

STUDIES  
IN  
THE HISTORY  
OF  
THARRAWADDY

*Lower Burma  
Eastern India  
Rangoon  
The Capital*

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*Farm Tenancy pp 31-36*

*" " 4<sup>th</sup> Crime*

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OF THARRAWADDY

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## THARRAWADDY

NEXT month His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor will, it is expected, pay a visit to Tharrawaddy on his way to Rangoon. That District has been troubled with an unenviable notoriety <sup>for crime</sup> for several years, and its condition has been the cause of many communications, culminating in a reference in the Legislative Council. In a sense, Tharrawaddy may be considered "an acid test" subject; those who know anything about it are either vehemently in favour of continuous repressive measures or are equally vehement in the belief that repressive measures are found to fail. As usual the truth lies between the two extremes. To-day we publish in another column the first of a series of "Studies in the History of Tharrawaddy," written with knowledge of the District and with a constructive purpose. Some of these articles will of necessity set forth the past history of Tharrawaddy, as the present is ever the child of the past, especially in Burma; but they will be found to have very close bearing on present conditions and will provide material for a judgment as to the future. They are intended to be not controversial, but informative; and we anticipate that they will be read with interest by all who have any concern for the future of a District which has been too much in the limelight for decades past. Tharrawaddy would certainly have been happier if it had had less "history."

12 June, 1919.



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# STUDIES IN THE HISTORY OF THARRAWADDY

## I. A BURMESE REGIMENT

### THE PEGU LIGHT INFANTRY

THE enrolment of the Pegu Light Infantry Regiment was sanctioned by the Governor-General in Council on the 4th April, 1853, because the work to be done in the Tharrawaddy District in suppressing the "rebel" Gaung Gyi required troops who were acquainted with, and accustomed to, the local physical conditions as well as more accustomed to the climatic conditions than the Madras and Bengal regiments then employed by the British authorities. The Corps was not placed under the General Commanding in the Province but under the Civil Commissioner. Enlistment in it was to be for general service; and it was proposed that the regiment should consist of Burmese, Arakanese, Talaings and Karens, with a few Malays, say twenty to each company. The Malays were added because Malays had been found so useful in the Ceylon Rifles, and because it was believed that Malays were more feared by Burmans than any other race, and would therefore be useful against Burmese marauders from over the border. Major Nuthall, who was in command of the Arakan Battalion at the time, was appointed to raise the new regiment and take command of it.

In May, 1853, Nuthall formulated for the organisation of the corps definite proposals which obtained the approval of Government. According to these the corps was to consist of 800 sepoy (with officers, doctors, clerks in proportion) and was to be formed for civil purposes but to be subject to all the Articles of War applicable to native troops in the service of the East India Company, and liable for military service whenever it might be ordered, by land or by sea; the standing orders of the Bengal Army were to apply generally; the men were to be

enlisted as sappers and rowers, and to be armed with percussion fusils. The uniform was to be green with black facings and accoutrements and silver mountings, the waist belt being fastened in the front with a bronze snake-clasp; in place of breast-plates each man was to have a bronze lion's head and pricker in a case connected with a double chain. The pay of a sepoy up to twenty years' service was fixed at seven rupees a month.

At the end of May, 1853, Nuthall, having obtained no recruits in Rangoon—some critics said he did not try very hard—went to Prome and there called for recruits under 22 years of age of any race living in the Province of Pegu; but the lack of any nucleus caused difficulty. After some time 20 boys were persuaded to offer themselves; of these seven were not physically fit and seven declined to take the oath of allegiance, so then there were six. Nuthall decided to take this somewhat minute nucleus of a regiment to Rangoon hoping for more success there; but one deserted when embarking at Prome, so then there were five. This was hardly encouraging, but Nuthall persevered. Finding that part of the difficulty lay in the system of monthly payments he paid the men every four days; further, recruits were paid four annas a day for the broken period of their first month instead of the regulation two annas. Eighty men now offered themselves for service in a few days. Many of them were unfit for service, but as they made a show of a nucleus it was pretended that all were taken, although none were actually enrolled; they were useful for constructing barracks and it was proposed to weed them out afterwards. They went on strike for Rs. 10 a month almost at once. Nuthall made a great speech to the strikers and drew their attention to the Indian troops all round them, arguing that they would not have agreed to serve so far from their homes unless they had found it satisfactory to serve under the British for Rs. 7-8 a month and the glory. The recruits were not convinced; they refused to work for the pay fixed for them and were accordingly dismissed; but in a few days all returned and asked to be re-enlisted. Nuthall, seizing his opportunity, weeded them out and took back only those who suited him; thus achieving a second object by making a favour of the re-enlistment. In July, 1853, however, Nuthall

himself pointed out to Sir Arthur Phayre, the Commissioner, that the recruits had a real grievance. Coolies in India were paid Rs. 5-8 per mensem and the sepoy who had to keep up various articles of half-mountings were accordingly paid Rs. 7-8 there; in Burma where the usually cooly rate was Rs. 8 the men of the Pegu Light Infantry, who after a rupee had been deducted for equipment received only Rs. 7, were distinctly worse off. Government however declined to grant any concession.

When he first began Nuthall asked to be allowed to take ten men from his former command, the Arakan Battalion, to form a nucleus for the new regiment. Later he found the Peguers, as he called them, more difficult to discipline than he had expected; and he increased his demand to 40 or 50. It is not clear whether he ever got these men, but that he eventually did seems probable from the fact that he ceased to ask for them; he was not the man to subside without getting what he wanted. In July 1853 he reported that he had 172 men who had taken the oath of allegiance, promising to serve for three years, and to work as sappers, pioneers, builders, rowers, etc., whenever required to do so. By September over 1000 had offered themselves and 192 had been taken, while many more were said to be ready to enlist if some advances were sent to them. All the local recruits up to this time were Karens and Shans, no Burmans or Talaings being taken as yet. They behaved well and submitted to discipline, and they appear to have been employed in building barracks in Rangoon. At first spades and pickaxes were provided for sapper work, but these were soon changed to the more familiar *dahs* and *mamutis*.

On the 20th November, 1853, the corps found its first employment on active service when a detachment landed some way up the Pegu River and hunted a party of dacoits for several days under peculiarly trying conditions. Success was only partial but the force earned the warm commendation of Major Nuthall. Soon after this the corps was warned to be ready to proceed to Yegin to quieten the Tharrawaddy District, and in January 1854 the move was made.

In April 1854 a proposal to increase the pay of privates in quarters to Rs. 9 was sanctioned, although it had been rejected only in the preceding January; and in August of the same year

the pay of privates in quarters was raised to Rs. 10 (including *batta*) and the pay of non-commissioned officers was increased at the same time. While engaged this year in the active pursuit of Gaung Gyi, for which the force had been organised, the men were frequently commended for good work; they showed themselves ready to suffer without complaint continued hardship and privation, and exhibited great courage and daring in actual conflicts.

In 1855 owing to the difficulty of obtaining Karen and Shan recruits the Commissioner sanctioned the enlistment of Burmans and Talaings. No avowed Talaing ever enlisted in the regiment; but Burmans were recruited, and by 1858 the force came to be composed entirely of Burmans and Malays, no Shans or Karens being included at any time after that.

Malay recruiting had been started towards the end of 1854, when a subaltern was sent to Penang as a recruiting officer with a promise of assistance from the authorities there. Early in 1855 some seventy Malays were brought up in this way, and later thirty-one more, followed again in February 1856 by another twenty-one. These recruits soon received the enthusiastic approval of Major Nuthall who found that Malays did "not require the same ceaseless supervision as the Burmans to keep them in order; they were more trustworthy, took more care of their arms and accoutrements" and were, in his opinion, "the best men for an irregular corps in this Province." Nuthall proposed to get more Malays so as to have one half Malays and one half local men; but Government limited their number to 200, or two companies, and directed that if the numbers of the two companies could not be made up with Malays they were to be filled with Burmans. To aid in recruiting them it was promised that every respectable Malay bringing 50 recruits to the regiment should be admitted as a commissioned or non-commissioned officer. At the end of 1857 the number of Malays was 154 and this was the maximum reached; for, as it had been found increasingly difficult to obtain Malay recruits and the expense incurred had been large—Rs. 64 per recruit apart from pay between recruiting and arrival in Tharrawaddy—the recruiting party in the Straits Settlements was withdrawn in July, 1857. It is to be noted that quarrels were frequent between the Malays and the local recruits, and



peace between them was maintained only by Nuthall's firm unwavering justice.

The Burmans did not please Nuthall so much as the Malays. He found them very good on active service but slack in Cantonments; and in August 1855 he said he had been extremely disappointed in them since they were withdrawn from active service in the field. As might be expected the Burman failed to appreciate sentry duty or any of the meticulous routine of barrack life, and the records include frequent complaints by the officers in these directions. But one sentry at least was faithful. Set to watch a consignment of barrels of gun-powder which had arrived at Yegin to replenish the store of the corps he stayed at his post with a fidelity worthy of Casabianca, sitting quietly there till a spark falling from his cheroot caused him to be removed from the exploding barrel by *force majeure*. The story certainly agrees with the character of the present generation in Tharrawaddy District, from the area of which most of the Burmans of the force were drawn. Nuthall thought the reason for this area supplying so many recruits was to be found in "the confidence and courage acquired by the people of that district in predatory habits during the Burmese time and their consequent predilection for a military life." In April 1855 the corps had 450 privates, including Shans, Karens, Burmans and Malays. In April 1858 it included about 780 Burmans who, together with the Malays, then brought the Battalion up to its full complement of sixteen native commissioned and ninety-six native non-commissioned officers with sixteen buglers and 800 privates. It has already been mentioned that from and after 1858 no Karens or Shans were included.

On first arrival in the Tharrawaddy district in 1854 the corps went to Yegin, but Myanaung was chosen almost at once for their headquarters, and they crossed over and built their barracks there, and retained that post as headquarters till the end.

The suppression of Gaung Gyi, which was a great part of the purpose of the force, was effected by about February 1855, when the regiment had reached only half its full complement; but that half in conjunction with the Arakan Battalion played no inconsiderable part in the operations and even in March

1854, when it had been only two months in the field, the corps was complimented by the Commissioner for gallantry in the operations round Tapun. Detachments from it replaced the Arakan Battalion in garrisoning the disturbed area until the Sarawah Police Corps, formed in 1854, took over some of the posts, leaving the Pegu Light Infantry the duty of assisting in guarding the Upper Burma frontier and of supplying garrisons for Henzada, Mingyi and Myanaung. Detachments were also employed in Hanthawaddy. In 1857-8, owing to the great amount of sickness amongst the detachments of the Madras Native Infantry employed on the frontier, all the outposts were garrisoned by the Pegu Light Infantry who were more suited to this work than were Indian regiments of the line. Their experience in this work was not altogether unchequered. In the year 1858-9 there were two cases of treasure in charge of detachments being lost, and one instance of a small party on the march losing their arms by sheer carelessness; and in 1860 the pay of a whole detachment and several muskets were carried off by bandits from the outpost of Yaymiet. On another occasion a well-organised attack by the well-known plunderer, Maung Hnaung, a dismissed Myook, resulted in the loss of treasure and the elephant on which it was carried; a second detachment under Lieut. Macdonald gave pursuit but Maung Hnaung got away with all his booty except the elephant which was abandoned in the jungle. But generally the men behaved well in their frequent tasks of repelling incursions from Burmese territory, and by their cheerful quickness and readiness to move without tents or baggage showed that they were thoroughly adapted to their work. Early in 1860 they anticipated an attack by a body of 300 dacoits upon the wealthy town of Shwedaung, capturing thirteen of them and compelling the rest to abandon all the loot they had already got. In 1859 there were no less than eighty-two and in the next year fifty-eight desertions; but this was due to keeping young soldiers of little experience unrelieved for too long periods in small outposts in unhealthy and comparatively expensive localities along the frontier, and when about a half of these had been recaptured and punished the fault was rapidly cured.

An incident which is of particular interest just now took place



in 1857, when the whole regiment volunteered for service in Bengal against the Mutineers. The Commissioner replied that the regiment had no services to offer; the acceptance of pay from Government made their services the property of Government; if Government desired to use those services orders would be issued accordingly; till then it would be more becoming to the regiment to perform properly the duties assigned to it. The Governor-General, however, when he learned of the offer, thinking perhaps that snubs were not a monopoly of Commissioners, said that, although its services were not required, he desired the Commissioner to thank the regiment for its offer. The regiment did, in a sense, render Mutiny service, as it withstood the numerous frontier attacks which were made when the first news of the Indian Mutiny began to reach the Burmese Court, and were systematically continued in 1858 by large bands of men who were suffering from the scarcity of rice then prevailing in Upper Burma.

In 1861 it was suddenly decided to disband the regiment on account of the establishment under Act V of 1861 of an organised constabulary for the Province. To this new force all the officers of the regiment were appointed; and many of the men took service in it too, the remainder being gradually disbanded. By the 30th April 1861, 328 privates were left; two companies were kept for a time till the new constabulary could take over the guard of the jails at Henzada and Mingyi, but on the 18th August 1861 the regiment came to an end. But it had lasted long enough to show those who had eyes that the Burman would make a good soldier if sympathetically handled and granted sufficient pay and reasonable conditions of service. The old-fashioned soldier, who, destitute of imagination, supposed that only one standard and type of discipline were permissible, and that close formation and highly polished buttons were the ultimate essentials of military art and science, failed to see this; but there is no doubt that a very different opinion would have been expressed by an Anzac or South African officer accustomed to the different ideals of to-day's colonial army. In the Pegu Light Infantry the Burmans had no opportunity to show their capacity for military leadership; but that too was shown by their opponent in marked degree, and was again exhibited nearly

thirty years later by the rebel U Thuriya. The recent discovery that Burmans can be trained to be soldiers might have been made at any time by anybody who had studied the Tharrawaddy record intelligently, even if he were not aware of the numerous wars and conquests of Burmese history, or thought they bore no relation to warfare by armies organised on western lines.

## II. THE STORM OF GAUNG GYI

THE principality of Tharrawaddy, which was formed when the kingdom of Prome was annexed to Toungoo by Burin Naung in 1542-3 and continued up to the time of the British occupation in 1852, occupied practically the same area as the present Tharrawaddy District, save that a small strip along the river, twenty-five miles long and eight to ten miles wide, forming the division of Sarawah, was not included. It was divided into two counties, North and South, of which the capitals were Monyo and Laukazeya—the latter being adjacent to the Mingyi which became the headquarters of the Yegin-Mingyi Assistant Commissioner. There was also a further sub-division into twenty circles—some accounts say thirty-two—under *thugyis* and steersmen and four Royal Forests under Conservators. The *Myowun* of the whole principality lived at Monyo. Between the *Myowun* and the *Sithès* of the two counties there was a division of authority, the evil results of which were exacerbated by appeals to the Prince of Tharrawaddy; as a result discontent, disunion and anarchy had often prevailed. Accordingly it is not a matter of surprise that Captain Josiah Smith, the first Deputy Commissioner of the district, found on his arrival four armed parties struggling for control and the right of collecting the revenues. The strongest of these parties was that of Gaung Gyi who had formerly been the *thugyi* at Tapun. He had failed to pay in his proper quota of taxes, and refused to furnish a contingent to the Burmese army at Prome, which had been collected to withstand the British; but the advance of the latter allowed the Burman generals no opportunity of reducing him to obedience. The *Myowun* at Monyo in 1852 was U Talok, a brother-in-law of Gaung Gyi, who was described in 1853 as “upwards of eighty years of age but still full of energy rapacity and perfidy.”

