing. It did not suit them to make the country prosperous.

Their method of ruling was to pit one tribe against another, to foster a constant state of agitation and ill-feeling amongst them. It was easy enough to effect this by favouring one at the expense of the other. If any Sheikh got too wealthy he was squeezed. Their method of collecting taxes was in itself calculated to bring about trouble. Suppose that a tax of, say, £100 was to be collected from some Sheikh, an official would be sent with a guard of soldiers. These would billet themselves upon the tribe until the money was paid. The amount to be recovered would not be merely the £100 tax, but an additional 20 per cent. for the Government officials, 10 per cent. for the collector, presents for the soldiers, who must be fed and kept quiet; meantime any small article that the collector might fancy, such as a young colt or a rifle or suchlike trifle, would have to be given to prevent strained relations, and only when everything had been

settled to the satisfaction of the official would he depart with his soldiers, much to the relief of his hosts, who knew well that if during his stay any of the Arabs, resenting the importunities of the soldiers, had come into collision with them, the Governor would be only too glad of such an opportunity to make the tribe pay for their misdeeds.

Europeans could not invest capital in industries without concessions, nor could they acquire land—not that the acquisition of land was prohibited them, but because of the difficulties which would be put in the way of the purchase.

Natives knew too well the risk of investing capital in any industry which was dependent upon the goodwill and co-operation of the Turkish official.

Some years ago Germany made a deliberate attempt to create a trade in the region of the Persian Gulf. The Hamburg-American Line put on steamers which were without doubt subsidized; German agents established themselves at the different ports and flooded the country with cheap German-made goods; the Bazaar stalls were full of cutlery, enamelware, china, glass, locks, buttons, and knick-knacks of all sorts, but very little of this was bona-fide trade. A certain number of these articles had before been imported through India, which the direct imports now replaced, but the bulk of it did not mean real buying; the goods were handed over to the retail dealers for sale or return. It cost the shopkeeper nothing to expose them, and he got a good profit upon whatever he did sell; but they were everywhere in evidence, and that was the real object—to make a show of trade. There is no doubt it was instigated by the German Government, and worked by the Trade Combines with the assistance of that Government.

Later on much of the local produce in the shape of grain, wool, and skins, was brought up by these same agents, who were able to operate at prices which British merchants could not touch for the open market in London.

Cheap freights in their subsidized boats gave them a certain advantage, but it is also very probable that some of the material was being made use of for military equipment.

The Board of Trade woke up to the fact of this commercial enterprise, and sent out two separate Commissioners to inquire into matters and suggest means of counteracting same, and their reports were made, but nothing further transpired. I was consulted by the Commercial Intelligence Department at the time, and gave my views, but it was against all the tenets of the official mind at that time to admit that Germans could assist trade in this way, and I fear that my words of wisdom fell on deaf ears.

So far as Mesopotamia is concerned, British trade has always held its own, despite the efforts on the part of the Germans, and this is not

due to any assistance from or any interest taken in it by the British authorities, but entirely to the dogged persistence of the British mercantile firms doing business there, who have had to fight not only the obstacles placed in their way by Turkish authorities and the competition of other countries, but also the apathy of the British manufacturer and frequently the indifference of the Consular officials in all matters pertaining to trade.

I had not intended to touch the subject of the railway, but in view of the discussion which took place last month in this room after Mr. Boulger had read his paper, I feel bound to refer briefly to it.

I have not visited the Euphrates higher up than Feluja, but I know that grain is grown at Anah and Hit. The land on the Tigris is just as fertile up to Moosul as it is below Baghdad, and there is no reason why the Euphrates Valley should not be equally so right up to Meskena.

That not much grain is grown in the upper portion is because this district is peopled by Shemmar Arabs on the one side and Anaizeh Arabs on the other, and the desert Arab is not a cultivator; moreover, cultivation, dependent upon precarious rainfalls, is often a failure; but the soil is fertile enough, and with proper irrigation would soon produce sufficient to support a railway. I am not a believer in a railway being the panacea for all evils—after all, a railway is only one road, a thing that has length without breadth; it is a cheap means of transport, but of itself it will not open up a very wide tract of country. Good roads adapted to wheeled traffic are necessary, and provided these were made simultaneously with irrigation works, there is not the smallest doubt that a railway would soon be a necessity.

What I want particularly to impress upon you is that if irrigation schemes are started some means of transport in addition to the rivers must be provided.

The Euphrates is not now navigable for steamers; during certain months small boats can pass down with grain, but the decrease in weight and damage through constant discharging and reloading occasion great loss, not to speak of the great delay. The Tigris is better, but even here navigation in the summer months is very difficult and costly.

Even now goods which will bear the carriage go across from Syria to Moosul rather than via the Gulf and Baghdad; and if there were any other choice between steamers and animal carriage it would be made use of.

Before concluding this paper I must touch upon the important question of the future of the country.

I can hardly conceive that anyone could contemplate handing Mesopotamia back again to the Turkish misrule; to do so would

indeed be to throw the Arabs to the wolves, and would constitute a very serious betrayal of trust, not to speak of wasted opportunity, which Great Britain would bitterly regret later; but some form of government must be evolved.

It has been suggested that the head of the Hedjaz Arabs, who has lately proclaimed his independence, should be placed in authority over Mesopotamia. To my mind this would never be acceptable. The Hedjaz Arabs have nothing whatever in common with the Arabs of Mesopotamia; there is little or no intercourse between the countries, and there certainly is no bond of union.

There are four important Arab tribes in addition to the Maidan or Marsh Arabs. These are the Anaizeh and the Shemmar, on the right and left banks of the upper portion of the Euphrates respectively; the Montifik, who occupy both sides of that river in the lower portion; and the Beni Lam, on the east of the Tigris. These tribes are always at variance with each other, and I question whether any of them would accept to be subordinated to the head of any other tribe.

It is very difficult to suggest any workable scheme or to name any individual with sufficient power and tact to control all the various conflicting interests, and that these interests are very conflicting I will endeavour briefly to point out.

It is perhaps hard for anyone who has not dwelt amongst them to realize that the Bedouin is in every way totally different from the townsman. The Bedouin is still in a state of feudal bondage, his every action is controlled by the Sheikh of his tribe; he has certain rights in his own property, his herds and cattle, etc., but he does not own the land, and must get the Sheikh's permission to cultivate or to graze his flocks on it. He has to pay dues to the Sheikh, to contribute to the common funds whenever required; he is entirely under the orders of the heads of the tribe, who can demand his services or even expel him from their midst.

The townsman, on the other hand, has thrown off this bondage. He owns property in land bought from the Turkish Government, or he trades or works for his living; he owes no subservience to any individual except his employer, and that only so long as he chooses to accept such employment. How could it be expected that he should accept to be placed under the rule of the Bedouin, and it is equally inconceivable that the Bedouin tribes would recognize a townsman as head.

The appointment of a ruler from amongst the religious party of Seyds and Ulema would be equally objected to by both Bedouins and townspeople. The influence which this class exercise over the people through the religion is very great, and is made free use of for their own private interests; but while the people accept the numerous calls made upon them in the name of religion, there is not much real

sympathy between them, and they would not tolerate any secular power being put into their hands. They would one and all accept the British rule, and I can see no better solution of the difficulty than to administer the country much in the same way as India is now governed.

The CHAIRMAN said they had been immensely interested in the valuable paper they had heard. It very likely suggested to many present considerations in respect to the Mesopotamian Commission Report which had been published that morning. But at the Council meeting that afternoon they came to the conclusion that it would be undesirable in their discussions to enter into that question at all. It was a very important and complicated issue, and the ventilation of it at this stage was to be deprecated.

Colonel C. E. YATE, M.P., said that the lecturer had thoroughly given them the benefit of his long years of experience in Mesopotamia. He particularly liked what had been said as to the need for railways, for he felt how necessary it was there should be other means of communication in addition to the present river system. It was a matter for congratulation that during the last year various railways had been constructed by our troops in occupation, and he felt sure that these railways would be extended as time went on.

The close of the paper was, in his opinion, its most important part, since it dealt with the question of the future of the country. They would all thoroughly endorse the view of the lecturer that it was inconceivable that Mesopotamia would be handed back to Turkish misrule. He also agreed with him that it was not feasible to place the Hedjaz Arabs over the Arabs of Mesopotamia. The Arab tribes of Mesopotamia to whom the lecturer had referred were all independent of each other, and there was no chief amongst them who would accept Hedjaz rule. Sir Thomas Holdich had lately shown in a lecture to the Society how absolutely impossible it was for the various Arab communities, such as Arabia, Syria, and Mesopotamia, to be ruled from one common centre. The different portions of the world inhabited by Arabs were more or less independent of each other, and he did not believe they would ever see them united under the Hedjaz. The lecturer had shown that the population of Baghdad was a particularly diverse one, made up of many races and faiths, and he did not believe that there was any one of these races which would accept any rule except that of the strongest. He thought the suggestion in the last portion of the paper, that all of them would accept British rule, provided the best solution of the difficulty. He agreed with Mr. Taylor that the best administration of the country would be one based on the Indian model. He thought they might look to the govern-