As early as September 1852 the southern part of Tharrawaddy was openly in favour of the British; and when Maung Po, the Governor of Tharrawaddy and Myanaung, retired to

Myanaung in October 1852, nearly the whole river line became safe; but the northern portion of Tharrawaddy, where Gaung Gyi's influence was felt, gave rise to the most difficult of all the tasks experienced by the British in their annexation of Lower Burma. U Talok was retained by the British as Myook at Monyo, and he promised Gaung Gyi to obtain for him the post of Myook of Myanaung. Failing to receive this, or impatient of delay, Gaung Gyi marched on Monyo at the beginning of March at the head of a number of Burmese police and soldiers, who had been left behind in the Burmese retreat and were ready now for any undertaking which gave a fair promise of plunder. Altogether he had 1500 men, of whom 600 were armed with muskets. U Talok fled across the Irrawaddy to Okpo, and Monyo was destroyed. At the first sign of disturbance Captain Smith summoned Gaung Gyi to Henzada, intending to give him an appointment. But Gaung Gyi went to Tapun instead; and, receiving secret support from the Burmese Court, set up his own Government there. He confirmed in their appointments such of the old *thugyis* as supported him, and drove the others away. He also appointed steersmen who robbed boats on the river and in the villages near its bank. His brother Gaung Gale, who had formerly assisted him in his duties as *thugyi*, assisted in his new enterprise, chiefly on the river, and was often credited with being the more able of the two. Some degree of organisation was established and it would be more correct to regard Gaung Gyi as the head of an army competing with the British for the possession of a Province abandoned by the Burmese Government than as a rebel or outlaw as he is usually described. In April Gaung Gyi's main force consisted of 600 men at Yuntalin, about twenty miles from Monyo, with an advance guard of 300 stationed at a distance of eight miles from that town; two other bodies of 600 each were between Monyo and Mingyi, and still another body of 100 was reported to be somewhere in the same neighbourhood. All remained quiet till the 24th May when Gaung Gyi suddenly crossed the Irrawaddy and committed depredations in Kanaung and Okpo on the Henzada side and then returned to plunder on the eastern bank. Destitute people crowded into Henzada, driven from Sarawah and Tharrawaddy by the loss of all their property; rice was sold

at Rs. 8 a basket—the usual price being six to ten annas—and even at that price only small quantities were available. Captain Smith asking for troops to assist him reported “the spectacle of a large tract of country in successful rebellion against the Government” and “the rebels in possession of the river.” Even when the Deputy Commissioner himself convoyed some canoes down the river Gaung Gyi’s men tried, though unsuccessfully, to cut off the last of them. In June the materials collected for the rebuilding of Monyo were burned by Gaung Gyi; and Myat Tun who had been defeated by Sir John Cheape and Captain Fytche at Danubyu, joined him and took charge of his river operations. Meanwhile in February or March the Deputy Commissioner had asked for Yegin to be established as a military post, for a gunboat to patrol the river, and for the Henzada side of the river to be made into a separate district so that he could give his whole attention to the eastern side. All these requests were granted and the outcome of the requests for troops and the establishment of Yegin was the sanction given on the 4th April to the enrolment of the Pegu Light Infantry Regiment which was the subject of the first of these studies.

The Governor-General, after cautioning the Commissioner against undertaking anything with inadequate means or involving risk, “because of the tendency in India and in England to distort or magnify trivial incidents in Pegu into serious disasters,” gave him a free hand to deal with the situation, and for a time the British had some success. H.M.S. “Nerbudda” cleared the Irrawaddy of Gaung Gyi’s friends and on the 31st July Smith reported that the Sanywe neighbourhood was quietened and that other rebels along the river were disposed to surrender themselves. On the 29th August the Myook of Tharrawaddy attacked Gaung Gyi with success and cleared the lower district of rebels. On the other hand on the 4th August U Talok, the Myook of Monyo, had been kidnapped by Gaung Gyi and carried off to his stronghold at Taungnyo; and Captain Phayre reported to the Governor-General on the 1st September that the whole of the east bank of the Irrawaddy from a few miles above Tharrawaw to Tarokmaw was “completely under the power of Gaung Gyi,” and that the latter had apparently determined to get the people of the west bank to join him. But



as a result of the success of the British in the south Gaung Gyi's influence seemed to be waning; and on the 19th October it was learned that, fearing attack, he had sent his family to the Pegu Yoma for safety. In January 1854 the British were strengthened by the arrival at Yegin of the first detachments of the Pegu Light Infantry and they occupied Gaung Gyi's quarters at Tapun in the same month. Gaung Gyi waited in the jungle near by, hoping that they would get tired of Tapun—as well they soon might—and go back; but being disappointed in this he retreated to the hills. A party of the Arakan Battalion under Lieut. D'Oyly followed up and in the same month of January attacked him and captured his gilt umbrella, his gong, twenty-five stand of arms, and the wives of many of his officers. One of his lieutenants was killed and his two elephants were nearly captured. Amongst the people confidence in the British now began to revive so that more information was obtainable. Gaung Gyi was followed up at once, no rest being taken lest news of the pursuers should reach him, and he was completely surprised at Bawbin, where there is now a Forest Department bungalow, a few miles east of Nattalin; many of his friends were killed or captured but Gaung Gyi himself escaped.

The unhealthiness of the locality forbade further operations in the neighbourhood of the hills. But unfortunately the main forces were withdrawn not merely to the plains but all the way to Prome. Gaung Gyi seized the opportunity and at once neutralised all these successes by his renewed activity. In January he had released his brother-in-law, U Talok, whom he had abducted in the previous March; and U Talok, having returned to Monyo, had been reappointed by the British to his Myookship there. But on the 10th February another party sent by Gaung Gyi again abducted him. There is no doubt that these abductions show that U Talok was sitting on the fence, but they also show which seemed at the time to be the winning side. Meanwhile all who had helped the British in any way were attacked, and a reign of terror was established in the north of the district. A party was sent to kill the Myook appointed by the British in Tapun, and that officer was severely wounded and barely escaped with his life. Every village round Tapun up to within a mile thereof was burned, and its population driven off,

in spite of the presence of 350 men of the British forces in that town. The British forces lost completely the confidence of the people, so that they could no longer get either information or supplies; while the terror of Gaung Gyi's name was higher than before, and many of the leading men of the district who had already submitted to the British now submitted to him. All the interior of Tharrawaddy indeed lapsed to Gaung Gyi, and on the 3rd March, 1854, it was found that by occupying the Ba-in forest he had cut the communications between Yegin and Tapun. On the 7th March a company of the 10th Bengal Infantry was attacked about six miles from Tapun and was saved only by the timely appearance of a force marching down from Paungde.

But about this time the energy of the British began to revive. The Commissioner, Captain Phayre, had offered in February a reward of Rs. 2000 for bringing in Gaung Gyi alive "and untortured"; in March the Governor-General increased the reward ten times. Captain Phayre on the 22nd February met at Tapun Major Nuthall of the Pegu Light Infantry Regiment and Captain David Brown, the Assistant Commissioner, and these three concocted a plan to drive Gaung Gyi back to the hills. Major Pott was appointed to the command of the Tharrawaddy District; and Major Nuthall's regiment, with boats to use during the rains, was placed at his disposal. In addition he had a gun-boat at the mouth of the Tapun river, a detachment of the Arakan Battalion with two guns, and five companies of Sikh, Bengal, and Madras Native Infantry. With the revival of British energy it was found possible to add to these a force of Burmese armed levies to act as scouts and protect the flanks under the command of their own *Bos*; these were armed with muskets and recruited chiefly from the neighbourhood of Paungde and were paid four annas a day; including those stationed at Sanywe, Monyo and Myodwin the cost of the levies came to Rs. 20,000 per mensem. In May also the Sarawah Police Corps of 480 men was sanctioned, while the Deputy Commissioner and the Assistant Commissioner were empowered to carry into immediate execution sentences of death passed upon persons convicted of participation in open rebellion. In July Captain David Brown was appointed Deputy Com-

missioner of Sarawah with headquarters at Yegin, the Henzada side being taken away to allow him to concentrate upon Gaung Gyi. In November it had still to be reported that as the Police and the Pegu Light Infantry were not sufficient to protect the country from Gaung Gyi, the Indian troops could not yet be withdrawn. But by February 1855 the Arakan Battalion was withdrawn after being specially complimented for its work, and replaced by detachments of the Pegu Light Infantry, which had then reached a strength of over 400 men. By this time Gaung Gyi's power had collapsed owing to the close pursuit he suffered; and the problem of pacification had resolved itself into that of dealing with a number of small dacoit parties of which his was one. Steady progress was made, and in June 1855 Gaung Gyi withdrew to Upper Burma.

In 1858 a scarcity of rice in Upper Burma led many who thought the British fully occupied with the Indian Mutiny to make attacks upon the British frontier; but on urgent remonstrance the Burmese Court adopted effectual preventive measures. Gaung Gyi, however, came to the frontier to make an inroad at the head of a considerable force. Special orders to desist were sent to him from the capital, and as he refused to obey he was shot by the local Burmese authorities.

A grandson of Gaung Gyi's brother, Gaung Gale, came into prominence in Tharrawaddy in the disturbances of 1888; while Sir Herbert Thirkell-White relates in his *A Civil Servant in Burma* that comparatively recently he met in Mandalay some descendants of Gaung Gyi. The Province owes it to Gaung Gyi that he showed by his own achievements that Burmans can exhibit capacity for directing military operations, and also by furnishing the ground for the experiment with the Pegu Light Infantry caused it to be made evident that Burmans could fill the ranks as well as direct.



### III. "FAIR GENERALLY, SOME SHOWERS; UNSETTLED LATER"

IN 1819 Alompra's son Bodawpaya died at his capital Amara-pura and was succeeded by his grandson Bagyidaw, who contemplated an invasion of England but is known to the British chiefly because he was the King of Burma at the time of the First Burmese War. The humiliation which he suffered at the end of that war affected his reason so much that a commission of regency of four persons was formed, including the Queen's brother Minthagyi, "formerly a fishmonger," and presided over by the King's brother, Prince Tharrawaddy. But the latter found palace intrigues so dangerous that he withdrew from the capital and lived in various places in and near the Delta, brooding over the troubles which had arisen from the supremacy of the fishmonger, to the following of whose counsel instead of Tharrawaddy's it was mainly due that the Provinces of Arakan and Tenasserim had been lost to those "uncivilised foreigners" the English. It is probable that Prince Tharrawaddy's endeavours first to avoid a war with the British and afterwards to come to terms with them were due to the position of his own territory in the direct line of advance from Rangoon to Ava. But this would not make the failure in the war less irritating; and when in addition he found the fishmonger was ready to go to a dangerous length in his enmity, he retired to his palace at Myodwin in the present Tharrawaddy District, and under cover of indulging in his favourite sport of boat-racing collected round himself there a strong body-guard, took measures to raise a large army and secretly collected 8000 muskets. In 1837 when the fishmonger sent a party to arrest one of the retinue at Myodwin, Tharrawaddy was so angered that he marched with his followers to Sagaing and thence to Moksobo, the home of Alompra, and raised the standard of a successful revolt. On securing the throne he took the title of Kunbaungmin and moved the capital back from Ava to Amarapura; his

Tharrawaddy principality played no further part in the events of his reign.

The next disturbance of the Tharrawaddy atmosphere was the storm of the Gaung Gyi episode; but the recovery from this was exceedingly rapid. Gaung Gyi withdrew across the frontier in May or June 1855; and already in the Administration Report of 1857 Sir Arthur Phayre declared that "Tharrawaddy is probably the best ordered District in the Province." In 1857 many attacks were made upon the northern boundary of British Burma as the result of a frontier agitation stimulated in the Burmese dominions by the first news of the Indian Mutiny, and in 1858 these were systematically continued by large bands of men who were suffering from the scarcity of rice prevailing in the Burmese territory; but from 1857 to 1859, although so near the frontier that special powers were granted to the Deputy Commissioner to carry into execution at once sentence of death passed on any persons convicted of participation in open and armed insurrection in cases in which there had been loss of life, Tharrawaddy was the paragon with "less crime in proportion than any other District" in British Burma. In 1860 there were only nineteen cases of cattle-theft, and in 1861 the Tharrawaddy and Henzada Districts were united because it was "unnecessary to retain a separate Deputy Commissioner and his staff for a district producing so little revenue, litigation or crime as Tharrawaddy." There was some disorder in 1865-8 due to outlaws from Upper Burma and the Prome District, but Tharrawaddy was generally law-abiding, and in 1873 there was only one case of dacoity in the whole of the District (which then included the present Henzada District). It was recorded in that year that "In Tharrawaddy, once the most turbulent district in Burma, a gang would find no sympathy amongst the people and would soon be disposed of by them." This remark is of interest not only as characterising the people as law-abiding but also as refuting the possible suggestion that the clear crime calendars were due to bad reporting of crime. In 1878 there was an increase of dacoity and other serious crime; but this was observed in all the other Districts too, and active measures soon disposed of the culprits, so that in 1880-81 Tharrawaddy again showed a comparatively clear crime calendar.

But in 1885 the district began to get out of hand and in the early part of 1886 a storm of disorder which had burst in the Shwegyin District in December 1885 reached Tharrawaddy which then became the scene of quasi-rebellions that were suppressed only with the aid of troops. Nga Aung who lived within five miles of the district headquarters raised a golden umbrella and within a week had a following of several hundred men with many guns collected from the surrounding villages. Other risings of a political character were headed by Landa and the Pongyi Bo. When these were suppressed the rebels broke up into small bands of dacoits. Bad characters of all kinds now banded together and took to the jungle, while less daring spirits stayed in their villages and dacoited under cover of the notorious gangs. Villages with less than five guns were disarmed by the Government to prevent firearms falling into the hands of dacoits, but the dense jungle of the district made capture of the dacoits difficult. Informers were often murdered and villagers therefore feared to give information. The police seemed to be frightened and even the Township Magistrates failed; most dacoities took place close to township headquarters and police stations. In the third and fourth quarters of 1886 there were 159 and 139 dacoities respectively. The police were not altogether useless, for they made many arrests and in the third quarter secured seventy-six convictions; but for the most part in this and in the two succeeding years dacoities were the work of gangs in formidable numbers under recognised leaders, and the work of the police was of the nature of petty warfare. The rural police failed at this time because, as elsewhere in Lower Burma, they had lost touch with the people. But the regular official police were strengthened and received the assistance of a special Indian Police Force recruited from Northern India, and of a punitive police force which was imposed at the request of the people, and of "Karen levies"; and by continually hunting the dacoits they had already made large progress in settling the district quite early in 1887. It is important to note that the "Karen levies," who were volunteers enrolled as special constables on the understanding that they would turn out to assist the regular police when called upon, included in Tharrawaddy District quite a few Karens, and were chiefly

composed of Burmans and Yabeins. When on active service these received pay and were armed by Government; where not less than ten, or in some cases five lived in the same village, they were allowed to retain their guns whether on active service or not.