ment which was now being established by Sir Stanley Maude, with the help of Indian officials, as the one form of government which would bring peace and prosperity to Baghdad such as had already been brought to Busrah, according to a recent *Times* article. Busrah was now a hive of activity and progress, instead of misrule and desolation. They all knew what the Government of India was, and what it had done, for example, in Upper Burma, which was one of the wildest countries imaginable a generation ago. It was now a most powerful and prosperous province, with a Lieutenant-Governor and its own local Legislative Council. He hoped that a generation hence we should see Mesopotamia with its local Governor and its local Legislative Council, enjoying peace and prosperity such as existed in Burmah to-day. If we could do so much for an outlying province on the east of the Indian Empire, like Burmah, he thought they could do just as much for an outlying province on the west of the Indian Empire, such as Mesopotamia. He hoped that everyone present would do their best to encourage the British Government to stick to Mesopotamia, and to establish an administration there by British officials on the lines of the Government of India.

Mr. C. E. BUCKLAND asked whether, in view of the severe heat of the Mesopotamian climate in the summer months, it would be possible to set up a sanatorium and summer station in the Pusht-i-Kuh Hills to the north-east and south-east of Baghdad. Would these hills provide a suitable site for cantonment of the troops which would have to garrison the country and places where our officers could preside during the hot weather ?

A clergyman present asked whether there were any traces amongst the Arab and other inhabitants of the country of ancient Jewish blood, such as existed in Asia Minor. He also asked whether there were to be found among the people any customs or observances showing traces of the penetration of the Buddhist faith in those regions.

Colonel A. C. YATE said that, having been instrumental in inducing the lecturer to give the address to which they had listened with so much interest, instruction, and pleasure, he wished to say that he thought that it held its own well with the standard of lecture at which the Central Asian Society aimed. With reference to the future of Mesopotamia, he would remind them that, when Lord Hardinge went to Busrah early in the Mesopotamian campaign, he practically committed the Government of India to an assurance that the country would not go back to Turkish misrule. There was one very strong reason why we could not give up the country lying between the Persian Gulf and Egypt, namely, because it was a vital link in the union of our vast Empire in Asia and Africa. When Mr. W. J. Childs, the author of " Across Asia Minor on Foot," lectured to their Society, there was

no point on which he insisted more strongly than that of the importance of Alexandretta as one of the great ports of the future of the Asiatic shores of the Mediterranean. The possession of that port would have a most important bearing upon our position as one of the greatest of Asiatic and African Powers, since it would be the Mediterranean terminus of our railway from Koweit through Baghdad, and should, if possible, communicate through Egypt with our African possessions. We cannot doubt that Berlin, when she embarked on the "Drang-nach Osten," meditated a concentration of railways from Asia and Africa upon Alexandretta. Surely we must dismiss the supposition that we could allow Alexandretta to fall into the hands of any other Power. The question is most closely connected with the security of Egypt and the Suez Canal, of the control of which we must certainly retain possession. These are among the factors which must determine our decision as to Mesopotamia.

Mr. BODDAM TAYLOR, in reply, said there were no traces whatever of Buddhism remaining in Mesopotamia in any shape or form. Mahomedanism had quite swept it away. But as regards the Jews, their features had been transmitted very largely to the Mahomedans, and especially among the Persian Mahomedans. Whether this was from intermarriage or from the large employment of the Jews in ancient days, he could not say. Jewish characteristics were especially marked among the Sabeans, to whom he had referred in his paper.

With reference to the possibilities of sanatoria in the Pusht-i-Kuh Hills, the distances were not great, but it was to be remembered that the hills were almost entirely in Persian territory. There were possibilities of a fine hill station for Baghdad in the hills near Kermanshah. The climate was beautifully cool, and the height about 3,000 feet. The suitable frontier towns were disputed points, and it was to settle these difficulties that a Boundary Commission went along the frontier shortly before the outbreak of war. In further answer to Mr. Buckland, he said he supposed that it would not be difficult to arrange with Persia for the provision of one or two cantonments in the hills, on payment of a subsidy.

The lecturer added that there were three gentlemen present who had lived and traded in Mesopotamia for many years, and knew all its requirements and possibilities. He believed that at a previous meeting Sir Thomas Holdich suggested that the Society should formulate a policy for the development of Mesopotamia, to be placed before the Government. He ventured to say that if this was done the three gentlemen to whom he referred could give advice and information of great value to the Council.

A vote of thanks to the lecturer, moved by the Chairman, closed the meeting.

ANNUAL MEETING

THE annual meeting of the Society was held on June 27, 1917, with Colonel Sir Henry Trotter in the chair. The Report of the Council was as follows:

REPORT OF THE COUNCIL FOR 1916-1917.