But about the middle of the hot weather of 1887, when conditions had so much improved, the local officers made the mistake of issuing licenses for firearms freely; and this was immediately followed by a recrudescence of dacoity which required special measures for its suppression. Punitive police were not imposed after August 1887 (when their number was 375) but regular troops were stationed at all the treasuries to set free the police for dacoit-hunting. In April 1888 Mr Todd-Naylor became Deputy-Commissioner; the work of re-establishing order was pressed on vigorously and disarmament was completed. Truly, as the dacoit gangs were broken up, crimes of violence were found only to have given place to crimes of stealth; but those who looked rather at the kind of disorder most readily perceived were just beginning to think the sky was getting clear when, in July 1888, there broke out suddenly the rebellion of the *Pongyi*<sup>1</sup> U Thuriya, which proved to be the greatest storm of all save only that of Gaung Gyi.

U Thuriya's rebellion was well organised, and the arrangements extended all along the railway line from Paungde to Tharrawaddy. His adherents were bound by an oath; and many of them were tattooed with the letters ၉ ၁ ၁ ၀, partly as a distinctive mark, partly to make them invulnerable. Some 1700 palm-leaf tickets were prepared for distribution to the rank and file, commissions on larger pieces of palm-leaf were given to the leaders, and a grandson of Gaung Gale (the brother and assistant of the famous Gaung Gyi) was nominated Viceroy of Tharrawaddy under the Myingun Prince. Nearly all the various dacoit bands of the district joined in the undertaking. The 2nd July was chosen by an astrologer as a suitable date, and it was arranged to make a simultaneous attack that night on Gyobingauk, Zigon, Nattalin, Paungde, and all the railway stations between Okpo and Tharrawaddy.

For some reason U Thuriya changed the date to the 1st-2nd

<sup>1</sup> *Pongyi* = Buddhist monk.

July midnight, when the telegraph wires were cut and the railway workmen forced to pull up a rail on the line between Gyobingauk and Zigon. The *Kyedangyi* of the neighbouring village of Kayingon was dragged out and informed that the rule of the foreigner was at an end; while a proclamation was read to him which, he was told, was issued by the Myingun Prince. Copies of this proclamation were afterwards obtained and it was found then to be of a purely political nature with no suggestions of oppression or mis-government. Having pulled up the rail the rebels marched south to capture or sack Gyobingauk and the Rangoon-Prome mail-train. There had been a rumour that Sir Charles Crosthwaite, the Chief Commissioner, would travel by that train, and it is possible the date of the rising was changed on that account; it was believed that the party which tore up the rail at Zigon intended to take up another behind the train so as to ensure its capture.

Meanwhile Maung Tha Pe, the *Kyedangyi* of Wunbe In village near Zigon, had warned Mr Hill, the Police Officer at Zigon, of the project at 10 a.m. on the 1st. Mr Hill took measures to save the guns of headmen and others in the neighbourhood and of the Bawbin police out-post from falling into the hands of the rebels, and informed the Inspector-General of Police and the Deputy Commissioner, Mr Todd-Naylor. The latter proceeded to the scene in a light train which acted as pilot to the night mail and saved it from wreck, and after an exciting night and a diligent search arrested eighty-four of those concerned and effectively quashed the rising. This served to show that the Government both could and would suppress disorder; and the work of the police immediately began to improve rapidly in results, so that by the end of the year the detection of crime in this district was described as excellent. A year after the rebellion the Chief Commissioner declared that the dacoit gangs had been extirpated and that the district had been brought to a state of quiet which it had not enjoyed for a long time.

Although the sensational development of U Thuriya's adventure was peculiar to Tharrawaddy the epidemic of ordinary crime was not; and by 1890 the district had recovered and could not, for instance, be compared with the districts of Pegu and



Amherst. In 1891 in spite of an increase from thirty-eight to forty-nine violent crimes (due largely to a band of dacoits from Hanthawaddy, of which the two leaders were both shot), Tharrawaddy was by no means the worst district in the province, and with further steady improvement the violent crimes of 1893-4 fell to twenty-one cases. Neither did Tharrawaddy at that time merit special mention for cattle theft. But in 1894-5, when there was only three-quarters of the usual harvest in the northern part of the district, and a combination of millers controlled prices in Rangoon, there was a violent change for the worse. There were twenty-eight murders; violent crimes increased from twenty-one to sixty-four, placing the district third in the province in this matter; cognisable crime of all kinds increased and numerous false cases were reported. In 1895-6 Tharrawaddy led the province with eighty-two violent crimes. Hanthawaddy coming second with forty-nine, but there were no dacoities included, most being petty highway robberies. In this year, however, cattle theft became really serious in the district and from this time onwards Tharrawaddy was distinctly a warm place. Though Hanthawaddy tended to surpass it in violent crimes there was little to choose between them. In 1903-4 there was a marked growth of crime in Tharrawaddy, which led to the addition of 111 men to the regular police of the district. This was followed in 1907 (just after the general reform of the police force) by another severe storm of crime which had not yet subsided in 1912, when the regular police force was increased by 117 men and a punitive police force of 263 men was imposed for five years at a cost of Rs. 543,000, which was recovered from the local inhabitants by a ten per cent. cess upon the land-revenue. It must be noted that after the general reform of the police force in 1906 the proportion of police officers to population appears to have been diminished relatively in Tharrawaddy. For in 1905 this district had one police officer to every 876 of the population and in 1910 one to every 760; but the corresponding figures for Pegu were 902 and 482, and for Prome 909 and 666<sup>1</sup>.

There can be no gainsaying the bad record of crime in

<sup>1</sup> All these figures allow for the increase of population since the census of 1901 and therefore differ from the figures in the official Police Reports.

Tharrawaddy since 1894. The district has an unenviable reputation for criminality in all branches, with murder and violent crime, ordinary theft and cattle theft as its specialities. The general opinion is that this has always been the case, and records can be cited which support this view. In the Pegu Commissioner's letter-book of 1853 may be found a report that "the Sarawah district was always in bad order in Burmese times." Of the Tharrawaddy part of the district it is recorded in the same book that "since long before the memory of man the people have been disorderly and rebellious; discontent disunion and anarchy have often prevailed there." An old proverb ran: "A Tharrawaddy man comes to you with a law-book in one hand and a *dah*<sup>1</sup> in the other." The Commandant of the Pegu Light Infantry declared about 1857 that the Tharrawaddy men were suited to a military life as a result of the "confidence and courage acquired in predatory habits during Burmese times." In his order of 1854 for the formation of separate Henzada and Tharrawaddy Districts Sir Arthur Phayre gave as his reason for the change "the unsettled state of the township of Tharrawaddy arising from the disposition of its inhabitants who from time immemorial have been noted as a turbulent and lawless race." He had already written, too, in 1853: "The people used to boast that they made away with their governors when they ceased to be pleased with them, and they were a by-word of the Burmese." It may be noted, however, that an exact parallel of this last has been said of the English before now, and the Parliamentary system depends essentially upon the power to displace undesirable rulers; the proverb, too, does not suggest that the Tharrawaddy man had no respect for Law. Moreover in 1857, when he had been longer in the province and knew more about it, Sir Arthur Phayre declared that "Tharrawaddy was probably the best ordered District in the Province." General Fytche and the Hon. Ashley Eden gave it good testimonials, too, as we have seen, in the 'sixties and 'seventies, and indeed a good report was normal for many years. This must be reconciled with the earlier statements; and it is observed at once, when this is attempted, that those statements were necessarily based upon reports from Burmans friendly to the new rulers. But

<sup>1</sup> *Dah* = knife or sword.

while it has never yet been proved that those Burmans did not colour their reports for any purpose, it is not difficult to suppose they would desire to enhance the contrast between themselves and the recalitrants, or to excuse failures in their administration by a magnification of the difficulties, or to satisfy their vanity by additions to their escort. Then there is the psychological consideration that the Burman constantly describes a condition which has held for a few years as having held "always" or "for ever so long"; it is merely a matter of an undeveloped memory and of a lack of historical training. Moreover those early reporters necessarily obtained their information through interpreters of poor attainments; it is not likely that a Deputy Commissioner, educated in early Victorian times and harassed by Gaung Gyi, would make a critical enquiry into the exact shades of meaning of the apparently simple word *always*. The difficulties which could arise through ignorance of the Burmese language are suggested by a report which Captain Smith made in 1853 to the effect that "the principal crops" were rice, miscellaneous vegetables, sessamum indigo and *ngapi*<sup>1</sup>. With a people so disorderly as the first reports declared, it would be impossible that on Gaung Gyi's withdrawal order should not only be restored instantaneously but also maintained. The restoration could perhaps be explained by the depopulation of the area during the disorders; but the same explanation cannot extend to the succeeding years when the old population rapidly flowed back again. It is known that Gaung Gyi was rebelling against the Burmese Government and that no less than four armed parties were struggling for mastery in Tharrawaddy before the British appeared on the scene. Captain Smith declared in 1853, before Gaung Gyi's depredations began, that "nearly all the gang robberies of this District originate in the scarcity of food; the people are forced by absolute want to band together for the purpose of plundering villages and boats known to contain rice *ngapi* and other necessaries of life." It is most probable that the disorder which the friendly Burmans reported was really confined to a comparatively short episode, though there had been previous occasions of friction between the

<sup>1</sup> *Ngapi* means fish paste.



*Myowun* and the *Sitkès* owing to the bad political organisation which divided authority between them.

The uncritical repetition of the earliest reports of the criminal character of the Tharrawaddy District has unfortunately given rise to a widespread belief that all its energies and genius have since the time of the pithecanthropus been combined in and concentrated upon the production of crime and that good order has never been known there. But examination of the records of the first forty years of British administration clearly exposes the falsity of this belief; and if any real success in reducing the crime of Tharrawaddy is to be made this false view and its implications for the future must be given up. The true history is that apart from the minor episode of 1878 to 1880 and the more serious episode of 1885 to 1889, the district was in good order throughout the British administration until 1894; only then did it begin to deserve its present reputation for crime.

#### IV. METEOROLOGY

IN studying the social and political atmosphere of Tharrawaddy, it is important to bear in mind the dates of its disturbances. A cause which has been in constant action since before 1853 could readily explain a generally heavy crime record with variations due to the super-imposition of other forces; but it will require particularly careful argument to establish such a cause for the actual record, clear up to 1894 with the exception of the storms of 1878 to 1880 and 1885 to 1889. The contrast between the periods before and after 1894 is even more marked than at first appears because allowance must be made for the increasing energy of repression. A marked feature of the modern history of the district is the frequency with which punitive police forces have been imposed; in the late nineties they were a regular institution in most of the townships. The increase of crime in 1906 and the repeated effect of an increased police force in diminishing crime suggest nothing so much as a spring compressed by the police and expanding at the slightest relaxation of their pressure. But just as physical meteorology discounts the effect of roofs and umbrellas, so criminal meteorology must distinguish between retarded genesis and increased repression; and it appears that the virtual genesis of crime has been accelerated since 1894 even more rapidly than the figures for recorded crime indicate. The special conditions of 1885 to 1889 will be dealt with presently; previous to that the genesis of crime was limited in spite of the slightness of repression. Tharrawaddy was described in 1873 as a model of good order; in 1861 there was so little crime that it was thought unnecessary to incur the expense of a Deputy Commissioner. It has never yet been suggested that this reduction of the cadre of Deputy Commissioners as a result of success in restoring good order is the reason for a failure to continue or repeat that success; but most other considerations except sunspots have been put forward at one time or another. Many of these, however, relate chiefly to the suppression of crime; or, so far as they relate to

its genesis, apply equally to other districts or other times and, therefore, while they may explain the heavy crime calendar of Lower Burma in general, fail to explain the special facts of Tharrawaddy history. The first step towards understanding that history is to review the facts; that has already been done in broad outline, and now a closer view will be taken of the prevailing conditions at each season of disorder.

Amongst the explanations of the disturbed atmosphere of the Tharrawaddy District in particular appears a reference to Kunbaungmin's revolt. It is suggested that he provided the origin of a criminal population by attracting lawless characters to his home at Myodwin. Probably he did include many such in his following, but they would be the least likely to be left behind when he marched for the throne; with such prospects of loot they would naturally go with him to claim their reward from their successful leader. Again it is suggested that Gaung Gyi left a legacy of criminals; but it is difficult then to explain the immediate and lasting return of good order on his withdrawal. It is reported in 1855 that the more orderly population had almost evacuated the district and that it was their immigration to Henzada which forced up the price of rice in that town in 1854 to sixteen times the normal. It was natural for the officials of the time, who regarded Gaung Gyi as a rebel, to consider his followers lawless. But it must not be forgotten that Gaung Gyi's long appeared to be the winning side, that his enterprise was really an attempt to establish a government, that those who foresaw his final success foresaw also the British retiring as discredited rival claimants for an ownerless province. It would be more correct to regard Gaung Gyi's followers as the more adventurous rather than the less orderly elements of the population. Moreover, as soon as it was clear that life and property were safe in Tharrawaddy, the people returned to their former homes, and new settlers came from elsewhere, so that already by 1868 the Government of India had admitted that, in spite of the good order maintained, the increase of population required Tharrawaddy to be separated again from Henzada District. In 1878 when the separation was carried out there was initially some administrative confusion, owing to the difficulty found in establishing a new headquarters and organising the

newly-formed district; the construction and opening of the new railway had the effect of increasing crime; there was a general increase of crime throughout Lower Burma; and there was also a disturbing factor in the revenue demand. The system of settlement of land-revenue by leases had proved very popular in Tharrawaddy in 1863-64 when most of the landowners, unlike those of Hanthawaddy, accepted the ten year leases which were offered them; in 1873-74 it was decided not to issue fresh leases and "certificated surveyors" were sent out to measure the land for re-assessment. In 1880-82 the careful survey by a better agency found the areas were generally underestimated, but it did not follow that there was so much under-estimation in 1878; it is certain that it was a rash proceeding to trust to the kind of surveyor employed, and it is probable that some individual cultivators felt through the exaggeration of their area, or from the expenses involved in avoiding that, a hardship which was not softened by the average under-assessment. In any case there was a general increase of revenue due to the assessment of extensions made free under the leases, and there was anxiety about the future which was amply justified by a summary enhancement of the rates per acre by twenty-five per cent. in 1879 and an addition in 1880 of an extra five per cent. to the five per cent. cess already paid.