The Session of 1916-1917 opened in October with a paper by Mr. H. Charles Woods entitled "The Salonica Campaign." In the unavoidable absence of Mr. Woods the paper was read by Sir Henry Trotter. In December Miss Edith Durham gave a most interesting paper on "Albania Past and Present," illustrated by beautiful lantern slides. The January paper, by Professor N. Kato, dealt with Japan's part in the war, and gave some highly instructive and interesting information on a subject little known and of great importance. This paper was followed in February by one from Mr. E. C. Wilton on "The Boundary Provinces of Western China," thus again dealing with the Far East. Those in April and May were on the Near East, a part so full of interest at the present time, "Baghdad," by Sir Thomas Holdich, and "Mesopotamia and Syria after the War," by Mr. Demetrius Boulger, being the subjects discussed. The attendance at all the meetings has been very good.

Three new members have been elected during the year—Mr. Frederick Yorke, the Hon. Mr. S. M. Fraser, the resident at Hyderabad, and Mr. J. A. Spranger, R.E. The Council regret to report the loss by death of Captain Perry Ayscough, who was killed in France. The Society has also lost by resignation Mr. R. P. Cadell and Colonel Swayne. Under Rule 8 one defaulter ceases to be a member of the Society. The hope expressed by the Chairman at the last Annual Meeting that the year 1916 would end without a deficit has been realized.

There is a balance of £6 2s. 9d. in the Society's favour.

The total expenditure was £121 18s. 7d., being a saving of nearly £16 on that of 1915, the receipts for the year being the same except for £2. The Statement of Accounts is appended. The recommendation of the Council to fill vacancies in the Council for 1917-1918 are as follows:

Under Rule 12 the Chairman, the Right Hon. Sir Mortimer Durand, retires. The Council have elected Sir Henry Trotter as Chairman in his place, and recommend the election of Sir M. Durand as Vice-President. Under Rule 13 the Hon. Treasurer, Sir Evan James, retires. The Council recommend his re-election. Under Rule 23 Mr. Tucker, Colonel Yate, and Sir Henry Trotter retire. The Council recommend the election of Mr. J. F. Baddeley and the re-election of Mr. Tucker and Colonel Yate.

The CHAIRMAN, in moving the adoption of the Report, said he was there in a new capacity, the Council having elected him Chairman. It was an honour he gratefully accepted, and he trusted he might be equal to the performance of his duties. Their retiring Chairman, Sir Mortimer Durand, was leaving London to live in Cornwall. He had known him for many years, and he recalled the fact that his father, Sir Henry Durand, afterwards Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab, was one of the first persons in India to show him hospitality when he arrived there fifty-five years ago. After outlining Sir Mortimer's services in public life, both as an Indian civilian and as Ambassador, successively at Teheran, Madrid, and Washington, and alluding to his literary work since retirement, he said they were most grateful to Sir Mortimer for the interest he had taken in the Society, which had prospered greatly under his Chairmanship, as the lectures had never been better attended. He felt sure that they would gladly accept the proposal of the Council to appoint him one of their Vice-Presidents. With respect to Council vacancies, they proposed a new member in the person of Mr. Baddeley, who was a great authority both on Russia and China. He was sure the meeting would accept the proposal of the Council.

The Report was adopted unanimously, and the recommendations of the Council were approved.

CENTRAL ASIAN SOCIETY ACCOUNTS, 1916

Receipts.

	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d
Subscriptions—						
114 at £1	114	0	0			
11 at 16s.	8	16	0			
2 in arrears at £1	2	0	0			
1 in arrears at 16s.	0	16	0			
				125	12	0
Journal subscription				0	16	0
Journal sales				1	8	0
Miscellaneous				0	5	4
				128	1	4
Balance at bank, January 1, 1916 ...	81	13	2			
Balance, petty cash	0	7	0			
				82	0	2
				£210	1	6

Expenditure.

	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
Rent				22	0	0
Salary				25	0	0
Journal—Printing and Reporting ...				44	13	3
Miscellaneous printing, stationery, etc. ...				6	4	0
Postage				6	13	0
Miscellaneous, including teas, petty cash, etc.				7	15	10
Lantern				9	9	0
Bank charges				0	3	6
				121	18	7
Balance at bank, December 31, 1916 ...	87	11	9			
Balance, petty cash	0	11	2			
				88	2	11
				£210	1	6

We have examined, with the books and vouchers, the accounts of the Central Asian Society for the year ending December 31, 1916, and find them correct.

HENRY TROTTER.
F. W. R. FRYER.