The next disturbed period was the serious one of 1885 to 1889 when there was very patent—and unfortunately rather obsessing the minds of many who were thus prevented from looking deeper—the unsettlement due to the war in Upper Burma. Tharrawaddy was the nearest district to Upper Burma which offered any considerable area of new land to cultivators, and it had 5400 Upper Burman immigrants, considerably more than any other district. Even in London in 1916 children stopped and looted vans of merchandise as a result of the unsettlement of their minds by war conditions; how easily then might there be unsettlement in Tharrawaddy when rumours of British reverses began to spread? It was alleged by some (but with what reason is not clear) that some of these immigrants were emissaries sent from Upper Burma for the definite purpose of causing disorder. The general population however did not love disorder; they asked for and obtained in 1886 the imposition of

a force of 189 "punitive police"—that is, additional police paid for by a local tax; next year the number reached 375 until they were dispensed with in August. By the end of 1886 the unsettlement due to the war had apparently quietened down but it had left serious effects. The disorder had led many villagers to purchase guns, often at extremely high prices; fearing that these would fall into the hands of dacoits, Government disarmed the district and 975 guns were confiscated without compensation. Cultivators were forbidden to live in isolated houses. "Karen levies" and punitive police were said to force labour and take food without payment. The settlement of 1882-84 had led to a further increase of land revenue in 1884 and 1885 amounting to fifteen to twenty per cent. in the south and thirty-seven per cent. in the north; these were average rates of increase and the increases in the first-class *kwins* were considerably higher still. Many villages had been impoverished by fines imposed upon them under the Rural Police Act, while the towns were alarmed at the prospect of the imposition of an income-tax. The fisheries failed because of a deficient rise in the river. Except in the small area of the Thonze circle the paddy crop of 1887-88 was far below the average, and a price Rs. 13 above the average of the three previous years (when the average Rangoon price was Rs. 75, 85, 81 respectively) had betrayed many into selling too large a proportion of their reduced crop. The early rains of 1888 failed entirely, so that the cultivators were unable to plough and were threatened with a complete failure of their crops and certainly saw little prospect of obtaining any early rice to make up for the deficiency in the provision they had saved from the previous short harvest. The degree of poverty prevailing is indicated by the record of numerous children being transferred to persons ready to adopt them and pay Rs. 5 to Rs. 30 for them. Thus political irritation was accompanied by high economic tension. Moreover the suppression of disorder by measures which caused the irritation was apparent rather than real; crimes of violence had been suppressed but crimes of stealth had replaced them, and in particular the rapid increase of cattle thefts (which doubled in frequency between 1886 and 1889) must have added to the troubles of the cultivators. To crown all, came a severe epidemic of cholera.



Meanwhile in 1887, when superficially it seemed that order had been approximately restored, the local officers had begun to issue freely licenses for fire-arms. This premature relaxation resulted in a fresh outbreak of dacoities which was met by a policy of extreme severity. Under the new Village Act were imposed upon many villages fines, of which the effect can only be judged fairly in the light thrown upon the general disorganisation of village administration at the time by Sir Charles Crosthwaite's famous Minute: to villages which had no corporate spirit but a headman without power such a fine must have seemed not merely a heavy burden but a gross injustice. Special powers were given to the Deputy Commissioner to carry sentences of death in certain serious cases into immediate execution. Everybody seems to have thought at the time that the obviously right course was being pursued; but, whether it was the least objectionable course or not there was only one possible result of applying coercion to human beings who were already suffering the economic and political tension of the time. Violence reacted to violence. There was a general Burman belief at that time in an eventual restoration of Burmese sovereignty, and there is no suggestion of a specially disorderly people in the fact that U Thuriya was able to get a following in an enterprise which aimed at overthrowing the comparatively new government under whose regime such troubles were suffered. U Thuriya's proclamation indeed gave a political reason for the rising; and that was commonly accepted at the time as the explanation of all the trouble. But even if it was the main reason in the minds of his followers (and this is not certain) there can be no doubt that the rising was due more to the troubles the population was enduring than to any conception of Burmese sovereignty. It is a commonplace now that the true cause of a rebellion, as of an industrial strike, is often not the reason for their action given by the discontents. Just as it is not really the threatened extra straw but the previously loaded portion of the burden which crushes the camel, so it is generally a more firmly established grievance than that which is alleged that breaks down the patience of a people. The alleged grievance may be any trifle and the people may be entirely unjustified in regarding it as grievance at all; yet even the aristocratically-minded Goethe declared that

when the people rebel the people are always right. No doubt every one of Wat Tyler's neighbours was ready to avenge the insult offered to his daughter by the tax-collector, but that was no reason why every man from Kent to Norfolk should rebel against the king; the Peasants' Revolt was due to the general disorganisation of the conditions of labour and food production and the substitution of a level capitation tax, when the storm-shattered fleet had to be repaired, for the graduated *that-hameda* which had previously been collected to pay for the fleet's construction. It is indeed curious how close is the parallel between the essential conditions in Tharrawaddy in 1888 and in England in 1381. The physicists again have shown us a heavy cloud floating peacefully in dust-free air precipitated immediately to rain by the introduction of an ultra-microscopic particle of dust or even by a "particle" of electricity. The tiniest nucleus is sufficient to start condensation; and once that is started the whole cloud is forthwith condensed. So too U Thuriya appears to have been the condensing point; but the cloud had arisen independently.

Still, some will say, there is no smoke without a fire; there must be some soul of truth in the reputation of Tharrawaddy; there must be something in the people which caused them to react to these economic difficulties so much more readily than the remainder of the province; certainly there were more Upper Burmans there than in other districts, and no doubt the crop of 1887 was better south of Thonze than towards the north, but were the other conditions noted sufficient to account for the difference between Tharrawaddy and its neighbour Hanthawaddy in which the industrialisation of agriculture had already developed and the presence of numerous alien Indians holding aloof from Burman social organisation had for many years given rise to much of the recorded crime? It may be replied that the irritation of Tharrawaddy by economic troubles, cholera, and martial law ruthlessly applied was such as would cause the rebellion of any people against any government, native or foreign; that for local reasons Hanthawaddy was exceptionally quiet in 1886 and most of Lower Burma was as disturbed then as Tharrawaddy; that other districts may have had not less disease but less obvious symptoms; that although the physicists'

cloud will condense on the most minute nucleus it will hold for ever if no nucleus arises. There were certainly heavy clouds over Tharrawaddy, and it so happened that a nucleus was provided in U Thuriya; the clouds condensed and the storm broke. Why did the nucleus appear in Tharrawaddy? Was that an "accident" due to the fortuitous co-operation of numerous independent forces which elsewhere operated but did not happen to co-operate; or does the very appearance prove special local conditions? Unfortunately the local officers were so fully occupied with action that they had little time for thought; they reported how the rebels died, but omitted to enquire how they had lived. It did not occur to them that the biographies of the rebels might have proved eventually more useful than their execution.



## V. THE ECONOMIC THEORY

RUSKIN's declaration that the science of political economy, as then taught, was founded upon half-true dogmas derived from an insufficient examination in a narrow corner of Europe of a limited portion of the field of economic phenomena (which was already a restricted portion of the wider field of social phenomena) was violently reprobated by the readers of the *Cornhill Magazine* in 1861, and probably no other magazine could have dared then to publish such matter at all; it was the age of the philosophy of unrestricted competition. The Suez Canal was opened in 1869 and the virus of competitive individualism soon took advantage of it to travel to Burma. As in Western Europe its growth was stimulated by steam and its most obvious economic form was shown in the development of capitalist industry. But whereas in England its activities were seen in the field of manufactures, in Lower Burma it went to the rice-fields where it eventually gave rise to the prevailing system of agriculture of the present day, which in the Delta, where it has been most completely developed, aims not at the production of the maximum crop or the maximum benefit for all concerned in its production, and still less at the maximum benefit for the general community, but, regarding the cultivator as a mere instrument of production, aims at the production of the maximum rent. The process has not yet been carried so far in Tharrawaddy as in the Delta, but even there the figures given in the last settlement report (1915) indicate that in the plains, after meeting the expenses of cultivation, the balance in the cultivator's hands (for meeting the cost of living, and of interest on the inevitable loans to finance the cultivator, and for paying the rent if he is a tenant) averages about thirteen baskets of paddy per acre, while the average rent is sixteen. It was observed that the most inferior holdings were not often let. But a certain number of holdings, rented or owned, are quite possibly cultivated at a loss, the cultivators obtaining their livelihood by so-called subsidiary industries upon which their paddy cultivation is parasitic; and the inclusion of returns from such holdings in

the statistics reduces the estimated net produce. There is also a margin of error due to miscellaneous causes; but the figures are sufficiently reliable to justify the statement that the tenant makes only the barest livelihood even when he does not steadily increase his debts. As no less than two-fifths of the area is cultivated by tenants it is clear that there is economic stress. But the matter does not end with tenants; it makes little difference in the available balance whether one pays rent to a landlord or interest to a mortgagee, when one's holding is fully mortgaged. The truth is that at least one-half of the land in these, the principal tracts of the district, is cultivated by owners or tenants who live on the very margin of subsistence. Of the tenants the Settlement Officer found that one-half worked their holdings for one year only, and one-third for either two or three years only, before leaving to hire a different holding, in working which they would of course suffer all the disadvantages of ignorance of its peculiar properties. "Short tenancies," he writes, "are the commonest and are due to competition among tenants"; and he somewhat naively adds, "It is a tendency that makes for the rapid increase of rents." Really the three phenomena of short tenancies, competition and increase of rents all conspire to accentuate each other. The economic pressure is clearly indicated by the rapid expansion of cultivation in the flooded tracts of the Myitmaka basin, considerably forestalling the advance of natural reclamation by taking up land so liable to serious flood that this cultivation is a pure gamble. Yet the Burman of Tharrawaddy, writes the Settlement Officer, "makes a good and lenient landlord," reducing the rents in bad seasons, not carrying on any unpaid portions as a debt to be settled at the next good harvest as in parts of the Delta. The conditions in fact are not due to extraordinary greed on the part of the landlords, who are not generally large capitalists, but who often are widows and orphans of cultivators or aged or infirm cultivators themselves; they are due to the whole social and economic system which is based upon ruthless unrestricted competition, and while it organises production entirely disregards all considerations of distribution and consumption, and does not even consider whether it is producing the most desirable products.

With this system goes the practice of employing agricultural labourers separately and on a casual basis for each separate stage in the process of production, that being the cheapest method of production in the eyes of a community which disregards all nauseous social bye-products. The labourers compete for work, and the older men are ousted by their more vigorous juniors and go to swell the competition for tenancies. Thus the transition from labourer or tenant to owner, which was formerly "a comparatively simple matter, is now almost impossible." The price of paddy has risen; but the tenant is no better off because the keen competition for tenancies allows no better margin for his subsistence than before. Meanwhile the labourer suffers by the rise of price, because, although he is normally paid in paddy for the most important part of his agricultural labour, he takes his wages in practice as cash advances on the *sabape* system. He receives his own food at his employer's house, but his wife and children must buy their rice at an increasing price. As the price rises a larger cash equivalent for his paddy wages is received by the labourer but the rise in the *sabape* rate naturally lags behind the rise in price. The difficulties of the labourer are increased by the importation for parts of the work of Indian labour, which having a lower standard of living, undersells him. A certain number of Burman labourers thus fail to find employment for part of the season; the competition even in those branches in which Indians are not employed is thus intensified and the standard of living is dragged down until Burmans have begun to compete with Indians by combining in gangs working for an Indian wage. Meanwhile the growing wealth of the land-owning and capital-owning classes heightens, by the contrasts it engenders, the resulting discontent of the poor.

The economic conditions here shortly described are those universally recognised as conducive to the development of crime in an agricultural community. These conditions are developed moreover in greater or less degree precisely in those districts of Lower Burma in which crime is heaviest; and they began to develop in the last quarter of the nineteenth century or about the time the present chronic state of crime in those districts began to develop. In some other parts of India there

was a somewhat similar change in agricultural economics which was not accompanied by an outbreak of crime; but there the new economic forces were introduced more gradually, and their action was modified by the caste system. In the Ma-ubin District, which has developed less crime in proportion to its population than the other delta districts, paddy cultivation is less important in comparison with the fisheries than in those. Turning to the Insein and Syriam Districts it is found that in 1872, as a result of the opening of the Suez Canal three years before, rice began to be sent to Europe in steamboats and seventeen steam rice-mills were working in Rangoon, where there had been only two before; there was a rapid and large extension of rice-cultivation, and a large and increasing crop of dacoity and theft began to be produced immediately thereafter. Hence the theory that the crime of Lower Burma is due to the development of industrial agriculture, of "factories without chimneys." Those who believe that Tharrawaddy has never been orderly must, however, find some difficulty in accepting this explanation; while those who are acquainted with the true record also find difficulties.

The influence of the economic conditions is undoubted. The disorder of 1853 was political in origin, but the robberies were ascribed by the Deputy Commissioner at the time to scarcity of food. The subsequent minor outbreaks of disorder were generally due to political unrest or contagion. In 1878 to 1880 the causes which were enumerated in the fourth of these studies included anxiety about the enhancements of land-revenue. In 1888 the political tension was accompanied by acute economic stress. The beginning of the present chronic condition in 1894 coincided very significantly with the combination of a deficit of one-fourth in the harvest and a bad market for the crop. (The average prices in Tharrawaddy for the harvest seasons of 1889 to 1899 were 89, 85, 89, 124, 77, 73, 98, 96, 121, 96, 90.) In 1901 to 1903 there were large increases in land-revenue due to revision of the settlement; and some of these took place unfortunately in 1902 which was the second of two years of a bad paddy market, while in a small area the increases of 1905 had afterwards to be reduced in spite of the general subsequent rise in paddy prices. The meaning of these increases can only

be understood in the light of knowledge of the vagaries of the soil-classifiers in the earlier settlements; the average increases were not uniform increases applying everywhere, but were the resultant of small increases or even decreases in some holdings and much larger increases in others, in which, even if the yield of the land justified and demanded the increase, the consequent change in the standard of living would be a serious matter, and if the increase resulted from an error of the soil-classifiers the seriousness would be immensely enhanced. The importance of this was the greater, as in those days only a small part of the land was cultivated by tenants to whom the revenue demand was of no consequence; and the misfortune of a low paddy price in 1902 made the matter particularly acute. It is possible that the great increase of crime which took place about this time, and led to an increase of the police force by 111 men in 1904 was in part due to that. There was, however, a system of intermediate rates to mitigate the enhancements; and this though unsatisfactory under the recent settlements was effective under the conditions of those times, and though it could not remove the hardship in the cases of erroneous soil-classification, postponed it. And the revenue even when erroneous was not so high as the rents subsequently came to be, and in any case its enhancement came into action only ten years after the outbreak of crime. Moreover the settlements of other districts were on similar lines and accompanied by similar conditions.

The great increase in crime in 1894 was not confined to Tharrawaddy but was general throughout Lower Burma and marks the beginning in all that part of the province of the present serious crime production, the development of which has coincided roughly with the development of industrial agriculture. But there is the difficulty that the latter has not developed so far in Tharrawaddy and Prome as in the Insein, Syriam and Pegu Districts whose crime record, though bad, is not nearly so bad as theirs in spite of the stimulus given to crime by the proximity of the large towns of Rangoon, Pegu, Insein and Syriam. An explanation can be furnished in Prome in the economic difficulties arising long ago from the smallness of the holdings, the poor soil and rainfall and uncertain harvests, the large number of toddy palms, and the densest and most laborious



rural population in Lower Burma; and these conditions apply in part to the northern portions of Tharrawaddy. But it is not possible to assign all the crime to that portion, representing perhaps one-fourth of the district. In the remaining three-fourths, where the economic conditions of Prome do not apply, it is undoubtedly true that economic conditions are of great importance; but for the success of the theory of the domination of economic causes it is necessary to explain how the chronic development of crime has been so much greater than in other districts in which the characteristic economic conditions began earlier and have been so much further developed, and also how it began in 1894 when the development of those conditions in the Tharrawaddy District was still rudimentary.



## VI. SOCIAL DISORGANISATION

IN 1852-3, when the British administration began, the population of Tharrawaddy proper was said to be 10,000 persons living in 2500 houses, while Sarawah had 3500 persons more. In 1872 the population of the present area of the Tharrawaddy District, which differs only a little from the sum of those two areas, was 171,000; in 1881 it was 272,000; in 1891 it was 339,000 or approximately double that of 1872. In all the old districts a similar increase occurred. But there was no corresponding development of social organisation; on the contrary the *kyedangyi* became (in the words of Sir Charles Crosthwaite) a mere village drudge without power and influence, and all traces of village responsibility were lost. The old *thugyi* had become a revenue official, no longer possessing either minute local knowledge of, or personal influence in, every part of his circle. There was nothing remarkable in all this; it was a direct result of the increased population which could no longer be successfully organised on the old lines, and of the nature of the *kyedangyi's* office, which brought many unpleasant duties but neither emolument nor honour. The Village Act was designed to substitute for the *kyedangyi*, a village headman who would be the leader and representative of the community. But in fact the Community has failed in most villages to develop. As Disraeli told us: "Gregariousness is not association." The tradition of a corporate village life had been broken and could not be re-established by the methods of the Village Act.

Sir Charles Crosthwaite repeatedly emphasised the importance of the non-official character of the headman who should be the representative and leader of the village, and the Village Act carefully subordinated the villagers to the headman and not to the officials, who were given only the power to demand the co-operation of the headman in certain directions; but headman, rural policeman and villager, all alike received nothing but duties and penalties under the Act. It is true that, in prescribing some duties, such as assistance to travellers, it limited the demands

that could be made; but no positive privilege of any kind was conferred by the Act save an exemption from some kinds of personal service for persons "not of the labouring class and accustomed to do such work as may be required." The inevitable development of this has been that the wealthier villagers have become immune from the headman's requisition for practically all the duties of villagers—a remarkable instance of one law for the rich and another for the poor—and consequently have tended to stand apart from the rest of the villagers instead of sharing in the common life with responsibilities proportionate to their privileges. But even apart from this mistake it was not possible to develop a corporate spirit by imposing on the headman duties towards an external Government, and on the villagers the duty of assisting him in executing them. Corporate life has never yet grown out of anything contained in the Village Act, and never will. Wherever a corporate village spirit exists it will be found to have developed in carrying out some common project, such as the erection of a monastery or the construction of a brick path or jetty, the personal qualities of the headman for the time being (or of some other villager) giving rise temporarily to an association of the people under his leadership. But corporate life is more than that; it demands an enduring consciousness of unity amongst the changing individuals of the group. If, instead of providing a Village Act to deal with disturbed periods, some definite endeavour to organise and humanise village life at ordinary times had been made while the economic conditions were not yet acute, it is possible that some sort of corporate life might have been regenerated. But the Village Act not only failed in itself; it prevented the consideration of alternative methods and no general corporate life resulted. Without corporate life there cannot be such a public opinion that disorderly persons "would find no sympathy among the people and would soon be disposed of by them" as in Tharrawaddy in 1873. Such a public opinion is much more than the sum of the opinions of the individuals. But the effect of a failure to repress crime is cumulative on account of the example which each crime sets to imitative minds, and of the general power of suggestion which is heightened by the apparent immunity of the transgressors.

The increasingly unequal distribution of wealth due to the economic conditions has done more than provide temptation to thieves. It has directly attacked what corporate spirit there was in the villages. No doubt the Burmese village had always treated its wealthier members in some ways as a special class, but with the new economic development grew the custom of the wealthier associating rather with the similar members of neighbouring villages than with other economic grades of their own village. Partly as a result of this came the tendency for the well-to-do to become concentrated in particular villages, leaving the other villages to the poor—who were thus deprived at once of their leadership and of their charity and subscriptions to village ceremonies and public improvements.

The failure of the Village Act to provide any basis of social organisation for Lower Burma has been repeated on all sides. Even the fundamental condition for healthy village life, that there should be land for the village to stand upon, has been neglected. Old-established villages are cramped and cannot expand because cultivation touches them on all sides, no trouble having been taken to provide for the increase of population, the inevitability of which should have been so obvious. Other hamlets have been squeezed into odd corners of unproductive land, which in the Delta is commonly flooded. Many people have been forced to beg permission to build a hut on the edge of somebody's paddy-land from which they are liable to be evicted at any moment. Not only these but old-established hamlets on land to which the evicting cultivator has no valid title whatsoever are actually evicted every year, and the evictions are enforced in the Civil Courts. Naturally the eviction takes place at the beginning of the ploughing season, and the evicted families are shelterless from the rains unless they can find somebody, probably at a distance from their work and with a house already fully occupied, ready to take them in. And with the removal goes often the loss of occupation. Half a sympathetic eye could have seen that the more cultivation extended the more necessary it was to reserve village-land against it. But with a shortage even of house-room where will the villagers meet to enjoy that intercourse from which alone corporate feeling can spring? Will corporate feeling arise from putting around a

village a fence which constantly accentuates the congestion? What kind of site and premises has the ordinary lay school, and even many a monastery school?

The breakdown of social organisation in Lower Burma generally can be traced in other directions too, but the general result is the same. Steadily growing with the increase of population, and particularly because that was due so much to immigration from diverse parts, it has been stimulated by the economic conditions. In 1888 the old organisation was already, according to Sir Charles Crosthwaite, ineffective for repressing crime. The new organisation, which he set up, was competent only to repress and in some measure to discourage by making the conditions more difficult; it could not regenerate the lost corporate life and organise public opinion. The social and economic dis-organisations were either alone sufficient to give rise to crime; and their interaction was still more potent even apart from their mutual stimulus. It is impossible now to separate their effects; but the earlier failure of social organisation explains in part why the crime epidemic of Lower Burma began before the economic conditions were fully developed, and the stimulus of those conditions explains its large growth and the failure of the means adopted for its repression.

The weakening of parental control over the young has often been suggested as a prolific cause of crime; and it, in its turn, is said to be due to the widespread change to teaching in lay schools from teaching in monastery schools, where, it is believed, children were taught to reverence and respect their elders. But it is not alone in Burma that elderly persons are apt to think that they in their youth were much superior in politeness and respect for their elders to the wild youngsters who treat them so badly to-day. Most readers of this paragraph have probably heard pointed expression given to the same idea occasionally in their own youth—and were ready enough then to be sceptical; and it is quite possible the same idea was expressed, and received with the same scepticism in Neanderthal. The statement that Burman children have less respect than formerly for their parents and elders is certainly to be accepted, if at all, only with some discount. How far, if it is true, it accounts for an increase of crime is another matter, and it is still another question whether it is

due to the change from religious to lay schools. There are other factors at work. As in all other countries moral teaching is largely referred to a basis of custom. In undeveloped minds law and custom are identical, as indeed they were in the early history of the race. For many reasons (chiefly economic) numerous customs have fallen out of use in recent years. But originally all customs had equal sanctity; thus the abrogation of any custom, even if it is only a relic of spirit-worship, tends to diminish the sanctity of other customs; and owing to the association of the ideas the authority of law—both in the legal and in the moral sense—is diminished too, and so also is that of the moral injunctions of parents. Further it is not clear that the monastery schools had so very much influence in the direction of inculcating respect for others than priests; and so far as moral instruction goes it is at least doubtful whether the frequent gabbling of half-understood phrases was any more beneficial in Burma than it has been found elsewhere. It is doubtful how far the lay schools have proved themselves inferior in character-formation to the monastery schools. There is certainly a natural tendency for the young to grow conceited about the superiority conferred by their vast knowledge, and to rate less highly than is proper the moral instruction of their less educated parents and elders; but this difficulty is to be met by so improving the economic conditions of parents that they may have more time and energy to devote to the training of children, by the exhibition of moral superiority on the part of elders and by direct teaching about this temptation to conceit in the schools—in fact by teaching more and not by preferring schools which teach less. The principal advantage of the monastery schools lies really in the discipline involved in processions to collect gifts and more particularly in keeping the school and its compound clean and attending to its garden. But all the world over it is the custom for parents to blame the teacher for an alleged failure to teach the children manners and morals, and for the teacher to retort that the parents have better opportunities than the teachers for doing this. And the teachers are largely right. Much of the school-time even in the monasteries of Burma is occupied with instruction in nothing of greater ethical value than the alphabet and arithmetic, and whether the child is



taught in a monastery or in a lay school the influence of the parents is greater than that of the teacher. Every animal responds most readily to the influence of its feeders. The Burman child has always received most of his training from his parents, and the teaching of the priests would be of no use at all without the parents' moral support. In any case it is difficult to believe that the change in the channel of education had proceeded so far by 1885-90 as to influence seriously the outbreak of crime which took place in 1894 throughout the province. If it is thought that though this change did not stimulate the original outbreak it has had important influence in maintaining the production of crime, there is still the difficulty that it has taken place in every district in the province and cannot therefore be a main cause of the particularly serious crime record of Tharrawaddy.

So too with the whole failure of social organisation, which, like the economic development, is much more marked in the delta districts than in Tharrawaddy. The house-site problem alone, which is a small matter in Tharrawaddy compared with the delta districts, makes an immense difference. Many newly-colonised parts of the delta too have never been organised; and in parts the diverse origin of the colonists is emphasised by the addition of a foreign element. Neither economic nor social disorganisation therefore can be a complete explanation of the even more prolific development of crime in Tharrawaddy than in the rest of Lower Burma.



## VII. GHOSTS

“ Ghosts...all sorts of dead ideas and lifeless old beliefs....They cling to us and we can't get rid of them.” (IBSEN.)

WHEN Razadarit the Talaing King of Pegu defeated the invading Burman army of Mingyiswa, King of Ava, at Hlaing in 1386 he carried the pursuit as far as Prome, but effected no permanent occupation of what is now the Tharrawaddy District. This remained as it had previously been a no-man's land between the two kingdoms, invaded by both parties but definitely occupied by neither, until 1405, when a definite boundary was drawn between the kingdoms of Pegu and Ava which gave Tharrawaddy to the latter. About the middle of the fifteenth century the governor of Prome, taking advantage of Ava's pre-occupation with the Chinese invasion, founded the independent petty kingdom of Prome, which included Tharrawaddy and was a constant source of trouble to the kings of Ava till it was annexed by Burin Naung in 1542-3. From that date until its conquest by Alompra in 1753 Tharrawaddy was a principality of the second Talaing Empire of Pegu; and after that conquest it continued as a principality of the Burmese Empire. It differed from the area of the present district by the exclusion of the narrow strip, only about eight miles wide, along the river bank, reaching from Tharrawaw to Monyo and Yegin-Mingyi (Laukzeya), and forming the division of Sarawah.

Nowadays Sarawah is a strip of flooded land, sparsely inhabited and producing a poor crop of paddy and a certain amount of miscellaneous crops grown in the dry season after the floods subside, but formerly parts of it were very fertile. The change occurred when the bunding of the right bank of the Irrawaddy in 1867 raised the level of that river and caused a large volume of its water to escape over its left bank. But in view of the benefits derived from that bunding elsewhere this fertile strip of Sarawah was readily sacrificed; it did not occupy the whole of Sarawah but was only two to three miles wide at the most, and sloped rapidly down towards the valley of the

Myitmaka or Hlaing river on the east. This valley forms now a second strip of land about eight miles wide, having that river running through the middle of it and lying still lower than the flooded cultivated area round Tharrawaw. It extends the whole length of the district and, being flooded every year to a depth of four to fifteen feet, is at present completely unculturable and furnishes nothing besides insects and fish and those annoying breaches in the Tharrawaw branch of the railway. It forms a dismal swamp which is one of the most obvious physical characteristics of the district.

But a second characteristic physical feature of the district is the failure of so many of the streams which descend the western face of the Pegu Yoma to reach the channel of the Myitmaka. On approaching the low strip in which that river lies they nearly all spread out and form a *thegaw*, which is a wide accumulation of detritus and forest refuse brought down by the water and deposited so as to fill up the river bed. Across these deposits the water flows in a thin sheet with here and there small channels which in their turn are silted up to cause an ever widening extension of the accretion. Such accretion has had of course a marked effect upon the level of the country; and the inference that the level between the present railway line and the Myitmaka was formerly much lower is of prime importance in the study of the history of the district. Not only was the level lower, but the swamp was wider. Mr Leete, when Conservator of Forests in the Pegu Circle, made a close study of these rivers, and stated in 1914 with reference to practically all those north of the Thonze *chaung* that forty years before all these streams had *thegaws* close to the railway line. But the railway line is now the central line of the cultivated central plain of the district. It is probable therefore that sixty years earlier still the *thegaws* were on the east of the railway line, and one begins to understand how Kunbaungmin could make boat-racing an excuse for the congregation of so many followers at Myodwin, eight miles east of Gyobingauk. One can also appreciate better the situation of Myodwin, which appears now to be so out-of-the-way but was really in earlier times comparatively central. The reason why the only objects of archaeological interest in the district are at Laukzeya near Yegin-Mingyi and at Myodwin,

and even so date only from about 1830 and 1843, is the existence in earlier times of this marsh, much wider than at present, extending the whole length of the district and dividing the populated area into the narrow riverine strip which formed the Sarawah division of Burmese times and a malarious fringe along the foot of the Yoma which formed the Tharrawaddy principality. The present central paddy plain has been built up quite recently by the steady advance of the *thegaws* which although it has been partially checked by the changes caused in the Irrawaddy-Myitmaka nexus by the Henzada embankments (seriously begun about 1863) has been as rapid as was noted by Mr Leete. The low marsh which formerly occupied the situation of this plain furnishes, in conjunction with the malarious nature of the terai, the explanation of the fact that while a Burman civilisation developed to the north in Prome, and a Talaing civilisation to the south in Hanthawaddy, and although these two civilisations often came into conflict, ordinary intercourse between them took place almost entirely by the river route. Even in 1825 the British column advancing by land turned to meet the river force at Tharrawaw because of the enhanced difficulties in their progress through the Tharrawaddy area. Tharrawaddy remained a comparatively undeveloped no-man's land between Prome and Hanthawaddy with a population which in 1852 numbered only ten thousand.

Such conditions could not be without an effect upon the development of the Tharrawaddy inhabitants. Clearly their occupations would not develop on quite the same lines as in level Hanthawaddy near the populous centres of Pegu, Syriam and Rangoon, or as in the populous and highly cultivated plains of Prome and Hmawza whence rice was exported to Upper Burma. Up in the hills were isolated Karen groups as there are to-day all along the Pegu Yoma; but in Tharrawaddy even in the less elevated parts the ordinary man only cultivated for subsistence and derived the satisfaction of a large part of his wants from wild vegetation and from hunting and fishing. The civilised strip was so narrow that every one in it was in direct contact with wild and sometimes fierce Nature, and these conditions held up till after the British occupation began. Further there was the difference of the degree of control exer-

cised by the Government in such an area and in the comparatively open areas nearer the seats of Government in Upper Burma or the ports of Lower Burma. Reaction to environment is the essential character of life of which, therefore, evolution in some form is a necessary quality. It is now being more and more recognised that animal evolution, however it may be with plant evolution, is only secondarily an affair of bodily structure; primarily it is an affair of mental structure to which bodily structure has adapted itself. The human mind seems to be endowed with a number of general emotions and instincts supplemented by a large capacity for adaptation to its environment which leads to the development of a mental structure corresponding to their environment and occupations in the inhabitants of every locality. Succeeding experiences overlay with modifications the developments and modifications due to earlier experiences, giving rise at last to a mentality in which the earliest qualities are greatly modified. But although modified they continue to play a part; the new structure is definitely a modified development of the old and not a substitute for it. In each stage of evolution there is a survival of the forms which have the most successful innate tendencies to form the corresponding mental structure; while each individual recapitulates, though perhaps roughly and imperfectly, the stages passed by his ancestors. There thus develops in each locality a mental type with characteristic qualities, traditions and ideals due to the history of the continued mutual reaction between existing mental structures and environment and the occupations practised. Thus from the social and family co-operation of the densely-populated paddy plains of China sprang the Confucian ethics of co-operation and social service. The pastoral life of Judaea furnished in the good shepherd that giveth his life for the sheep a model of self-sacrifice. The proximity of every part of England to the sea and the mistiness of her atmosphere have led to the production of a race which knows no limits in its pursuit of adventure in the sphere either of travel or of the imagination. What kind of mental structure is to be expected under the conditions of the Tharrawaddy District? What character traditions and ideals should be formed there?

No doubt in quite primitive times hunting for food was one

of the principal occupations of every human pack; but as semi-agricultural habits were contracted in settlements in a milder environment growing steadily more mild the old clan system died out, and, as the wild produce of the immediate neighbourhood of a particular spot, though supplemented by the products of cultivation, could only support a limited number, the settlements would be of limited size. Within each small group there would be practised co-operation, but in relations with every other group there would be a strong leaning to competition. Where pastoral or agricultural habits were largely developed the mental structure of the people would be modified; but in the degree in which the hunting habits and association with wild nature continued that structure would develop in the direction of Le Play's *Hunter Type*, which, while no less endowed with courage than the pastoral type, is distinguished from that type by a character not of the self-sacrifice of the ideal shepherd but of self-assertion and "other-sacrifice." The characteristics of the "hunter type" are those of men who support themselves with the animal and vegetable products of nature, obtained, not like crops or herds by a long peaceful process of cultivation or tending, but by an aleatory search under conditions which involve the constant risk of various serious dangers. The hunter, whether he seek animal or vegetable products, must often come into situations in which he must either take the life of a fierce assailant or yield his own; as he may sometimes search long without reward he will hold fast to whatever he gets; he resents the intrusion of others into the circle of his hunting because increasing demand means a diminishing supply, and he therefore lives in small communities and develops a spirit of independence. As he seeks vegetable as well as animal products the term Hunter is not quite appropriate; but it is difficult to find another single word to convey the sense of the tracking of animals as well as of the search for other products of the jungle. The name is not of much importance however provided its connotations are kept in mind.

The clearest line of development of the hunter spirit is that which leads to the warrior asserting himself against other men, with which is closely associated the development of the pre-



datory instincts. Another line of development is that which transforms the courage and self-assertion of the hunter into a spirit of adventure first in the material and then in the mental universe. Again one side of the hunter's mind is distinguished by its interest in and study of nature; originally aiming only at increased power of catching and destroying, this becomes transformed to the spirit of the naturalist. But whatever subsequent transformations take place the original hunting instinct in its earliest transformations still persists (or "perseveres") though overlaid by subsequent experiences. It appears only slightly veiled in the taste for games in which a player or thing is hunted. It is shown in the interest in a terrier killing rats. It is to be traced in the subjective sweetness of stolen fruit. It appears blatantly in the passion for sports in which killing plays an essential part as the indubitable registration of success. It was offered as an explanation of the "disastrous outbreak of burglaries" experienced in England after the conclusion of the armistice last November, having been awakened as a predatory character by the stimulus of the war even in men who had remained in civil life. Under certain stimuli it still appears in its primitive simplicity, even in the most highly cultured natures, as when Julian Grenfell wrote of the Joy of Battle. In no civilised society however can the pure ideal of the hunter be pursued; it is the negation of organised life in a large community. The changing conditions of environment and the consequent development in some degree of agricultural occupations demand from any race which wills to survive a modification of its mental structure to an extent which varies with the character intensity and duration of its racial experience. But as has already been emphasised the primitive qualities are modified, not eradicated; they still continue to play a part.

Every people has passed through the hunting stage at some period of its development, and the qualities developed therein are still present in a form more or less overlaid and modified according to its history. In all Burma, with the jungle until recently so close to every village and with such recent memories of war and conquest, the overlaying and modification are less than in many races; but in Tharrawaddy where contact with



wild Nature (both in the hills on the east and in the floods to the west) and undeveloped conditions and weak government and comparative isolation from the culture of both the Burmans on the north and the Talaings on the south existed so recently, we may expect to find particularly strong evidence of the persistence of the hunter's spirit as a Ghost of the ancestors of the race in the ideals traditions and character of the people. Tharrawaddy in fact in 1850 differed from the central areas of Burman and Talaing civilisation just as these differed from western Europe, in that the primitive hunting instinct was, owing to the physical environment and occupations of the people, nearer the surface and therefore so much more readily stimulated. Here indeed was the true source of the "confidence and courage and predilection for a military life" which Major Nuthall observed in the Tharrawaddy men of the Pegu Light Infantry and ascribed to predatory habits in Burmese times; he was more nearly right in his words than in his intention, the assignment of the basic meaning of "predatory" is all that his words require. The spirit of independence which gave rise to the reports that the Tharrawaddy men disposed of rulers who did not suit them derived originally from the same source. Gaung Gyi with his strong spirit of independence and bold adventure and his clever strategy, which took advantage everywhere of the difficulties which the physical conditions offered to his opponents, was the very type of the Tharrawaddy man. The people of Sagaing and Shwebo, long accustomed to living by the cultivation of the lands adjacent to their compact closely-organised villages and frequently engaged in distant wars or in repelling invasions, organised themselves and developed first into the disciplined soldiers of Alompra and Bandula and later into the favourite flock of the Registrar of Co-operative Societies. The Burmans of Tharrawaddy lived in a sparsely inhabited jungle tract and took no part in the collective action of either the Burmans to the north or the Talaings to the south. Preserving more nearly in its primitive form the independent hunting spirit they proved themselves in the Pegu Light Infantry, as well as in the persons of Gaung Gyi and his followers, well adapted to irregular guerilla warfare; and, except in the significant case of a football-team which gives an opening for

the indulgence of the hunting spirit, co-operation in all forms is much more difficult to establish among them unless the individual advantage can be clearly seen.

The present population of Tharrawaddy has not descended entirely from the stock of 1850; it has been largely recruited from immigrants from Upper Burma. But it was naturally the more adventurous and more independently-minded Upper Burmans who emigrated to the Lower Province where they had to experience all the differences of the unfamiliar conditions associated with level contours and a heavy rainfall. Upper Burma thereby was relieved of those adventurous and independent spirits which would have weakened its tendency to solidarity. But in Tharrawaddy like was added to like; while in the same way the other districts of Lower Burma have received a population of the adventurous type somewhat similar to that of Tharrawaddy in addition to whatever they had before, and so have acquired in greater or less degree the Tharrawaddy character.

The spirit of adventure being a lineal descendant of the old hunting and killing spirit, it is not surprising that other traits closely associated with the same spirit or transformations of it appear. A love of gambling is certainly more closely associated with the uncertainty of the hunter's life, with its alternations of hunger and surfeit, than with the life of the shepherd or cultivator. The instant appeal to the knife in petty quarrels is the direct outcome of the spirit of the hunt. The individualism of the hunter is one of the direct causes of the lack of cohesion in the villages of Lower Burma, which would have been cured before now if the varied origins of the immigrants and present physical conditions were its sole causes. The competitive individualism which characterises agriculture in Lower Burma would perhaps have arisen amongst any people placed in the same circumstances, but the immediate and complete reaction of the Burmans to the conditions was a result of the hunter spirit expressed in individualism.

## VIII. THE RAISING OF GHOSTS

THE persistence of the primitive traits of the hunting age is a factor which has frequently been overlooked or denied because the traits have been hidden by a screen formed of the complex of inhibitions developed in the later history of the race and dense in proportion to the sum of subsequent racial experiences. But it so happens that there is ready to hand a direct test of the theory in an observation of the effect of temporarily suppressing those inhibitions. The Advisory Committee under Lord D'Abernon, which reported to the Central Liquor Traffic Control Board in England in 1917 on the effects of alcohol on the human organisation, is probably the highest authority on that subject. It is reported that (setting aside the case of the chronic drunkard) alcohol successively suspends the functions of the brain and mind in the order from above downwards—that is to say, in the inverse order of their development in the individual and in the race. Small doses affect the higher intellectual faculties, which are the latest acquirements of the brain; and the result is a failure of inhibitions and a consequent setting free of the emotions and their instinctive impulses from intellectual control. A further dose leads to a disturbance of the functions of sense-perception and skilled movement, and this disturbance is accompanied by emotional instability; the emotions and instinctive impulses being still relatively intact, the drinker is apt to give way to violent displays of emotions characterised by the exclusive dominance of each primary emotion in turn. The report is a scientific corroboration of *In vino veritas*. Viewed in this light the well-known effects of alcohol upon Burmans are a corroboration of the theory of the persistence in them of the hunting and killing traits behind a screen of more modern acquisitions, the greater readiness with which the screen is removed in Burmans than in Europeans being a result partly perhaps of less racial experience of alcohol but largely of the more recent acquirement of the screen.

It was of course common knowledge long ago that the consumer of a sufficient dose of alcohol is liable to become quarrelsome and behave generally in an uncivilised manner. But the

analysis of the mode of action of alcohol, which though it was denied by many when taught by Sir Victor Horsley and others has now received the incontrovertible authority of Lord D'Abernon's committee, brings that knowledge to us in a form of which use can be made in two different ways. In the first place it will be noticed that the analysis does not prove that alcohol is a prolific cause of crime. It shows that it is possible for it to be such, and demands therefore an investigation into the correlation of alcohol with crime in any criminal locality. But it goes further—and this is a matter not commonly appreciated; it shows that care is needed in rejecting an indicated correlation in one locality because it cannot be discovered in another. It will often be accepted that differing environment or occupations will account for different results being obtained in two localities, but it is not yet sufficiently realised that, even when environment and occupations are identical now, the human material may be different because of differences in long-forgotten history. (In the study of this matter, too, one should count not only the stabber who acted under the influence of alcohol consumed by himself but also him who stabbed on a provocation given by a consumer; but the figures should be kept distinct.) The second direction in which the analysis is of use is in its suggestion of a possible cause of crime in any drug or other influence which by inhibiting the control of the higher nerve-centres raises the ghosts of past ages. The effect of opium is known to be a depression of the faculties of reason and judgment accompanied initially by a slight excitement of the imagination that soon gives way to a general depression which, as in the case of alcohol, affects the faculties in the reverse order of their development. Thus the relation of opium to crime should be studied in the same way as that of alcohol. That, indeed, has long been generally understood, but a more subtle influence which has commonly been overlooked is malaria.

The effect of wide malaria infection is a subject demanding the close study of a mind trained in statistics and psychology as well as versed in the study of malaria. Opium is commonly consumed all along the Pegu Yoma as a preventive of malaria; it has even been alleged that in some eastern parts of the Prome District a cultivator must guarantee a supply of opium for this

reason before he can get a ploughman to agree to work for him. Many Burmans who would refuse to use opium even as a preventive of fever resort freely to alcohol when travelling in malarious areas. A large proportion of town Burmans, if they have to go out even to rural villages, to say nothing of the jungle, in October or November, regard a daily dose of some form of alcoholic drink as indispensable to protect them against fever; and the dose is very apt to grow. Many have thus contracted either the opium or the alcohol habit directly through the fear of malaria. But the close study, in the light of the Freud theory of repressed tendencies, of the neuroses arising from malaria and malarial cachexia in Burmans would probably establish a relationship between malaria and crime arising in much the same way as the relationship between crime and alcohol, by the weakening of the mental forces which maintain the repression. Malaria will then appear to be a far more potent force than alcohol or opium because it affects a so much larger portion of the population.

The analysis now suggests still another line of thought. Alcohol and opium and probably malaria are related to crime through the failure of repressing forces which arises from their effect upon the nervous system. But such a failure may be caused in other ways. One such way is by emotional shock, but the resulting condition is then regarded as pathological and outside the present studies. A more subtle way is by long-continued conscious or sub-conscious mental friction or stress arising from the repression of tendencies and habits which have previously had full play. Such stress must occur whenever adjustment is made to a changed environment. With the environment changing slowly the stress may not be great; but with an economic environment changing as rapidly as that of the Lower Burman has done the stress must be serious. Take what is perhaps the most obvious change as an example, and consider all the effects of the changes in the habits of domestic economy arising from the loss of free jungle-products which can no longer be collected in most places because the expansion of cultivation has pressed back the limits of the jungle from which also a larger population desires to take toll. In Tharrawaddy in particular there is combined with this the repression of the



instinct for the hunt, formerly satisfied by the search for all free natural products, both animal and vegetable, and repressed quite suddenly and recently. But it is the very alphabet of psychology that suppression leads to violent manifestation; and the Thonze householder dares not leave a waterpot outside his house at night lest it appeal to somebody as a free gift of Nature to be appropriated for the trouble of collecting it. So too, all the changes in environment, economic or physical, cause, through the repression of tendencies belonging to the old environment, mental strain which results in many individuals in strong reaction. The strain is sub-conscious and the individual is unable to explain the "motive" which apparently caused the crime. But there is probably much to learn from a study of the modern theory of hysteria, with which many cases of crime are undoubtedly related, particularly those in which the "motive" is obscure and the only apparent explanation is "pure cussedness." Some aspects of the social disorganisation, such as the failure to provide reasonable house-sites, take effect in a similar way by establishing neurasthenic conditions under which the ghosts are raised and walk again.

The clearest cause of mental strain associated with the loss of free jungle products is, however, the difficulty of making ends meet in the domestic budget without them; and this leads to the consideration of all forces which by tending to impose a lower standard of living excite reacting mental stresses in the endeavour to maintain the habitual standard. From this it is only one step more to the consideration of the effect of the fear and worry due to all poverty however caused, and thus to find a cause of crime in any cause of poverty. The most obvious cause of poverty in Lower Burma generally is the competitive basis of its economic life. Other causes are the alcohol and opium habits which take effect both by direct exhaustion of resources and by reducing industrial efficiency. Malaria, whatever may be its direct psychological effect, is another powerful cause of poverty acting either by depriving wife and children of their natural supporter, or by the loss of efficiency when working, or by the loss of time when too ill to work—perhaps occurring at a critical point in the agricultural season and causing a failure of the harvest for a tenant or owner, and dismissal for



the labourer. Whether due to economic competition, to malaria or to drugs, poverty tends to work in a vicious circle, to re-inforce its own causes and so accentuate itself and its effects. And the psychological consideration of its action in a people of the Burman temperament shows that crime may be caused indirectly by poverty of much less than that extreme degree in which destitution acts as a direct stimulus to theft to supply an elementary need.

Thus poverty, drugs, malaria and the change of physical and economic environment may be regarded as causing crime indirectly and through their mental and nervous effects. In addition there are forces stimulating directly the production of crime. The influence of example is particularly important amongst these because it becomes constantly more powerful as crime increases. It must not be thought that the power of example is restricted to unpunished crime; the influences of suggestion and mimicry in circumstances in which other forces have already excited irritation are effective even in the case of a crime which is detected and punished, particularly if the crime takes place locally and the punishment far away in a secluded institution. Another stimulus to crime arises directly out of the mere increase of the density of the population. If the population of a given area is doubled the number of contacts between individuals must be quadrupled, and the number of occasions of mutual irritation or of temptation must also be at least quadrupled unless some influence concurrently diminishes them. The competitive atmosphere of the economic life of to-day is certainly not such an influence. Normally the growth of population should be accompanied by growth of social organisation under which men, becoming associated instead of merely being gregarious, learn to allow less effect to occasions of irritation; this is indeed the essence of civilisation. The lack of social organisation appears again therefore as a stimulus of crime through the consequent failure of civilisation to advance as rapidly as the population increases.

We have already noted that the disconnected outbreaks of crime in Tharrawaddy before 1904 were accompanied by acute economic conditions and political tension, and that since that year there has been a growing economic and social disorganisa-

tion, which would, as we now see, tend to produce psychological conditions in which ghosts of instincts or tendencies developed in earlier stages of the evolution of the people would be raised and crime generated. The temporary stress of 1878 to 1880 and 1885 to 1889 produced temporary outbreaks. The crime of 1894 also started under economic stress and would probably have subsided, too, in the same way as those previous outbreaks if the general economic and social conditions had been the same. But, although the economic and social disorganisation in Tharrawaddy had not yet advanced far enough in 1894 to be accepted as the cause of the chronic state of crime obtaining there since that date, it had proceeded far enough to neutralise the measures taken for repression. As each year passed the disorganisation was steadily growing and its effect was enhanced by the growing stimulus of example. By 1904 the conditions of industrial agriculture were establishing themselves, and with a history of ten continuous criminal years the high output of crime became normal and only liable to oscillation as exacerbating influences and the measures for its suppression alternately obtained the upper hand.

Thus by pressing back to the psychological basis of the effects of economic and other conditions it is possible to meet the two difficulties in assigning to economic causes the chronic crime of Tharrawaddy, which began before those causes had become chronic and developed in greater intensity in Tharrawaddy than where those causes were more developed. The primitive instincts, which are found in men of every race because of the conditions of life of primitive man, but are transformed and repressed by the inhibitions and mental modifications acquired in the course of racial development, can be liberated by certain stimuli in their primitive or only partially transformed character. Owing to the physical, political and social history of Tharrawaddy those inhibitions are even less firmly established in its people than in other Burmans, while the transformation of the primitive hunting and predatory instincts by environment and occupation has not proceeded so far; and accordingly those instincts are more easily stimulated in Tharrawaddy than in other districts, although owing to colonisation by people of a similar innate character the delta districts have populations

which do in some degree partake of the Tharrawaddy character. Amongst the stimuli which tend to revive the primitive instincts poverty and the other effects of the current economic and social conditions are perhaps the most powerful, and continued crime began sooner in the neighbouring districts than in Tharrawaddy because in them these economic conditions developed sooner. But the crime of Tharrawaddy developed most intensely because of the innate character of its population, which responded more readily to those stimuli and to the stimulus of example of which the influence has grown at an increasing rate. Other stimuli have been alcohol, opium and malaria. As causes of poverty these reinforce the effects of the economic conditions, and they have also direct influence. Malaria is rife now along the foot of the Yoma and was of prime importance among the forces retarding the development of the old principality. It is probably even now more serious in Tharrawaddy than in most districts of Lower Burma; and besides having thus a greater direct influence would be more effective in inducing the alcohol and opium habits. Further, remembering the transformation of the primitive hunting spirit into the spirit of adventure, it need cause no surprise if the people of Tharrawaddy are found to be more ready than others, quite apart from fever prevention, to experiment with drugs. In this connection there is on record a report which may also interest those who regard the British Government as responsible for the opium evil in Burma. It was made by Captain Smith in 1853, the first year of the British occupation of the province, when Gaung Gyi's rebellion was in full swing and the Sarawah and Tharrawaddy people were driven to Henzada and suffered there from great poverty, and it stated that "intoxicating drugs are used to excess by the idlers—chiefly opium sold secretly by Chinamen." This report not only forestalled a recent view of the opium question, but suggests that the people were indeed susceptible to the temptation of drugs. Such susceptibility is not a sufficient reason for condemnation. Emerson, an apostle of the Higher Life, recognising the greater readiness with which drugs are used by the adventurous than by the timid, even went so far as to declare that a people which has never indulged in some drug is not worth its salt.

## IX. THE LAYING OF GHOSTS

THE history of greatest interest to intelligent men is the history of what has not yet occurred. All history of the past is of interest chiefly as an aid to writing the history of the future. The method of this science of pro-history is that of all the successful sciences; namely, deduction from a theory which resumes all the known facts in a kind of mental shorthand and is constantly tested by agreement between the deductions and newly discovered facts. The theory is a pure concept, to the students of which questions of historical truth are of interest only as guides in so constructing the theory that it may be in agreement with the known facts, and questions of metaphysical truth are of no interest at all. The functions of the theory are to guide to the discovery of new facts and to increase the material and spiritual power of man; and the theory is true in so far as it fulfils these functions. The earth is safely circumnavigated through the theory that it is a sphere around which the rest of the universe revolves. The simple atomic theory of matter provides a satisfactory basis for chemistry so long as a certain wide range of phenomena is not exceeded. The ghost theory of the Tharrawaddy crime is advanced with a similar pragmatic claim; it is suggested that it resumes with sufficient accuracy the known facts and furnishes a guide to the discovery of new facts, and, inasmuch as knowledge is an indispensable preliminary thereto, assists in the discovery of the proper methods of dealing with its subject. It is in fact a tool to work with. It conceives of the production of crime by the action of certain stimuli upon a people of a particular psychological character which is the natural result of their past history. It exhibits the "antecedent and primary causes which bring about the disposition to commit crime" (*Police Report*, 1911) and by throwing light upon the mode of action of known stimuli offers aid in the detection of others. It suggests three methods of combating crime: to discover and remove or weaken the stimuli; to provide legitimate means of expression for the repressed instincts concerned; and to convert the char-



acter of the people by transforming those instincts and overlaying them with inhibitions which will successfully resist the stimuli. The satisfactory application of these methods will involve an economic social and spiritual revolution; their neglect will be accompanied by a development of crime which will make future administrators of Tharrawaddy look back with a sigh to what they will regard as the innocent years of the Great War. "The forces of the world do not threaten—they operate," says President Wilson; and that is true of the crime stimulating forces at work in Tharrawaddy. Fortunately it is equally true of the forces which resist them, and if these forces can be discovered and applied in time with sufficient intensity their success is equally inevitable. Already a beginning is being made in their application, and it is no part of the intention of the present studies, which are directed to the "pure" rather than the "applied" branch of their science, to work out a complete system of application. A few disjointed suggestions arising out of the preceding studies are all that will be offered.

Amongst the stimuli of crime example was noted as of particular importance because of the cumulative influence it exercises. Correlative to this is the importance of the measures for reforming criminals and repressing crime. The agency of repression is the police force, and the improvement of the police is consequently the method of attacking crime which meets with fewest sceptics. The story of the Pegu Light Infantry Regiment was prefaced to these studies partly because, while one of the difficulties in organising that regiment was, as with the police to-day, the inadequacy of the pay, the general conditions of service were of even more importance. The experience of the Pegu Light Infantry Regiment when employed on frontier duty showed that these conditions must be human if the force is to be a success. At his last Durbar (April 1919) the Deputy Commissioner of Tharrawaddy called for a body of police which would fill other districts with envy; there is every reason to believe that the district can supply that if Government will let him experiment with improved conditions of service. The need for better pay is admitted; but, just as with Labour in Europe and America, pay alone will not settle the matter. The Tharrawaddy policeman, for the very reasons which



will make him a good policeman, requires opportunity for self-expression and a broader life. It must not be expected that the housing problem has been settled for the Tharrawaddy police by the supply of continuous rows of cottages even more closely resembling each other than do the bricks and concrete posts of which they are built; individuality must be allowed room for expression and a piece of land must be given to each man for a garden—and opportunity to develop it. A suitable sheltered playground for the children of the station is also required. The supply of a newspaper is as important in the police station as in some offices in the Secretariat to which newspapers are supplied at Government's expense. Clubs are required for reading as well as for indoor and outdoor games; powers have recently been granted to sanction grants-in-aid to such cases and the police stations should not be overlooked, though the institutions should admit others than police and other officials because thus all will get broader views and develop wider sympathies, and a beginning will be made in a few centres at least of the process of humanising life in Burma. The police football teams have their value; but even against these a warning is required, because they are liable to monopolise attention and leave non-players without the provision of any opportunity for self-expression and with only the soreness that comes when a player is promoted.

But even with an improved police force repression cannot be successful without (in the words of the Police Report 1916) "the creation of a healthy public opinion leading to a cordial co-operation of the community and the police." And that is hardly possible until a community has been developed. But communities cannot be developed by merely granting to headmen power to inflict punishment upon those villagers who, not having the excuse of wealth, fail to assist them in carrying out their duties. Nor are they necessarily produced by building village fences; "gregariousness is not association." The improvement of the status of headmen has its uses, but it can never engender the desired public opinion amongst the non-headmen; benches of headmen will provide a useful and cheap branch of the judicial service, but unless the headmen are elected they cannot do more than use their more intimate local know-

ledge to punish more wisely and promptly, and to recognise more readily the cases which demand guidance rather than punishment. Public opinion will arise when and where there is a community; communities will begin to develop when some enduring medium for the expression of their sense of unity is provided. Economic societies cannot as a rule include the whole of the village; political organisation is required, and the formation of village committees with constructive powers, which even if limited are real and susceptible of extension, is the first step. But advance in political organisation requires improved social and economic organisation. It must be realised that the Village Act and the Village System are by no means identical; the rigorous enforcement of the former is not really the same thing as the maintenance and development of the latter. The Act has its place in the foundations of the system, but it must not be mistaken for the commodious apartments which the superstructure ought to provide. The village-site problem too must be dealt with before it becomes as difficult as in the Delta. There must be room for the village if corporate life is to develop. The destruction of old-established hamlets in the Delta by the aid of Township Courts gives a real stimulus to the belief that law and order are not upon the side of the people—a belief which will effectually prevent the people from being upon the side of law and order. Though this is confined to the Delta it is symptomatic of the lack of touch between the judiciary and the people which is not confined to the Delta; it is due not only to ignorance of the Land Records system but to an ignorance of rural conditions which must affect unfavourably all the work of the Courts.

The correlation of malaria and crime in Burma should be closely studied. Unfortunately the vital statistics in Burma are of no value for the purpose, nor even are the figures for patients in the hospitals. A malaria survey like that recently carried out in Mandalay is urgently required in all the criminal districts; its results should be carefully collated with local crime records, and its scope and tabulation should be modified if necessary for that purpose. Further, a continued study in relation to malaria of the present inmates of jails and of new entrants for a considerable period, and a tabulation of the results on a care-

fully considered basis of kind and motive of crime (and also the economic status of the criminal), should be of value if the statistical examination of the data were made by a mind trained in that work. On account of the now well-known phenomenon that malarial cachexia may be developed to a high degree although, owing to his system having become habituated to the toxin, the subject has never shown prominent symptoms of fever or ague of any kind, the study of the prisoners should not be confined to obtaining a record of clinical symptoms but should be pursued with the unrestricted aid of the microscope; while on the other hand a free use should be made of all the methods of modern psychology to study the co-existing mental qualities. There is reason for believing that the co-ordination of all these studies in Tharrawaddy would be well repaid.

Incidentally it would probably become clear to some that it is entirely unnecessary to have a skilled medical officer to check the ordinary routine papers of jail administration. It is surely something of a paradox that the comparatively few prisoners in a District Jail, mostly men in the prime of life, living under a carefully framed regime, well housed and sufficiently fed, protected from most diseases, and suffering only by the mental effects of incarceration, should be supplied with a special medical attendant; while the immensely larger number of persons (largely children or old people) outside the jail, often insufficiently clothed and fed, living lives which are the antithesis of regularity in an environment often extremely insanitary, exposed to all kinds of weather, overwork, infection and worry, are neglected. It will perhaps be realised some day that the inmates of the jails being largely drawn from the mentally unstable and living under conditions which affect only the mind unfavourably, should be placed in the charge of a psychologist. The Civil Surgeon, apart from executions and supervision of the medical service of the jail, would be set free for his legitimate duty of Health Officer in the rural as well as the urban areas and for the benefit of the law-abiding as well as the transgressors. The psychologist would be fully occupied because he could not understand his subjects unless he also studied persons outside the jail; he would be required to study also the school-children and advise the educational authorities

and give occasional expert assistance at the hospital. The Civil Surgeon would then be able to attend to the pioneer cultivators who are clearing new holdings on the edge of the jungle. All through the colonisation of Lower Burma the fundamental difficulty of the pioneer has been not finance but fever. It has constantly been the inefficiency caused by fever which has made the financial difficulties so important. But although the people who took the risks of pioneering were drawn from the more virile and adventurous portions of the population, no effort was ever made to help them fight the fever which killed so many and brought so many others into the debts which eventually swallowed up the land they had developed. If the medical department of the Province had taken its proper part of fighting malaria in the colonisation of Lower Burma, the economic condition of the cultivators in many parts would have been very different from what it is. Not only would the pioneers have survived in better economic condition; the greater ease of success as a pioneer would have caused many more to leave the old-established tracts and so have relieved the competition there.

## X. THE LAYING OF GHOSTS (*concluded*)

THE stimuli of alcohol and opium have already been sufficiently discussed in the development of the theory. Poverty must also be dealt with, not only because it is a direct stimulant to crime but because the solution of the economic problem is a necessary preliminary to any considerable advance in social organisation on lines which take account of personality. Moreover economic organisation is the easiest to start because the advantages to each individual can be most clearly seen; and it can be used to facilitate social organisation. An endeavour is being made with co-operative credit, sale and supply. In a society of small owners these could probably furnish an almost complete solution of the problem. But amongst tenants, with such severe competition for land as exists amongst the tenants of the Delta and is growing in Tharrawaddy, they cannot succeed. Nearly the whole of what they save in interest must be transferred to rent, leaving the tenants almost where they were unless they can form a sufficiently powerful trade-union or can form societies to take over the land. Meanwhile the greater the solidarity of the small owners and tenants, the worse the lot of the labourer who must also look then to collective action in a trade-union or in societies which take over the land. Except in areas worked by small owners (as in Prome) subsidiary industries for cultivators will benefit chiefly the money-lenders and rent-receivers if introduced before the tenants and labourers have a stronger economic position. Improved seed and methods of cultivation, new and varied or multiple crops, all tend in the same way until that condition is established. Whether the competition amongst tenants in Tharrawaddy is yet so severe that these views apply there is a matter of enquiry; the figures of the last settlement report suggest that it was not so in 1915, but the conditions may have changed during the war. The objection to the introduction of improvements and subsidiary industries while the tenants and labourers are unorganised is not merely the negative consideration that these classes would get little benefit, but the



serious positive consideration that they would thereby be so much worse off even when they did improve their relative economic position, and that the inevitably consequent struggle would be so much the more bitter. In the case of subsidiary industries there is also the difficulty that the profit derived from them might not be enough to provide for a fair standard of living and yet be enough to make the establishment of a trade-union more difficult. It may be necessary to accept the disadvantages of co-operative societies amongst tenants to effect the initial step towards the wider organisation; but in that case the step should be taken before control over the land passes still further into the hands of rent-receivers. There are dangers in going too slow in co-operation as well as in going too fast. The balanced development of whole-time non-agricultural industries to relieve the competition for land and agricultural employment offers a different prospect and furnishes perhaps the most fruitful field of endeavour if the new industries are not so treated as to produce worse problems of their own. The development of such industries would not only reduce the competition amongst tenants and labourers but would provide the needed field for investment or spiritually profitable consumption of much of the wealth which at present is a bait stimulating the predatory instincts.

The Land Records system must be revised so that it can less readily be used by the wealthy and unscrupulous to the detriment of the poorer or less sophisticated. The methods of land-revenue settlement must also be revised to secure a more equitable distribution of the revenue amongst the assesseses, and a more defensible gradation of the changes made at each revision than is accorded under present conditions by the system of intermediate rates in vogue. It will never be possible, however, to make a satisfactory settlement until the land-revenue is supplemented by a tax upon the profit derived from renting land, including in such profits the profit derived from storing paddy paid as rent, which at present escapes assessment to income-tax. The rent received for agricultural land should not be regarded as a profit of agriculture but as a profit of investment in land. Profits below a prescribed minimum being exempted, there would be no danger of affecting the genuine cultivator or

his widow or orphan; the change could only hit the large rent-receivers. Traditions relating to land-revenue derived from Akbar and other early authorities must give way to the needs of the present; the object of the land-revenue is not the maintenance of a tradition but equitable taxation. Without such a tax as that suggested, there must always be at every new settlement the difficulty that revenue rates which would transfer to Government its proper share of the unearned increment of rent, even on the most modest basis of calculating that share, would crush the cultivating owners or at least seriously depress their standard of living and induce those nervous effects to which attention was drawn in the eighth study. Apart from such a tax the most effective aid in the improvement of settlements will be derived from the formation of agricultural trade-unions, which will be able to undertake most of the work of the settlement, and particularly will carry out soil-classification and arrange the relative incidence of the revenue on various lands throughout the district and province with the best knowledge and therefore in the best way.

The parrot-cry that the lay schools do not develop character as did the monastery schools may be hushed for a time while the energy it absorbs is given to devising a scheme to get better teachers with sufficient remuneration to make their minds easy and contented and schools in which teachers can have a fair opportunity. It cannot be expected that every teacher will be an exceptional man; and, without being such, an underpaid and discontented teacher, suffering from severe economic pressure and teaching in a badly designed dwelling-house in any odd corner of the village, cannot be expected to exert the best possible influence and train his pupils satisfactorily. Spacious and convenient school buildings with adequate play-grounds and equipment (extravagance being distinguished from adequacy for other reasons besides expense) should be provided at the public cost, or at least more liberal aid should be given from public funds than is now the case. The site can safely be outside the village-fence just as that of the monastery often is now, and the cost can be recouped in the near future by reappropriation from "Prisons." The lay schools if given an opportunity can do as much as religious schools to inculcate respect for such

“superiors” as deserve it; it would be a poor system of education which did not encourage the discrimination of such. It is moreover frequently found to be not so much the diminution of respect which is deplored as the loss of servility. Given a reasonable site and building, the lay schools can use the same means to discipline of keeping the school clean and tending the garden as the monastery schools.

The subjects of instruction are also of importance. The growing demand amongst Burmans for a better system of education is a good sign, but there is a marked tendency to ask for technical education. This, though useful enough in its way, will not aid in reducing crime (or improving political capacity) unless the main emphasis is laid upon the stimulation of constructive imagination. But if the instinct for adventure is afforded scope in the mental and spiritual sphere it will be so far transformed that much stronger stimuli will be required to excite it to demand expression in illegitimate ways. The psychologist when he came to study the schools would quickly conclude that their days are too long; shorter sessions being given to literary education, the time so freed should be devoted to genuine nature-study always in close contact with nature, affording thus an outlet for the hunter-instinct in its earliest transformation. Occasions which the weather made unsuitable for nature-study could be utilised for some kind of constructive manual work. Nature-study could be so directed as to enable the next generation to appreciate and respond to the teachings of the Agricultural Department and even to assist that Department.

Related to the development of nature-study is the Boy Scout organisation which was the outcome of a specific endeavour to discover a means of encouraging the qualities and virtues developed by the hunter type in its conflict with nature while discouraging the hunter's defects and vices. There are only two centres of Boy Scouts in the province now, and neither of those is in the Tharrawaddy District which appears to be a very suitable field for their establishment. An organiser of the right type to develop Boy Scout centres at all the towns of the Tharrawaddy district could be found amongst the many partially disabled officers of the Expeditionary Force who would have the advantage of all the glamour of his war experiences. He

would train local Scoutmasters, who should be of the same race as the scouts, and afterwards transfer the whole organisation to them. Scoutmasters would probably be best obtained at first from amongst those who have had elementary (but not too much) military training.

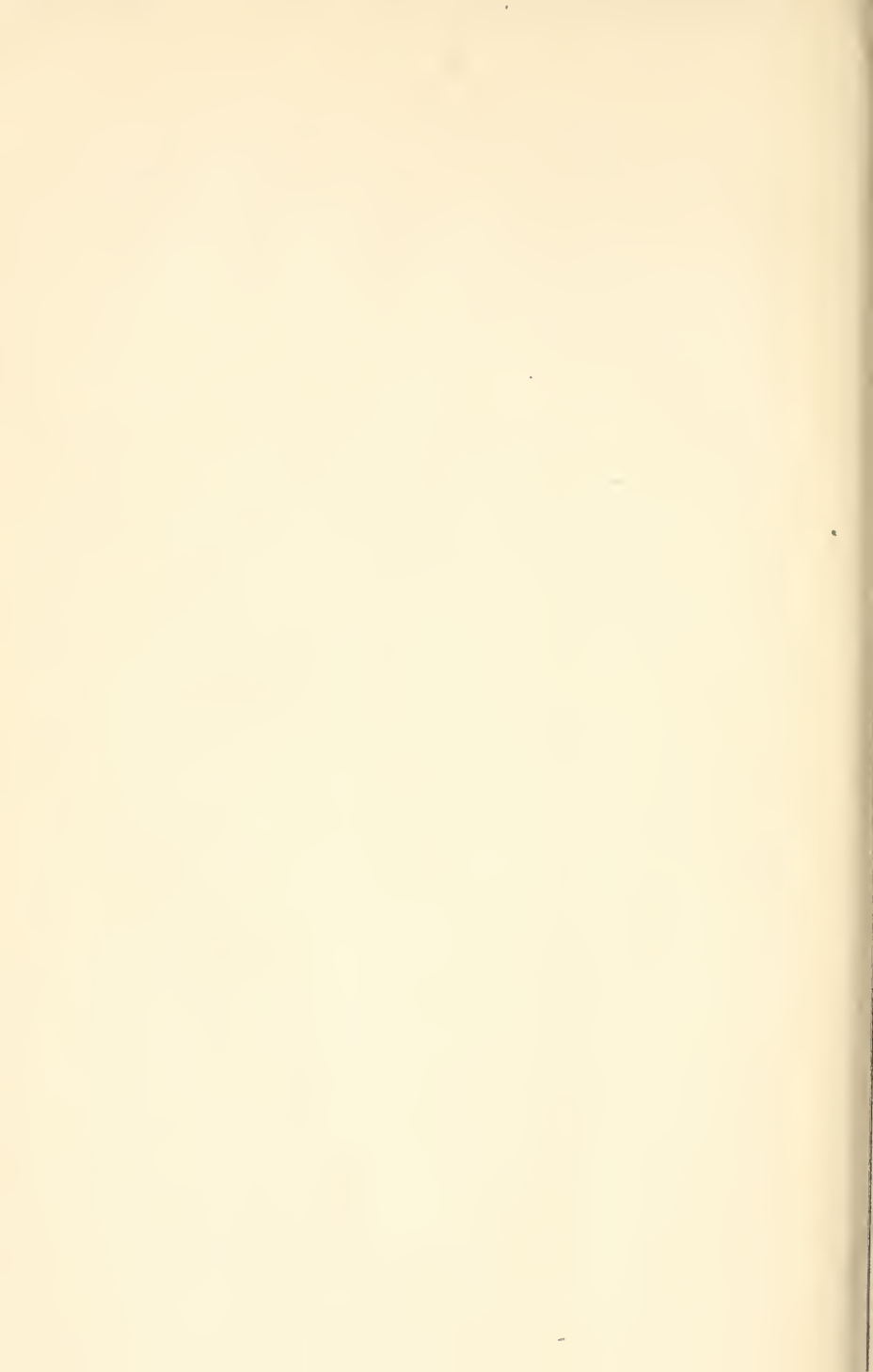
But it is useless and even dangerous to improve the education of the children unless the environment in which they will live is adapted to the kind of adults so produced. If the one evicted devil is not to be replaced by seven worse, the new capacities developed in the transformation of the old instincts must be accorded room for expression, and this requires the general humanisation of village and town life. Every encouragement should be given to the societies now springing up for this purpose in the towns, and extension of their activities to the villages should be encouraged. Land ready levelled or reclaimed and drained should be provided, by acquisition if necessary, for the erection of meeting-rooms in the larger villages. Village committees with powers to construct village requirements are needed to stimulate the development of a corporate spirit; they will find scope again in this direction as instruments for the transformation of the hunter instincts.

Meanwhile for some a more direct outlet can be provided by recruiting for the Burman army, but their training should follow the Colonial not the Prussian model. The conditions of life in the army must be human. For instance, the mistake of sending a Burmese detachment to a distant station where there was no minister of their own religion must not be repeated; a *pongyi* chaplain must be sent with them. It will always be impossible to turn the Tharrawaddy recruit into a satisfactory machine; but the experiment of the Pegu Light Infantry and the skill endurance and courage of Gaung Gyi and his army showed that there is good material if the right treatment is accorded. A Burmese Army, by stimulating the spirit of nationalism in large numbers not included in its ranks, will provide still another influence to overlay and transform the hunter's spirit of self-assertion by a sense of service to society.

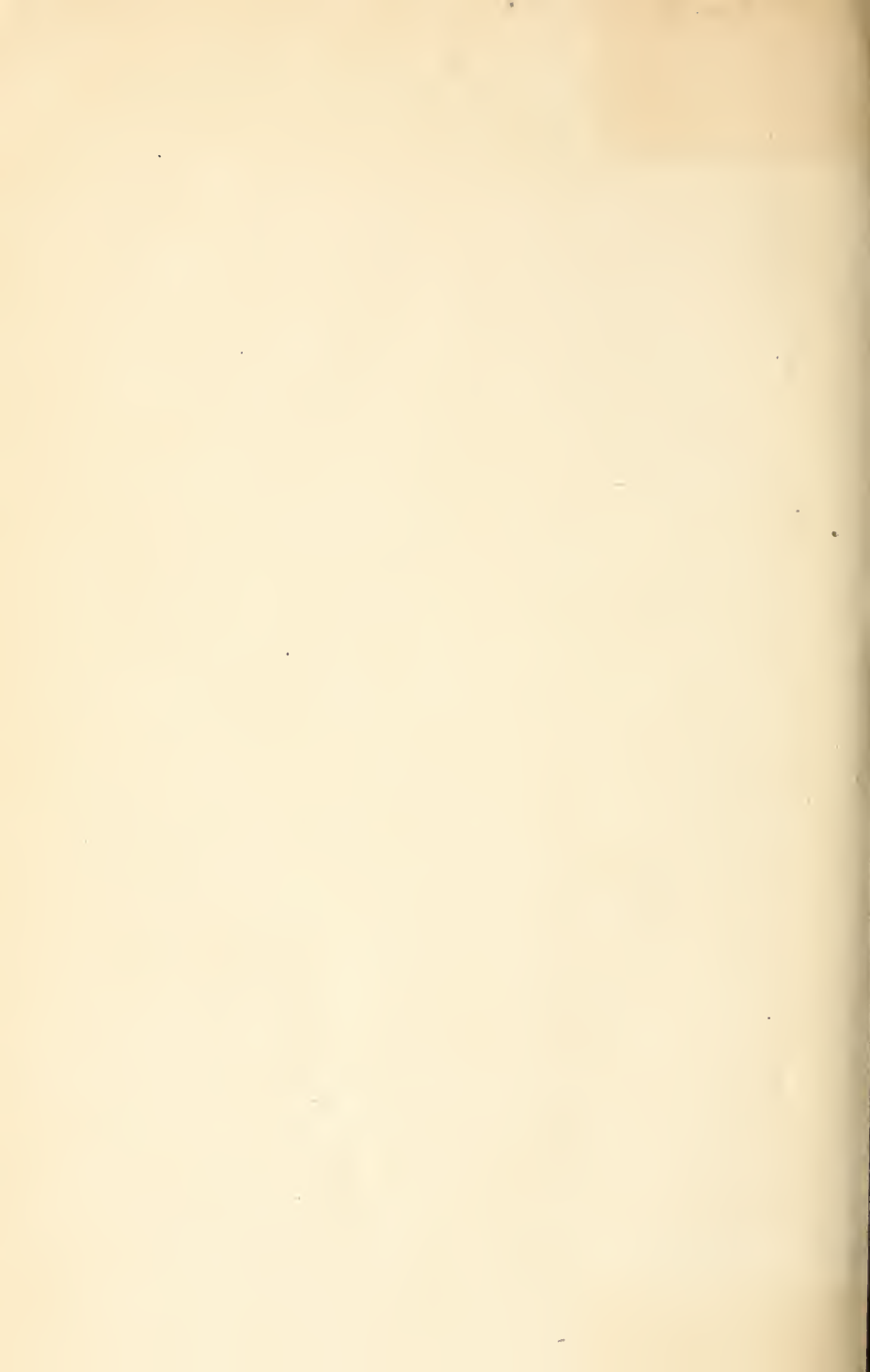
All these suggestions are founded upon the idea that Tharrawaddy is in a sense the youngest district of Burma, young in the psychology of its people because of its geological history.

Its turbulence is largely the turbulence of unguided youth exposed to a difficult environment. It is inarticulate and the forces at work are largely sub-conscious; yet its psychology is not peculiar, but is that of all new colonies and can be comprehended by studying the more articulate colonists of the Empire or of the newer parts of the United States. Electricity, which when uncontrolled excels all forces in destructiveness, is, if suitably guided or transformed to other forms of energy, such that it is now put forward as a main element in both the material and the spiritual reconstruction of Western Europe. So too the genius of Tharrawaddy, now wasting itself in crime, can be turned by sympathetic treatment based on real comprehension of its nature into the great treasure of the province. It is the stuff of which are made poetry and inventions and scientific discoveries and theories, and is worth far more than petroleum and paddy. But like petroleum it does not generally lie upon the surface; it must be sought won and refined; like paddy it must be cultivated. The practical problem is not to suppress but to raise to still higher potential and to guide in the right channels the instincts of adventure in the children, and to provide a suitable environment for the adults into which children trained on these lines must develop. To stifle these instincts completely is impossible; any attempt at stifling must be defeated by violent reaction. But since the whole is greater than its part, to allow them to waste away would be a crime blacker than all the crime that Tharrawaddy ever has produced or ever can.











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